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Perceptions of Leadership Personnel on the Breakfast in the Classroom
Program: A Qualitative Case Study

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by

Kurt S. Lowry

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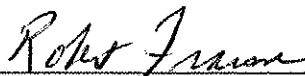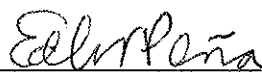ProQuest

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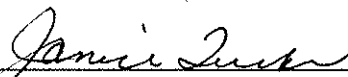fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

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Abstract of the Dissertation

Perceptions of Leadership Personnel on the Breakfast in the Classroom Program:
A Qualitative Case Study

by

Kurt S. Lowry

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership
School of Education
California Lutheran University, 2014
Janice L. Tucker, Ed.D., Chair

In partial response to poverty, food insecurity, and other risk factors believed to adversely impact academic achievement, school districts have begun to implement the Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) program. While research identifies health, nutrition, and achievement-related benefits of school meal programs, few studies focus on leaders' perceptions of the BIC program. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of district and school leaders on the BIC program implemented in their schools, as well as to examine their recommendations for long-term program success.

This case study employed Bolman and Deal's framework through which structural, human resources, political, and symbolic aspects of the BIC program were examined at two elementary schools. Twelve participants were interviewed. Findings indicated that leaders perceived the BIC program to be a valuable social program with benefits that outweighed its flaws. They recommended the importance of school-site

support, implementation differentiation, an improved menu, and the establishment of a

food donation program or classroom food storage system to ensure BIC program success.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Closing the Achievement Gap in the NCLB Era of Testing and Accountability

In the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Race to the Top era of high-stakes student achievement testing and performance accountability metrics, our nation's public school leaders are confronted with increasing demands to close identified Achievement Gaps and to ensure that all students master grade level curriculum content standards and graduate prepared for college and/or ready to embark on their chosen career. Since NCLB became law, efforts by our nation's public school districts and schools to identify, address, and close identified achievement gaps intensified as results were well-documented and published annually.

As measured by Adequate Yearly Progress performance metrics established under the federal NCLB, as well as by Academic Performance Index metrics established in the state of California, the public was able to see for itself how well a school was progressing toward the goal of closing student achievement gaps that existed between students identified as at-risk of failing in school and of dropping out and those identified as not at-risk.

For large, urban public school districts like those in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and elsewhere in other large, American cities, a great number of children who attend their local public schools are identified as at-risk of academic failure, thus making

those districts' and schools' respective efforts to improve student achievement especially challenging, urgent, and consequential. A heightened sense of urgency to close various achievement gaps for at-risk, youth, has focused mainly on students who were identified as English Learners (ELs), Latinos, African Americans, Students with Disabilities (SWD), and students who come from food-insecure and/or otherwise impoverished homes.

In order to address, resolve, and/or preempt problems associated with food insecurity, poverty, and student achievement, the Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) program school breakfast delivery model has been implemented in public school districts and schools across the nation. While BIC as a school breakfast delivery model has gained widespread attention and traction since the inception of NCLB in 2001, its most immediate predecessor, the National School Breakfast Program, actually dates back to the President Lyndon Johnson administration. The National School Breakfast Program was created in 1966 to combat hunger and poverty by increasing access to breakfast meals and was considered a logical outgrowth of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) that was enacted in 1946, whose own ancestral roots date back to the successful mass feeding programs implemented in Munich, Germany, in 1790, that were created to feed the poor and hungry (Gunderson, 1971).

Over time, school feeding program success has been determined by a variety of metrics such as student participation rates, nutrition, and meal program effects on achievement gaps. Pollitt, Gersovitz, and Gargiulo (1978) performed a review of then-available literature on the United States' school meal programs to determine to what extent the programs provided educational benefits to children. They found that from the

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enactment of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to the date of their study in May, 1978, no serious effort had been made to assess the effectiveness of the Act in meeting its primary objective of facilitating educational progress for students. The authors noted there existed a dearth of pre-1978 research on long-term effects of the United States' school feeding program on student achievement, while concluding that the provision of a school breakfast meal might provide certain emotional benefits to students that might help them successfully participate in and complete academic tasks.

Twenty years later, Murphy et al. (1998), by way of their Harvard/Kellogg Study, gained recognition for conducting what is considered the first research study to examine the relationship between child hunger, child nutrition status or intake, and the child's psycho-educational functioning, as measured by that child's academic performance. The study concluded that low-income students benefit from free school breakfast in terms of attendance, achievement, behavior, and emotional adjustments. Similar findings were supported by a contemporary study of the Maryland Meals for Achievement Project of 1998 (as cited in Kennedy & Cooney, 2001) which examined the provision of a universal and free classroom breakfast to all children who wanted and accessed it. Results of this study over a 2-year period revealed that schools that offered free classroom breakfast to their students demonstrated "a 22% improvement on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program," as compared to "a 13% improvement for schools in a control group, and a 5% improvement for all Maryland schools" (p. 434S).

Other research on school-provided breakfast meal programs has been centered primarily on purported nutrition and health-related benefits of breakfast. For example, Bhattacharya, Currie, and Haider (2006) examined the impact of a school-provided

breakfast meal program on children's nutrition. The authors found that there were notable differences in nutritional intake between students who accessed breakfast meals and those who did not and thus concluded that school breakfast programs provided improved nutrition based on evidence of students' improved dietary habits, healthier food consumption, reduced calories from fat, reduced likelihood of various vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and likely higher intake of fiber, iron, and potassium. Unfortunately, geographic location, family income, family unit, a summer month food program, and school breakfast program changes in the mid-1990s either confounded or otherwise weakened the authors' interpretation of their findings. Still, the authors concluded that the school breakfast program improved American children's nutritional outcomes.

While research studies have documented a general and global need for school lunch and breakfast programs by highlighting their associated benefits to student nutrition and health, academic achievement, as well as to the economy, to the general welfare and functioning of society, and to national security (Anderson, 2011; Bartfield & Kim, 2010; Basch, 2011a, 2011b; Bhattacharya et al., 2006; Grantham-McGregor, 2005; Hofferth & Curtin, 2005; Li & Hooker, (2010); Millimet, Tchernis, & Hussain, 2009; Reddan, Wahlstrom, & Reicks, 2002; Taras, 2005; Torlakson, 2011; U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA], 2013a; Vilsack, 2010; Waehrer, 2008; Wong, 2006), little research existed on perceptions of school district-level and school site-level leadership personnel on BIC program implementation in our nation's public schools. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of school district-level and school site-

level leadership personnel on the BIC program implementation via a qualitative case study approach.

In this chapter, I provide the reader a brief overview of the national, statewide, and local impacts of the food insecurity problem, and the relationship between food security concerns and students' access of and participation in school breakfast programs. Second, I discuss BIC program implementation from recent positions of program and policy advocacy and opposition. Third, I briefly discuss the purpose of this research study and guiding research questions. In the last part of this chapter, I discuss the significance of this research study.

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Statement of the Problem

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Food Security and National Security

In October, 2011, Vice President Joe Biden and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton addressed an audience of United States' national and international security partners at the State Department, highlighting critical issues and problems associated with national security and global food security. Biden explained the need for continued investment to ensure global food security, noting "Investments made to ward off food insecurity and prevent its recurrence can prevent the vicious cycles of rising extremism, armed conflict, and state failure that can require far larger commitments of resources down the road" (Shrier, 2011). Thus, while most people might envision military troop movements and materiel when considering the term national security, Vice President Biden's remarks clearly highlighted the importance of food supply and access to food as essential ingredients to the achievement of national and international prosperity, stability, and security.

Former Secretary Clinton's remarks were similarly urgent and purposive. She noted that it was not only "possible, but it is both a moral and strategic imperative" (Shrier, 2011) for critical partners to renew their commitment to and investment in food security and agricultural sustainability, productivity, and self-sufficiency initiatives around the globe, all prominent features of the Obama administration's foreign policy. Accordingly, in her remarks, former Secretary Clinton disclosed the United States' commitment to provide over $100 million in food aid to drought-stricken African nations such as Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia, in addition to the Obama administration's $650 million in food and humanitarian assistance already committed. The secretary remarked, "Even as we are working hard to feed the hungry in the present, we also have to redouble our commitment to Feed the Future, so that we can ultimately make famine a thing of the past" (Shrier, 2011).

Food Insecurity in California

Food insecurity is a major statewide concern and problem in California. Chaparro, Langellier, Birnbach, Sharp, and Harrison (2012), through their research with the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, contended that the number of low-income-earning adults in the State of California who could not afford a sufficient amount of food rose exponentially from approximately 2.5 million adults in 2001 to 3.8 million adults in 2009. According to the results of their California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), these low-income adults, who resided in households with incomes at the U.S. poverty level or below, were not able to provide a sufficient amount of food one or more times during the preceding calendar year. Additionally, adults who lived with children in low-income homes and/or in homes wherein Spanish was spoken endured the worst levels of food

insecurity, especially during 2009, a year noted for high unemployment numbers during the peak of our most recent economic recession. Other groups who suffered included people who became or who were divorced, widowed, and/or separated, foreign-born, and people considered non-citizens. Accordingly, to safeguard against this negative trend, Chaparro et al. (2012) recommended expanding and simplifying people's access to government-offered food assistance services and programs. One such program was the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which the authors concluded might be helpful in reducing the rate of food security concerns amongst lower income-earning populations and serve as a strong and critically-necessary barrier to the effects of food insecurity, especially during less than robust economic conditions.

Food Insecurity and Poverty in the Los Angeles Unified School District

Concerns about food insecurity are common in large urban school districts wherein student population demographics reflect those of the larger cities wherein such school districts reside. Urban populations are typically diverse, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and have greater numbers of people who live in poverty. According to the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank and Feeding America, "In Los Angeles County, 1.7 million people live in poverty, in food insecure households--households wherein families face a constant struggle against hunger" (Deasy, 2012b, p. 3). Homes with food insecurity are defined as those that lack access to sufficient amounts of high-quality food and thus struggle to maintain the health of those who inhabit the household (USDA, 2012a).

In 2012, more than 553,000 students in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) met the aforementioned definition of living in a food insecure household. While these students were eligible for free or reduced price school breakfast meals

offered by the schools they attended, only approximately 27% to 29% of federal School Breakfast Program-eligible (SBP) students even participated in their schools' breakfast program. This means that well over 400,000 students might have gone to school every morning without breakfast (Deasy, 2012a). In response, LAUSD's schools have begun to re-think and reemphasize the importance of breakfast and have begun to implement the BIC program to help students begin their day on a full stomach (Deasy, 2012a). In addition to Los Angeles, BIC programs have been instituted in large, urban public school districts in large, urban cities such as in Houston, Chicago, New York, Washington, DC, Boston, San Diego, and in other cities in order to take advantage of the program's purported academic, health, and social benefits. It is believed by many that when students eat breakfast in the classroom, a nurturing and family-like environment is developed that allows students to practice important social skills and communication skills, build relationships and strengthen their connection with their fellow classmates, teacher, school, and schoolwork (Deasy, 2012b).

Increasing Access to Breakfast and Reducing Social Stigma

Khan, Pinckney, Keeney, Frankowski, and Carney (2011) administered a survey to Vermont public middle school students in order to examine the relationship between food security, student's accessing school-provided free or reduced price breakfast and lunch meals, with a goal to improve program results. The authors found that students who lived in homes that were classified as food insecure homes were not as likely to engage in physical activity as were their non-food-insecure peers and that they were less likely to eat breakfast in their respective homes. They also found that the school's breakfast program diminished differences in participation rates in the school's breakfast

and lunch programs between children who resided in food insecure households and those who resided in food secure households. The authors noted that their research results might provide key implications for school district leaders and lawmakers, as well as for administrators of other mass feeding programs. For example, Khan et al. (2011) called on school administrators to increase access to food on their campuses by reducing the negative social stigma perceived to be associated with eligibility for school meal programs. Specifically, the authors recommended making school meals universally available to all students and they recommended providing these free school breakfast meals in the classroom.

Leadership Perspectives: Breakfast in the Classroom Advocacy and Opposition

In Chapter 2, a review of BIC program literature revealed important leadership perspectives and positions of advocacy and opposition pertaining to program implementation. School districts either produced their own internal public relations toolkits to communicate the global benefits of BIC, or have cited government and non-profit organizations' press kits, instructional guides, and toolkits, to persuade district stakeholders of BIC program benefits (National Education Association Health Information Network & Share Our Strength, 2013; Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom, 2013; Rainville & Carr, 2008). In opposition, site-level stakeholder leaders, such as teachers, parents, and even some administrators cited challenges to effective BIC program implementation, such as a major daily loss of instructional time and custodial and sanitation problems that have led to infestations of rodents and bugs as reasons why they should not adopt the program (United Teachers Los Angeles [UTLA], 2013a).

In Los Angeles, the UTLA, the labor union that represents all LAUSD teachers and some other classes of school district employees, had strongly opposed the LAUSD's plans to implement its BIC program in all LAUSD schools. UTLA's vocal opposition in the Spring of 2013 had been strong enough to force the LAUSD Board of Education to formally determine the program's fate at its School Board meeting convened on Tuesday, May 14, 2013. At that meeting, LAUSD Board Members voted unanimously (7-0) to continue the BIC program at LAUSD campuses wherein the program is currently being implemented and voted to expand the BIC program to every LAUSD campus that does not currently provide it.

Purpose of the Study

In order to address, resolve, and/or preempt problems associated with food insecurity, poverty, student achievement, social welfare, and national security, BIC program models are being implemented in public schools across the nation. While research studies have documented a general and global need for school lunch and breakfast programs by highlighting their associated benefits to student health and achievement (Anderson, 2011; Bartfield & Kim, 2010; Basch, 2011b; Bhattacharya et al., 2006; Grantham-McGregor, 2005; Hofferth & Curtin, 2005; Li & Hooker, (2010); Millimet et al., 2009; Reddan et al., 2002; Taras, 2005, Torlakson, 2011; USDA, 2013a; Vilsack, 2010; Waehrer, 2008; Wong, 2006), little research exists on perceptions of district leadership and site-level leaders on BIC program implementation and efficacy.

It is important for readers, researchers, and practitioners to gain insight into the perceptions of district-level and site-level leaders regarding actual BIC program implementation for three important reasons: (a) BIC program implementation represents

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a major structural change in the way most public school districts and schools currently deliver breakfast meals; (b) BIC program implementation is demonstrative of an increasingly popular and strategic shift in thinking as it re-emphasizes the important role of breakfast as a key ingredient in the fight to close the achievement gaps in our NCLB era of high-stakes testing and accountability; and (c) Without important feedback on Breakfast in Classroom program implementation from those who are actually deciding to implement it at the district level, and without important feedback from those who are administering it at the school site level, making it, serving it, eating it, and cleaning it up, opportunities for learning about shared best practices and mistakes with regard to implementation would have been lost or limited to respective sites. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of district-level and site-level leadership personnel on the BIC program via a qualitative case study approach and to share these leaders' perceptions of and recommendations for improving BIC program implementation.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the literature review and methodology of this research study as I examined and observed the perceptions of leadership personnel on the BIC program through a qualitative case study methodology:

1. What are district-level and school-site level leadership personnel perceptions of the BIC program?

2. What best practices, program models, resources, and other considerations are needed to ensure BIC program success at the school site level?

To address these research questions, I implemented a qualitative case study approach in order to examine the BIC program within its "real-life contemporary context or setting" (Yin, as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 97). Creswell (2013), himself, noted:

> Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual materials, and documents, and reports), and reports a case description and case themes. The unit of analysis in the case study might be multiple cases (a multi-site study) or a single case (a within-site study). (p. 97)

In this research study, the case study approach allowed me as the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of various stakeholders' perceptions of their school's BIC program implementation. Additionally, using a case study methodology provided opportunities to examine various processes and problems related to BIC program implementation that might be unique to an authentic setting or context. I believe the qualitative case study methodology was an appropriate methodology for this study because it allowed me to gain an in-depth understanding of the unique factors and characteristics that comprised the BIC program for district-level and site-level stakeholders.

This study also allowed me to incorporate semi-structured interviews with a diverse group of stakeholders, conduct a survey, review a Food Services Report that documented daily BIC participation rates, and conduct my own observations in order to generate authentic findings pertaining to stakeholder leaders' perceptions of BIC program implementation and efficacy.

Significance of the Study

The available BIC program literature revealed wides support for public schools continuing to provide free and reduced price lunch and breakfast meals in order to prevent malnourishment and to ensure student health, attention, and achievement in our era of accountability under No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top. The mass feeding programs established in Germany and Europe in the late 1700s (Gunderson, 1971) and that were exported to the United States to eradicate hunger and to sustain if not improve national security continue to remain relevant today. My review of the long legislative history at the federal and state levels of school lunch and breakfast program implementation provided evidence of continuing widespread support as food security and national security concerns remain inextricably linked to our values and goals of eradicating hunger and poverty, providing all students a high-quality education, and sustaining and supporting our nation's national security interests and position of leverage with regard to foreign policy decisions (Shrier, 2011).

The most recent incarnation of the original NSLP of 1946 is the bipartisan-supported Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. In California, Assembly Bill 839 (D-J. Brownlee) "Pupil Nutrition: Federal School Breakfast Program Participation" had as its goal school breakfast program implementation and expansion. The intent behind AB 839, before it died in committee, was to increase students' access to and participation in the federal SBP because while a majority of respondents believed breakfast was an important meal, existing law at the time of this writing requires public schools that serve low-income students need only provide one free and/or reduced price meal per day, which is typically a lunch meal. AB 839 intended to increase student access to breakfast.

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BIC research literature also revealed that school breakfast programs produced student achievement gains by facilitating increased student attention during classroom instruction, as well as resulted in fewer discipline referrals, fewer referrals to the nurse, improved attendance, and improved cognitive engagement. (Bartfield & Kim, 2010); Basch, 2011a, 2011b; Bhattacharya et al., 2006). Additional research on strategies for increasing access to school breakfast programs revealed that increased access may lead to decreases in obesity because students who eat a regular breakfast every morning are less likely to overeat at a later meal or snack between meals (Hofferth & Curtin, 2005; Kennedy & Cooney, 2001; Kennedy & Davis, 1998; Li & Hooker, 2010). Strategies for school breakfast program expansion and increased access included the implementation of various meal delivery options, including BIC, a kiosk delivery model, and a breakfast on a cart delivery model. Public school districts in Broome County, New York, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were highlighted in the literature as leadership case studies for their respective BIC implementation practices and models (Johnston, McFadden, Tucker, Denniston, & Bordeau, 2010). Additionally, The Eligibility Manual for School Meals provided schools and districts guidance on how to identify eligible students for participation in available school meal programs, and provided guidance on issues related to non-compliance with program eligibility rules that resulted in over-payments and under-payments for school-provided meals that end up costing millions of dollars due to mistakes, lack of oversight, and/or fraud (USDA, 2012a).

Challenges to the BIC program centered around increased demands for custodial support at schools, the likelihood of wasted food, spills that cause damage to school property, an increased number of reports of rodents, bugs in the classroom, and an

alleged loss of valuable instructional time (Johnston, et al., 2010; UTLA, 2013b; Wong, 2006). As a result of associated program benefits and costs, the BIC program was a salient research topic that is worth additional discussion and educational research.

Summary

As discussed in this chapter, the BIC program has emerged as a critical component in public school districts' and schools' respective efforts to combat childhood hunger, poverty, and close achievement gap(s) for at-risk youth by providing students greater, if not universal, access to school breakfasts in the classroom setting. Since NCLB law in 2001 ushered in our most recent and urgent wave of public scrutiny of our nation's public school performance via high-stakes testing and performance accountability metrics, the BIC program has expanded rapidly to several large and/or urban public school districts, including the LAUSD, which, behind New York City schools, is the nation's second largest public school district, and wherein the program received unanimous approval from the LAUSD Board of Education in May, 2013, to become a permanent breakfast service delivery model for all LAUSD campuses by 2015.

The BIC program appears poised to contribute to the ongoing debate about how education institutions can best meet the unique learning needs of individual students in the 21st century. Chapter 2, a comprehensive literature review, provides a synthesis of scholarly school breakfast program research with an important emphasis on its rich, legislative history and evolution based on its humanitarian roots and national security contextual factors and interests. Chapter 3 outlines a precise research methodology, including research questions, research study design, data collection, and data analysis procedures. Chapter 4 provides a forum through which the research findings are

presented and analyzed. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the research findings in

connection with the available literature, as well as provides an analysis of the findings

through Bolman and Deal's (2008) theoretical framework I used to examine the

structural, human resources, political, and symbolic elements of the BIC program.

Chapter 5 also provides leaders' recommendations on how the findings might be used to

inform future BIC policy and program implementation and best practices in P-12

education and perhaps in higher education contexts.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

National Security Strategy and Social Policy Rooted in Food Security Concerns

In Chapter 1, Vice President Biden and former Secretary of State Clinton were cited for highlighting critical issues of national security and global food security in their respective addresses at their October, 2011 conference with the United States' global security partners. Biden explained the need for continued investment to ensure global food security and thus ensure local, regional, and international economic and political stability (Shrier, 2011). While articulating similar arguments, Secretary Clinton's remarks, specifically, to ". . . redouble our commitment to feed the future, so that we can ultimately make famine a thing of the past," invoked, however, a more basic, humane, socially beneficial, and socially justice-oriented lens and purpose through which strategic partners and agents of change can assist their fellow citizens of the world (Shrier, 2011). According to Biden and Clinton, food security is not only good national security strategy and policy, but it is good social policy. It is inherently and fundamentally human, good, and just to take care of one's fellow citizens. We, according to Clinton, have and are guided by a "moral purpose" to address concerns regarding food insecurity at home and abroad (Shrier, 2011).

One of the primary vehicles through which concerns regarding food insecurity have been addressed is the public school system. Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, and Henry

(1997) noted "The introduction of mass schooling itself arose in the broader context of a struggle for social improvement and transformation, to provide opportunities for the 'poorer classes,'" (p. 126).

Accordingly, the role and purpose of the public school as a means through which scores of youth developed knowledge and skills as well as social and economic mobility, remain central to the health and function of our democracy and our society, our American way of life. The role of our public school system remains especially important, if not urgent, for those youth who are school dependent, those for whom access to education, books, and meals is limited largely to that provided by and delivered at their resident public schools during students' school day. Thus, the provision of a free education or a free and/or reduced-price breakfast or lunch through the public schools remains an integral part of the American social policy landscape that benefits individuals, families, communities, and greater society. As long as issues of poverty, hunger, social justice, equity, and access continue to pervade society, policy-makers and educational leaders have a fiduciary responsibility, if not a moral obligation, in the words of former Secretary Clinton, to address issues related to poverty and food insecurity through the institution of public education.

In order to address, resolve, and/or preempt problems associated with food insecurity, poverty, and student achievement, and ultimately, national security, the BIC program model has been implemented in greater numbers of public schools across the nation. While research studies have documented a general and global need for school lunch and breakfast programs by highlighting their associated benefits to student health and achievement, little research exists on perceptions of district leadership and site-level

leaders, faculty, and staff on BIC program implementation and efficacy. In this review of literature, I examined research literature on the (a) history of and values inherent in the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Federal School Breakfast Program and supporting legislation; (b) School Breakfast Program eligibility, participation, and expansion; (c) School Breakfast Program effects on student achievement and obesity gaps; and (d) an examination of district and site-level leaders' and other stakeholders' positions of advocacy and opposition with regard to the BIC program implementation in public school district schools. Lastly, I summarized and identified limitations of the existing BIC research and made recommendations for additional research.

Food Policy Rooted in the American Social Compact of Liberty and Equality for All

Edlefsen and Olson (2002) noted that emergency feeding programs provided steady relief during emergencies and natural disasters, including hunger in the United States, since welfare reform legislation became law in the 1990s. Over the last 2 decades, reduced welfare benefits also created a shifted greater social responsibility for caring for the poor from the federal government to the voluntary sector, which began to fill gaps in government program aid. While government welfare rolls receded, the volunteer, religious, and charitable sectors assumed a greater share of responsibility for caring for the downtrodden in American society, including feeding greater numbers of the poor and hungry. Our Founding Fathers invoked the phrases "inalienable rights," and "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," as core rights and values, all of which are hallmarks of the American social compact, or commitment, to social justice, equality, and freedom for all. While welfare rolls receded, core American values historically rooted in liberty and justice for all drove others to create voluntary programs to feed the poor. The question

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was not whether or not we would feed the poor; it was and remains today how we would best do so. General social values, such as feeding the hungry and providing assistance to the poor in time of great need pervade society and are held by virtually all people, regardless of their "ideological, philosophical, or religious" commitments (Fowler, 2013, p. 92). In essence, democratic values of liberty and equality in America are ideals to which we aspire and constitute reasons why our nation addresses social ills through social programs and policies such as the creation of mass feeding programs and public schooling for the citizenry.

Food Insecurity in California

Food insecurity and poverty are major statewide concerns and problems in California. Chaparro et al. (2012), through their research with the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, contended that the number of low-income adults in California who could not afford a sufficient quantity of nutritious food increased from 2.5 million adults in 2001 to approximately 3.8 million adults in 2009. As a result of their California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), these same adults, who resided in households identified as being at or below the federal poverty level (FPL), were unable to provide a sufficient quantity of food at least once during the preceding calendar year. Notably, adults who lived with children in low-income earning households and adults who lived in homes wherein Spanish was spoken, endured the lowest levels of food security, especially during 2009, a year remembered for high unemployment and economic recession. Other groups who suffered effects of food insecurity included those who were divorced, widowed, separated, foreign-born, and non-citizen residents. Accordingly, to guard against this negative trend, Chaparro et al. recommended expanding and simplifying

acceptance into government-provided food assistance programs, such as the

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which the authors concluded could

help significantly reduce food insecurity rates amongst low-income earning people and

serve as a strong and critical barrier to food insecurity during bleak economic conditions.

Food Insecurity and Poverty in the Los Angeles Unified School District

Addressing concerns about food insecurity in the city of Los Angeles, California,

is particularly challenging due to the city's sprawl and its large and diverse population

that includes a large number of residents who suffer the debilitating effects of poverty

and hunger (Deasy, 2012b). "In Los Angeles County, 1.7 million people live in poverty,

in food insecure households--households wherein families face a constant struggle

against hunger" (Deasy, 2012a). Food insecure households, or "households that live with

a limited or unstable supply of nutritionally adequate food," describes the living

conditions for over 553,000 students who resided within the Los Angeles Unified School

District boundary in 2012 and who lived with food insecurity on a daily basis (Deasy,

2012a). However, because fewer than 30% of those students who qualified for either the

free or reduced price meal programs available in their public school of attendance

actually participated in either program, it was estimated that over 400,000 LAUSD

students may have started their days in their classrooms with an empty stomach.

Like in the LAUSD, public school districts across the nation have scrambled in

recent years to address student achievement gaps in our high-stakes era of testing and

accountability and have thus begun to commit vast sums of money and other resources to

restructure school district policies, programs, and procedures in order to do so. One such

investment is the implementation of a BIC program that is designed to help students

begin their school day with a nutritious meal in a nurturing environment that can help close achievement gaps (Deasy, 2012a). BIC programs have already begun to operate in large, urban school districts in "Houston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Washington, DC, Boston, San Diego, Compton, and other . . ." urban areas (Deasy, 2012b). Program advocates believe that when youngsters eat breakfast in a classroom setting in school, they improve their academic achievement, improve their attendance by decreasing absenteeism and tardiness, improve their attention span and task-completion, and decrease the likelihood that they will be referred to the school nurse as a result of feeling hungry or lethargic as a result of not having had a morning breakfast. The purported benefits of students eating their breakfast in the classroom on a daily basis are strong enough reason, apparently, for school districts to invest. In addition to direct academic and health-related benefits, as more students eat breakfast in school, schools generate and reap financial benefits because some of the federal and state monies generated from each meal served are directed back to the district and schools themselves (Deasy, 2012b).

Increasing Access to Breakfast and Reducing Social Stigma

Khan et al. (2011) examined the relationship between food security status of children, their accessing meals through school-based and provided breakfast and lunch programs, exercise and its effects on children's body mass, with a purpose of enhancing school breakfast program results for these factors. The authors found that children who lived in homes identified as food insecure were less likely to engage in physical activity then non-food-insecure peers and were less likely to breakfast at home. They also found that the school's school breakfast program diminished differences in participation rates in the school's meal programs between children who reside in food insecure homes and

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those who do not reside. The authors, whose results hold important implications for

school officials and lawmakers, called on school leaders to increase access to high-

quality and higher quantities of food and recommended school leaders to reduce the

incidence of food insecurity on campuses expanding access to food to all children on

campus in part by reducing students' perceived negative social stigma related to their

eligibility for and receipt of free or reduced-priced meal programs through the provision

of free meals to all students and by providing these free breakfast meals in the classroom

setting.

History of USDA's School Breakfast Program

Advent and Evolution of Mass Feeding Programs

Taylor et al. (1997) noted

analysis involves more than a narrow concern simply with a policy document or
text. We need to understand both the background and context of policies,
including their historical antecedents and relation with other texts, and the short
and longer-term impacts of policies in practice. (p. 44)

Accordingly, for researchers to gain a greater understanding of the exigent circumstances

that served as catalyzing agents for and thus created the conditions through which the

School Breakfast Program was first created and through which it has evolved and

expanded, what follows is rich, contextualized historical background information,

including information on some influential people and factors in the external policy

environment, all of which contributed to the school meal program's policy's creation,

evolution, and staying power.

Gunderson (1971) noted over 40 years ago that our public schools' meal

programs' ancestral roots date back as far as 1790 to Munich, Germany, wherein an

American born physicist and statesman, Benjamin Thompson, through his Poor People's Institute, was instrumental in developing public mass feeding programs for the hungry and poor. His service model and assistance became sought after by many European nations, and he was thus credited for establishing similarly successful mass-feeding programs in "England, Germany, Scotland, France, and Switzerland" (Gunderson, 1971, p. 1). Early mass-feeding programs began to take shape in schools in the United States with the help of private clubs and organizations interested in child welfare and education, such as The Children's Aid Society of New York who commenced their organization and purpose in 1853 to serve meals to vocational school students. Mass media and printed texts also helped create the conditions that supported the advent of school feeding programs. Robert Hunter, an author whose central concern was with hunger, particularly among poor children, wrote a seminal book on the subject, "Poverty: Social Conscience in the Progressive Era," which "had a strong influence upon the U.S. effort to feed hungry, needy children in school" (as cited in Gunderson, 1971, p. 5). Additionally, another author and social critic in the Hunter tradition, John Spargo, wrote a similarly poignant account dealing with the scourge of poverty and poverty-stricken families, and "extensively upon the misfortunes of children and the effect of malnourishment upon their physical and mental well-being" (as cited in Gunderson, 1971, p. 7).

By the early 1920s, mass-feeding programs were well-established in American schools, mainly on the east coast and in the mid-West in large cities such as in Philadelphia, Boston, New York, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Chicago, and others, with Los Angeles being a west coast exception. School meal programs in rural schools posed distinct challenges as rural schools lacked adequate facilities for permanent kitchens or

dining areas for meal preparation or dining itself. Children who attended rural schools typically traveled longer distances, too, than did their city-dwelling counterparts. Rural-dwelling students' lunches often consisted "mainly of cold sandwiches, many of them of questionable nutritive value" (Gunderson, 1971, p. 11). At about this time, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) "became increasingly concerned and active in the school lunch movement, and supported activities through donations of funds and equipment" (Gunderson, 1971, p. 11). As a result of PTA involvement, formal support for school meal programs in rural community schools steadily developed, becoming more and more the norm, rather than the exception.

Advent and Evolution of the National School Lunch Program

While PTA support was critically important to local efforts to provide school-based lunch programs for needy children, overall demand for school-based feeding programs required additional and a more stable funding source in order for schools and districts to provide and sustain their school-based lunch programs. Accordingly, State and federal legislatures began to provide this additional and more stable funding source. According to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, USDA, The School Lunch Program and Agricultural Surplus Disposal (1941), "By 1937, 15 States had passed laws specifically authorizing local school boards to operate cost of the food only, four States made special provisions for needy children" (as cited in Gunderson, 1971, p. 12). Federal aid followed state and local aid when "it became clear that local governments and school district boards could not provide the funds necessary to carry the increasing load" and when it became evident that "supplementary contributions by charitable organizations and individuals did not suffice" (Gunderson, 1971, p. 12).

The Great Depression of the 1930s contributed contextually and heavily to the advent of, reliance on, and reification of support for public assistance programs under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, all of which impacted access to food staples. As a result of the stock market crash of 1929 and the resulting Great Depression, many people employed and living in urban centers and suburban centers lost their jobs and were forced to seek public assistance to support themselves and their families. It followed logically, then, that "much of the production of the farm went begging for a market, surpluses of farm products continued to mount, prices of farm products declined to the point where farm income provided only a meager subsistence" (Gunderson, 1971, pp. 12-13). As a result of massive job loss across the country, millions of school children went without lunch as a result of their not being able to consistently bring lunch or pay for a school lunch. Thus, the author) noted, "the danger of malnutrition among children became a national concern" and "federal assistance became essential and Congressional action was taken in 1935 to aid both agriculture and the school lunch program" (Gunderson, 1971, p. 13).

Federal assistance was also needed to stabilize NSLP as a result of World War II and its demands on the national economy. While the United States' entrance into World War II provided both a boost to the nation's economy and the national clarion call and sense of purpose it needed to rally itself out of The Great Depression, it, too, adversely impacted the nation's food supply and destabilized the NSLP. While "defense industries provided work for more and more people, W.P.A. payrolls declined sharply . . ." and "the huge supply of food required for the support of U.S. Armed Forces and allies soon drained off farm surpluses, except for a few sporadic over-supplies of some items from

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time to time" (Gunderson, 1971, p. 13). Thus, as Gunderson (1971) noted, "By April 1944, there were only 34,064 schools serving some 5 million children in the program. But a further decline was not to occur" (p. 13).

Finally, in order to effectively stabilize the nation's food supply and to ensure school-aged children across the nation had dependable access to daily meals while in school, Congress began to provide year-to-year appropriations to the NSLP during World War II. In 1946, the 79th Congress finally introduced a legislative bill that assigned the government's school lunch program a "permanent status" and authorized "the necessary appropriations for it" (Gunderson, 1971, date, p. 16). Thus, in 1946, the National School Lunch Act was approved and thus became law:

> It is hereby declared to be the policy of Congress, as a measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food, by assisting the States, through grants-in-aid and other means, in providing an adequate supply of food and other facilities for the establishment, maintenance, operation and expansion of nonprofit school lunch programs. (Gunderson, 1971, p. 16)

U.S. Department of Agriculture School Breakfast Program Overview

Kennedy and Davis (1998) noted that the USDA oversees the largest school-provided breakfast meal program worldwide. The School Breakfast Program had originally begun as a pilot program to determine the feasibility of establishing a permanent, school-based breakfast program to provide adequate nutrition to children in poverty as a central feature of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966. The School Breakfast Program was made official and permanent in 1975 and is now administered in every state by way of various state-level education agencies who operate in partnership with local food authorities to bring breakfast to more than 12.1 million students "in more than

89,000 public and non-profit private schools and residential child care institutions"
(USDA, 2012c).

Kennedy and Davis (1998) examined the history of the USDA's SBP including
student participation rates amongst groups of students considered at-risk. At-risk
students included lower grade students who come from households identified as low-
income, African American students, and Latino students. The Kennedy and Davis found
that the availability of breakfast positively impacted student participation rates in the
breakfast program. Additionally, they noted that SBP participants were more likely to be
eligible for free and reduced-price meals and, hence, come from low-income homes. In
many cases, students from low-income homes were compared with less nutritionally at-
risk students from higher-income homes.

Additionally, Kennedy and Davis (1998) noted that the SBP studies performed
within the previous 25 years prior to the year of this article had been limited to the
examination of SBP effectiveness in improving children's diet and nutrition. While less
research had been conducted on the SBP's effects on cognitive development, the few
studies evidenced in this research article concluded that the SBP "significantly improves
school performance and reduces absenteeism and tardiness" (Kennedy & Davis, 1998, p.
798S). The authors concluded that the effects of nutrition and SBP program participation
on students' academic achievement would be of particular interest.

In their examination of U.S. child nutrition programs, Kennedy and Cooney
(2001) discussed the development of American child nutrition programs and specific
research on the effects of various nutrition programs on individual children's nutrition,
diet, and overall health. Key programs included in the study were the Special

Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the Federal School Breakfast Program (FSBP), the Summer Food Service Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and Food Stamp program. Together, these nutrition programs comprised The Nutrition Safety Net.

Kennedy and Cooney (2001) also discussed the genesis of American child nutrition programs, namely that the health and nutrition status of American children had been and remains today an urgent federal priority. The authors noted that the agricultural surplus in the early 20th century could have been more appropriately utilized by feeding impoverished school children. Preparing for war was found to be a powerful justification for the U.S. government's creation of child nutrition programs because scores of military recruits were rejected from World War II service as a result of nutrition and health problems. As a result of this occurrence, Congress enacted the NSLP in 1946 as a prominent domestic feature of our national security efforts, with the idea being that healthy children will become strong warriors. The development of child nutrition programs in the post-WWII era was driven in part by a diverse set of events and circumstances that converged in the 1960s, such as the Civil Rights movement and increasingly urgent news reports on the plight of the hungry and poor in America, as well as more recent attempts to eradicate poverty, hunger, and obesity and their concomitant impact on individual lives, families, healthcare systems and our economy.

Pollitt et al. (1978) performed a review of available research literature on various academic benefits related to U.S. school-provided meals. From the inception of the 1966 Child Nutrition Act to the date of their research article in May, 1978, no credible attempt had been made to examine whether or not the Act was meeting its core objective of

facilitating educational progress for American students. According to their research findings, there existed a failure of pre-1978 literature that documented any significant, longer-term impact of the United States' school feeding program on student achievement, while research on more immediate impact of school meal programs concluded that the schools' provision of a breakfast meal might provide cognitive benefits that help students complete academic tasks.

Twenty years later, Murphy et al. (1998), by way of their Harvard/Kellogg Study, gained recognition for conducting what was then considered the first research study to examine the relationship between child hunger, nutrition intake, and psychological functioning, as measured by academic performance. The study concluded that low-income students benefit from free school breakfast in terms of attendance, achievement, behavior, and emotional adjustments. Similar findings were supported by a contemporary study of the Maryland Meals for Achievement Project of 1998 (as cited in Kennedy & Cooney, 2001) which provided free and universal breakfast in the classroom. Results of this study over a 2-year period revealed that schools that offered breakfast in the classroom demonstrated "a 22% improvement in the composite index score" of the "Maryland School Performance Assessment Program" (Kennedy & Cooney, p. 434S).

Other research on the school breakfast program focused primarily on nutritional benefits of breakfast. Bhattacharya et al. (2006) surveyed the effects of the school-provided breakfast meals program in order to measure differences between students who accessed the school breakfast program and those who do not access it. The researchers concluded that the school breakfast program improved the nutritional outcomes for those who accessed it based on a variety of measures, such as better dietary habits, healthier

eating, reduced calories from fat, reduced likelihood of vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and increased likelihood of higher fiber, iron, and potassium consumption. Unfortunately, however, geographic location, family income, family unit, a summer food provision program, and reform of the school breakfast program in the mid-1990s either confounded the authors' strategy or otherwise weakened their interpretation of their findings. Still, the authors found that the school breakfast program improved American children's nutritional outcomes and overall health status.

Current Legislation

Federal Legislative Support: Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

President Barack Obama signed in to law Public Law 111-296, The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Acts of 2010, on December 13, 2010. The law directed the USDA to review and upgrade the NSLP "meal pattern and nutrition standards based on the latest Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The new meal pattern went into effect at the beginning of SY 2012-2013, and increased the availability of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in the school menu" (USDA, 2012b). By signing into law this latest incarnation of the long-supported National School Lunch Act of 1946, President Obama not only confirmed our nation's long-term commitment to the health and welfare of millions of low-income and poverty-stricken school-aged children, he also reaffirmed our nation's bipartisan commitment to investing in our nation's economic health and national security interests through food security. Jonathan Shrier (2011), then acting Special Representative for Global Food Security, posited at the time, "Although 'national security' often conjures up images of missiles and militaries, it should also prompt

images of maize and millet. The availability of and access to food is inextricably linked to prosperity and stability."

The federally-financed and administered NSLP facilitates the delivery of lunch meals at more than 100,000 public and private schools, as well as in home care institutions all over the United States. In 1998, the U.S. Congress had expanded the NSLP in order to allow for reimbursements for the provision of after-school snacks provided to children up to 18 years old who were attending after-school educational and enrichment programs. The NSLP facilitated the delivery of nutritionally-measured and school-provided free and reduced-price school lunch meals to well over 30 million school-aged children every day in 2011. While the Food and Nutrition Service wing of the USDA administers the NSLP at the federal level, it is usually administered by state education agencies at the state level that operate the program by contractual agreements with school food program administrators (USDA, 2012b).

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack, in an official statement on the House of Representative's Passage of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, lauded the then-new law for its historic significance on behalf of our nation's young people. He stated, "This legislation will allow USDA, for the first time in over 30 years, the chance to make real reforms to the school lunch and breakfast programs by improving the critical nutrition and hunger safety net for millions of children" (Vilsack, 2010). In the same statement for the press, Secretary Vilsack (2010) highlighted key provisions of the legislation which the USDA had begun to implement, including the upgrading of nutritional standards for and overall quality of all foods served in school meal programs, increasing the number of meal-eligible children who access school-provided free and

reduced-price school meals, expanding the universal meal delivery model in high-poverty communities, and expanding meal access for a greater number of at-risk children by allowing other child and adult food and care providers to be reimbursed for their provision of meals to their constituents. Additionally, Vilsack highlighted key provisions of the law, such as requiring meal-providing schools to make meal and nutrition information available to parents in their native languages, easing the re-certification process for families to ensure their child or children remain eligible for the school meal program to alleviate gaps or delays in meal benefits coverage, and by mandating increased use of technologically-advanced payment and eligibility tracking methods, and by increasing breastfeeding support.

In his statement, Secretary Vilsack (2010) also emphasized what the Obama Administration believed was at-stake for our nation and our nation's youth with regard to this new law: "Our national security, economic competitiveness, and health and wellness of our children will improve as a result of the action Congress took today. According to Secretary Vilsack's statement and the President's own words, there appeared to be a direct correlation between the health and welfare of our youth and our national security, that our nation's security was dependent in large part on our ability to meet the basic nutrition and health needs of our most at-risk school-age children by providing them access to high-quality, nutritious, and sufficient amounts of food on a daily basis (Vilsack, 2010).

Contextually, the advent of the NSLP began with a need to feed impoverished children in Germany. At the time, mass feeding programs for the poor in America were either in the idea stage or otherwise unheard of, but the social seeds of revolution borne

out of a unifying desire to redress grievances provided for fertile ground for taking care

of one's fellow American. As Taylor et al. (1997) noted "a . . . question for consideration

in analysis of policy contexts deals with what we call production questions, that is, the

more proximal and tangible processes involved in the development of the policy itself"

(p. 47). From this contextual lens, the idea of feeding the poor and hungry through mass

food distribution programs was consistent with the democratic value of equality and with

the American social compact of redressing grievances. Fowler (2013) noted that equality

in such cases "means that all people are equally human and are therefore entitled to an

equal standing before the law and to an equal opportunity to live their lives in a way not

too remote from the norms of their society" (p. 96). The success of Benjamin

Thompson's mass feeding model in Germany thus allowed other countries in Europe and

elsewhere around the globe, including, of course, the United States, to observe the

benefits to a nation of investing in feeding programs to feed the poor and hungry, as well

as providing its citizens a free appropriate public education. In short, the mass feeding

programs helped build, support, and strengthen lives, as well as democratic forms of

government and democratic values.

Ultimately, the development of the National School Lunch Act in 1946 should be

viewed as an outgrowth of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, a domestic, social policy

consistent with other New Deal programs that were strongly rooted in democratic values

of liberty, equality, and social justice, and a policy that was designed to ameliorate social

problems resulting from the throes of the Great Depression, namely joblessness and its

concomitant and debilitating effects of hunger, poverty, and homelessness. Contextually,

with the rise of Fascism in Europe and Asia and their threats to democratic freedoms,

governments, and nations around the globe, the lens through which the National School

Lunch Act was viewed as good, domestic social policy began to broaden and be viewed,

too, as a means to help protect American national and international security interests and

the American way of life. Thus, what was originally designed primarily to address U.S.

domestic social inequities and to provide basic social needs for those downtrodden in

society, the policy adroitly and simultaneously adopted its national and international

security credentials. Essentially, from a national security standpoint, then, a well-fed,

educated citizenry is more likely than not to defend itself from aggression. In the decades

since the enactment of the NSLP in 1946, a rapidly diversifying and growing global

population, coupled with limited natural resources, continuing problems with access to

food and water and other resources, and compounded by competing political and social

values, philosophies, and practices, varying religious faiths and views, and nations'

respective and varying spheres of influence and alliances, have contributed to the advent

and evolution of mass feeding programs to their present day form that includes the most

recent incarnation of the NSLP and School Breakfast Program, the classroom breakfast

program model.

Since enactment of the National School Lunch Act in 1946 and including its most

recent version, The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, several amendments have

been brought about by various contextual realities for the purpose of making program

improvements. Federal funds apportionment to the states, the establishment of

reimbursement rates for school-provided free and reduced price meals, and the

establishment of a National School Lunch Week, to the authorization to buy dairy

products, and more, are just some examples. One of the most important amendments to

the National School Lunch Act of 1946 came to fruition as the Child Nutrition Act of

1966, which was enacted

> In recognition of the demonstrated relationship between food and good nutrition
> and the capacity of children to develop and learn, based on years of cumulative
> successful experience under the NSLP with its significant contributions in the
> field of applied nutrition research, it is hereby declared to be the policy of
> Congress that these efforts shall be extended, expanded, and strengthened under
> the authority of the secretary of agriculture as a measure to safeguard the health
> and well-being of the Nation's children, and to encourage the domestic
> consumption of agricultural and other foods, by assisting States, through grants-
> in-aid and other means, to meet more effectively the nutritional needs of our
> children. (Public Law 89-321, 89th Congress, Nov. 3 1965, 79 Stat. 1212, as
> stated in Gunderson, 1971, pp. 21-22)

At about that time, additional research on poverty and hunger concluded that even

here in America, the most prosperous nation on Earth, malnutrition is a national problem.

Gunderson (1971) noted "It would be erroneous to conclude that only people who live at

or below the poverty level suffer from malnutrition, and hence are susceptible to

underdevelopment physically and mentally" (p. 28). Additionally, a steadily diversifying

U.S. population created an additional contextual challenge to the NSLP. Dayton (as cited

in Gunderson, 1971) noted that

> It has long been known that if a food supplement is to be successful in nourishing
> a malnourished population, it must be acceptable to the people for whom it is
> intended. Changing food fads and habits even in malnourished populations is
> extremely difficult. Therefore, nutrition education is of the utmost importance to
> any nutrition program whether in the United States or in other countries. (p. 28)

Thus, the National School Lunch Program began to viewed at the time as a remedy to the

malnourishment program and the public schools began to be viewed more and more as a

national provider of not only a free and appropriate public education, but also a free

and/or reduced price lunch to meet the needs of a rapidly diversifying population, and

one with increasing numbers of low-income and/or poverty stricken school-aged children.

Since 1966, many technical developments in school food service have also contributed contextually to the continuing evolution of the historic National School Lunch Act. Meals and meal patterns were created and designed and meal portions created as a result of years of testing and research in order to ensure nutritional and caloric content were acceptable. Cost considerations, availability and access, and other factors also affect student participation rates in and expansion of the program on a routine basis and continue today. Fortified foods were also routinely researched as a possible means through which to streamline the process of providing meals in schools which might "lack space and food preparation facilities" (Gunderson, 1971, p. 29). Additionally, continuous improvements in the preparation and serving of food, including technology, equipment, systems, and methods, that are specifically tailored for public schools, has brought about "new packaging and food delivery systems to make the job less difficult in schools without kitchens and serving areas" (Gunderson, 1971, p. 29). Efforts also included the creation of mobile units that keep foods either hot or cold, as well as the now ubiquitous implementation of disposable and now recyclable plates, cups, bowls, and eating utensils. These improved technologies, products, and services effectively all but eliminated the need for school kitchens and personnel to spend time and money washing dishes and/or investing in the infrastructure and equipment to do so, thus improving sanitation in school food preparation, delivery, and clean-up.

Since 1970, federal guidelines established by the Secretary of Agriculture and legislation established by Congress have mandated that U.S. school boards and schools

themselves to develop policies to guide school meal eligibility via the free or reduced

price meal program. Accordingly, "uniform national guidelines and criteria in the

determination of eligibility" thus became the norm (Gunderson, 1971, p. 30).

Additionally, at about the same time, due to "substantial changes brought about by the

amendments . . ." a "public review" of safeguard procedures was enacted, "giving the

State agencies and administrators the opportunity to voice their opinions prior to the

issuance of final regulations" (Gunderson, 1971, p. 30).

An Enduring Policy

Uniform reporting criteria, monthly reports, revisions, plans for yearly growth of

free and reduced price meal programs at the local level to provide for every needy child

in school, meal program funds appropriated a year prior to the year during which meal

program funds would typically be appropriated, nutritional education and research,

special developmental projects approved by the USDA, State Matching requirement, the

creation of a national child nutrition advisory council, and the establishment of school

milk programs that are designed to effectuate increased milk consumption by school-aged

children, were major revisions and/or amendments that define the character and staying

power of the National School Lunch Act of 1946.

Taylor et al.'s (1997) notion of policy consequences is an important lens through

which to consider the longevity and overall endurance and success of the National School

Lunch Act of 1946 and its re-enactments. The authors noted "contextual complexities

and competing interests involved in policy making . . . may actually be manifested as

ambiguities in the policy document itself, with implications for how the policy is read

and implemented" and "Different interests can give very different emphases to various

aspects of the policy" (Taylor et al., 1997, p. 50). So, whose interests and views are represented by the re-enactment of the policy? From a purely political lens, the latest incarnation of the law, The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, remains a bipartisan law as it has been since its inception. It might be important to note that the current law was most recently considered by and passed in the United States Senate on August 5, 2010, was considered by and passed in the United States House of Representatives on December 1 and 2, 2010, and was signed into law by President Obama on December 13, 2010. This seemingly efficient timeframe within which the law passed both houses of the United States Congress and then was subsequently signed into law by President Obama is evidence, perhaps, of the legislation's bipartisan underpinnings as good social policy and good national security policy. In fact, it may very well be the case that this law is arguably one of the most effective and important pieces of legislation ever created in the United States.

The law has survived and expanded since 1946. It has endured, adapted to, and succeeded in anticipation of and in response to years of domestic population growth and diversification, as well as succeeded in response to and in anticipation of America's leading role in an increasingly complex global geo-political landscape. The policy appears to be a unifying and stabilizing force for the American way of life and our democracy itself as it has remained in force since its inception through war and peace, economic recession and expansion. Our nation's public schools and the National School Lunch Program and National School Breakfast Programs provide youth temporary shelter, nutrition, an education, and also inculcate essential values that reify our national identity and security. Due to the contextual reality of increasing numbers of low-income,

poverty-stricken, and food insecure households, the institution of public education, for all of its real and perceived imperfections, remains an undeniably essential institution that contributes mightily to individuals, families, communities, states, nations, and the state of the world.

Since its inception and throughout its evolutionary history, the National School Lunch Act of 1946, now The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, has maintained a remarkable constancy to purpose: From a more local perspective or domestic lens, the law serves as a major catalyst for addressing our nation's enduring desire to cure the elusive childhood hunger and malnutrition scourge through our public school food services delivery system in the Benjamin Thompson Poor People's Institute tradition. From a more global lens and in the global context, the current law is responsive and sensitive to gyrations in our geopolitical landscape, and within such a volatile landscape, has dutifully guided our nation through oft-turbulent times as a foundation, a pillar, of our national security policy.

It is indeed, quite remarkable to think of the impact one nutritious meal can make on an individual, a family, a community, a city, a nation, and the world. Couple that meal with that individual child's desire to learn and we have established a strong first foundation for the individual's chances of reaching her or his fullest human potential on so many levels. Additionally, we have then most likely contributed, too, to the health and strengthening of our local, state, and national economies, and our nation's position on the global stage. The extent to which our citizens have unfettered access to high-quality, nutritious meals and education inevitably impacts our economy, military, trade policy, international relations, and perception of ourselves here at home and abroad.

If feeding the nation's hungry and poor remains a core democratic social value, and if research continues to conclude that millions of children continue to live in food insecure households, recent policy changes designed to increase consumption of nutritious meals at school through expansion of the NSLP, as well as expansion of the national SBP and after-school Supper Meals programs would remain in alignment with the original purpose and goals of the National School Lunch Act. The fact that increasing federal incentives and increasing state investment in breakfast and after-school supper meals are becoming norms in public schools across the nation suggests that too many children are still not accessing nutritious food in adequate amounts and the consequences pertaining thereto will continue to have a detrimental impact on student development, health, and academic achievement. Unfortunately, the scourge of hunger, when coupled with concerns about America's position in a competitive global economy and in oft-unstable geo-political security contexts, means that the enormous investment of money, time, and other resources required to address domestic and foreign interests and security needs will likely continue, and thus obligate taxpaying citizens financially, in perpetuity. Security has a cost.

Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 as a result of continuing national concerns about the harmful consequences on children and adults of malnutrition, food insecurity, and poverty on children, families, schools, achievement gaps, public health and public assistance programs, economic strength, and national security. We continue to shape public consciousness in favor of expansion of the NSLP and similar programs, such as the national SBP and after-school Supper Meal Program. Since its official enactment, the NSLP has evidently been considered a prudent, if not

mandatory, investment in securing for individuals, families, communities, cities, states, and our nation a fighting chance to achieve the American Dream and American Way of Life.

In the final analysis, given the demonstrated benefits of lunch, breakfast, and/or supper meals on student health and student achievement, the nation's public school districts would be wise to ensure full implementation of the NSLP in their public schools. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 is an essential ingredient for and solid investment in our nations' children's health and education, as well as in our nation's economic and national security interests at home and abroad.

California State Legislative Support: CA Assembly Bill (AB) No. 839

Here in our state of California, Assembly Bill (AB) No. 839 was introduced by State Assembly Member Julia Brownley of District 41 on February 17, 2011. Although it died in committee in November, 2012, it is important to discuss the bills ramifications. AB 839 would have changed existing law in that it would have required "school districts that elect to apply for funding through the consolidated application to assess and discuss and consider specific issues concerning School Breakfast Program participation . . ." and "made legislative findings and declarations regarding the importance of breakfast to the achievement of pupils" (Assem. Bill 839, 2011, p. 2).

Essentially, AB 839 would have required schools and districts to publicly disclose their results regarding the perceived and real impact of a school-provided breakfast meal on student academic performance (Assem. Bill 839, 2011, pp. 2-3). It would have also required school districts that elected to apply for categorical program-eligible funds to use data on meal-eligible students and their participation rates, and to "discuss these data

in a public school board meeting to review and consider approval of the required application" (Assem. Bill 839, 2011, p. 3). AB 839 would also have enabled schools and districts to draw on federal funds designated to serve low-income pupils (Assem. Bill 839, 2011, p. 3). Importantly, based on data and contingent upon approval, schools would then have either: "1. Implemented a breakfast program or 2. enhanced their existing breakfast program to increase eligible students' participation rates" (Assem. Bill 839, 2011, pp. 3-4).

Additionally, the bill would direct which schools with existing federal SBP participation would continue to operate existing programs with no changes or be directed to make recommended changes. If changes were recommended, an implementation date would have been assigned to the school. Specific recommendations for change might have included hiring additional cafeteria staff to serve more meals, altering the breakfast program from a traditional, before-school program model to a BIC program model, or some other design based on the unique needs of the students and school site itself.

The bill targeted public schools that were operating existing breakfast programs but that had low participation rates. Low student participation was defined by the bill as schools meeting one or both of the following criteria:

> 1. Average daily participation rate of eligible students who participated in the Federal School Breakfast Program (SBP) was not more than 20% of average daily participation rate of eligible students who participated in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and 2. The average daily participation rate of eligible students in Federal School Breakfast Program was not more than 15% of the number of enrolled pupils who were determined eligible for free and reduced-price meals. (Assem. Bill 839, 2011, pp. 4-5)

For California's public schools that are working ceaselessly to close student achievement gaps between students at-risk of failure and those considered not at-risk or

minimally at-risk, a consolidated application for the receipt of categorical funds based on students' participation in school-provided free and reduced price meal programs carries benefits of breakfast for student health and achievement and results in federal reimbursement dollars being returned to participating school districts and schools. There are also costs associated with the program. According to the California State Senate Appropriations Committee AB No. 839 Fiscal Summary, "The CDE estimates that if school breakfast program participation were at 100%, the additional cost to the State would be nearly 100 million dollars to augment (by approximately 22 cents per meal) 450 million additional meals" (California State Senate, 2011, p. 2). Additionally, as new rules seek to make breakfasts more nutritious by including in them various fruits, vegetables, and whole grain bread products, etc., food costs will inevitably increase. Finally, labor costs were also expected to increase under the bill as "more on-site preparation and less reliance on prepared foods" would have increased (California State Senate, 2011, p. 2).

AB 839 had been held under submission in the California Senate Appropriations Committee since August 25, 2011. Prior to dying in committee, the bill had been unanimously supported along party lines in the Assembly Education Committee, with seven Democrats supporting the bill, while two Republicans opposed the bill. Similarly, the Assembly Appropriations Committee voted for the bill by a party-line vote of 12-5, with Democrats supporting the bill and Republicans opposing it. The large majority of Democrats who supported this bill had direct public education experience as teachers, school-board members, and/or other indirect experienced working with schools and/or early education centers, while their Republican counterparts who opposed the legislation

predominantly held careers in the private sector in industries such as business and/or medicine. The party-line vote could have reinforced prevailing stereotypes of both major political parties, what with Democrats supporting the maintenance or expansion of entitlement programs and Republicans opposing increases in spending for public education and/or public services.

In the final analysis, given the widely accepted benefits of breakfast on student health and student achievement, school districts would have likely supported this bill. Perhaps a longitudinal study could have been performed to measure healthcare costs related to obesity, diabetes, malnutrition, and other maladies in order to determine what, if any, savings might be attributed to public schools' efforts to provide eligible students both Breakfast and Lunch and that might ultimately save taxpayer dollars on public healthcare costs in the future. Could the BIC program be considered an ounce of prevention that prevents a pound of cure later? Additionally, with merit pay and other financial incentives for schools, administrators, and teachers to produce student achievement gains and student attendance improvement, this bill could very well have proven to be a wise investment in California's children's health, education, and futures.

School Breakfast Program Eligibility, Participation, and Expansion

Eligibility Manual for School Meals: Overview of Eligibility and Notification

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA, 2012a) mandates that all state-level agencies that administer the NSLP or SBP provide a free and reduced price breakfast or lunch meal to eligible children. Additionally, schools and other institutions that participate in a free school milk program are required to provide free milk to eligible children. Accordingly, a child becomes eligible for free school meals if he or she is the

beneficiary of any one of the following categorical public assistance programs: "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP; Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR); Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF is a Federal Designation; each State has its own name and acronym for the Program)" (USDA, 2012a, p. 1). Additionally, a child may be classified as categorically eligible if he or she is documented as "homeless, runaway, or migrant; a foster child; enrolled in a federally-funded Head Start Program or a comparable state-funded Head Start Program or pre-kindergarten program; or in an Even Start Program" (USDA, 2012a, p. 1).

Local Education Authorities (LEAs) such as public school districts are required to distribute a letter at the beginning of the academic year to all households of children attending the school to provide families information about which child food service and nutrition programs are available in the school and must inform families that these meals and/or milk are available for free or at a reduced price. Schools are obligated to send this school meal eligibility and availability letter to the households of all enrolled children either before the beginning of the school year or as soon as possible after the beginning of the school year in order to determine children's meal eligibility status as soon as is practicably possible and thus begin to administer the benefits of the free and reduced price meal programs. As a safeguard against lapses in meal program benefits, carryover eligibility from one school year to the next (a school year is typically from July 1st to June 30) is "allowed for up to 30 operating days, beginning with the first day of school, or until a new eligibility is approved or denied. The new eligibility determination supersedes carryover eligibility" (USDA, 2012a, p. 15).

Schools Encouraged But Not Required To Serve Breakfast

While LEAs are required to search for and serve children who might be eligible for free and reduced price meal program benefits and what with all of the purported benefits to body, mind, and learning of eating a nutritious breakfast meal every day, one might assume that most, if not all, public schools would have in place well-established breakfast programs, regardless as to whether or not the breakfast programs are configured as in-class breakfast programs. However, many California public schools do not have breakfast programs, nor are they required to serve breakfast. In fact, existing State Law "requires each school district or county superintendent of schools maintaining any kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to provide for each needy pupil one nutritionally adequate free or reduced-price meal during each school day" (Assem. Bill 839, 2011, p. 1). That one meal is typically lunch.

Still, existing state law supports the California legislature's intent to implement and expand the federal SBP to all public schools in the State. Additionally, the law mandates the California Department of Education (CDE) to provide information and seed funding to all California public school districts and schools for school breakfast meal program start-up and/or expansion. Existing state law also "encourages school districts and charter schools that currently do not operate school breakfast programs to apply for funding to establish breakfast programs using funds appropriated for this purpose in the annual Budget" ((Assem. Bill 839, 2011, p. 1).

School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Participation Rates in California

It is important to note some important statistics about the state of California's public school participation rates in the federal SLP and/or federal SBP. According to the

CDE, "1013 of 1047 California public school districts offer the National School Lunch Program," while just "866 of 1047 California public school districts offer the Federal School Breakfast Program" (Deasy, 2012b). Additionally, meal-eligible student participation rates for either free or reduced price meal programs increased from 51% to 56% between the years 2008 and 2010, thus indicating an increasing need to close the hunger and poverty gaps that continue to adversely impact school efforts to close stubborn achievement gaps. Additionally, according to the California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA; 2011), 70% of eligible students access the federal SLP while only 30% of eligible students access the federal SBP.

Several factors exist that might explain meal-eligible students' much lower participation rates in the federal SBP than in the federal SLP, including the following: far fewer public schools opt to serve breakfast as their one legally required free or reduced price meal during the day, for example. According to the CFPA (2011), 750 public school sites in California do not even offer the federal SBP, which means that over 54,000 students go without an important breakfast meal at the beginning of their day. Other factors include students arriving late to school, having to choose between morning activities or breakfast or having to choose between a morning recess play period or a second chance breakfast meal served during that recess period. Additionally, some students report feeling socially stigmatized and/or embarrassed by their conspicuous participation in free and/or reduced price breakfast programs in cafeterias. Typically, too, public school districts like LAUSD had, until a couple of years ago, issued ticket booklets to eligible students, thus reinforcing a very visible social stigma related to participation in the free and reduced price meal program. Whether attributable to social

stigma or not, according to the CFPA (2011), while 91% of California's public schools offer the federal SBP, over 2.3 million students are not accessing it.

Similarly, the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) referred to a then-recent study of 23 urban school districts across the nation that highlighted similar obstacles that prohibited children's access to and consumption of school-provided breakfast meals (as cited in Waehrer, 2008). Waehrer (2008) noted various obstacles, including a lack of sufficient time for children to eat a breakfast meal at home or even at school during the weekday, especially given that some children's access is dependent upon adherence to strict bus schedules that adversely impact arrival time, a lack of adult supervision available to supervise children at school during the before-school breakfast period, children's preference to socialize and/or play rather than consume breakfast, and children's fear of being socially labeled or stigmatized as poor as breakfast prohibitive. The author concluded that school districts and schools that addressed these obstacles by providing alternative ways of delivering school breakfast meals, such as the BIC program model, or a kiosk-style grab-and-go breakfast delivery, enjoyed higher breakfast participation rates amongst lower-income meal-eligible students than did school districts and schools that did not provide alternative breakfast delivery options to the standard, before-school-starts cafeteria model.

Evidence of Participation Problems and Non-Compliance

Dahl and Scholz (2011) examined NSLP and SBP income-eligibility and income data from 1993, 1996, and 2001 in order to determine trends in school lunch and breakfast meal program participation rates and student eligibility. The survey respondents provided responses to several survey topics, including demographic

characteristics, household income, and those related to meal program access. The authors concluded that while they believed that school meal programs provided an important food safety net for our children and a "foundation for the nation's development of human capital," they questioned whether or not children eligible for free and reduced price meals were even accessing meal program benefits and they questioned whether or not the school meals program was fraught with fraud and abuse (p. 19). Over-payment of benefits occurs, they wrote, when a child was the beneficiary of a free meal when he or she was eligible only for a reduced price meal or when he or she was not eligible at all. Under-payment of benefits occurred, they wrote, when a child was eligible for a more heavily subsidized meal, but received only a reduced price meal, and therefore had paid a higher price.

For the 2002-2003 academic year, the authors had culled data to combine overpayment estimates into a single overpayment by the federal government and concluded that student misclassification of students' meal eligibility for the School Lunch Program alone resulted in the federal government underpaying school districts, based on a 180-day calendar, an aggregate amount of $31 million, while a similar examination of School Breakfast Program data indicated that the federal government may have overpaid schools an aggregate "$170 million over the course of the same school year" (Dahl & Scholz, 2011, p. 21). The authors called for additional research on how eligible children access their benefits or not, as well as called for "high-quality" studies to document the "effects of school meal programs on nutrition, children's behavior, and school performance" (Dahl & Scholz, 2011, p. 21).

Strategies for Breakfast Expansion

The USDA's (2013b) Food and Nutrition Service Division website resented details and a variety of strategies that purportedly increased school breakfast program participation. These strategies included a variety of breakfast service delivery models, as well as ideas and resources for enhancing the quality of meals and for incorporating nutrition and health education to ensure a comprehensive school breakfast experience. Strategies to expand participation include "'Provision 2, Eliminating Reduced Price Charges for Breakfast, Direct Certification, Creative Menu Ideas, and Alternate Service Methods" (USDA, 2013b, p. 1). Alternative Service Methods listed included, Breakfast in the Classroom, Breakfast after First Period (Mid-morning Recess or Nutrition Break or Second Chance Breakfast), Grab 'N' Go, and Breakfast Carts (USDA, 2013b, p. 1).

Cullen, Thompson, and Watson (2012) conducted interviews with 47 sixth-to-eighth grade students and 41 parents and four teacher focus groups and one focus group with child nutrition managers to identify ecological factors that influenced school breakfast program participation and to develop a "free school breakfast intervention that included school staff support and promotion to students and parents" (p. 1). The semester-long free school breakfast program intervention plan produced a "242% increase in whole school breakfast program participation rates, compared to the previous three semesters' average participation rates" (17.1% to 58.8%; Cullen et al, 2012, p. 1). The authors concluded that a free school breakfast program supported by school staff may be a "practical, cost-effective approach that improves energy balance, nutrient intake, and school-related variables such as discipline and nurse referrals, attendance, tardiness, and school achievement" (Cullen et al., 2012, p. 1). School leadership and staff

support, they concluded, was critically important to producing sufficiently successful school breakfast meal program participation rates and grounds for school breakfast program expansion.

Bartfield and Kim (2010) reviewed longitudinal data to examine federal SBP participation rates among lower-grade elementary school students during the 2002 academic year. They found that SBP availability and access varied widely across the nation' public elementary schools and that household income and other school-related factors influenced students' participation in the program. Specifically, the analysis confirmed that the federal SBP was much less widely accessed than was the NSLP and that SBP participation was largely limited to those students considered most at-risk and who are highly dependent on free and reduced price, government-subsidized school meals.

The Bartfield and Kim (2010) also found a substantial percentage of SBP-eligible students who did not participate in it, including "38 percent of those who are estimated to be food insecure" (p. 558). The authors concluded that SBP student participation rates were directly related to how the SBP program was structured and administered at the school. School Breakfast Program (SBP) design and outreach efforts were noted as potential strategies for increasing student participation rates. Of particular note, Bartfield and Kim stated "the relations between program attributes and participation patterns suggest that policy levers can be used to enhance participation and remove logistical barriers," as had been done in the State of Kansas, wherein all school buses were mandated to "arrive at school with adequate time for children to eat breakfast" (Food Research and Action Center, as cited in Bartfield and Kim, 2010, p. 559), and in

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, wherein "all schools that participate in a universal free breakfast program are required to make breakfast available in the classroom" (p. 559).

Aforementioned policy level changes like those instituted in Kansas and in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, might ameliorate the breakfast gap by eliminating some site-level implementation obstacles that prevent full SBP participation and expansion, but other factors, such as children's respective decisions regarding their daily participation in the school-provided breakfast meal based on the program's perceived benefits or a perceived negative social stigma or pejorative social label that might be ascribed to them based on their eligibility and participation in school meal programs have proven equally, if not more difficult, to address. Reddan et al. (2002) surveyed scores of upper grade elementary school students in six school breakfast program pilot schools in order to determine the perceived costs and benefits associated with school breakfast consumption as well as "concerns about weight among children in schools with or without a Universal School Breakfast Program" (Reddan et al., 2002, p. 47). The authors found that a majority of school meal-participating students perceived that eating the school breakfast helped them to learn, in part, by increasing their energy levels and attention span. These students also perceived that the most common factors that kept them from eating breakfast were not having enough time and not being hungry for breakfast. Finally, students who attended School Breakfast Program-providing schools, when compared with students who did not, "were less likely to wish they were thinner, to go on a diet, or skip breakfast because it might make them fat, and more likely to believe that eating breakfast will give them energy and help them pay attention" (Redden et al., 2002, p. 47).

Since most SBP participants were those who qualified for and already accessed the NSLP, outreach efforts may prove effective if school breakfast program participation is marketed as a logical "expansion of the school lunch concept" (Bartfield & Kim, 2010, p. 559). National School Breakfast Program outreach was the focus of the National Education Association Health Information Network (NEAHIN; 2013) through its guide "Start School with Breakfast: A Guide to Increasing School Breakfast Participation." This guide provided interested schools and organizations information and statistics on the "benefits of school breakfast, how to increase school breakfast consumption and participation, resources and tools that schools can use, and sample letters to parents, staff, site principals, and superintendent, as well as school breakfast success stories" (NEAHIN, 2013, pp. 1-2). This guide was made available to the public as a result of the NEAHIN's desire to eradicate the negative consequences of hunger on children's development, health, and success in school. The NEAHIN noted "According to a survey of America's teachers, 'Hunger in Our Schools: Share Our Strengths Teachers' Report,' there is very strong and broad agreement among teachers that schools and the education community have a role to play in addressing child hunger" and ". . . child hunger is having a direct impact on students' ability to learn" (NEAHIN, 2013, p. 4).

In addition to the aforementioned NEAHIN outreach information guide, schools considering offering or expanding school breakfast programs can also take advantage of available breakfast program seed funding provided by non-profit organizations such as "Dairy MAX, a long-time supporter of the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs" and which has allocated "funds to provide nutrition education programs for teachers" and whose "goal is to increase school breakfast program participation by 50

percent or more by instituting alternate breakfast service options, such as 'Breakfast in the Classroom,' 'Grab and Go Breakfast,' and 'Breakfast After First Period'" NEAHIN, 2013, p. 13).

School Breakfast Program as Intervention: Effects on Achievement and Obesity Gaps

Breakfast and the Achievement Gap

Basch (2011a) examined the literature on breakfast consumption and American youth and noted that breakfast provided both direct and indirect positive academic achievement-related benefits for children. The author noted that while SBPs have gained popularity in American schools, a majority of American school-aged children, at the time of the author's study, still did not participate in school-provided breakfast programs. Additionally, the author noted school-based breakfast programs provided positive health and education-related benefits to students and schools, as well as generated an increase in federal funding to state budgets and to schools themselves. Among these findings, the author noted that student participation in school-provided meal programs, including the SBP, appeared to contribute to an overall improvement in student attendance rates, a precursor to student academic achievement. Basch (2011a) also noted that universal school breakfast programs and delivery models that allow students to eat breakfast in the classroom setting, as opposed to eating in the school cafeteria, were approaches that have resulted in increased student breakfast participation. Basch (2011a) concluded that "high-quality universal breakfast programs that allow students to eat breakfast in the classroom are especially needed for youth who are not likely to get good nutrition the rest of the day" (p. 639).

Taras (2005) conducted a study of the association between children's nutrition and their academic performance, specifically, how nutritional supplements, such as vitamins and minerals, impacted children's cognitive functioning and overall school performance. The author's findings showed that children with iron deficiencies were at an academic disadvantage to those children whose iron levels were normal. Additionally, the findings showed that students' cognitive performance improved with iron supplementation therapy. Taras also noted that while food insecurity was a grave problem that adversely affected children's abilities to learn in school, more research was needed to be better understand the problem. He also noted that school-provided meal programs appeared to result in improved student attendance records and appeared to decrease student tardiness, thereby improving student academic achievement results. Accordingly, he concluded that school-provided breakfast meal programs appeared to enhance students' general cognitive abilities and overall academic performance.

Grantham-McGregor (2005) also studied the relationship between academic achievement performance and child nutrition, noting that enrollment, attendance, school behavior, and even drop-out rates, were positively associated with the nutritional health of students. The author noted that previous research studies provided evidence of a relationship between hunger, poor diet, stunted cognitive and physical development, and poor school performance. Finally, the author concluded that when students miss breakfast, doing so might produce harmful effects on their cognitive abilities, whereas students' consumption of breakfast has shown nutritive and academic benefits in children, particularly in children who had previously been considered malnourished.

Basch (2011b) noted that "educationally relevant health disparities influence students' motivation and ability to learn, but reducing these disparities has been largely overlooked as an element of an overall strategy for closing the achievement gap" (p. 650). He argued that unless educationally relevant health disparities were confronted, school reform efforts, in general, would be at-risk. Accordingly, Basch (2011b) argued for the implementation of a comprehensive and coordinated school health service model that supports students' nutrition, health, and concomitantly begins to close academic achievement gaps. Basch (2011b) also outlined "National, State, and local responsibilities for supporting school health, including shared strategies, recommendations for leadership from the U.S. Department of Education, policy development, guidance, technical assistance, and professional development, accountability and data and software systems, and a research plan . . ." (p. 650).

Breakfast and the Obesity Gap

In addition to closing the achievement gaps that exist, SBP participation rates and the quality and quantity of breakfast consumed have implications for school district and site level leaders who want to close the growing obesity gap. The obesity gap is a more recent contributor to the overall achievement gap, and if left unchecked, could prove extremely costly to individuals and family health, academic achievement, as well as to local, state, and national healthcare delivery systems, economic productivity, government budgets, and even our national security. According to Hofferth and Curtin (2005), over a quarter of American elementary-aged children were classified as overweight at the time of their research. They posited that the number of children classified as overweight is much higher in recent years than the number of children who were classified as

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overweight in the 1960s. Additionally, the authors noted, although poverty has

traditionally been linked with people being underweight, research now reveals that

poverty and obesity now often co-exist in the United States. The authors examined data

in order to determine whether or not low income status might be linked to school-aged

children being overweight and whether or not food programs, including school meal

programs, were positively associated with children in different income groups becoming

overweight. The authors found no evidence that suggested that children who live in

impoverished homes were more likely to be overweight, and they found no evidence that

school meal programs were directly responsible for making meal-participating children

overweight.

Li and Hooker (2010) examined possible relationships that existed between

contributing factors to childhood obesity and the type of school children attended. The

authors found that public school-attending children had, on average, a higher body mass

than did children who attended private schools, and if a child both attended a public

school and were eligible to participate in the school-provided meal program, then that

child's average body mass was likely to be higher than if he or she were not eligible for

meal programs provided by the school. Accordingly, Li and Hooker concluded that

eligibility for public school-provided meal programs was associated with children's

increased body mass and because children from lower-income homes typically attended

public schools, they were, therefore, more likely to be classified as overweight. These

research results were consistent with those of Millimet et al. (2009), who examined the

relationship between students' participation in school-provided meal programs and

weight gain. The authors concluded that there existed a positive relationship between

students' participation in these meal programs and weight gain and they concluded that school-meal program participation exacerbated the obesity epidemic.

Given the alarming increase in childhood obesity in this country and due to unimpressive rates of SBP program access and consumption by eligible students, and given the widely accepted belief that eating breakfast before or during school may positively influence student health, behavior, and academic achievement, the federal SBP and NSLP have become both urgent opportunities for improvement and expansion, as well as urgent targets by critics opposed to school-provided meal programs.

Breakfast in the Classroom Program Advocacy and Opposition: Leadership Perspectives on the Front Lines of Implementation

Breakfast in the Classroom Program Leadership and Advocacy

Rainville and Carr (2008) conducted a case study on the benefits and costs associated with providing students breakfast in the classroom setting. The authors reviewed documents and records relevant to the program, observed food service operations, and conducted interviews of various leader stakeholders, including school leaders and cafeteria managers who were involved in breakfast in the classroom preparation and delivery. The authors concluded that breakfast in the classroom program provided several benefits, including increased student participation and access to breakfast, which facilitated improved child nutrition. Additionally, the authors concluded that breakfast in the classroom programs decreased the number of student discipline referrals to school administrative offices, facilitated a sense of classroom community and increased students' sense of responsibility. The authors did also find challenges to successful program implementation including a lack of support from some school-based

employees, as well as a limited timeframe for breakfast preparation, delivery, and implementation in the classroom, which adversely impacted instructional time, according to findings, and finally, a limited number of menu items. While the authors cited aforementioned benefits as sufficient reasons for breakfast in the classroom start-up and implementation, they acknowledged the program was not flawless and recommended additional research in order to adequately address custodial concerns, teacher and staff concerns, menu variety concerns, and concerns regarding program expansion to high school settings (p. 38).

Anderson (2011) highlighted a $3 million Walmart-funded initiative that had been aimed at increasing participation in school breakfast programs and fostering increased student achievement by moving school breakfasts from the cafeteria to the classroom had commenced in January, 2011. The initiative was launched by four nationally recognized organizations "collectively known as Partners for Breakfast in the Classroom, and the group's rollout paralleled the public release of "School Breakfast in America's Big Cities," a report issued by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), a Washington, D.C.-based health and food policy advocacy organization (FRAC, as cited in Anderson, 2011, p. 1), which found that of 23 schools with "classroom-based breakfast programs . . . those that provide breakfasts free to all students have the highest participation rates" (p. 1). Anderson noted benefits to eating breakfast in the classroom, including increased student alertness, increased academic performance, potential reduction in obesity, reduced tardiness, improved student attendance rates, and because breakfast took place in classrooms during morning attendance-taking and announcements, students reportedly did not feel as rushed while eating as they reportedly felt while eating during recess or

lunch (p. 2). From a district-based leadership perspective, the aforementioned benefits

might be powerful arguments in favor of supporting BIC. In the next section, I present

how some BIC advocates package messages in support of BIC implementation.

Pro-Breakfast in the Classroom Public Relations Campaigns and Press Kits

The federal government, non-profit organizations, and school districts themselves

that are the BIC program most visible and strongest advocates. These entities have

devoted significant resources to the development of sophisticated and comprehensive

websites, press kits, toolkits, and public relations efforts to deliver the message that a

good breakfast every day is a good thing and that BIC program delivery is an effective

means through which to deliver school children daily nutrition at the start of their school

day. Furthermore, the NEAHIN School Breakfast Toolkit (2013) touted not only BIC,

but universally-provided and free classroom breakfast meals for every student.

Accordingly, the NEAHIN contended:

> Breakfast in the Classroom model is the single best way to increase participation
> and achieve the widespread gains in academic success linked to school breakfast
> consumption. Schools that provide universal breakfast in the classroom report
> decreases in discipline, psychological problems, visits to school nurses and
> tardiness, and increases in student attentiveness and attendance, as well as
> generally improved learning environments. (p. 3)

The NEAHIN, along with three other pro-classroom breakfast organizations,

FRAC, the National Association of Elementary School Principals Foundation (NAESPF),

and the School Nutrition Foundation (SNF), entered into an official partnership to

advocate for the BIC program implementation model in schools and in other meal-

providing organizations across the country. Together, these Partners for Breakfast in the

Classroom (2013) issued a joint press release advocating for BIC and highlighted several

benefits of the model. The partners contended that "the adoption of universal breakfast in the classroom programs remains a key strategy for urban school districts to expand breakfast participation among low-income students" (p. 2).

Similarly, the USDA (2013a), Food Research & Action Center (2013), and CFPA (2011), respectively, made available for public consumption "10 Reasons to Try Breakfast in the Classroom," "Breakfast in the Classroom: Promising Practices," and "Classroom Breakfast Basics: Serving Classroom Breakfast and Meeting Instructional Minute Requirements" in order to deliver their respective messages in support of BIC.

In California, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson, weighed in on the purported benefits of the BIC program model in order to promote the SBP, which he hailed as an integral component of his Team California for Healthy Kids campaign. In his September 21, 2011, letter to various statewide public school superintendents and charter school leaders, as well as to food and nutrition service administrators regarding Improving Student Nutrition and Academic Achievement Through School Breakfast Programs, Torlakson (2011) stated, "The implementation of inventive models like Classroom Breakfast links nutrition to our joint goal of increasing academic achievement in school" (p. 1).

In concert with Superintendent Torlakson's campaign, the LAUSD entered into a strategic partnership with various non-profit organizations in order to implement a 3-year, phased-in implementation of the district's 'I'm In!' . . . for Breakfast in the Classroom! initiative that would provide in-class breakfasts to the district's 553,000 students each morning. In their online "Frequently Asked Questions on the Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) Program," the LAUSD lauds the in-class breakfast model, stating:

This program hs proven to increase breakfast participation, which helps students focus and do better in class. In fact, we've found that when breakfast is offered to students in the classroom, participation in the program increases significantly – from about 23% of students (before school) to close to 70% of students (in the classroom) eating breakfast at school. (LAUSD, 2012, p. 1)

While relatively new to the LAUSD, the BIC service delivery model has been instituted in many school districts across the nation, mostly in large, urban cities. In Broome County, New York, Johnston et al. (2010), on behalf of the Broome County Strategic Alliance for Health initiative, established the Patriot Breakfast Program, a universal and free breakfast in the classroom delivery model that was "piloted in four second grade classrooms beginning in October 2008, and was expanded to include all grade levels by the end of February 2009" (Johnston et al., 2010, p. 1). By the time research results were published, the Patriot Breakfast Program had reportedly student breakfast participation rates and access at the Woodrow Wilson School, a participating Broome County elementary school, from 43% in October 2008 to a dramatic "88% by October 2010" (Johnston et al., 2010, p. 1). The researchers noted that school stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and students believed that "the Patriot Breakfast Program had positive behavioral, social, cognitive, and health benefits," and that student assessment results appeared to indicate "that the program did not interfere with the school day and more than 80% of stakeholders hope that the program continues" (Johnston et al., 2010, p. 1).

Wong (2006), began a formal evaluation of the Milwaukee Public Schools 2005-2006 implementation of the district's Provision 2 pilot breakfast program at various schools. Provision 2 is "an option under the national school lunch and school breakfast programs that can potentially benefit students and schools or districts with high poverty

levels and low breakfast participation" (Wong, 2006, p. i). Working for The Hunger Task Force, Wong evaluated Milwaukee's Provision 2 program in order to "inform future considerations regarding expansion of universal free meals" (p. i). By conducting surveys and interviews, as well as by reviewing quantitative data, Wong found that the BIC program model improved student breakfast access and participation rates. He noted, "breakfast participation doubled at the two schools where breakfast is served in the classroom" (p. i).

Surveys, interviews, and data from the two participating elementary schools in Broome County, New York, Wheatley and Carver Elementary Schools, respectively, revealed that "Forty-seven percent of combined school staff at Carver and Wheatley rated breakfast in the classroom as a 4 or 5, conveying that breakfast in the classroom runs 'very well and better than the cafeteria,'" while a third of the combined staff rated the BIC program with a survey score of 3, or similarly to the cafeteria, while "Twenty percent of combined school staff rated it as a 2, slightly less favorably than serving breakfast in the cafeteria and 0% of school staff rated it with a 1" (Wong, 2006, p. 27).

Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) Program Leadership and Opposition

While the previous section highlighted literature that discussed leader stakeholders' positions of advocacy and the perceived and real benefits of serving BIC, other literature revealed that some school leaders and stakeholders were adamantly opposed to the program. These leader stakeholders were convinced that the cost and flaws associated with the BIC program outweighed the program's benefits which, opponents argued, could be realized well enough in school cafeterias before class beings each day and during an additional breakfast opportunity that occurred during a morning

nutrition or morning recess break, at least in elementary schools. In the Broome County, New York, School District, The Patriot Breakfast Program pilot resulted in two of the seven participating teachers at one of their schools to disclose that spills, timing, and discipline were problems resulting directly from their school's implementation of the BIC program, while five food service workers at participating schools noted that "bagging breakfasts can be quite time-intensive" (Wong, 2006, p. 29). At another participating elementary school in Broome County, teachers highlighted spills as being a problem and stated that "teachers were not equipped with proper materials for sanitary clean up" (Wong, 2006, p. 28).

The LAUSD, at the time of this research study, was in year three of their implementation of their BIC program in 676 K-12 schools by the year 2015 (UTLA, 2013b, p. 1). The UTLA, the labor union that represents LAUSD teachers and other classes of employees, distributed a survey in March 2013 to all members who had "experience with the BIC program in their classroom" (UTLA, 2013b, p. 1-1). The purpose of the survey was to determine BIC effectiveness and impacts. Key findings of the survey revealed the following results:

> 52% saw an increase in bugs and rodents in the classroom; 78% say BIC takes longer than 10 minutes (allotted by the District), which cuts into instructional time; 53% would support BIC if time and sanitation issues are resolved; 88% support breakfast for students as long as it is served in the cafeteria, not the classroom (UTLA, 2013b, p. 1-1).

These survey data results were made available for the public via the LA Times and other media outlets in April of 2013.

Perhaps in anticipation of a possible perception by parents and the general public that UTLA's opposition to LAUSD's BIC program implementation might be viewed as a

barrier to student health and achievement, UTLA produced a video on BIC

implementation which could be viewed at www.utla.net and began an outreach campaign

to all LAUSD parents to ensure that parents understand UTLA's concerns about and

position in opposing the program. UTLA leadership wrote:

> Parents, make no mistake: teachers are not trying to deny your child of breakfast
> at school. We believe that breakfast should happen *before* the instructional day
> begins, and in the cafeteria instead of the classroom. If you have concerns about
> the BIC program, please contact your School Board member, or John Deasy, the
> Superintendent of Instruction of LAUSD. (UTLA, 2013a, p.1-1)

Former LAUSD Superintendent John Deasy, an advocate of the BIC program

model, in response to UTLA and other stakeholder concerns about the BIC program,

distributed a memorandum dated April 29, 2013, to all LAUSD employees in which he

reiterated his support for the program and predicted that the School Board would vote to

not only continue the BIC program at schools wherein the program was already being

implemented, but to expand it to all district schools by 2015 (J. Deasy, personal

communication, April 29, 2013). On Tuesday, May 14, 2013, LAUSD School Board

Members voted unanimously to continue and expand the controversial program.

Figure 2.1 depicts the many contextual factors that have both influenced and that

have been influenced by the creation of the BIC policy and its concomitant program

implementation. The BIC policy and program have deep humanitarian roots and have

individual, local, statewide, national, and international security implications, scale, and

consequences. As an outgrowth of the NSLP of 1946 and the federal SBP of 1966, the

BIC program, from a policy perspective, has enjoyed strong bi-partisan legislative and
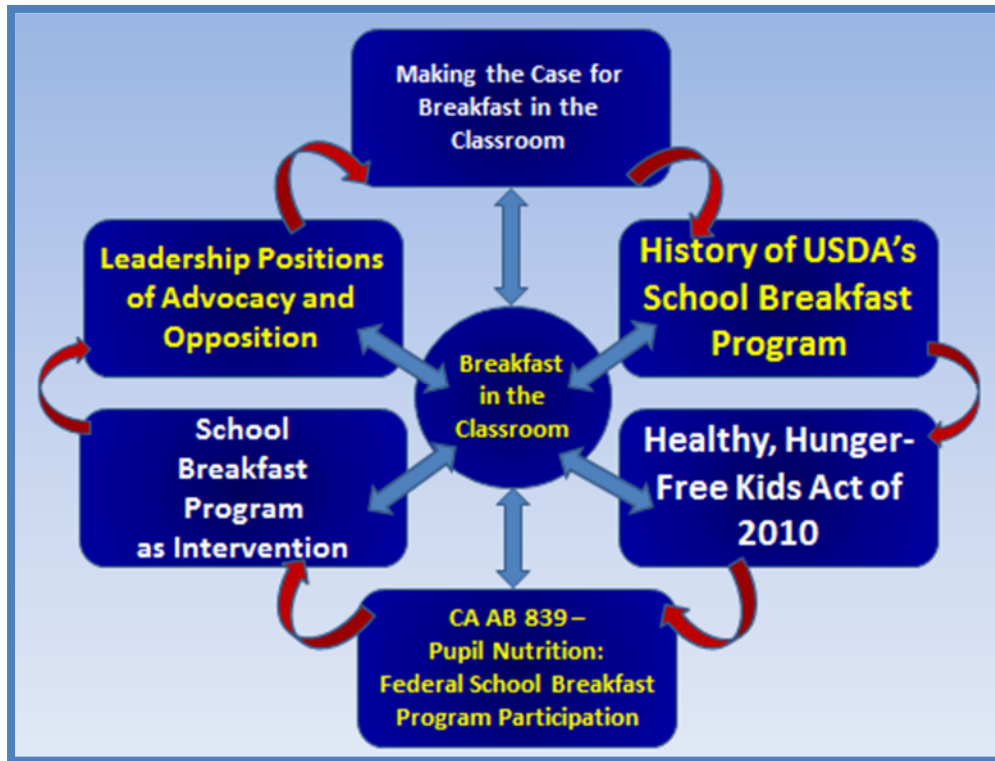
Figure 2.1. BIC policy and program influences and implementation considerations.

public support since the United States Congress formalized and stabilized federal funding

for the NSLP in 1946.

Summary of the Literature

My review of the literature on the BIC program revealed widespread support for

public schools continuing to provide eligible students free and reduced-price breakfast

and lunch meals for the purpose of preventing malnourishment and to ensure student

health, attention, and achievement in our era of school accountability under both No

Child Left Behind and Race to the Top. The mass feeding programs established in

Germany and Europe in the late 1700s (Gunderson, 1971) and that were exported here to

the United States to eradicate hunger and to sustain if not improve national security

continue to remain relevant today. The long legislative history in support of school lunch and breakfast program improvement and/or expansion is evidence of this widespread support as food security and national security remain inextricably linked to our values and goals as a nation to eradicate hunger and poverty, provide all students a high-quality education, and sustain and support our nation's national security and foreign policy (Shrier, 2011).

Legislative research literature revealed that the most recent incarnation of the original NSLP of 1946 was the bipartisan-supported Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. In California, Assembly Bill 839 (D-J. Brownlee) "Pupil Nutrition: Federal School Breakfast Program Participation" would have, before it died in committee, established a goal of school breakfast program implementation and expansion. The genesis behind AB 839 was that while many believe breakfast is an important meal, current law requires that public schools that serve low-income students provide only one free and/or reduced price meal per school day, which is typically a lunch meal. AB 839 was intended to increase student access to breakfast meals.

BIC research literature also revealed that school breakfast programs produced student achievement gains by facilitating increased student attention during classroom instruction, as well as resulted in fewer discipline referrals, fewer referrals to the nurse, improved attendance, and improved cognitive engagement. Additional research on strategies for increasing access to school breakfast programs revealed that increased access may lead to decreases in obesity because students who eat breakfast every morning were reportedly less likely to overeat at a later meal during the day or to snack between meals.

The Eligibility Manual for School Meals provided schools and districts guidance on how to identify eligible students for school-provided free and/or reduced price meals. Additional literature evidenced student participation rates and issues regarding non-compliance in terms of over-payments and under-payments with regard to free and reduced price meal program implementation. Strategies for school breakfast program expansion discussed in this section also included the implementation of BIC, a grab-and-go kiosk-type delivery, and a breakfast-on-a-cart model, while universal breakfast, regardless of eligibility, and provision 2 meal access strategies were considered successful in improving access to breakfast. School districts in Broome County, New York, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were highlighted as leadership case studies for BIC implementation best practice models.

Literature on BIC program implementation also revealed important leadership perspectives and positions of advocacy and opposition pertaining to program implementation. The literature revealed that school district leaders advocate for BIC models based on increased access, program participation, and the likely benefits of increased attendance and student achievement. The literature also revealed that school districts have either produced their own internal public relations toolkits to communicate the global benefits of BIC, or have cited government and non-profit organizations' press kits, instructional guides, and toolkits, to persuade district stakeholders of BIC program benefits. In opposition, site-level stakeholder leaders, such as teachers, parents, and even some administrators cited logistical challenges to effective BIC program implementation, such as a major, daily loss of instructional time, and custodial and sanitation problems that have led to infestations of rodents and bugs.

In Los Angeles, the UTLA, the union that represents the LAUSD's teachers and some other classes of school district employees, strongly opposed the LAUSD's implementation of and intention to expand the BIC program to all LAUSD schools by 2015. UTLA's vocal opposition had been strong enough to force the LAUSD Board of Education to formally determine the program's fate at its school board meeting convened on Tuesday, May 14, 2013. At the board meeting, LAUSD Board Members voted unanimously (7-0) to continue the BIC program at LAUSD campuses wherein the program is currently being implemented and voted to expand the BIC program to every LAUSD school campus that does not currently provide it.

Gaps in the Literature

There are gaps in the body of BIC program literature. First, most literature on school meal programs is centered on the NSLP, out of which the SBP came to fruition. BIC is a more recent service delivery model that remains subordinate to the overall SBP. Naturally, there was less available literature on the BIC program than there was on the overall SBP. Secondly, the bulk of School Breakfast literature focused largely on nutrition, food quality, and participation rates without extensive discussions that link specific breakfast service delivery models with specific types of schools. Finally, there existed a lack of research on the perceptions of district level and school site-level leadership personnel on BIC implementation at the district and school levels, respectively, apart from efforts mentioned in district-produced brochures, memoranda, press kits, toolkits, and public relations campaigns that advocate for BIC implementation.

Chapter 3

Research Methods

This chapter on research methods includes a detailed description of the following: purpose of this research study, research questions, research design, theoretical perspective and interpretive frameworks, role of researcher, research setting and participant selection, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, ethical considerations, trustworthiness, limitations to the study, and a summary to conclude the chapter.

Purpose of Research Study

In order to address, resolve, and/or preempt problems associated with food insecurity, poverty, and student achievement, and ultimately, national security, the BIC program model has been implemented in public schools across the nation. While research studies have documented a general and global need for school lunch and breakfast programs by highlighting their associated benefits to student health and achievement (Anderson, 2011; Bartfield & Kim, 2010; Basch, 2011b; Bhattacharya et al., 2006; Grantham-McGregor, 2005; Hofferth & Curtin, 2005; Li & Hooker, 2010; Millimet et al., 2009; Reddan et al., 2002; Taras, 2005, Torlakson, 2011; USDA, 2013a; Vilsack, 2010; Waehrer, 2008; Wong, 2006), little research existed on perceptions of district leadership and site-level leaders on BIC program implementation and efficacy. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of district-level and site-

level leadership personnel on the BIC program via a qualitative case study approach and share these leaders' perceptions of and recommendations for improving BIC program implementation.

It was important for readers, researchers, and practitioners to gain insight on the perceptions of district-level and site-level leaders regarding actual BIC program implementation for the following reasons: (a) BIC program implementation represented a major structural change in the way most public school districts and schools currently deliver breakfast meals today; (b) BIC program implementation was demonstrative of an increasingly popular and strategic shift in thinking as it re-emphasized the important role of breakfast as a key ingredient in the fight to close stubborn achievement gaps in our NCLB and Race to the Top era of high-stakes testing and accountability; and (c) Without important feedback on BIC program implementation from those who are actually deciding to implement it at the district level, and without important feedback from those who are administering it at the school site level, making it, serving it, eating it, and cleaning it up, opportunities for learning about shared best practices and mistakes with regard to implementation would be lost or limited to respective sites.

Research Questions

The following two research questions guided the methodology of this qualitative research study to examine the perceptions of district-level and site-level leadership personnel on the BIC policy and program implementation through a qualitative case study methodology:

1. What are district-level and school-site level leadership personnel perceptions of the BIC program?

2. What best practices, program models, resources, and other considerations are

needed to ensure BIC program success at the school site level?

Research Design

In conducting my research, I implemented a qualitative case study design in order

to examine perceptions of district-level and site-level leadership personnel on the BIC

program. Prior to selecting a qualitative case study research methodology for this

research study, I needed to determine whether or not the case study research methodology

would be an appropriate and/or effective methodology by which to examine the BIC

program as it was implemented in a public school district and school-site setting.

Accordingly, I reviewed available research literature from known experts on qualitative

and/or case study research, including and Creswell (2013), Merriam (2009), Stake

(2006), and Yin (2009), and determined that a qualitative case study research

methodology was an appropriate methodology for this study. For example, my case

study research involved the examination or study of a real phenomenon in a

contemporary context or setting (Yin, 2009). Yin expanded upon this abbreviated

definition as follows:

> Doing case study research would be the preferred method , compared to the
> others, in situations when (1) the main research questions are "how" or "why"
> questions; (2) a researcher has little or no control over behavioral events; and (3)
> the focus of study is a contemporary (as opposed to entirely historical)
> phenomenon. Among the variations in case studies, a case study can include
> single or multiple cases, can be limited to quantitative evidence, and can be a
> useful method in doing an evaluation. (p. 2)

Creswell (2013) defined qualitative case study research in terms of it being

integral to a contemporary system or phenomenon and in terms of the unit or units of

analysis. Accordingly, he noted the unit of analysis might include more than a single

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case (a multi-site study) or focus on only a single case (a within-site study). Stake (2006) highlighted the case study's systemic features, noting that the qualitative case is an integrated system with certain components that lie inside and outside of the case's boundaries or system and that the case researcher "needs to generate a picture of the case and then produce a portrayal of the case for others to see" (pp. 2-3). Merriam (2009) noted that the qualitative case study methodology is an appropriate qualitative methodology due to its special features, or "particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic" attributes (p. 43). He noted that the case study can be characterized by features that are particular to a specific situation, event, program, or phenomenon, the results of which comprise a "thick" description and understanding of the case under examination. "Thick description," Merriam (2009) noted, "can bring about the discovery of new meaning, extend the reader's experience, or confirm what is known" (pp. 43-44).

Finally, Creswell (2013) iterated the versatile nature of the qualitative case study methodology because of its reputed implementation in the fields of psychology, medicine, law, and political science, all of which frequently employ the analysis of various cases to be examined. He noted, for example, in psychology, the patient himself or herself is a single case, or a single subject of the analysis. Similarly, in western medicine, case analyses of problems are examined for diagnosis and prescription for preventive medicine applications. In the legal profession, case law is studied and cited in order for advocates and opponents to bolster their own cases. In political science, case reports inform, influence, and are influenced by public policy in the marketplace of ideas. Yin (2009) noted the case study approach's versatility and utility in that researchers can implement either qualitative or quantitative approaches when conducting research and

when discussing programs and other phenomenon. Accordingly, too, Merriam (2009) acknowledged the qualitative case study approach was appropriate for application in the field of education which required flexibility in producing and interpreting dynamic results. Thus, the apparent advantage of the qualitative case study approach is that it is a popular and versatile research methodology that can be applied to many disciplines as the case study researcher may choose from a variety of texts and approaches.

Regardless of which approach and/or combination of approaches and texts a case study researcher might employ, qualitative case studies share some common characteristics. First, case study research typically involves the identification and interest in examining a specific case, such as an individual or group, or a less concrete entity, such as a system, a decision-making process, or other project (Yin, 2009). The primary goal of the case study researcher is to discern and describe the case attributes under study as the case occurs in time and space within a given context (Creswell, 2013). As was previously mentioned, it is common for case study researchers to examine either single or multiple cases (Creswell, 2013).

Another defining characteristic of the qualitative case research approach is that it reveals the researcher's intent for conducting the case study in the first place. For example, Stake (2006) noted that qualitative case study research can be research that holds unsually high interest for the researcher in and of itself and that intrinsically compels the researcher to examine it and share its qualities (Stake, 2006). Merriam (2009) noted "Qualitative case studies share with other forms of qualitative research the search for meaning and understanding, the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, an inductive investigative strategy, and the end product being

richly descriptive" (p. 39). Additionally, Stake (2006) noted that the intent of the case study researcher might be to gain an "instrumental" understanding of an issue or problem and thus offer possible reasons for the existence of the problem as well as possible solutions. The qualitative case study approach can employ multiple cases, which Creswell (2013) termed a "collective case study." In a collective case study, a single problem or issue is the target of the research, while the researcher selects multiple cases to illustrate the issue or problem. Within a collective case study, the researcher might select for study several sites or programs. Additionally, in the collective case study approach, it is common for researchers to select multiple cases for research in order to show different perspectives on various problems or issues (Creswell, 2013). This line of thought is similar to that of Yin (2009), who recommended using a multiple case study approach that employed similar approaches and examination procedures for each case in order to avoid over-generalizing results of cases that study the same issue or problem but from different contexts.

A third poignant characteristic of the qualitative case study research approach is that it can create the conditions for a deep understanding of the issue or problem or case, in question as a result of the researcher collecting and analyzing more than one type of qualitative and/or quantitative data, including possible "interviews, to observations, to documents, to audiovisual materials," (Creswell, 2013, p. 98) as the author advised against relying on just one source for data collection which would likely not result in a sufficiently detailed description or understanding of the issue or problem under investigation.

A fourth defining characteristic of the qualitative case study approach is that the approach to data analysis will vary, depending on whether or not multiple cases and data were selected for study and comparison or whether or not a single case is analyzed (Creswell, 2013, pp. 98-99). Additionally, a precursor to understanding data analysis is the quality of the description of the case itself (Creswell, 2013). Accordingly, the research findings section of a case study would include a thorough description of the case or cases, as well as underlying themes or issues that the researcher has discovered through his or her research.

A fifth defining characteristic of the qualitative case study approach is that the resulting themes or issues discovered from the research are able to be presented in a "chronology by the researcher, analyzed across cases for similarities and differences among the cases, or presented as a theoretical model" (Creswell, 2013, p. 99).

Finally, qualitative case study researchers provide conclusions based on the meaning they derive from their research (Creswell, 2013). Stake (2006) termed them "assertions," while Yin (2009) termed them "patterns" or "explanations."

In this research study, I used a qualitative case study research methodology for two important reasons. First, a case study methodology allowed me as the researcher to address the research questions that guided this study, namely, to discover perceptions of district-level and site-level leadership personnel on the BIC program, to observe the BIC program being implemented in a public school setting, and to discover what might constitute best practices in terms of BIC implementation. Secondly, as the researcher and as a current school site principal in a large, urban public school district who oversees his own site's implementation of the BIC program breakfast delivery model, I have

benefitted from the perceptions of district-level and site-level leadership personnel on the BIC program as the program was being implemented in their respective districts and schools. Thus, by employing a qualitative, case study research methodology, I identified common themes and issues with regard to specific elements of the BIC program, drew meaningful conclusions, and learned of leaders' recommendations in order to enhance the BIC experience for all stakeholders who have a vested interest in long-term BIC program success.

Theoretical Perspective

An ontological perspective within an interpretive framework of pragmatism guided this research study in my efforts to obtain and examine district-level and school site-level participant leaders' perceptions of the BIC program (Creswell, 2013). Using an ontological perspective afforded me the opportunity to discern the reality of the BIC program from differing perspectives of leaders who held various district-level and school site-level positions of leadership within the public school district and school site contexts. Ontological perspectives are concerned with determining the nature of reality and its characteristics through multiple lenses. Researchers who select this research perspective are typically comfortable with one of the central tenets of qualitative methods research in that the researcher him or herself is often predisposed to embracing multiple realities (Creswell, 2013). Accordingly, it was from these district-level and site-level leaders' perceptions of their district's and school's BIC program implementation, along with other sources of data, that common themes emerged to form an overall reality of the BIC program. This emerging reality from multiple perspectives and other sets of data were consistent with what Creswell (2013) stated in that "Evidence of multiple realities

includes the use of multiple forms of evidence in themes using the actual words of different individuals and presenting different perspectives" (p. 20). This ontological perspective guided my semi-structured interview protocol, data collection, and analysis of data.

The interpretive framework of pragmatism also guided this research study. Researchers who hold an interpretive framework based on pragmatism are concerned with research results and are interested in finding possible or actual solutions to real or perceived problems, including what actions, situations, and consequences resulted in response to the inquiry and investigation, rather than being preoccupied simply with prior conditions of the status quo (Creswell, 2013). Rather than focus on a specific methodology, researchers who operate from an interpretive framework of pragmatism are focused more on the inherent problem or problems being investigated. Creswell (2013) noted "In practice, the individual using this worldview . . . will employ multiple sources of data collection, will focus on the practical implications of the research, and will emphasize the importance of conducting research that best addresses the research problem" (pp. 28-29). This interpretive framework of pragmatism guided my semi-structured interview protocol, my data collection, and my analysis of the data, especially as it pertained to my research question concerning recommendations for BIC "best practices." When BIC viewed from an interpretive framework of pragmatism and an associated ontological belief, my research study revealed what Creswell might term a reality that ". . . is useful, is practical, and 'works'" (p. 37).

**Viewing Breakfast in the Classroom From Multiple Realities and Frames
of Reference**

In addition to the aforementioned ontological perspective within an interpretive

framework of pragmatism, Bolman and Deal's (2008) Four Frames guided this research

study in my efforts to obtain, examine, and interpret district-level and school site-level

participant leaders' perceptions of the BIC program. Bolman and Deal noted "life in

organizations is packed with happenings that can be interpreted in a number of ways" (p.

313). Accordingly, in public school districts and schools themselves, the implementation

of the BIC program and policy can be viewed then, too, from multiple frames of

reference, or multiple realities. Bolman and Deal noted "any event can be framed in

several ways and serve multiple purposes" and "multiple realities produce confusion and

conflict as individuals look at the same event through different lenses" (p. 313).

Therefore, operating from the assumption that there are a myriad of competing voices and

interpretation of events that occur in any organization comprised of people, and operating

from the assumption that successful leadership requires a successful understanding of and

navigation through these competing realities in order to move organizations forward and

upward, Bolman and Deal's theoretical framework through which one can view and

interpret the varying structural, human resources, political, and symbolic elements and

events of any organizational setting or phenomenon was an appropriate framework with

which to gain a comprehensive understanding of the BIC program and policy.

Bolman and Deal (2008) noted that the underpinnings of the structural frame of

reference reflect "a belief in rationality and a faith that a suitable array of formal roles

and responsibilities will minimize distracting personal static and maximize people's

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performance on the job" (p. 47). The structural frame emphasizes job performance and functionality in that it relates to the appropriate alignment of people into positions that will facilitate the achievement of the organization's purpose and goals. Accordingly, there is an emphasis on the effective implementation of organizational rules, personnel roles, organizational or institutional goals, policies and procedures, technology and functionality, and overall environment and effectiveness. From a structural framework perspective, organizational leaders might be considered to be designers or engineers who assign, align, and adjust the structural and procedural aspects of organization's environment, including their systems, policies, procedures, and technologies, in order to accomplish desired organizational goals. Accordingly, from the structural lens, a school district leader or school site-based leader who is charged with implementing and overseeing the BIC program would be concerned with achieving an organizational program's established goals and objectives. He or she would be concerned with increasing program efficiency and enhancing performance through specialization and ensuring structures are designed to fit an organization's current situation, including meeting goals and addressing and improving structural problems, which can be remedied through study and realignment of existing structures (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Bolman and Deal's (2008) human resources frame reflects the nature of relationships that exist between people and their organizations. From one point of view, people who work in organizations are viewed as organizational assets. From another point of view, people who work in organizations might be viewed as objects to be exploited for the organization's goals. Bolman and Deal noted "The human resource frame evolved from the early work of pioneers such as Mary Parker Follett (1918) and

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Elton Mayo (1933, 1945), who questioned a century-old, deeply held assumption--that workers had no rights beyond a paycheck" (p. 121). The human resources frames acknowledges the importance of human needs and the relationships people have with their work tasks, their organization and its goals, and with others who also work in the same organization. From a human resources frame of reference, organizations are seen as families and organizational leaders empower others to contribute to the organizational family. Thus, a school district leader or school site-based leader who is charged with implementing and overseeing the BIC program would be concerned with the assumption that organizations exist in order to serve human wants and needs rather than a reciprocal view in that humans being motivated solely by meeting organizational goals. Such leaders would recognize that people within organizations and the organizations, themselves, actually need each other, and that when individuals are engaged in personally productive and valuable labor, and when organizations receive from its human members the efficiency and productivity they need in order to survive, both the organization and its members achieve success (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Bolman and Deal (2008) noted the importance of understanding the political underpinnings within an organization and its culture. They noted "viewed from the political frame, politics is the realistic process of making decisions and allocating resources in a context of scarcity and divergent interests" (p. 190). The assumptions of the authors' political frame view organizations as competitive marketplaces in which individuals and groups compete for power and various resources. From a political framework, organizational leaders vie for and advocate strongly for their own and others' special interests, as long as other's interests are reasonably aligned with their own

interests. Thus, a school district leader or school site-based leader who is charged with implementing and overseeing the BIC program would be concerned with determining the values of various internal and external school and district stakeholders and how such values might motivate these stakeholders as they make important decisions that involve the acquisition, allocation and/or distribution of various resources amongst themselves and other organizational players. Such leaders understand conflict and competition are daily occurrences and resulting goals and decisions are made by those in power (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Bolman and Deal's (2008) symbolic frame allows for people to ritualize and celebrate meaningful events and other occasions in an often-unorganized or chaotic world. They noted "Symbols are the building blocks of the meaning systems, or cultures we inhabit . . . including myth, vision, story, heroes, and heroines, ritual, and ceremony" pp. 248-249). The symbolic frame reflects the nature of the organization as a place wherein members of the organization reinforce the organization's existing culture and meaning through symbolic rituals, ceremonies, lore, and people whose contributions and/or identities shaped the culture of the organization. From a symbolic framework, organizational leaders are visionary leaders who inspire others within the organization by affirming or reaffirming the purpose, vision, and meaning of the organization for members. Thus, a school district leader or school site-based leader who is charged with implementing and overseeing the BIC program would likely be concerned with the meaning behind events that occur in the school district and/or school that either support or oppose the BIC program.

Figure 3.1 depicts Bolman and Deal's (2008) Four Frames which can be used to view the BIC policy and its concomitant program implementation. When the BIC program is viewed from these multiple frames of reference, school district level and school site-based leaders can gain a deeper understanding of the BIC policy and program implementation mechanics, its impact on people and resources, and the meaning created by and reinforced through its daily implementation.

Participants and Sample Population

All participants in this research study were identified through purposeful and convenience sampling procedures. A purposeful sampling procedure allowed me to examine and reveal multiple realities and perceptions of the BIC program case, including perceptions that were sometimes in competition with each other, if not adversarial toward each other, and that were informed in part based on participants' differing positions of leadership and experiences within the school district and schools wherein I conducted this study. Accordingly, I sought and obtained research study participants who held a variety of positions within the school district and within the two public schools wherein the BIC

Frame	Structural	Human Resources	Political	Symbolic
Metaphor for Organization	Factory or Machine	Family	Jungle	Carnival, Temple, Theater
Central Concepts	Rules, Roles, Goals, Policies, Technology, Environment	Needs, Skills, Relationships	Power, Conflict, Competition, Organizational Politics	Culture, Meaning, Metaphor, Ritual, Ceremony, Stories, Heroes
Image of Leadership	Social Architect	Empowerment	Advocacy	Inspiration
Basic Leadership Challenge	Attune Structure to Task, Technology, Environment	Align Organizational and Human Needs	Develop Agenda and Power Base	Create Faith, Beauty, Meaning

Figure 3.1. Bolman and Deal's Four Frames

program was being implemented. From the district level, the district superintendent and the district food services supervisor participated. From the school-site level, two site principals, four classroom teacher(s); two cafeteria manager(s), and two daytime custodians participated.

The use of purposeful sampling facilitated my ability to obtain leadership perceptions of the BIC program from participants who worked at the district level and school-site level, respectively. Thus, I achieved my goal of obtaining some variation within my sample population which allowed me to examine these leaders' perceptions of the BIC program from different leadership perspectives and positions of responsibility. Advocacy for and opposition against the BIC program was generally understood to be a disagreement between classroom teachers, who cited concerns about disruptions to teaching and learning, instructional time, working conditions, routines, and district-level and/or school-site administrators, who viewed the benefits of BIC as good policy to end hunger and close achievement gaps in our schools. Thus, in the school district I conducted this research study, I reasoned that it was important for me to obtain perceptions of the BIC program from leaders at both the district level and at the site level in order to arrive at a diverse, comprehensive, and rich collection of data.

Convenience sampling also guided my selection of research participants. I employed the convenience sampling procedure because participation in this research study was totally voluntary and due to the controversial nature of the case to be studied, the BIC program, I was concerned about obtaining an adequate number of participant volunteers at either or both the district-level and/or the school-site levels who also would be willing to participate fully in this research study.

In summary, I interviewed a total of 12 participants for this research study who were identified through purposeful and convenience sampling and who worked at the district level and/or at the school-site level in two public elementary schools. For reader reference, I published the results of a Stakeholder Leader/Participant Demographic Survey. These demographic survey data are presented in a table in Chapter 4.

Site Selection

I received permission to conduct this research study in a small southern California public school district that served students in grades K-8 and that was comprised of a diverse population of students, parents, teachers, staff, and administrative leadership personnel. My priority had been to select and seek Institutional Review Board (IRB; see Appendix A) approval from a public school district in order to conduct my research with district and/or school-site level leaders at one or two public elementary schools within a single public school district.

Data Collection

As Creswell (2013) noted, "The data collection in case study research is typically extensive, drawing on multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials" (p. 100). In order to gain a comprehensive view of district-level and site-level leaders' perceptions of the BIC program, I collected data from multiple sources, including from a demographic survey (see Table 4.1 and Appendix B), my own observations of the BIC (see Table 4.2 for Summary of BIC Observations), and as a result of a 45-60 minute semi-structured interview protocol (see Table 4.3) with two leaders/participants from the district level (leaders with director-level and superintendent-level positions), as well as from ten school-site leaders/participants in

whose school(s) the BIC program was being implemented, and from a Breakfast Participation Rate Report. By design, the semi-structured interviews were the primary source of data collection for this research study.

For the semi-structured interview, I asked a total of 10 open-ended questions which allowed participants to share their perceptions of the BIC program in their own words and from which I hoped to gain a detailed response to each question. Additionally, I probed leaders/participants for additional and/or clarifying information, as needed, depending on my understanding of their respective responses to the original interview questions. Thus, with a semi-structured interview protocol, I was afforded an opportunity to learn of these various leaders' perceptions of the BIC program in their own words while also being able to ask follow-up questions and/or to probe interviewees for greater understanding or clarification of previous points, and in the process gain a greater understanding, all the while staying the course of the original design of the interview (Creswell, 2013, p. 173).

The semi-structured interview questions were designed to elicit responses from participants that addressed my research questions about the BIC program as the case on which this research study was focused. Interview questions were designed to facilitate a comfortable and casual conversation with interview participants to the extent that they would provide me unvarnished responses to the questions based on their respective leadership experiences and perceptions of the BIC program. I was of the mindset that research participants were comfortable during the interview and therefore provided responses that were consistent with their true perceptions of the BIC program.

All interviews were audio recorded only with an iPad and transcribed with participant permission. The use of the iPad to audio record each interview allowed me to be fully present and focused on the participant leaders and their responses during the semi-structured interview process. The semi-structured interview questions were designed to serve as a guide to facilitate a conversational dialogue (see Interview Questions in Appendix C). When a participant identified an area of particular interest, enthusiasm, or other sign of strong feelings or opinion during the interview, I probed the participant to extend her or his thoughts to gain a greater perspective, understanding of the response.

The semi-structured interview process allowed me as the researcher sufficient flexibility to transcend the interview questions themselves, as needed, in order to probe participants for more rich details of their experiences and perceptions which allowed us both to examine more deeply the meaning of participants' experiences and perceptions. It was at this stage of my research during the semi-structured interview process, and especially during which time I probed participants to extend their thinking in response to a particular question or topic, that my role as an observer-researcher shifted toward that of participant-researcher. This happened whenever I asked for clarification and as I paraphrased or quoted back to the respective participants what I thought I heard them say or mean. Accordingly, as a participant observer, I was mindful of Creswell's observation steps of a good qualitative observer, as follows:

> Determine, initially, a role to be assumed as an observer. This role can range from that of a complete participant (going native) to that of a complete observer. I especially like the procedure of being an outsider initially, followed by becoming an insider over time. (p. 167)

Regardless of any shift or degree of transformation as a researcher, it was my intention to be an active researcher during the semi-structured interviews. I intended to be alert, attentive, and actively engaged in the interview process by seizing on opportunities to ask participants to extend their thinking, asking deeper and more thought-provoking questions about participants' experiences with and perceptions of the BIC program. Additionally, all of the data I collected, including my research notes, demographic surveys, and audio recordings have been stored on my password-protected iPad, password-protected personal computer, and/or stored on a personal flash drive and will be destroyed after 3 years of completion of this research study. Additionally, all written interview notes have been secured in a locked file cabinet in my home and will be destroyed after 3 years of completion of this research study.

In addition to semi-structured interviews of district-level and school-site level leaders, I conducted four observations of the BIC program as it was being implemented in four different classrooms, two from each school site. Initially, my intention was to use an observation protocol (see Table 4.2) to record my findings as well as position an iPad to record video and to take pictures of the BIC program as it was in process on campus, including in the preparation and staging area(s) in the cafeteria, at breakfast delivery and/or pick-up point(s), with custodial personnel and resources, and in the classroom(s). Accordingly, I hoped to gain a comprehensive understanding of the BIC program as it was being implemented at one or more school sites. However, due to the fluid realities of the school day and due to various modifications made to BIC program implementation, I decided to use only the observation protocol (see Table 4.2) while conducting my observations as the protocol allowed me to tally and document routines/processes and

challenges to routines/processes, personnel involved and personnel challenges, time of service and time constraints, and various other factors that occurred during observation of the BIC program. After I concluded my observations, I reviewed my observation notes and compared them with leaders'/participants' interview transcripts in order to derive meaning, discover specific and recurring themes, language, values, and consistencies or inconsistencies between the district-level and school-site level leaders' insights and perceptions, as well as between the leaders'/participants' insights and perceptions and my own observations.

Finally, I requested and received a school breakfast participation rate report in order to collect data that might confirm whether or not respective school breakfast participation rate target goals were being met as a result of the BIC program being implemented at the site(s).

Data Analysis

As I stated in the preceding Data Collection section of this chapter, for this qualitative case study research study, the semi-structured interview served as the primary method of data collection. Accordingly, my data analysis approach focused heavily on respective interview responses. It was my intention to begin to analyze all research data upon my collection of it, in order to capture as much as possible a detailed description of the BIC case and its setting (Creswell, 2013). Stake (1995) advocated for four forms of data analysis and interpretation that were appropriate for case study research. First was "categorical aggregation," or the collection of several pieces of data and relevant meanings from demographic survey results data, semi-structured interview response data, observations, and district-produced report that reflected school breakfast participation

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rates. Secondly, and in contrast to categorical aggregation was when I, as the researcher, employed direct interpretation in that I focused on just one instance or occurrence and derived meaning from it on its own while being careful not to compare it to other instances of data collection (Creswell, 2013). Thirdly, I, as the researcher, then organized my collected data into rough categories based on my interviewees' own words and my own understanding of the relationships between the themes that emerged from my interviewees' own words. I then represented these themes visually in a table that demonstrated the relationship or relationships. Finally, I, as the qualitative case study researcher, established naturalistic generalizations from my own analysis of the data from which others might learn from this research case and possibly apply to other cases (Creswell, 2013, p. 200). Creswell (2013) held a view similar to that of Stake's (1995) and termed his own process a "data analysis spiral." He wrote:

> Despite this uniqueness, I believe that the analysis process conforms to a general contour. The contour is best represented in a spiral image, a data analysis spiral . . . One enters with data of text or images (e.g., photographs, videotapes) and exits with an account or narrative. In between, the researcher touches on several facets of analysis and circles around and around. (p. 182)

Accordingly, I applied Creswell's data analysis spiral to the data I collected, the first step of which was for me to organize the data on my computer and flash drive. This data organization and management included my establishment of electronic files and folders based on the type of data I collected, as well as was based on the number of research participants in this research study. Then, I engaged in the second step of the data analysis spiral process, which was the reading and memoing step. In order to derive meaning of my data set, I reviewed and transcribed all of my participant interviews with an online transcription service provider which included my replaying of all audio recordings of the

interviews, reflecting upon them, and adding on my accompanying handwritten notes. "Writing notes or memos in the margins of field notes or transcripts or under photographs helps in this initial process of exploring a database" (Creswell, 2013, p. 183).

Next, I invested time in the third step of the data analysis spiral, which was the "describing, classifying, and interpreting the data . . . forming codes or categories . . . themes . . . to provide an interpretation in light of their own views" (p. 184). By engaging in the important process of coding, I disaggregated the textual data, including audio data, into smaller categories of information, and assigned a label or a code to only that section of the data that would be used in this qualitative study (Creswell, 2013). In this research study, I wanted to allow codes and themes to emerge from exact words used by interviewees during the interviews, and I created code labels that were the exact words participants used or that were closely related to the words participants used during the interviews. I believed it was important for the participants' perceptions to be described with their own words because doing so would likely eliminate any risk of participants' being misunderstood and/or misinterpreted. Creswell (2013) referred to this process as the use of "in vivo code" names, or "use of the exact words used by participants" during their respective interviews (p. 185).

Within this same step of the data analysis spiral process was the classifying stage. In this stage, I reviewed all interview data and broke it down into categories, themes, or other dimensions of information on leaders' perceptions of the BIC program. Creswell (2013) noted "themes in qualitative research (also called categories) are broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea" (p. 186). Additionally, Creswell noted the process of classification of data into themes is a popular

type of data analysis that involves the identification of five to seven general themes. After I arrived at my general themes through the data classification process, I engaged in the next step of the data analysis spiral, "interpreting the data . . . making sense of the data, the lessons learned . . . abstracting out beyond the codes and themes to the larger meaning of the data" (p. 187). In this stage, overall meaning of the BIC program was comprised of leaders' perceptions and my own interpretations of leaders' perceptions of the BIC program, as well as based on my own observations of the BIC program in action.

In the final phase of Creswell's (2013) spiral, I represented the data and visualized it. Representing the data means "a packaging of what was found in text, tabular, or figure form" (p. 187). For the purposes of representing and visualizing this qualitative research case study data, it was my intention to conduct and present a clear visual representation of the BIC program as it was implemented and understood as a single case at the school site level (Creswell, 2013).

In addition to the interview transcription and analysis processes described above, I reviewed and reflected on my own observation notes, and made additional notes on any similarities and differences between my own observations of the BIC program as a researcher and those of research study participants. Additionally, I reviewed participants' respective demographic survey data and included it in a table (see Table 4.1) for the purpose of representing participants' demographic data. Finally, I reviewed the district's breakfast participation report for the 2013-2014 academic year to learn what were the daily student breakfast participation rates in the school district and in the selected school site(s) wherein I conducted my site-level research.

**Data Analysis Findings Organized and Presented via Bolman and Deal's
Four Frames**

From an ontological perspective, it was my intent to understand and represent the

nature, essence, or complexity of the case itself as it was being implemented.

Accordingly, I remained alert to and receptive of patterns and themes that emerged and

that allowed me to draw generalizations, conclusions, and recommendations that might

be appropriate for and inform a school district's and/or a school's decisions regarding

implementation of the BIC program (Creswell, 2013). In order to gain a comprehensive

understanding of leaders' perceptions of the BIC policy and program implementation in a

public school district school or schools, I organized the research findings around Bolman

and Deal's (2008) Four Frames of organizational behavior and leadership. Accordingly,

my semi-structured interview protocol included questions that sought leaders'

perceptions pertaining to the structural, human resources, political, and symbolic

elements of the BIC policy and program implementation. Through this application of

Bolman and Deal's theoretical framework, not only did I gain a comprehensive

understanding of leaders' perceptions of the BIC program itself, but I also gained

important insights into the leaders' respective leadership bias(es) that might have

influenced the way leaders perceived the BIC policy and program implementation in their

district and/or school(s), as well as what they recommended to ensure overall long-term

program success.

Role of the Researcher

Throughout this research study, I was aware of the significance of my dual roles

as both a qualitative case study researcher of district-level and site-level leaders'

perceptions of the BIC program and as an urban public middle school principal who oversees the implementation of the BIC program on his own campus on a daily basis. Accordingly, I think it was important for me to acknowledge that my own initial views of the BIC policy and program were highly negative. I since changed my views and I am now a supporter of the program which is purported to increase the likelihood that all school breakfast-eligible students eat a nutritious breakfast meal on a daily basis and in the friendly confines of their classroom setting. I came into this qualitative case study research as a supporter of the program and also as one with a realistic understanding of the program's alleged flaws, including its impact on instructional time, food and drink spills, wasted food, infestation of bugs and rodents, damage caused to desks, books, and carpets, impact on custodial time, resources, and other personnel, and more. I entered this study knowing that these aforementioned concerns would have to be adequately addressed by way of the evidence that I expected to collect during this research study in order for leaders to perceive the BIC program as worthwhile.

It was also my intention to allow themes and the story of the research to emerge, rather than try to drive it toward a pre-determined outcome. Prior to the beginning of my data collection, I had begun to reflect on my role and responsibilities as a researcher, a participant, and an observer (Creswell, 2013). I also began to reflect on the ethical responsibilities that were incumbent upon me as a researcher, as someone who would eventually gain access to participants' personal and professional experiences, views, and perceptions, and as someone who would gain access to district-level and school-site level leaders' facilities, records, and other documents, while I prepared for and collected, analyzed, and presented my research data and findings. Thus, in the process of

researching the BIC program, in gaining various leaders' perceptions of the program, including its perceived costs and benefits and its overall impact on the district and/or the school community, I was repeatedly reminded of and reflected on my own responsibilities as a researcher and as a school site principal whose own experiences with the BIC program might bias and also inform how I might interpret and present the findings of my research.

My reflection was particularly poignant during my data collection and data analysis stages of my research study, especially during my interactions with and treatment of interviewees, starting from the process of providing and obtaining participant's informed consent. My role as a researcher and as an urban public school principal who was charged with the responsibility of addressing and closing achievement gaps between at-risk students and those considered not at-risk lead me to believe that the BIC program was a worthwhile investment in any school district and school, especially in our era of high-stakes testing and accountability. A balanced education, one that rigorously challenges the mind and the body, coupled with a nutritious and daily diet, was, in my view, critical to student health and achievement. When these two deliverables were delivered appropriately and consistently, they might have helped narrow, if not helped eliminate altogether, stubborn achievement gaps. Based on the results of this research study, as well as based on my own personal experiences, I am now ever more determined to help my own school deliver to the fullest extent possible and practicable, a successful BIC policy and program implementation because my students deserve nothing less than the best from all who work at and visit my school.

Ethical Considerations

I gained specific and important insights and perceptions from various leaders of the BIC program costs and benefits and their overall impact on the school community. I committed myself to upholding the highest standards of ethical research to protect the participants who participated in this study. Accordingly, I fulfilled my obligation to provide each research participant "informed consent" by personally reviewing and explaining the informed consent form to prospective participants prior to conducting my survey questionnaire and interview.

I also ensured that I answered any prospective participants' questions and/or addressed any concerns pertaining to this study prior to and/or during this study. Upon Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, I went to work to initiate the purposeful sampling selection process to begin my research by contacting via email and telephone the central district superintendent to provide more details of my study and to discuss needs and next steps. The superintendent offered full support and also generously designated another district director to assist my efforts during my data collection process. The designated director was wonderfully supportive from the outset and assisted my efforts to obtain research participants at both the district and school site levels, secured their informed consent, and coordinated and scheduled participant demographic survey and interview sessions at the respective school sites and district headquarters.

In order to maintain all FERPA guidelines and regulations, I ensured that the superintendent and designated director at the district office who assisted my data collection efforts held prospective participating leaders' names in confidence until they

contacted me for further inquiry regarding my research study. I also maintained full

confidentiality of all participants during all phases of this research study, from participant

invitation and selection, to data collection, data analysis, discussion and documentation of

findings and conclusions. While I anticipated minimal risk to research participants, I did

inform participants that they would likely engage in topics of discussion about which

they and others might have strong personal and/or professional opinions and that their

views would be published in a dissertation that would become available for public

consumption. Appropriately, I maintained my commitment to protecting the identity of

all participants who volunteered to be a part of this research study. I ensured that no

personal identifying information was connected to any of the data I collected and/or

documented in this research study. I took great care to ensure that I would protect the

personal identities of research participants, including during my communications with

participants prior to, during, and after the conclusion of this research study. Creswell's

(2013) description of the role and responsibilities of the researcher provided an important

consideration for me as I planned and conducted my research:

> A researcher protects the anonymity of the informants, for example by assigning
> numbers or aliases to individuals. A researcher develops case studies of
> individuals that represent a composite picture rather than an individual picture.
> Furthermore, to gain support from participants, a qualitative researcher conveys to
> participants that they are participating in a study, explains the purpose of the
> study, and does not engage in deception about the nature of the study. (p. 175)

Trustworthiness

In keeping with my ethical obligations as a researcher and in the spirit of ensuring

representativeness of participant responses, I ensured that I accurately characterized,

interpreted, and documented leaders'/participants' respective perceptions of the BIC

program by engaging participants in the process of member checking. Creswell (2013)

noted:

> Is it possible to even have a "right" answer? To answer these questions,
> researchers need to look to themselves, to the participants, and to the readers.
> There are multi- or polyvocal discourses at work here that provide insight into the
> validation and evaluation of a qualitative narrative. (p. 243)

To ensure validity of my findings, I shared participants' respective interview transcripts

with respective participants and asked each participant to validate my interpretation of

their responses to the interview questions in order to determine whether or not my

interpretation was an authentic representation of their respective experiences.

Limitations of the Research Study

Creswell (2013) noted, "The data collection in case study research is typically

extensive, drawing on multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews,

documents, and audiovisual materials" (p. 100). The research methodology I have

described in this chapter proved to be both beneficial to and appropriate for this case

study research, the time allotted, as well as for my desire to gain insights into

stakeholders' perceptions of the BIC program. Limitations included the number and

types of research participants, the type of schools in which I conducted my research (only

elementary, as opposed to middle or high school levels), the size and location of the

school district, and other factors related to modifications made to BIC implementation

that are discussed in Chapter 4. For example, because I conducted my site-level research

at the elementary school-site level, the results might or might not be generalizable to

middle school or high school campuses. Reciprocally, if I had conducted my site-level

research at the middle school or high school level, the results might or might not be generalizable to other types of campuses.

Summary

In this chapter I provided a detailed description of the qualitative case study methodology that I utilized in order to obtain and examine the perceptions and recommendations of district level and school-site level leadership personnel on the BIC program that was being implemented in their school district and at respective school sites during the 2013-2014 academic year. The intentions of this study were to obtain and examine perceptions of district-level and site-level leadership personnel in order to arrive at an overall, aggregate picture of support for or opposition against the BIC program and to share these leaders' perceptions of and their recommendations for improving BIC program implementation within their district and respective school sites. In the following chapter, I present the findings of this qualitative case study.

Chapter 4

Findings

In Chapter 3, I described the research methodology and strategies I used to collect data on perceptions of district-level and site-level public school leaders on the BIC program and their recommendations for improving the BIC program. I indicated, too, that ontological and interpretive lenses, rooted in pragmatism, and Bolman and Deal's (2008) Four Frames guided my research study in my efforts to obtain, examine, and interpret district-level and school site-level participant leaders' perceptions of the BIC program.

In this chapter, I present the findings of my data, including a research participant demographic survey, findings from 12 semi-structured interviews, findings from four classroom observations of the BIC program, and a summary of the district's Breakfast in the Classroom Participation Rate Report for the two schools wherein I conducted my research.

In response to my first research question, four dominant themes emerged from semi-structured interviews, including the following: School-based and district-based leaders perceived the BIC Program to be a valuable social program that (a) Provided daily access to nutrition and health to youth; (b) Provided relief and support to food insecure households; (c) Provided a variety of academic benefits; and (d) Contained flaws that challenge BIC program effectiveness. In response to my second research question,

data from semi-structured interviews, BIC Program observations, and a BIC Program participation report revealed how the BIC Program worked with modifications, as well as resulted in School-based and District-based leaders' recommendations for the BIC program to ensure its long-term success at respective school sites. I attempted to allow my research participants' views and voices to be expressed independently of my own as it was these participants' respective views and voices that best represent the BIC program as it was implemented in their school district, in their respective schools, and in their respective classrooms. Accordingly, I included in this chapter a number of participants' verbatim quotes culled from transcriptions of their respective semi-structured interviews.

The purpose of this research study was to examine the perceptions of district-level and site-level leadership personnel on the BIC program implementation and to gain an understanding of what might be needed in order to enhance or otherwise to ensure BIC program effectiveness. The BIC program is an increasingly popular delivery option for school breakfast meals, especially in areas wherein issues related to food insecure households exist. Accordingly, my research questions were:

1. What are district-level and school-site level leadership personnel perceptions of the BIC program?

2. What best practices, program models, resources, and/or other considerations are needed to ensure BIC program success at the school site level?

Participant Demographic Data

General Criteria for Participation in Research Study

I recruited participants for this study who were required to meet two criteria. First, participants must have been at the time of my research investigation employees of the school district and/or school wherein I conducted my research. Second, participants must have been at the time of my research investigation employed in one of the following jobs/positions within that same school district and/or school: district superintendent and/or other district-level director or coordinator; school-site principal, school-site assistant principal, and/or coordinator; school-site teachers (grades K-12); school-site cafeteria manager and/or cafeteria worker; school-site plant manager and/or custodian. Prior to conducting interviews with participants who met these criteria, I asked participants to complete an optional demographic survey (see Appendix B). All 12 participants in this study completed the demographic survey. Accordingly, the demographic data presented herein represented information from all 12 consenting research study participants.

I conducted this study at two southern California public elementary schools, both of which were located approximately 1 hour northwest of downtown Los Angeles and which resided within two miles of the other school. Both schools belonged to the same public school district, which was comprised of six elementary schools and two middle schools. During the 2012-2013 school year, School A had an enrollment of 501 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. During the same school year, Hispanic or Latino students comprised 98.4% of School A's student body, while White (.8%), Filipino (.4%), and Pacific Islander (.2%), and other (.2%) students comprised the remaining 1.6%

of the student body. Seventy six percent of the student body was identified as English

learners, 81.2% socioeconomically disadvantaged, and 3.2% identified as students with

disabilities (School A School Accountability Report Card, 2013-2014). School B had an

enrollment of 671 students in kindergarten through the fifth grade. Also during the same

2013-2014 school year, Hispanic or Latino students comprised 97.8% of School B's

student body, while White (1.2%), Pacific Islander (.3%), Asian (.1%), Filipino (.1%),

and students identified by two or more demographic groups (.1%) comprised the

remaining 2.2%. Eighty four percent of the student body was identified as English

learners, 81% socioeconomically disadvantaged, and 4% identified as students with

disabilities (School B School Accountability Report Card, 2013-2014).

With the permission of the superintendent of the school district, I gained access to

research participants, the two campuses, district offices, and related documents through

an appointed gatekeeper, a district-level administrator, who coordinated and scheduled

my semi-structured interviews with participants based on my criterion and purposeful

sampling strategy and position preferences.

Position/Role, Age Range, Years in District/School, and Gender

Based on criterion and purposeful sampling strategies, and with gatekeeper

assistance, I was able to conduct individual interviews with a total of ten school site-level

leaders and stakeholders and two district-level leaders and stakeholders, all of whom

were familiar with and were implementing the BIC program in their respective schools

and/or in their school district. Participants in this study included a school site principal,

cafeteria manager, daytime custodian, and two teachers, one lower elementary grade

teacher (K-3) and one upper elementary grade teacher (grades 4-6), from each of the two

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elementary schools. Additionally, I interviewed the district food services director, as well as the district superintendent of schools. Participants included seven women and five men. Women held the following school-site level and/or district-level positions: food services director, cafeteria manager, principal, and teacher. Men held the following school-site level and/or district-level positions: school district superintendent, principal, day custodian, and teacher. Participants' time served in their respective positions ranged from 7 months to over 10 years. In an effort to maintain confidentiality, the names of all research study participants were omitted and only references to job title/position were used to identify participants. Additionally, the two schools' names and the name of the school district were also omitted from this research study in favor of pseudonyms, specifically, Public Unified School District (PUSD), School A, and School B, respectively. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the demographic survey results provided by the 12 research participants included in this study.

Research Question 1: What are District-level and School-Site Level Leadership Personnel Perceptions of the BIC Program?

Access to Nutrition and Health

In an effort to answer my first research question regarding leaders' perceptions of the BIC program, participants were asked a series of ten questions to describe their respective views of the program as they experienced the program in their then-current roles as district-level and school-site-level leaders. All 12 leaders perceived the BIC program remarkably similarly as a humane and pro-social mass feeding program that served a valuable purpose by successfully providing at-risk students important daily

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Table 4.1

BIC Stakeholder Leader/Participant Demographic Survey Results

Position/role	Age range	Years in district/school	Gender
District superintendent	50 - 59	7 mos - 2 yrs	Male
Food services director	35 - 49	Over 10 yrs	Female
Site principal A*	50 - 59	7 mos - 2 yrs	Male
Site principal B	50 - 59	6 yrs - 10 yrs	Female
Site teacher AL	50 - 59	Over 10 yrs	Female
Site teacher AU	35 - 49	6 yrs - 10 yrs	Male
Site teacher BL	26 - 34	6 yrs - 10 yrs	Female
Site teacher BU	35 - 49	6 yrs - 10 yrs	Female
Cafe manager A	35 - 49	3 yrs - 5 yrs	Female
Cafe manager B	60 - over	Over 10 yrs	Female
Day custodian A	60 - over	Over 10 yrs	Male
Day custodian B	50 - 59	6 yrs - 10 yrs	Male

*Schools A and B are two elementary schools within the same public unified school district
AL = School A Lower Grade Teacher (K-3)
AU = School A Upper Grade Teacher (Gr. 4-6)
BL = School B Lower Grade Teacher (K-3)
BU = School B Upper Grade Teacher (Gr. 4-6)

access to nutrition and health. The school district superintendent had the following to say

about the BIC program:

> Well, obviously, it's really important that kids have good nutrition and that they
> eat at least three times a day . . . so, health and well-being and then, having it in
> the classroom, to me, is just about, maybe efficiency and also school culture. But
> the real end result that we're looking for is making sure that every child has had a
> nutritious meal in the morning before they get rolling.

The cafeteria manager of School A similarly perceived the BIC program to be an

important support for students in need. She stated,

> The . . . Breakfast in the Classroom program . . . helps the kids eat before they start class, because most of the school starts really early and many just get up from bed and come straight to school . . . kids always just come on time…and they don't have, uh, probably, time to come to the cafeteria and eat breakfast and go back to class. So, limited time.

The four teachers, two lower grade teachers (K-3) and two upper grade teachers (grades 4-6) from School A and School B, respectively, shared similar views of the BIC program in that they perceived it to deliver important nutrition and health benefits to needy students. The lower grade teacher from School A stated,

> My perception of the program is . . . it ensures students are actually receiving some type of nutrition in the morning before they come to school or once they get there . . . to provide access to nutrition for all the students that attend who may not be getting that nutrition at home before they come to school.

The upper grade teacher from School A also referenced the importance of the delivery and consumption of the breakfast meal. He responded as follows:

> Well, I feel the purpose of the Breakfast in the Classroom is to have students eat breakfast because breakfast is, uh, the most important meal of the day. It gets them, their energy going, and many kids around, I know around this area, don't have that opportunity to eat breakfast. They get up, get dressed, skip breakfast, and then, they're a little lethargic later. So, with the breakfast, this way, they have that little extra energy, and it gets them a little more alert.

Participation Rates

A majority of interview participants perceived students' BIC student participation percentage as the most important piece of evidence to consider in determining whether or not the program was succeeding in meeting students' nutrition and health needs. School-site A lower grade teacher did not hesitate in stating that she perceived student participation rates to be the most important evidence to consider when determining whether or not the program was meeting her students' nutrition and health needs. Additionally, she perceived that BIC program participation rates were directly related to

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the menu choices available to students. She stated, "I would say just how many kids are eating, participation . . . They like the pancakes. They like the little waffles. The burritos they like. They don't necessarily finish them, but they like the burritos. Everything depends on the meal choice."

School-site B lower grade teacher also cited student breakfast participation rates as being the most important evidence to consider when determining whether or not the program was meeting the nutrition and health needs of her students. She stated,

> I think the way we've made changes to do it in the classroom has resulted in the numbers. I'd say the numbers would be the most significant evidence of breakfast program success. You know, the number of students who were eating before school before we did it this way was very few.

The district's food services supervisor, when asked to consider what evidence was most demonstrative of the program meeting the nutrition and health needs of youth, stayed close to home in reaffirming the centrality of student participation rates, but also acknowledged the program's potential impact on students and teachers in the classroom. She, too, referenced potentially important evidence such as student attendance, behavioral referrals, and student test scores, as follows:

> As far as my department is concerned, the participation model is the evidence that we use. I believe that probably the principal here could, get some input on research that I've read that says things that could be shown are attendance, you know, behavioral referrals are down, increases in test scores, things like that. That's not any information that I have access to. We just go off of participation level.

When asked how her opinion of the BIC program had changed over time, the district food services director reiterated her strong advocacy for the program because it delivered daily nutrition and health benefits to needy students, as well as supported the learning environment. She explained:

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I think that I've always been a big proponent of it . . . my personal belief is that, you know, all children deserve good, healthy acts of food. Everybody, regardless of income level, deserves food every day, every time they want it. So, breakfast in the classroom just kind of allows that philosophy to be borne out in a super positive way because kids who don't have access to food on a regular basis focus on nothing else. So I feel that we are supporting the learning environment by making sure that kids can get the food that they need so they're not worrying about what's happening here, in their stomach. They can worry about what's happening up here, in their brain.

Support for Food Insecure Families

In an effort to answer my first research question regarding leaders' perceptions of the BIC program, district-level and school-site-level leaders responded that they perceived the BIC program to serve an important purpose or role beyond the delivery of daily nutrition to students at school. Several interview participant leaders responded that they perceived the BIC program to fulfill an important social purpose in that it provided critical relief and support for food insecure or socio-economically disadvantaged families and households. These leaders perceived the BIC program to meet the needs of entire families of the children in their respective communities in which they serve. The school district's food service supervisor, when asked what she perceived to be the purpose of the BIC program, emphasized that the program served not only needy students, but also their families. She explained:

We find, especially in this area, that because a lot of parents work third shift, it's difficult to get kids here before school to get breakfast in the traditional manner. And, of course, kids who eat breakfast, there are tons of studies that show that a well-fed child in the morning learns better and has a better attention span. So, the Breakfast in the Classroom program allows us to capture those kids who don't have a chance to get there before school.

The school-site principal of School A, when asked the same question, echoed the

District Food Service Director's comments in that the BIC program's purpose was

inherently a community support service for entire families. Principal A responded,

> So, what I see as the purpose is to be able to make sure that our children who
> attend the school here, have the proper nutrition. Because that's not necessarily
> happening at home. So, that's how I see it, in our community, the Breakfast in the
> Classroom program serves our students and supports families.

Similarly, the school-site principal of School B highlighted the purported equalizing

effects of the BIC program for students and families living in food insecure households.

She put it this way:

> I think the purpose of the Breakfast in the Classroom program in this district is to
> give kids, an even start for the day. We have a high population of students who
> have food insecurities in the home because of, you know, income or two parents
> who work out of the home. So, frequently, prior to the Breakfast in the
> Classroom program, students would come to school hungry and not be able to
> focus on work or it sometimes might affect behavior . . . So Breakfast in the
> Classroom provides students the ability to have a successful start to the day and
> families don't have to worry to ensure their students have a daily morning meal.

When asked for his thoughts, the principal of School A replied that he thought it

was the right thing to do to for students in a high-poverty school community. He stated

the following:

> I mean I'm familiar with it, so, it wasn't like, "Oh, my gosh," or, "That's great," I
> mean, it's just something that we do. I think it's appropriate for a high poverty
> school, definitely. So, I was glad to see that we do have that as an option for us.
> So, I really didn't have, you know, any "A-hah" or any negativity toward it
> because I was familiar with the program and I know that it's good for where we
> are.

All four teachers stated that they recognized the importance of the BIC program

to the students and families they served. The lower grade teacher from School A stated

that she and her colleagues had come to accept the program and realized that the program

met the needs of the community. She shared the following:

> Yeah. I mean, we haven't really even talked about it, I would say, at all this year.
> It's just . . . it seems like people have just accepted it. And it seems like it meets
> the needs of the community. And I know that we have a migrant farm worker . . .
> agriculture worker population. And the parents typically will be out in the fields
> pretty early, which might be something to look at with participation rates being so
> high.

The lower grade teacher of School B stated that the BIC program had indeed had

a positive effect on her students and their families in the community. She stated,

> Yeah, it definitely has been beneficial for our population. I believe in our district
> that this is probably the most low income area. And I can see where other
> schools, you know, in higher income areas wouldn't necessarily benefit because I
> would guess a lot of students can and prefer to eat at home.

The upper grade teacher from School B stated that the program had had a positive impact

on students and their parents, many of whom were migrant farm workers who worked in

the strawberry fields. She elaborated as follows:

> I think it's been really positive for our students and also for our parents. I think
> parents are very thankful that they don't have to go out of their way to make sure
> the kids eat at home and like I mentioned before, a lot of the kids' parents work in
> the strawberry fields. They live in one household and then they have about five,
> six families sharing that one house. That's the situation of a lot of our kids, and
> so a lot of the kids mentioned, 'I have to get up at 5:00 and go with somebody
> else,' And then the babysitter gets them ready, brings them here . . .

Academic Benefits

In an effort to answer my first research question regarding leaders' perceptions of

the BIC program, participants responded that they perceived the BIC program to provide

several academic-related benefits for students and teachers, including students' improved

overall school readiness and energy levels, on-task attention and behavior, relationships

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with others, improved attendance, and improved classroom learning environment and classroom culture. The district superintendent said he perceived the BIC program could provide benefits beyond nutrition, namely that the program could possibly impact student engagement and connectedness in a good environment. He stated,

> The level of engagement and connectedness should be stronger and better. So just kind of making sure that kids eat and that they eat in a good environment and they're not rushed . . . there are a lot of other things that could come out of that, as well as, if at all possible . . . the purpose of eating can be more than just nutrition.

The cafeteria manager of School B referred to the program's relationship-building purpose and re-emphasized the importance of ensuring student participation, noting,

> Well, what I think the purpose is, is well, they get to eat in a smaller group, because they're in their classroom with their classmates so it's more intimate. It also ensures all participate, in the kind of classroom setting and climate that ensures that all of them have the opportunity to eat.

> Both, School A and School B daytime custodians perceived improved student

academic achievement, rooted in perceived improved student concentration, as important academic benefits perceived to be related to the BIC program. School A daytime custodian offered enthusiastically:

> I guess maybe our test scores because I believe that, you know, if the kids have eaten, have the energy in them, I think they'll concentrate more. You know, and I think it's a big plus, because our test scores have gone up. And . . . you know, our teachers, every . . . all of us, are pretty jazzed. And I think it does, the breakfast program does help a lot with that.

School B daytime custodian perceived students' increased concentration in the classroom as an essential academic benefit. He stated:

> Well, the thing is for me, in the classrooms is better, because I think that the kids can eat and concentrate more . . . Kids used to concentrate more on playing, but now that they're ready in class . . . I think with the kids I see the potential. You don't have a choice. Eat your breakfast and you're ready to go to work in class because they have observation and supervision from the teachers.

The principals from School A and School B both perceived classroom behavior

and academic performance to be important academic benefits related to the BIC program.

The principal from School A stated the following:

> You know, I come from a different area and when I came to the school, the positive behavior that the kids exhibit impressed me. You would expect in the elementary setting that most behavior referrals would come from the highest grade level because traditionally, that's where they come from. Here, they're coming from the lower grade levels and those are the grade levels where we don't serve breakfast and that's why . . . that's one of the other reasons that I have been really pushing this . . . there is a link to full bellies and discipline and academic success. So, uh, I see it as something that's very important for the success of the school to make sure that our kids are fed.

The principal from School B perceived student academic achievement and the

fact that at her school the BIC program had been in practice long enough to the extent

that the program had become part of the school culture as important evidence to consider

when determining whether or not the BIC was successful. She said,

> I suppose student achievement . . . so, performance on standardized types of assessments or even benchmark assessments. I think it's part of the culture now. I don't get, you know, complaints one way or the other. Breakfast in the Classroom, it's just, you know, built into the program so much now that it just happens.

Teachers perceived academic achievement as a result of improved attendance,

concentration, and family-type learning environment created as important academic

benefits of the BIC program. The upper grade teacher from School A echoed his

principal in perceiving student attendance as an important academic benefit. He stated,

> If anything, maybe the attendance part. You know, they're here . . . Like I said, I don't really have a problem with attendance this year. Everyone's here. They pick up their food item. Maybe it could be because of the breakfast . . . I think for some students who do choose to pick up the breakfast items, they want to come in to eat something that day.

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Social Benefits

Both, the lower and upper grade teachers from School B stated that they perceived

a communal-type setting created as a result of the structure of the BIC program as an

important academic benefit. The lower grade teacher from School B described her

perception as follows:

> I can see, you know, it's kind of like eating dinner with your family, you know, all at a dinner table. When they're in the classroom we are, you know, it is a communal type setting where we're all participating, doing it together. You know, they are able to kind of chit-chat when we're done with our little business, we try to talk about, you know, things they've done on the weekend . . .

The upper grade teacher from School B stated similarly:

> So, participation, the kids are accessing meals. Also, a sense of community, and a correlation with test scores. Teacher used to complain, because it took them longer to get started and to, you know, to participate. Now, the breakfast process is super fast. Kids eat their breakfast, they eat and they're happy and, you know, fulfilled. So, I'm sure that's had an impact, a positive impact on their grades, but I don't have hard evidence, you know, in my hand.

The district superintendent perceived the BIC program to have the ability to create

improved classroom cultures. He noted the following:

> I think feeding of kids is really important. The better quality and the better it all works out in terms of access and participation, nothing but good stuff is going to come from that. Then, you can build upon that in terms of opportunities for developing other things through that process. So, when you hear the Breakfast in the Classroom Program, to me it sounds like, "Well, it has a potential to have improved classroom cultures." It could be a culture created like that or it could be something that is handed down from the top that nobody wants to do.

Overall Positive Academic Impact on Students

All 12 interview participants were asked how their district's/school's

implementation of the BIC program had impacted students. Participant's responses

indicated that the BIC program was perceived to have had an overall positive impact on

students. For example, participants perceived that the BIC program had generated or improved the classroom culture or atmosphere, facilitated greater access to and participation in the daily BIC program, improved the conditions for eating, improved students' abilities to learn, created a more supportive and personalized staff interaction with students, improved students' in-classroom behaviors and attention span, provided good nutrition, and met the needs of the family and community. The district superintendent perceived that classroom cultures, student participation, and eating conditions were just some of the school-related benefits the BIC program provided. He noted:

> My guess would be that more students eat and my hope, too, would be that our classroom cultures would be better for greater access for all students . . . greater participation, as well as the conditions of the eating. So that's something that would be good to look at. How many students actually eat their breakfast, or self-report that they eat their breakfast? How many students say that the environment for eating is better in the classroom or in the cafeteria? I know that we're a predominately low-income community, so the food that students eat is really important to them nutritionally and, generally, is valued very highly. Some adults get all worked up that kids throw away a lot of stuff and to me that is so easily adjusted. Our kids are hungry and they do want to eat. The variables to make it more idealized are pretty easy to address and, I think, the Breakfast in the Classroom is just one kind of delivery system that, perhaps, can, you know, head in the right direction along those lines.

When asked how her district's/school's implementation of the BIC program had impacted students, the district food services supervisor perceived improved student focus, ability to learn, and students feeling supported and important to the adults on campus as positive impacts of the BIC program. She shared the following:

> I think that it's really helped with their ability to focus. It's helped with their ability to learn. They feel supported. They feel important. The staff knows who the students are. So they ask them, you know, "How was your math test yesterday?" They celebrate with them when things go right. You know, so really just making students feel important, making them feel that we're here to help

them, impacts them in ways that really, we can never measure, unfortunately. It just makes them know that school is a safe place where they get fed, they feel cared about, and they want to come.

When asked how his district's/school's implementation of the BIC program had impacted his students, the principal of School A noted that it would be interesting to track student discipline referral data for next year's second and third grade students (2014-2015) based on the fact that next year's second and third grade level classrooms would actually participate in the BIC program that occured in the classroom setting. He was of the belief that the BIC program produced a positive impact on student behavior and learning, when BIC program implementation was done with fidelity, meaning that breakfast consumption occurred in the classroom setting. He noted the following:

> OK, I don't know the impact yet until we really roll out what I call phase two of our breakfast in the classroom, and that's really addressing the fact that first through third grade does not do it currently with fidelity. If you were to come back at the end of next year, I would be interested to see how my referrals drop in grades one and two, um, and how the behavior changes in those grade levels. Actually, I . . . it'd be interesting to track those students who are now in first and second grade that will be second and third grade next year and see, the amount of office referrals that occur next year versus what's going on this year.

When asked how her district's/school's implementation of the BIC program had impacted her students, the cafeteria manager of School A stated, "It helps the kids learn. There are fewer behavior problems, and students no longer have empty stomachs and ask, 'When is it going to be lunch time?'" When asked the same question, cafeteria manager of School B perceived the creation of a better classroom and school atmosphere and a familial setting created by the structure of the BIC program. She explained further:

> I think it's had a good impact, instead of all coming into the cafeteria where they would be crowded . . . they're going into their classrooms, where . . . you're in a small group eating your breakfast and it just seems much nicer and much more controllable. It's kind of like a family. I mean, it's your family for the day, when

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you're in the classroom. And then, I mean, you're talking too, I suppose, and your teacher's talking and it just seems like a better atmosphere.

Flaws and Challenges

In response to my first research question, district-level and school-site-level leaders also described specific challenges that existed at the district level and/or at their respective school sites that challenged BIC program effectiveness. At the district level, both the district superintendent and his director of food services perceived that BIC program effectiveness was challenged by burdensome compliance and safety issues, some unpopular menu choices, a resulting "mess" created by spills, rodents and bugs, and more issues that could and sometimes did adversely impact teaching and learning time. The superintendent stated:

> One, I guess, is appropriate food service and getting food to kids . . . that has taken amazing levels of compliance in rules and regulations now. There's just a tremendous amount of regulation and data and safety issues that need to be addressed. The flip side is teachers' concerns and one of the teachers' concerns that I've heard before, you know, it's just things getting spilled in the classroom, things not being cleaned, or, consumption of instructional time. We're doing really good along those lines, but, but one of the things that I've found in surveying kids for a very long time is that no matter how good your food program is, kids and parents will always survey that the food could be better.

The district food services director also perceived challenges posed by burdensome compliance paperwork, safety concerns, and faculty resistance, as the greatest challenges to BIC program effectiveness. She stated the following:

> Well, you know, like I said before, unfortunately there are always some faculty who are not behind the program. They really do feel that it takes away from their instruction minutes even though Tom Torlakson--our superintendent--has said it down not and it can be . . . time can be used towards instruction. There's, of course, also, in food service, there is a ton of, you know, laws, and regulations, and things behind it. But I feel that we always approach, especially somebody who's hesitant to try a program . . . If we can, you know, just all agree that it's good for kids, then it shakes out much better because everyone is like, "Okay.

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Well, if the goal is something that's good for kids, let's try and get there." I think that giving them a voice and asking them, you know, "What are you finding a challenge about it? How can we help you?" is a really good way to get them more on the offensive than defensive.

The district food services supervisor elaborated further on her initial concerns

about perceived safety challenges, as follows:

My only concern when it comes to that sort of thing is how can we do it safely. How can we keep food at the proper temperature? How can we make sure kids are not putting food in their backpack that could make them sick later? So just making sure we have the right equipment for food safety and that sort of thing, you know, making sure that they get the food in a timely manner and things like that.

Both principal of School A and principal of School B were very clear about what

they perceived to be the greatest challenges to BIC program effectiveness. They both

perceived that "the mess" and subsequent loss of instructional time to top the list of

challenges. The principal of School A noted the following:

I think overcoming the . . . messy items. At my former district, Breakfast in the Classroom was a mess when it first started. So we're talking, literally, the mess of little kids eating at their desk. We are in agricultural area, so we do get creatures that visit when there are messes that are left behind. The other thing is the, the teachers are very concerned that Breakfast in the Classroom will really interrupt their instructional schedule. That's a huge concern, that it will just take too much time. Now, the history of the school is we've got kids that are traditionally, second language learners. We have a high population of second language learners, including Hispanic and Mixteco. And every minute that they're not teaching is something that they feel is lost. It's valuable lost time.

Principal of School B identified spills, time, messy homework papers, clogged pipes,

unpleasant odors, mice and insects, as real challenges to BIC program effectiveness. She

stated the following:

I've tried to control for some of it. But, you know, the spills in the classroom, the amount of time it takes to eat specific items. Maybe some items take longer to eat than others or they're sticky and then kids get sticky on the desk or on their papers. Some teachers try to use that time not just for breakfast in the classroom,

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but they're doing calendar . . . homework. And so it is, it is a setback if a student spills a milk or whatever it is that they're eating gets onto their papers. One of the other things that was happening with the lower grades is that they didn't necessarily finish all their milk, pour it down the sink drain in the classroom and the pipes clog up all the time. We have to have the plumber out here to unclog the pipes. And then it smells bad. The other thing is that adversely impacts the implementation of the program is that it does require that the trash be picked up right afterwards. Otherwise there is, you know . . . it can attract, you know, varmints or once in a while we get mice in the classroom. And then once in a while we get, you know, sightings of cockroaches in the classrooms. And then, and then we also have to have additional staff to go pick up the boxes.

When asked what challenges existed at her school that adversely impacted implementation of the BIC program, the cafeteria manager of School A indicated that no challenges existed with the program during the 2013-2014 academic year, but that she anticipated the likelihood of challenges to BIC implementation during the 2014-2015 academic year as a result of her school's expected expansion of the BIC program to all grade level classrooms. She stated:

Well, we haven't experiences any . . . any this year. Because we've been having it, um, breakfast in class and breakfast in line, so it's been smooth. But next year it's going to be all breakfast in class, and it's going to be something totally new for us. We're not going to know until the beginning of the year how the . . . how many kids are going to actually be gonna coming in, or how are we going to be moving around. But, I . . . eventually, we are going to need and will probably receive more support from our supervisor.

Cafeteria manager of School B noted the following anticipated challenges associated with BIC program growth:

Well our school next year, we are getting bigger, we're adding more students, so I mean, that's a challenge in itself. I mean it's a challenge because we're going to have so many more students, you know, to serve. Because we're going to get seventh graders here . . . Right now we're packing for 16 classes, but we have two bags for each class, so you're actually packing 32 bags. I come in a six in the morning, and then I have . . . one of my co-workers comes in at 6:30. Breakfast is served at 7:30, so all those carts have to be out there by 7:30. And if you're cooking something it takes time even though it's pre-packaged. So, you're just on such a strict timeframe. So that's a big challenge.

Daytime custodian of School A, like all teachers, referred to the challenges associated with the mess left behind whenever spills happen. He responded,

> The mess that the kids can create in a classroom. Um, plugged sinks, spills on the floor, and excess trash. Sometimes, the students, you know, they're not going to go to a trash can and throw it away in there. They throw it on the floor. So I spend a good amount of my day picking up a lot of that from the ground.

He elaborated further:

> . . . the mess, the litter, it's a constant. I still get plugged sinks in the upper grade and you know, just messes, you know? Sometimes, maybe they'll spill the milk and no one will call me, so people have stepped in the milk and tracked the whole classroom. Instead of me just coming in to do one simple job . . . And my time is pretty limited in the morning. I mean, our time, we're like almost on a time schedule, and if one classroom puts me 15 minutes longer in there, it takes away from my other classrooms.

Daytime custodian of School B appeared to look beyond the daily realities of spills as challenges and instead, appeared to define them more as "opportunities." He responded:

> Well, for me, mine is not a challenge. For me it's an enjoyment for, you know, to do my ability to work in the school. You know? I'm enjoying doing that. My job is to clean up after the kids. And, you know, clean, you know, the trash and, and, you know, and for me it's not a . . . I'm happy. Like I told you, you know, I'm happy to do it, because it's part of my responsibility. Sometimes you feel like you have a lot, but the thing is, if you coordinate your job and the time being . . . it is part of my responsibility.

As might have been expected, all teachers responded that spills and resulting losses to instructional time posed the greatest challenges to BIC Program effectiveness. The upper grade teacher from School A referred to the mess created by spills and the additional challenge of clogged sinks as a result of unconsumed milk as two challenges that adversely impacted the BIC program implementation at his school. He noted the following:

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> In the past, it would be, if they had something, like, for example, syrup, they would spill it on their desks or on the floors, and it's . . . more time for them to pick it up. But, they've done away with the syrup. It's . . . I guess now, the choices are if they have pancakes, the syrup is somehow inside the meal already so there's no mess. Um, the other part is the milk. We have bad sinks here. So, I have my students dump the milk out in the grass because if we put it in the sink, they tend to clog a lot . . .

The lower grade teacher from School B, responded similarly. She stated:

> I guess possibly, you know, spills or, you know, leaving food behind, but I've never had a problem with rodents. You know, spills typically, they don't happen often enough for it to really be a huge problem. It can take away from instructional time if teachers allow it to go, you know, past a certain time. I feel like 8:00 is a good cut off. I just feel like the advantages outweigh the challenges because otherwise, you know, you're going to have students who are sitting there hungry and thinking about, you know, their basic needs before they can learn how to read.

The upper grade teacher from School A admitted to having reservations about anticipated losses to instructional time based on messes and spills and an adverse impact on a busy custodial staff. Even with these challenges, he had maintained his support for the BIC program:

> Initially, I thought it was going to take time off their educational time and it's going to cause a lot more mess and work for our custodian, who already has a busy schedule. And I wasn't thrilled at first, to be honest with you, but, I do see how some students . . . do pick up something . . . So initially, I wasn't very thrilled with it but, as it went on, I really enjoyed the program.

The lower grade teacher from School B shared initial concerns about a lack of understanding of the logistics of the BIC program, a fear of messes to clean up, and a resulting loss of instructional time, but described getting past initial challenges based on her understanding of perceived benefits of the BIC program. She described her thoughts this way:

> Just how is this going to work? It seemed like it was going to be very chaotic. It was going to take away, you know, instructional time, that there would be a mess

every day to have to clean up. That was I feel like everyone's concern. And it's like once we kind of worked out all the logistics of it all, I want to say most teachers kind of got past that because of all the benefits of having it.

Research Question 2: What Best Practices, Program Models, Resources, and/or Other Considerations Are Needed to Ensure BIC Program Success at the School Site Level?

Modifications to the BIC Program During Implementation

In an effort to answer my second research question regarding what best practices, program models, resources, and/or other considerations were needed to ensure BIC program success at the school site level, district-based and school-based leaders acknowledged inherent flaws in the BIC and cited the need to modify the BIC program to best fit their students' and their classrooms' respective needs. These leaders noted that modifications and program flexibility were valued and essential ingredients to a successful BIC Program. The district superintendent and the district's food services supervisor both described the district schools' practice of modifying its BIC programs. The food services supervisor highlighted School A's BIC program as follows:

> So, it's actually kind of a modified program, because we found that there was some push-back from the teachers of the . . . of what I call the "little littles," like the Ks and the ones, the ones who need extra assistance either opening packaging. They spill more often 'cause they're little little. So, um, our little littles group comes through here just, they can come before the bell, in the morning, or they can come after the bell. The older kids, those in grades 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, here actually pick up their, um, their, uh, hot and cold bags that we have on luggage carts 'cause they're the cheapest option, but they roll really well . . . and, um, usually, a yard duty will assist the firsts and seconds, but an, a student who's assigned by the teacher will come and pick it up in the morning, take it into the classroom. Um, some teachers hand the food out themselves. Some teachers let kids pick. Some teachers have other students who hand out. So it just, in that part of the program, we kind of let the teacher make the decision of what works best in their classroom. So we found we got better buy-in if we let that sort of, that section of the program be dictated by the teacher. 'Cause if we tried to make it too rigid, then some teachers were just not behind the program at all. And then without the teacher's buy-in, it just doesn't work very well.

School Site A principal noted that the primary reason for implementing a modified BIC Program was the mess the BIC program had apparently created prior to the modifications. Accordingly, he had decided to allow some teachers and grade levels to opt out of the classroom portion of their school's breakfast program. He noted:

> Breakfast in the Classroom was . . . a bit messy when it first started in our district. And our teachers in grades one through three did not want to participate in it, because there were a lot of, just, issues with the things that were being served and the mess that it had created in the classroom itself. So, what it looks like in those grades is we actually just feed kids in the cafeteria in the morning. So we open the cafeteria at 7:45 in the morning and kids are free to come in and get breakfast. In grades, kinder and grades 4 and 5, the breakfast is actually packed up into zippered pouches and then it's carted to the classrooms by foodservice worker and the kids actually do have breakfast in the classroom, at their desks in the morning. Then our custodian comes around to those locations and picks up the leftovers and the carts and bags and brings them back to the cafeteria where they then, you know, take care of the rest of it. So either repacking or reusing or throwing away what needs to be, you know, disposed of.

School Site B principal also described her school's need to modify the BIC program to meet her school's unique needs. She stated:

> So we do a variety of different approaches to Breakfast in the Classroom. Second through sixth grade students pick up their bags of the breakfast in the cafeteria and then take them out to the classroom. Then they have breakfast in the classroom. But kindergarten students actually eat in the cafeteria prior to their instructional minutes starting, because they arrive so early and instead of having them running around the campus, they have an opportunity to go into the cafeteria, sit, and have their breakfast. And then they go start their instructional minutes after they finish eating. At 7:45 we have another group of students. The first graders come in, and they get started on their breakfast. And then their instructional minutes start at 8:00, so they have a later start than everybody else in the school.

In response to the BIC modification question, the cafeteria managers for Schools A and B both highlighted the need for BIC Program flexibility. The cafeteria manager for School B described in some detail how her school implemented a modified BIC program. She described it this way:

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How we do it here, uh, all the classrooms don't have breakfast in the classroom. We have first, kindergarten, first graders, come in the morning, and they go through the line in the kitchen and get their breakfast. And then we have the second graders through the sixth, they get breakfast in the classroom. And we come in early in the morning, and we, whatever we're having for that break-breakfast that day, we prepare it, and we put it in the hot bags or the cold bags, then we put it on a cart, and we have their folder in it with their class name on it. And then as soon as they get to school, we have them all lined up outside, and they come, and they grab their cart, take it right to their classroom . . .

The four participating teachers described how they had been permitted to make modifications to the BIC Program in their respective classrooms to make it work for them. The lower grade teacher from School A described how the BIC program was implemented with modifications in her kindergarten classroom to take advantage of their nutrition and morning recess break time:

In kindergarten, it's served as part of our nutrition break whereas in the other grades it's served after the instructional day begins. For the kindergarten program here, breakfast is brought to the classroom before we actually take the break. And then once we're ready to take that nutrition break, I share with them what is available to them and then I excuse them to come and get their breakfast. If they choose not to participate, then they sit on the rug so that I can take my count. They eat at the table. They wait to be excused so we can make sure they clean up their area and then they're excused to go play.

The lower grade teacher from School B described her own classroom's modified implementation of the BIC program. She noted the following:

When the 8:00 bell rings, that's our cutoff. For, for myself, personally, it's . . . you're done. We, you know, throw it away, move on. If they're not finished, I allow them to put it in the back, and they can take it to recess with them. Um, but yeah, typically during that time, we're doing the morning business anyway, so we are, um, using that time for Breakfast in the Classroom.

Classroom Observations

In addition to conducting semi-structured interviews with 12 research participant leaders/stakeholders, I observed the BIC Program in four teacher participants' classrooms

and/or under their respective supervision in order to learn how the BIC Program was administered. I observed two lower grade classrooms (one Kindergarten classroom; one second grade classroom) and I observed two upper grade classrooms (one fifth grade classroom; one sixth grade classroom) from each of the two nearby elementary schools. To document my findings, I implemented the use of a Breakfast in the Classroom Observation Protocol (see Table 4.2).

The BIC program was administered in the actual classroom setting in three of four observations. Only the lower grade teacher from School A's classroom students did not actually eat breakfast inside their classroom, although these students selected breakfast items while inside their classroom setting just prior to relocating to tables just outside of their classroom. Additionally, the BIC program was allotted a total of 20 minutes during three of four observations, while the lower grade teacher from School B's BIC evolution was allotted a total of 15 minutes. Breakfast was picked up in the cafeteria and delivered to the respective classrooms on rolling carts by designated student helpers in three of four classrooms. Only lower grade teacher from School A's classroom had breakfast delivered to the classroom setting by an adult, specifically, a cafeteria worker.

In three of four settings, teachers were the sole adult in the classroom, while in lower grade classroom from School A, three adults were present, including the teacher, a paraprofessional, and a parent volunteer. Three of four classroom teachers facilitated a variety of morning business routines during my observations. Morning business routines observed in these three classrooms included a general welcome by the teachers with announcements, homework collection, classroom discussion about a variety of topics,

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Table 4.2

Breakfast in the Classroom Observation Protocol Summary

Breakfast in the Classroom Observation Protocol		
BIC topics	Observation(s)	Reflection(s)
BIC room/other location	School A kdgtn. – classroom/outside tables School A 5th gr. – classroom School B 2nd gr. – classroom School B 6th gr. – classroom	Any problems with spills or excess trash on playground; addl. messes cited by custodial Students appear to know BIC routines; Student helpers established;

BIC Time Started: Time Ended:	School A Kdgtn.
	  9:10 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
	School A 5th gr.
	  8:10 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
	School B 2nd gr.
	  7:50 a.m. – 8:05 a.m.
	School B 6th gr.
	  7:45 a.m. – 8:05 a.m.
		BIC provided 15-20 minutes from start to finish. Is this enough time? Is it too long?

How was BIC delivered to classroom?	School A Kdgtn. – cafeteria worker delivered School A 5th gr. – designated student helper School B 2nd gr. – designated student helper School B 6th gr. – designated student helper	Understandable why adult delivered to Kdgtn. Good plan to have students take ownership for delivery of breakfast bags; creates leadership opportunities for students and establishes daily routine.
What is/are adult(s) doing?	School A kdgtn. – transition from instruction to breakfast/morning recess School A 5th gr. – facilitating morning business School B 2nd gr. – facilitating morning business School B 6th gr r. – facilitating morning business	Are Kdgtn. Students going to feel excited to play rather than eat? Is this a good idea to have breakfast outside at the play area and during recess time? Are all teachers doing the same morning business/routines? Are they expected to follow some clear plan during BIC?
Number of adults present	School A kdgtn. – three School A 5th gr. – one School B 2nd gr. – one School B 6th gr. – one	Do all classrooms have enough support?

Table 4.1

Continued

	Breakfast in the Classroom Observation Protocol	
BIC topics	Observation(s)	Reflection(s)
Adult(s) role(s)/title(s)	School A kdgtn. – teacher, classroom paraprofessional; parent volunteer School A 5th gr. – teacher School B 2nd gr. – teacher School B 6th gr. – teacher	Do all classrooms have enough support?
Any spills?	School A kdgtn. – no School A 5th gr. – no School B 2nd gr. – no School B 6th gr. – no	How have students improved in this area? Are food items packaged and/or prepared in a way to minimize drips and spills? Waffles or pancakes with "built-in" syrup?
Trash left behind?	School A kdgtn. – bagged for custodial p/up. School A 5th gr. – bagged for custodial p/up. School B 2nd gr. – bagged for custodial p/up. School B 6th gr. – bagged for custodial p/up.	Seems a relatively efficient and clean operation on observation days.
Number of meals accessed?	School A kdgtn. – 20/27 School A 5th gr. – 16/31 School B 2nd gr. – 27/31 School B 6th gr. – 11/25	Why aren't more students choosing to access breakfast? Meal choice a possibility, per 3/4 teachers in the classroom. What other factors could be at play? Attendance/ tardies? Classroom environment? Teacher buy-in? Lack of adult support to facilitate breakfast consumption? Structure of BIC during morning recess = competition for students' interest?
Number of meals not accessed?	School A kdgtn. – 7/27 School A 5th gr. – 15/31 School B 2nd gr. – 4/31 School B 6th gr. – 14/25	See questions/comments above.

Table 4.1

Continued

Breakfast in the Classroom Observation Protocol		
BIC topics	Observation(s)	Reflection(s)
Number/kinds of items remaining?	School A kdgtn. – 7 sets-crumb cakes, apples, milk School A 5th gr. – 15 sets-crumb cakes, apples, milk School B 2nd gr. – 4 sets-flatbread w/sausage/egg, apples/plums, milk School B 6th gr. – 14 sets-flatbread w/sausage/egg, apples/plums, milk	To what extent does meal choice impact meal access? To what extent do absences/tardies impact meal access?
What happens to remaining BIC items?	All classrooms – remaining items returned to cafeteria/trash/snacks for day in class	Does the school have a food donation program established to provide unaccessed food to a shelter? Are teachers permitted to store food in the classroom and provide students food throughout the day?

delivering, serving, transition from BIC, post-breakfast laptop/netbook internet surfing or research, and attendance-taking. In one classroom, breakfast was distributed in the classroom and taken to tables just outside the classroom during a morning recess period and after a morning instructional block of time. I observed no spills or other food-related messes in any of the four classrooms at any time and all BIC-related trash was bagged, tied, and placed outside of each classroom for custodial pick-up.

In terms of the number of breakfast meals accessed, the results were mixed. Twenty of 27 students in lower grade classroom from School A accessed a full meal, while 16 of 31 students in the upper grade classroom from the same school accessed a full breakfast meal. In School B, t27 of 31 total students in the lower grade classroom accessed a full meal, while in the upper grade classroom, just 11 of 25 total students

accessed a full meal. On the days of my observations, in three of four classrooms, any

breakfast items that students had selected from the breakfast bags but were not eaten were

placed on a designated table in the classroom and later bagged for trash and custodial

pick-up. In one classroom, the lower grade Classroom from School B, remaining food

items were taken by the teacher and placed in a classroom refrigerator for snacks for

students throughout the day or for a Friday Fruit party. I observed no food donation

system or program in place in any classroom, school, and/or in place at the district level.

Table 4.2 summarizes my four BIC observations as documented on one Breakfast

in the Classroom' observation protocol. In the left column, I listed BIC topics. In the

middle column, I listed observation(s). In the right column, I listed reflection(s) in

response to my observations of the respective classrooms.

Leaders' Recommendations

In order to address my second research question, "What best practices, program

models, resources, and/or other considerations are needed to ensure BIC program success

at the school site level?" school-site-based and district-based leaders made several

recommendations based on their perceived need to make accommodations to the program

and/or to otherwise differentiate BIC Program implementation in order to make it work.

Leaders' responses during the semi-structured interviews, even when highlighting

frustration with various logistical flaws that existed in the BIC program, reflected a

general regard for, care and concern for the BIC program. The following themes and

recommendations emerged from these data, including the need for and importance of: (a)

School-site level support; (b) Differentiated BIC implementation; (c) Improved menu

choices; and (d) Establishment of a food donation program or classroom storage system.

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These findings corroborated what I observed in that I concluded that leaders perceived the BIC program to be a valuable program that required modifications to it in order to make it work better in teachers' respective classrooms. Additionally, leaders perceived participation rates and the amount of leftover or wasted food to be strongly related to BIC program menu choices available and accordingly, recommended that menu choices be reviewed and upgraded for flavor and for nutritional reasons. Leaders' also perceived school site support for the program, from teacher buy-in to actual investments in support personnel who can help to clean up spills and empty trash, to those who would allow teachers to make modifications to the program, as important for overall program success. Lastly, leaders recommended the implementation of a schoolwide food donation program or classroom storage system to donate food to those in need inside or outside of the school or classroom to otherwise provide snacks to hungry students throughout the day.

School-Site Level Support

In an effort to answer my second research question, I asked district-level and school-site-level leaders what kinds of support existed or should exist at the school site level to facilitate a successful BIC program. As a result, interview participants highlighted the importance of school stakeholder support, including teacher buy-in, principal support, district-level support, parent support, and student support in facilitating a successful program. The district superintendent, himself, highlighted the importance of teamwork and manpower to ensure that the BIC program is successful. He noted the following:

> Well, obviously, you really need to have the principal, the teacher, the custodian, and the, food service folks, all working together to make sure that the challenges or potential downsides to that type, are diminished to the greatest degree. And,

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so, obviously, you want rooms to be clean and you don't want to deal with spills. You want to make sure that the food is warm and that the pluses outweigh the minuses.

The district food services supervisor also highlighted the importance of an involved and supportive principal and school cafeteria manager, an organized school cafeteria team, and the importance of having appropriate equipment to support a successful BIC program. She stated:

> Well, there are a couple of things. A really involved principal is very helpful. School principal A, it's his first year here with us. He did the Breakfast in the Classroom Program in his previous school district, so that was really helpful because there's always going to be a couple of teachers on every campus who do not like the program. The other really important part of it is a site leader or a site manager in the kitchen who is behind the program, understands why it's important, and makes sure that the cafeteria team is very well organized. And of course, the equipment considerations, what works best. Is it a hard side cooler? Is it a soft sided bag? All of those need to be taken into account.

School Site principal A echoed the importance of personnel support and a change to messy menu items to ensure the facilitation of a successful BIC program. He stated:

> I have three morning duty personnel that are here. They're not school employees but they're hired hourly and they do my parking lot duty, they do my recess, they do my lunch, you know, that type of thing, lunch supervision and cleanup. So that's what I'm looking at is assisting the teachers. And that was kind of a negotiating chip that I had in order to, you know, meet the objections of my teachers, you know, as far as the mess is concerned. The other thing . . . is that the menu items have changed from messy to a lot neater, they've gone to a lot of pre-packaged. They've gotten rid of the liquid syrup that used to be around that was a mess. So, um, the breakfast items appear to be a lot better, um, than they used to be, you know, in terms of creating a mess, and be a lot, you know, easier to eat. Almost like, you know, finger food type, type stuff.

School Site principal B also cited the importance of supervision personnel as an important kind of support to ensure the facilitation of a successful BIC program. She said:

So in the second . . . well, for instance, for, for kinder and first graders eating in the cafeteria, I do have to provide noon duty or rather supervisory personnel. So it does require additional support. And then, in the cafeteria, for the ones eating in the cafeteria, parents also help out because they'll be in the cafeteria with their kindergartens who just arrived. And, you know, they're nice enough to open milk for other kids or get them to get going. In the classroom, there is no one assisting the teacher unless that teacher has a classroom volunteer, which some of them or a lot of them do. The kids actually pick up the breakfast cart from the cafeteria and wheel it out to the classroom . . . and then the teacher designates a spot in the classroom for them to be given out. And then how it's distributed in the classroom is up to the teacher. Some of them have a classroom, like it's the assigned task of a person in the classroom.

The cafeteria manager of each school responded that support personnel, such as custodial staff, noon duty aides, and teachers were essential to the operation of an effective BIC program. The cafeteria manager of School A highlighted strong custodial support and trash pick-up as then-existing and important supports for their BIC program and hoped that their level of support continued into the 2014-2015 academic year during which they anticipated BIC program expansion. The cafeteria manager of School B stated that existing support personnel were essential to an effective BIC program implementation. Specifically, cafeteria manager B stated, "Our noon duty aides are a big help, also the teachers in the classroom make sure they put the count of how many students eat, so they help us, help implement it."

When asked the same question about what support was needed at the school site level in order to facilitate a successful BIC program, daytime custodian from School B emphasized parent support for the BIC program as critically important to the BIC Program success, as follows:

Parents give support, and you receive feedback from the kids, because the parents, the majority of the parents are working in, in early in the morning and sometimes don't have enough time to feed the kids. And I think, but they're so happy to have this program for, for the kids. We've got 100% support from the district

office. Also, you know, to support, you know, everything goes related to the kids, to support the kids. Noon duty aides and they have support. We've got here . . . five support noon duties aides who support the kids, make sure there is safety and make sure that everybody eats.

The teachers from School A and School B praised custodial and cafeteria staff support, as well as student helpers, and described the way such support ensured BIC program effectiveness in their respective schools and classrooms. The upper grade teacher from School A stated,

We have a wonderful kitchen aide who has a variety of food choices that students can choose from. The custodian picks up the breakfast in the upper grade, and he cleans up in the cafeteria. In my classroom, I have student helpers . . . they're in charge of monitoring who picks up breakfast.

The district food services director elaborated further by reiterating her view that teacher support for the BIC program and support for modeling good nutrition habits in front of the students were important to meeting BIC program goals and ultimately, to program success. She shared her views, as follows:

I think that just getting teachers to understand why it's important that kids get fed good, healthy, protein-centered breakfast. I wish that I could get those teachers who I see come on campus with fast food choices, Coke, you know, all of those things that are linked with long-term health problems and obesity because, I think, that sometimes, adults forget that.

Differentiated BIC Implementation

In an effort to address my second research question, district-level and school-site-level leaders also recommended the need for BIC procedural and structural flexibility through differentiated implementation schemes that schools tailored to meet the unique needs of their students, teachers, and community. For example, the principal of School A stated that school meals, in general, should be made available at any time throughout the school day, not just during a designated breakfast time. Additionally, he suggested a

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comprehensive review of all aspects of the BIC program to ensure that the program

would continue to be implemented efficiently and effectively, albeit in a differentiated

fashion in each school. He expounded on the concept of BIC differentiation, as follows:

> Kids should be able to eat at any time during the day. If they are hungry, you know, they'd all have, always have snacks in there. I bring snacks to school. You know, granola bar, whatever, and they would have to ask permission, but if they needed to eat because they were hungry, then by all means, they were OK to eat. That's the culture I had in my classroom. So, I'm trying to instill that culture here. Also, it's looking at the time it takes for the kids to eat breakfast. It's looking at, is the distribution going well? Is the cleanup going well? Take a look at the behavior statistics. Take a look at the academic achievement for students in those lower grades, and really monitor that on a regular basis so that we can make the breakfast in the classroom successful for our culture and our environment. Also, there's no one way to do it. It needs to look different for every school, and that's . . . just like instruction in the classroom needs to look different for every school, because every school serves a different culture. So, we will make it our own, and we will make it our own through feedback loops that come from the teachers, through myself, and we will make adjustments as we move forward to make it successful here.

Similarly, the principal of School B suggested that a second chance breakfast

opportunity be made available for students who were not hungry the first time BIC was

offered, perhaps at a morning recess or morning nutrition period. She explained it

accordingly:

> I guess ideally, one of the things that I've seen at another school is there would be a second chance kind of breakfast for some kids. Whether it'd be an additional portion or whether it be that they weren't hungry at the first time that it was offered, but they are hungry by 10 o'clock. You know, and that second chance, whether it'd be at their recess, that would be an ideal time where they can come and decide to have their breakfast then.

The lower grade teacher from School B wondered about a return to the school's previous

policy of serving breakfast during the morning recess time, so that the BIC program

doesn't take away any time from classroom instruction. She recalled the following:

We used to provide it at recess time, so that it's not taking away any minute from instruction, but whenever we did that, whether it was the regular school year or summer school, students preferred to play rather than eat. Now, you know, we do our reading and math, you know, first thing in the morning so we want our students to be ready to go so I don't know if returning to a breakfast at recess time would be a benefit, it's just an idea. We kind of go with the flow.

Finally, the upper grade teacher from School B called for a change of venue from classroom breakfast to breakfast in the cafeteria so as to better deal with, in her opinion, supervision and spills, and advocated for a return to a singular focus of eating during eating time. She explained the following:

> I think it would be better if everyone would eat in the cafeteria. Because they would be forced to eat at least even, like, if it's a banana . . . I'm either doing, you know, here and there, and I don't necessarily pay attention that everyone is eating something but I know that if they go through the cafeteria and they have that process that everyone is eating something, it'll work better because it, it's a place for eating, you can house and supervise lot more kids, and if they were to just provide more healthy, prioritize healthy stuff for the kids, I think that would be wonderful, yeah.

Improved Menu Choices

In an effort to address my second research question, district-level and school-site-level leaders also made the recommendation that BIC menu choices be improved in order to ensure that all students eat breakfast so they can learn. Unlike her School A colleague who recommended no program changes at the time of the interview, the Cafeteria manager of School B recommended an improved breakfast menu to ensure BIC program success as defined by improved participation rates. She noted the following:

> To only serve what they like. Menu choices. I've, been looking at the menu for next year and we have some of the same things on there. Like for example, what we had today, so why are we having that on there, if they don't like that, you know? I mean these are changes that I would make myself. When we have manager's meetings and things, we mention foods they don't like, you know, that they don't care for. And on those days, we have less participation.

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The daytime custodian of School B also recommended greater variety be added to the breakfast menu choices and stated that he hoped there would be enough State money to continue what he perceived to be a valuable BIC program.

> This is a hard question, because, for me, I'd like to see more variety of food, but it's hard to make, to cook. Especially they have to get enchiladas. They get taquitos. You know, free tacos. I bet you that would make an impact. I hope this program, we have enough money to continue with this program and the state continues to provide the breakfast for the kids. Like I told you before, you know, empty stomach, empty head.

For her part, the upper grade teacher from School B stated what improvements she recommended be made to the BIC program. She responded,

> I just wish that, you know, we would have different, more options for students, more fruit rather than carbs. That's just my personal . . . waters maybe instead of juice. I mean we're not providing juice but maybe just water instead of milk because I know that in my class, they don't drink the milk. That and more menu variety.

Establishment of a Food Donation Program or Classroom Storage System

Finally, in an effort to address my second research question, district-level and school-site-level leaders recommended the establishment of a food donation program or a classroom storage system to reduce the amount of food that was wasted on a daily basis. The daytime custodian of School A made the connection between menu choices and the amount of wasted food, noting that he thought it would be a good idea to improve BIC menu choices in order to reduce the amount of wasted food. Additionally, he was the strongest advocate for the establishment of a food donation program or a classroom storage system to facilitate the pick-up and donation of extra food that would otherwise go to waste. He stated the following:

> . . . I think our staff, the district as a whole, try to give them some food that they really like, but, sometimes, they put things out that the kids don't like. And it all

winds up in the trash. And, then, these trash cans do get heavy. You know, sometimes, I believe apples should be cut for them, because they take one bite and then they toss the whole apple. There is a lot of wasted food and there is no pick-up program or set aside system in place.

For his part, the upper grade teacher from School A also alluded to the

establishment of a classroom storage program or system for certain foods. He

questioned,

I wonder if there will be a certain time limit that we have to get breakfast in and out or if we can save food for those students even though they're absent or late? I wonder if we can just hold on to something like the granola bars that won't need to be refrigerated. Anything that we could store . . .

Finally, the district superintendent recommended that the BIC program be

reviewed comprehensively over time in order to determine how much food was

consumed and how much was discarded. He stated:

I think you need to really kind of shape out the variables and look at . . . issues over a long time. When you do have a place like ours where some are doing and some don't, then that's something where you can do a little comparative analysis. It might be useful to do an analysis of how much food is actually consumed . . . how much is thrown away . . . But, I think the most important stuff is just asking the people who are the most impacted, who are the kids, and, to some degree, their families.

Table 4.3 illustrates a summary of BIC semi-structured interview response themes

and evidence.

BIC Student Participation Report

In addition to the participant demographic survey, the semi-structured interviews,

and four BIC program classroom observations, I requested and received from the

district's food services supervisor, a copy of the district's 2013-2014 BIC student

participation report. I requested this report in order to confirm BIC program student

participation rates at Schools A and B and to draw any conclusions about the BIC

Table 4.3

BIC Interview Response Themes/Recommendations and Evidence Summary

Emerged themes/recommendations	Evidence/example
1. BIC Program provides daily access to nutrition and health in our youth	"Well, obviously, it's really important that kids have good nutrition and that they eat at least three times a day…so, health and well-being and then, having it in the classroom, to me, is just about, maybe efficiency and also school culture. But the real end result that we're looking for is making sure that every child has had a nutritious meal in the morning before they get rolling." - District Superintendent
2. BIC Program provides relief and support to food insecure households	"I think the purpose . . . is to give kids, an even start for the day. We have a high population of students who have food insecurities in the home because of, you know, income or two parents who work out of the home. So, frequently, prior to the Breakfast in the Classroom program, students would come to school hungry and not be able to focus on work or it sometimes might affect behavior... So Breakfast in the Classroom provides students the ability to have a successful start to the day and families don't have to worry to ensure their students have a daily . . . meal." - Site Principal, School B
3. BIC Program provides a variety of academic benefits	". . . It's kind of like eating dinner with your family, you know, all at a dinner table. When they're in the classroom we are, you know, it is a communal type setting where we're all participating, doing it together. You know, they are able to kind of chit-chat when we're done . . . things they've done on the weekend . . ." - Lower Grade Teacher, School B
4. BIC Program contains logistical flaws that challenge BIC program effectiveness	"Well, I thought we'd probably have some problems. And we did have lots of problems for a while. But we were able to kind of solve those. Because, they would dispose of the milk or whatever they were drinking down the sink, and we would suggest, "After you do that, let the water run for a little while." But, it wasn't happening, and we were getting a lot of, you know, calling maintenance down to take care of sinks." - Day Custodian, School

Table 4.3

Continued

Emerged themes/recommendations	Evidence/example
Q2 - BIC Program recommendations for long-term success	"Kids should be able to eat at any time during the day. If they are hungry, you know, they'd all have, always have snacks in there. I bring snacks to school. You know, granola bar, whatever, and they would have to ask permission, but if they needed to eat because they were hungry, then by all means, they were OK to eat. That's the culture I had in my classroom. So, I'm trying to instill that culture here. Also, it's looking at the time it takes for the kids to eat breakfast. It's looking at, is the distribution going well? Is the cleanup going well? Take a look at the behavior statistics. Take a look at the academic achievement for students in those lower grades, and really monitor that on a regular basis so that we can make the breakfast in the classroom successful for our culture and our environment. Also, there's no one way to do it. It needs to look different for every school, and that's . . . just like instruction in the classroom . . . because every school serves a different culture. So, we will make it our own . . . we will make adjustments as we move forward . . ." - Site Principal, School A

program as it was being implemented in School A and B as result of reviewing the

findings of all of my interview data, observation data, and the participation report itself.

What follows is a brief summary of the report.

Per the report, as of June 16, 2014, the average number of students who had

participated daily in the BIC program at School A and School B, respectively, was

School A = 218/501 students; and School B = 462/700. Additionally, as of June 16,

2014, the raw number of students who had participated daily in the BIC program at

School A and School B, respectively, and expressed as a percentage, was 44% (School

A) and 66% (School B). Considering that the percentage of students who were eligible

for free and/or reduced price meals was approximately 81% at both School A and School B, again, per the report, the percentage of students who actually accessed breakfast through the BIC program appeared to be low.

These seemingly low participation rates could have been attributed to the following factors:

1. Not all free and/or reduced price meal-eligible students were participating in the BIC program in their respective grade levels at the time of this research study. Recall that both Schools A and B had grade levels that had opted out of the BIC program for various reasons, as per interview responses;

2. Perceived limited menu choices and/or other factors such as eating breakfast at home, going without breakfast, etc., might have adversely impacted student participation rates for eligible students whose grade levels were participating in the program.

Conclusion

Overall, the findings of this study revealed that school-site-based and district-based leaders perceived the BIC program to be a valuable social program with important benefits and with some flaws that challenged program effectiveness. Ultimately, these leaders perceived the BIC Program to do and/or to have had the following: provided and facilitated daily access to nutrition and health in our youth; provided relief and support to food insecure households; provided a variety of academic benefits; contained logistical flaws that challenged BIC program effectiveness; and had the capability of benefitting from stakeholders' recommendations for differentiation and accommodations to be made to the program in order to ensure its long-term implementation success at respective sites.

In the next chapter I provide a review of the findings of this study in the context of the literature, as well as provide a discussion of limitations of the study and potential areas for additional research on the BIC program.

Chapter 5

Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the key findings of this study in response to my two research questions on leader's perceptions of the BIC program and leaders' respective recommendations for BIC program implementation and long-term success. Herein, I discuss the findings of this research study through the theoretical lens of Bolman amd Deal's (2008) Four Frames of organizational behavior and leadership that allowed me to view the BIC program from structural, human resources, political, and symbolic frames of reference. In addition to their theoretical application and contributions, I discuss how these findings carry important implications for professional practice and policy development. Finally, I discuss the limitations of this research study, recommendations for additional research, and conclude.

The BIC program model is an alternative, school-provided breakfast delivery model that is being implemented in public schools throughout the nation. While research studies have documented a general and global need for school lunch and breakfast programs by highlighting their associated benefits to student health and achievement (Basch, 2011a, 2011b; Bhattacharya et al., 2006; Taras, 2005), little research existed on the perceptions of district-level leaders and site-level leaders with regard to the BIC program. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of district-

level and site-level leadership personnel on the BIC program via a qualitative case study approach and share these leaders' perceptions of the program and their recommendations for improving it. This research study appears to have great relevance due to the current implementation by school districts of the BIC program model and it may serve as a catalyst for future research to learn more about and report leaders' recommendations to ensure BIC program success. I utilized a variety of data collection methods to conduct this research study at two public elementary schools, including a demographic survey questionnaire, a semi-structured interview process, a BIC Classroom Observation protocol, and a document review and analysis.

Semi-structured interviews were an appropriate means of collecting data from each of the 12 research participants because the interview process and open-ended questions allowed each of my participants the freedom and time to reflect on and share their respective perceptions of the BIC program in their own words, as they experienced the program. The comprehensive data I collected during this research study included data from my own observations of the BIC program, themes that emerged from the semi-structured interview from district-level and site-level leaders' perceptions of the program and recommendations for improvement, and my review of the school district's BIC student participation report.

Upon reflection, all of these contributed to my gaining a greater understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with BIC program implementation. Importantly, too, these data and my interpretation of these data through Bolman and Deal's (2008) Four Frames contributed to my development of a greater appreciation for and

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understanding of district-level and site-based leaders' specific recommendations for BIC program implementation differentiation and other improvements.

Research Population

Based on criterion and purposeful sampling strategies, I gained access to and conducted individual interviews with a total of ten school site-level leader stakeholders and two district-level leader stakeholders, including a school site principal, cafeteria manager, daytime custodian, and two teachers, one lower elementary grade teacher (K-3) and one upper elementary grade teacher (grades 4-6), from each of the two public elementary schools. Additionally, I interviewed the district food services director, as well as the district superintendent of schools.

I conducted this study at two southern California public elementary schools, both of which were located approximately 1 hour northwest of downtown Los Angeles and which reside within two miles of the other school. Both schools belong to the same public school district, which is comprised of six elementary schools and two middle schools.

Discussion

Overview of Key Findings

In this study, the following key findings emerged from the analysis of the data as presented by the perceptions and recommendations of the participant leaders. In response to my first research question, four dominant themes emerged from interviews, including the following: School-based and district-based leaders perceive the BIC Program to be a valuable social program that (a) Provides daily access to nutrition and health to youth; (b) Provides relief and support to food insecure households; (c) Provides a variety of

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academic benefits; and (d) Contains flaws that challenge BIC program effectiveness. In

response to my second research question, data from semi-structured interviews, BIC

Program observations, and a BIC program participation report revealed how the BIC

Program currently works with modifications, as well as resulted in school-based and

district-based leaders' recommendations to ensure its long-term success at respective

school sites: (a) School-site level support; (b) Differentiated BIC implementation; (c)

Improved menu choices; and (d) Establishment of a food donation program or classroom

storage system. Throughout my data collection process, I attempted to allow my research

participants' views and voices to be expressed independent of my own voice and bias as

it was these participants' respective views and voices that best characterize the BIC

program as it was being implemented in their school district, in their respective schools,

and classrooms at the time of this study.

Findings in Response to Research Question 1: District Level and School-Site Level Leadership Personnel Perceptions of the BIC Program

Access to Nutrition and Health

In an effort to answer my first research question regarding leaders' perceptions of

the BIC program, all 12 leaders perceived the BIC program remarkably similarly as a

humane and pro-social mass feeding program that served a valuable purpose by

successfully providing at-risk students important daily access to nutrition and health.

These findings were consistent with available literature related to school breakfast

programs' important social role. For example, Taylor et al. (1997) placed emphasis on

the important role of the nation's public schools as important vehicles through which

social ills are addressed. Similarly, the findings of this study were supported by Kennedy

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and Cooney's (2001) research that highlighted schools' important social role in preventing malnourishment and childhood obesity, as well as by Grantham-McGregor's (2005) study that highlighted how schools help fight problems associated with poverty in order to ensure student health. Finally, these leaders' perceptions were consistent with Kennedy and Davis' (1998) findings in which the authors highlighted a relationship between school breakfast availability and student participation rates and access.

Indeed, the findings of this research study supported the idea that the mass feeding programs established in Germany and Europe in the late 1700s (Gunderson, 1971) and that were later exported here to the United States to eradicate hunger remain relevant today due to their perceived social benefits. The long legislative history of federal support for the NSLP and federal SBP, coupled with recent statewide efforts to expand access to school breakfast programs, such as here in California, served as additional evidence of support for the BIC program's social benefits. Taking care of our fellow citizens is a part of our national identity as we have a constitutionally-supported social compact with our fellow citizens that manifests itself in efforts to eradicate hunger, disease, and poverty by providing expanded access to food (Cullen et al., 2012; USDA, 2013b).

Figure 5.1 provides a summary of the relationship between leaders' perceptions regarding the BIC Program's purported provision of daily access to nutrition and health, relationship with available literature, relevant applications to Bolman and Deal's (2008) theoretical framework, and representative quote.

Relationship to Literature – RQ1 - Access to Nutrition and Health

Key Perception(s):	Relationship with Literature:	Application to Bolman & Deal (2008):	Quote:
All Twelve leaders perceived BIC to be a valuable mass feeding program that provides at-risk students daily access to nutrition and health benefits.	CONSISTENT with: Gunderson (1971) Social Compact w/Poor, humanitarian Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard & Henry (1997) ("Schools 'vehicles' through which social ills are addressed") Kennedy & Cooney (2001) (School's social role in preventing malnourishment and obesity) USDA.gov (2012) (Part of Schools' efforts to eradicate hunger, disease, and poverty	Political Symbolic	"…the real end result that we're looking for is making sure that every child has had a nutritious meal in the morning before they get rolling." **District Superintendent**

Figure 5.1. Relationship to literature, RQ1 theme Access to Nutrition and Health.

Participation Rates

A majority of interview participants perceived student participation as the most important piece of evidence to consider in determining whether or not the program was succeeding in meeting students' nutrition and health needs. Leaders perceived that breakfast availability, daily access, and menu selection all impacted, positively or negatively, students' BIC program participation rates. Literature on school breakfast program availability and participation rates supports these findings. For example, Bartfield and Kim (2010) and Rainville and Carr (2008) noted school breakfast programs provide students daily access to nutrition and health. Additionally, these leaders' perceptions of the importance of BIC participation rates are in accord with Waehrer (2008) who advanced the notion that school breakfast program participation rates can be

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adversely impacted by menu choices, meal preparation, and/or delivery, and school-provided transportation routes and schedules. Finally, these findings are consistent with literature put forth by the USDA (2012a) that details how meal program documentation, eligibility, and/or non-compliance issues all impact student access and participation.

As was stated in Chapter 4, most participants, including the School-site A lower grade teacher, did not hesitate in stating that they perceived student participation rates to be the most important evidence to consider when determining whether or not the BIC program is meeting students' nutrition and health needs. Additionally, they perceived that BIC program participation rates were directly related to the menu choices and meal times available to students. These findings are supported by the most recent incarnation of the NSLP Act of 1946, the bipartisan-supported Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which updated school-provided meals nutrition standards and meal patterns.

Finally, district-level and school site-level leaders at Schools A and B perceived that their respective schools' anticipated BIC program expansion which was scheduled to commence with the beginning of the 2014-2015 academic year would provide a greater number of needy students the daily benefits of breakfast. These findings are consistent with available literature on school breakfast program and BIC program expansion goals to increase student access to and participation in the school breakfast program. For example, in California, at the time of this study, Assembly Bill 839 (D-J. Brownlee), the "Pupil Nutrition: Federal School Breakfast Program Participation" had as its goal school breakfast program implementation and expansion. The genesis for AB 839 was due to the fact that current law requires public schools that serve low-income students to provide only one free and/or reduced price meal per school day, which is typically a lunch meal at

mid-day (Assem. Bill 839, 2011; USDA, 2012d). AB 839 died in committee in November, 2012.

Figure 5.2 provides a summary of the relationship between leaders' perceptions of the importance of participation rates to the BIC program, relationship with available literature, relevant applications to Bolman and Deal's (2008) theoretical framework, and representative quotes.

Support for Food Insecure Families

Several interview participant leaders perceived the BIC program to fulfill urgent "humanitarian" and "social cohesion" functions in that the BIC program provided critical relief and support for entire families and communities and who need relief from the stress

Relationship to Literature –
RQ1 - Access to Nutrition & Health (Cont.) - Participation Rates

Key Perception(s):	Relationship with Literature:	Application to Bolman & Deal (2008):	Quote:
Majority of Leaders perceived student participation as the most important evidence to consider in determining whether or not BIC is successful.	CONSISTENT with: Rainville & Carr (2008) Bartfield & Kim (2009, 2010) (SBP provides daily access and participation opportunity)	Structural	"I think the way we've made changes to do it in the classroom has resulted in the numbers...the number of students who were eating before school before we did it this way was very few." -School B, Lower Grade Teacher
Leaders perceived BIC participation to be impacted by unpalatable menu choices and schedule.	Weehrer (2008) (SBP participation impacted by menu selection, meal preparation, schedules(delays). "Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010" (Updated nutrition standards and meal patterns)	Structural Human Resources Political	"They like the pancakes. They like the little waffles. The burritos they like...Everything depends on the meal choice." School A, Lower-Grade Teacher

Figure 5.2. Relationship to literature, RQ1 theme Access to Nutrition and Health, participation rates.

and strain of poverty. This is supported by the work of Edlefsen and Olson (2002) and Gunderson (1971) who highlighted the humanitarian philosophy and altruistic purpose behind the creation and expansion of mass feeding programs that were initially designed to feed the poor and hungry in non-school settings and that were later installed and implemented in the nation's public school system through the NSLP, 1946 and the federal SBP, 1966. Taylor et al. (1997) remind us, too, that our public school system continues to serve as a primary vehicle through which food security concerns and other social ills are addressed. Therese findings were also supported by former LAUSD Superintendent of Schools, Dr. John Deasy, whose 2012 memorandum on the benefits of BIC highlighted the important role the BIC program serves in the fight against food insecurity problems for well over 400,000 students and families in the LAUSD residence boundary alone (Deasy, 2012b).

Also important to consider is that while the findings of this research study did not immediately or directly link a school's daily provision of nutrition through school meal programs or, more specifically, the BIC program itself, to our national security interests, my review of available literature on the important benefits of breakfast and school-provided meal programs revealed an important link between food security concerns and our national security (Shrier, 2011). Essentially, if a geographic region's food supply is abundantly stable and accessible, that region's geo-political stability is more likely to be stable (Shrier, 2011). Accordingly, in my view, it is appropriate, if not critically important, for researchers, policy makers, and other leaders to consider immediate and long-term impacts of food insecurity concerns and investments on individuals, families,

communities, cities, states, and our nation as they shape public policy and implement and/or enhance school meal programs. The provision of a free and reduced price breakfast and lunch meal then, when considered in conjunction with the same school's provision of a high-quality education for all citizens, is an essential ingredient that is needed to strengthen individuals, families, communities, cities, states, in our nation. In my view, the BIC program is not only good social policy, but it is good health, education, economic, and foreign policy.

Figure 5.3 provides a summary of the relationship between leaders' perceptions of the BIC Program's purported provision of support for food insecure families, relationship with available literature, relevant applications to Bolman and Deal's (2008) theoretical framework, and representative quote.

Academic Benefits and Overall Impact on Students

In this study, participants responded that they perceived the BIC program to provide some important academic-related benefits for students and teachers, including students' improved overall school readiness and energy levels, on-task attention and behavior, relationships with others, improved attendance, and improved classroom learning environment and classroom culture. These findings were consistent with the available literature I reviewed that indicated that there existed an association between school performance and the daily delivery of nutrition to needy children (Grantham-McGregor, 2005). Tellingly, research participant leaders perceived that the school's respective BIC program provided an important connection between a student's academic performance and his or her nutritional status. Basch (2011a) noted similarly in his research study that school breakfast programs produced increased student attention, as

Key Perception(s):	Relationship with Literature:	Application to Bolman & Deal (2008):	Quote:
Interview Participants perceived BIC Program to serve an important "social cohesion" purpose in that it provided relief and support for "food insecure" families	CONSISTENT with: Gunderson (1971) Edlefsen & Olson (2002) (Humanitarian and Altruistic purpose) Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard & Henry (1997) Schools vehicles to address food security concerns Deasy (2012) BIC instrumental in fight against food insecurity) Biden (2011) Clinton (2011) Food Security linked with Political Stability and National Security	Political Symbolic	"So, what I see as the purpose is to be able to make sure that our children who attend the school here, have the proper nutrition. Because that's not necessarily happening at home. So, that's how I see it, in our community, the Breakfast in the Classroom program serves our students and supports families." - School A, Principal

Figure 5.3. Relationship to literature, RQ1 theme Support for Food Insecure Families.

well as improved behavior and attendance. Taras (2005), in an earlier research study, noted that breakfast improved overall cognitive performance. Finally, Basch (2011b) highlighted the importance of reducing educationally-relevant health disparities that have been overlooked in order to address stubborn achievement gaps.

Overall, interview participants perceived the BIC program to have had a positive impact on students which is supported by available literature. For example, participants perceived that the program generated improved classroom cultures and facilitated a sense of community (Rainville & Carr, 2008), improved student attendance (Anderson, 2011); decreased behavior and health-related referrals (NEAHIN, 2013), and provided an overall positive effect on students' behavior, social interactions, cognitive performance, and health (Johnston et al., 2010). These leaders perceived the benefits of the BIC program at

Schools A and B to clearly outweigh the program's few but important flaws and challenges, which are discussed immediately below.

Figure 5.4 provides a summary of the relationship between leaders' perceptions regarding the BIC Program's purported provision of academic benefits and the program's overall impact, relationship with available literature, relevant applications to Bolman and Deal's (2008) theoretical framework, and representative quote.

Flaws and Challenges

Flaws and challenges to BIC program effectiveness resided within what researchers Bolman and Deal (2008) refer to as the "structural" and "human resources" frames of their Four Frames model for examining organizational structures and behaviors. Interestingly, considering the fact that district-level and school site-level

Relationship to Literature – RQ1 - Academic Benefits & Overall Impact

Key Perception(s):	Relationship with Literature:	Application to Bolman & Deal (2008):	Quote:
Interview Participants perceived the BIC Program to provide several academic-related benefits and to have an overall positive impact on students.	CONSISTENT with: Grantham-McGregor (2005) (Association between academic performance & nutrition) Basch (2011) (SBP improves attention, behavior & attendance; Need to reduce educationally-relevant health disparities) Taras (2005) (Breakfast improves cognitive performance) Rainville & Carr (2008) (BIC improves classroom culture and builds sense of community) Anderson (2011) BIC improves attendance	Structural Political Symbolic	"Kids used to concentrate more on playing, but now... they're ready in class...I think with the kids I see the potential." - School B, Daytime Custodian

Figure 5.4. Relationship to literature, RQ1 theme Academic Benefits and Overall Impact.

leaders at each school perceived the benefits of the program to outweigh its implementation-related flaws challenges was perhaps indicative of these leaders' understanding of and valuing the BIC program's "political," "place," and "symbolic" meaning to people in need in our democratic society over immediate structural and human resource deficits. In other words, these leaders perceived the BIC program to be a valuable social-welfare-promoting program moreso than it was perceived to be a flawed or imperfect breakfast delivery model.

District-level and school-site-level leaders described specific challenges that exist at the district level and/or at their respective school sites that challenge BIC program effectiveness. Site-level stakeholder leaders, especially, cited major or minor logistical challenges to the effective implementation of their schools' BIC program, including a daily loss of instructional time as a result of spills and other food messes, a lack of sufficient resources and personnel to efficiently administer the program, trash and plumbing problems, and health risks posed by an increased presence of rodents and bugs attracted to leftover food and spills as reasons for their opposition. At the district level, even the Superintendent, who strongly supported the BIC program, acknowledged important challenges at the respective district and school-site levels, including burdensome paper and compliance mandates at the district-level, and food spills and lost instructional time as pitfalls at the school-site level. The district food services director also perceived challenges posed by burdensome compliance paperwork, safety concerns, and faculty resistance, as the greatest challenges to BIC program effectiveness. UTLA (2013b) and Wong (2006) highlight flaws and challenges anticipated to occur as part of the reality of the implementation of a BIC program that support the findings of this study.

Figure 5.5 provides a summary of the relationship between leaders' perceptions regarding the BIC Program's purported flaws and challenges, relationship with available literature, relevant applications to Bolman and Deal's (2008) theoretical framework, and representative quote.

Findings in Response to Research Question 2: What Best Practices, Program Models, Resources, and/or Other Considerations are Needed to Ensure BIC Program Success at the School Site Level?

Modifications to the BIC Program During Implementation

In an effort to answer my second research question regarding what best practices, program models, resources, and/or other considerations are needed to ensure BIC program success at the school site level, district-based and school-based leaders cited the need to modify the BIC program to best fit their students' and their classrooms' respective needs. At the time I conducted my literature review, I found few references to

Key Perception(s):	Relationship with Literature:	Application to Bolman & Deal (2008):	Quote:
Interview Participants perceived the BIC Program to have flaws and challenges that challenged program effectiveness.	CONSISTENT with: Wong (2006); UTLA BIC Survey Results (2013); UTLA Parent Communication (2013); - Spills and "the mess" - Lost instructional time - Lack of personnel - trash/plumbing problems - Rodents and bugs - Burdensome Compliance paperwork - Faculty resistance	Structural Human Resources NOTE: Symbolic importance of BIC prevailed over Structural and H.R.-related flaws, and Political resistance)	"..the mess, the litter, it's a constant. I still get plugged sinks in the upper grade and you know, just messes...And my time is pretty limited in the morning." - School A, Daytime Custodian

Figure 5.5. Relationship to literature, RQ1 theme Flaws and Challenges.

modifications to the BIC program, especially in terms of modifying the BIC program location. Surprisingly, however, and in strong contrast to the dearth of literature on BIC program modifications available, a strong majority of research participants noted that modifications and program flexibility were actually valued and encouraged at the two schools and strongly supported by the district. My own observations revealed that the two schools' BIC programs were indeed, implemented with schoolwide and/or classroom-by-classroom modifications that were not only permitted, but encouraged and supported. Accordingly, Bolman and Deal's (2008) Four Frames are applicable because structural and human resources-related accommodations had been permitted on campus, including the variation of BIC implementation with regard to structures, locations, and timeframes, and through the hiring of additional staff. Importantly, these structural and human-resources-related modifications to BIC implementation were, based on my own observations and based on research participants' semi-structured interview responses, driven by extant operating political power relationships that existed between teachers, parents, district-based and school-site-based administrators, and driven by organizational and cultural symbols that convey the overall importance, value, and meaning of the BIC program to the school community and to greater society.

Classroom Observations

The BIC Program was administered in classroom settings in three of four observations. The lower grade teacher from School A's classroom students did not actually eat breakfast inside their classroom, although these students selected breakfast items while inside their classroom setting just prior to relocating to tables just outside of their classroom during their daily morning recess period. Lower grade classroom

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students from School A who ate breakfast outside during a morning recess period may have been, according to the literature, deprived of in-class breakfast program benefits, including increased student participation rates, nutritional intake, fewer discipline referrals, increased student responsibility, the creation of a sense of classroom and school community (Rainville & Carr, 2008), and overall improved learning environment (NEAHIN, 2013). Additionally, the fact that I observed the students from lower grade classroom students from School A eating their breakfast outside of the classroom during a daily morning recess period may hold important implications for how best to implement a BIC program. Available literature supported the notion that when given a choice to eat breakfast or play, children prefer to socialize or play over eating (FRAC, 2013; Waehrer, 2008). Additionally, the BIC program was allotted a total of 20 minutes during three of four observations, while the lower grade teacher from School B's BIC evolution was allotted a total of 15 minutes. Accordingly, if the BIC model is implemented for the purpose of removing barriers that prevent access and that increase participation (Bartfield & Kim, 2010), surely students need to be provided a sufficient amount of time to eat breakfast in a relaxed room environment that affords them time to benefit from BIC.

In three of four settings, teachers were the sole adult in the classroom, while in lower grade classroom from School A, three adults were present, including the teacher, a paraprofessional, and a parent volunteer. While I observed no spills or other food-related messes in any of the four classrooms at any time during my observations, and all BIC-related trash was bagged, tied, and placed outside of each classroom for Custodial pick-up within the BIC program's allotted time, participant leaders' concerns about needing sufficient levels of adult supervision and custodial support were corroborated by

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available research that indicated that a lack of available supervision (FRAC, 2013; Waehrer, 2008) and concerns about BIC implementation being a time-consuming endeavor (UTLA, 2013a; Wong, 2006) present challenges.

In terms of the number of breakfast meals accessed, the results were mixed. On the days of my observations, in three of four classrooms, any breakfast items that students had selected from the breakfast bags but were not eaten were placed on a designated table in the classroom and later bagged for trash and custodial pick-up. In one classroom, the lower grade classroom from School B, remaining food items were taken by the teacher and placed in a classroom refrigerator for snacks for students throughout the day or for a Friday Fruit party. Obviously, students' abilities to access and participate in breakfast were central to leaders' perceptions of BIC program success. These leaders' perceptions of the centrality of breakfast as a means to proper nutrition and as a cornerstone in the establishment of a strong foundation for learning and achievement are supported by available literature that links BIC to childhood nutrition, health, and learning. For example, research conducted by advocates of the BIC program, such as the CFPA (2011) and the USDA (2012c), made specific connections between the BIC program and improved child nutrition, academic readiness, and achievement.

Based on their respective interviews and the aforementioned observations, I concluded that leaders perceived the BIC program to be a valuable program that required modifications in order to make it work better in teachers' respective classrooms. The next section provides a look into four themes that emerged from my second research question and that resulted in four recommendations district-level and school-site-based leaders made for the purpose of improving the BIC program.

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Leaders' Recommendations

School-site-based and district-based leaders made several recommendations on how to improve BIC Program implementation in order to make it work. Leaders' responses during the semi-structured interviews, even if highlighting frustration with various challenges, reflected support for the BIC program. The following themes and recommendations emerged from these data, including the need for and importance of: (a) School-site level support; (b) Differentiated BIC implementation; (c) Improved menu choices; and (d) Establishment of a food donation program or classroom storage system.

School-site level support. Interview participants highlighted the importance of school stakeholder support in facilitating a successful program. Leaders cited the importance of district-level and school-site level support in terms of personnel and resources in order to effectively operate a successful BIC program. Similarly, Cullen et al. (2012) cited the importance of school stakeholder support as a necessary condition for the successful implementation and expansion of school breakfast programs. For Schools A and B, without the support of administrators, custodial staff, cafeteria managers, and teachers, the BIC program would most likely not be perceived overall to be a success. Reciprocally, a lack of stakeholder support for the BIC program would likely be considered tantamount to a death knell for the program, or a major barrier to overcome before BIC program effectiveness could be achieved. These findings were also consistent with the work of Kennedy and Cooney (2001), whose research discussed the removal of various barriers to breakfast that might prohibit access to nutrition and health. Lastly, these findings were consistent with the work of Rainville and Carr (2008), whose research concluded that in-class breakfast program challenges include a lack of support

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from school-site personnel. For Schools A and B, sufficient stakeholder support existed for the BIC program, perhaps because of the district and school site level administrators' support for differentiated BIC implementation, which I discuss in the next section.

Differentiated BIC implementation. District-level and school-site-level leaders recommended the need for BIC procedural and structural flexibility that would allow stakeholders to differentiate BIC implementation at the two schools in order to best meet the unique needs of their students, teachers, and school community. While this recurring recommendation for differentiation was not supported by the literature I reviewed, leaders I interviewed in this research study perceived that the district's and schools' respective support for and allowance of differentiated BIC program implementation were central tenets of the purported success of the program at the respective schools. For example, the principal of School A stated that school meals and snacks should be made available at any time throughout the school day, not just during a designated breakfast time. Additionally, he recommended a comprehensive review of all aspects of the BIC program to ensure that it is being implemented efficiently, albeit in a differentiated fashion in each school. For example, he recommended a review of BIC clean-up procedures to determine whether or not they were working effectively and a review of student discipline referrals and academic achievement results for students in order to discover to what extent any relationship might have existed between breakfast access, student behavior, and student achievement.

Improved menu choices. District-level and school-site-level leaders recommended that BIC menu choices be improved in order to ensure that all students eat breakfast in the morning before school so they can fully participate and learn. Research

participant leaders perceived a strong relationship between food quality and choices and BIC program participation rates. The cafeteria managers and daytime custodians of both Schools A and B were strongly in favor of and recommended an improved breakfast menu and more options that would appeal to students for the purposes of increasing student participation rates and other school-related benefits. These findings were supported by the LAUSD (2012), the CFPA (2011), and the USDA (2012c), whose breakfast in the classroom program advocacy literature highlighted available or improved menu options through press releases, memoranda, and information kits created by these organizations and/or distributed on their behalf.

Establishment of a food donation program or classroom storage system. District-level and school-site-level leaders recommended the establishment of a food donation program or a classroom storage system in order to reduce the large volume of food that was discarded uneaten on a daily basis. The daytime custodian of School A made the connection between menu choices and the amount of food left behind. He noted that he thought it would be a good idea to improve BIC menu choices in order to reduce the amount of wasted food. Additionally, he made a general recommendation that school districts or schools should establish a food donation program or system to facilitate the pick-up and donation of extra food that would otherwise go to waste. While this important recommendation was not significantly supported by the literature, the potential benefits of establishing a district-wide or school-wide or even a classroom food donation, storage, or giveaway program for leftover food and beverages could prove to be very valuable for students and local families in need. Additionally, the establishment of a food donation or classroom storage component to the BIC program would assuage critics

of the program who view the programs flaws, including spills and a lot of wasted food, as insurmountable.

Figure 5.6 provides a summary of the relationship between leaders' recommendations regarding the BIC Program and available literature, relevant applications to Bolman and Deal's (2008) theoretical framework, and representative quotes.

BIC Student Participation Report

In addition to conducting the demographic survey, semi-structured interviews, and four BIC observations, I reviewed the district's 2013-2014 BIC student participation report of BIC program student participation rates at Schools A and B. The percentage of BIC program-eligible students who actually access breakfast through the program appeared to be low. For example, as of June 16, 2014, the average number of students who participated daily in the BIC program at School A and School B, respectively, was as follows: School A = 218/501 students and School B = 462/700. Additionally, as of June 16, 2014, the raw number of students who participated daily in the breakfast in the classroom program at School A and School B, respectively, and expressed as a percentage, was 44% for School A and 66% for School B.

The BIC program had been implemented at both schools with various modifications that were supported and viewed by stakeholders as important for their program's perceived success. Considering the aforementioned low participation rates, the district and/or schools might benefit from a comprehensive review of the BIC program in order to determine whether or not any adjustments to the program need to be made. A comprehensive review of BIC program appears to be a reasonable and objective

Relationship to Literature – RQ2 – Leaders' Recommendations

Leaders' Recommendations:	Relationship with Literature:	Application to Bolman & Deal (2008):	Quote:
School-Site Stakeholder Support	CONSISTENT with: Cullen, Thompson, & Watson (2002); and Creighton (2002) SBP/BIC needs support from a range of stakeholders	Structural Human Resources Political Symbolic	"…you really need…folks all working together to make sure that the challenges…are diminished…" - PUSD Superintendent of Schools
Differentiated BIC Implementation	Not Supported by Literature, but was a central tenet of purported "success"	Structural Human Resources Political Symbolic	"…there would be a second chance kind of breakfast…an ideal time where they can come and decide to have their breakfast then." - Principal, School B
Improved Menu Choices	Waehrer (2008) (SBP participation impacted by menu selection, meal preparation, schedules. "Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010" (Updated nutrition standards & meal patterns)	Structural Human Resources Political Symbolic	"Menu…we mention foods they don't like… on those days, we have less participation." - Cafeteria Manager, School B
Establishment of a Food Donation Program or Classroom Food Storage Program	Not Supported by Literature	Structural Human Resources Political Symbolic	"There is a lot of wasted food and there is no pickup program or set aside system in place." - Day Custodian, School A

Figure 5.6. Relationship to literature, RQ2, Leaders' Recommendations.

approach toward maintaining and enhancing a program that is considered by advocates and opposition to provide great social benefits as well as contain a number of flaws. Waehrer's (2008) research supports this conclusion in that school districts and schools that address various barriers to breakfast enjoyed higher breakfast participation rates.

Implications for Theory

The key findings of this research carry important theoretical implications. In Chapter 4, I examined my findings on the BIC program implementation through the theoretical lens of Bolman and Deal's (2008) Four Frames of organizational behavior and leadership. These Four Frames allowed me to view the BIC program from structural, human resources, political, and symbolic frames of reference that ultimately afforded me

the opportunity to learn about the program and its meaning to and for diverse

stakeholders in specific school communities. The bulk of my research data was collected

via my semi-structured interview protocol which included questions that sought and

elicited leaders' perceptions of the BIC program, most of which pertained to structural

and human resources elements of the program. The findings show that leaders at the

district-level and site-level recommended modifications to various structures, including

time allotted for program implementation, location of program implementation, and

human resources available to support the program, in order to create teachers' buy-in

(political frame reference) and for the pragmatic purpose of implementing an effective

BIC program (structural, human resources, and symbolic frames). School Site A

principal noted that the primary reason for implementing a modified BIC Program was

"the mess" the BIC program had apparently created prior to modifications being made.

In response to the mess, he decided to allow some grade levels to opt out of the classroom

portion of their school's breakfast program.

Clearly, principal A's and other leaders' responses reflected decisions that had

been made to enhance BIC program effectiveness at structural and human-resources

levels. Still, interview responses to such structural and human resources-related

interview questions were laden with references to and understandings of important

political and symbolic relationships and norms that carried both meaning and power. For

example, the district food services director's response to questions about real and

perceived challenges posed by burdensome compliance paperwork, safety concerns, and

faculty resistance, contained references to political relationships inherently associated

with BIC program compliance at the state and federal levels and implementation at the

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district and school-site levels. For example, she referenced the symbolic meaning behind the program in that it is "good for kids" as part of her strategy to create greater "buy in" for the program from politically-motivated teachers.

Participants' responses to structural and human resources-related elements of BIC program implementation and decision-making contained references to political and/or positional power relationships and culture-affirming or culture-challenging decisions and symbols, making Bolman and Deal's (2008) political and symbolic frames of reference appropriate lenses through which to view and understand the BIC program from the various frames of their theory and from multiple points of view. For example, the fact that some entire grade levels were permitted to opt out of BIC program implementation completely during the 2013-2014 academic year and the fact that participating teachers were permitted to make modifications to their own classrooms' implementation of BIC, were demonstrative examples of real respect for the political power of teachers at the respective school sites. Teachers, indeed, had a say in the implementation process of BIC at their schools and in their classrooms. Still, teachers' political power remained subordinate to the overall societal expectation and symbolic value of the neighborhood public school system as a democratizing and noble institution that is expected to deliver quality education and other means of social support to children and families. Indeed, Bolman and Deal (2008) noted "life in organizations is packed with happenings that can be interpreted in a number of ways" (p. 313).

Implications for Leaders, Practitioners, and Policy

The findings of this research study hold important implications for educational and other organizational leaders, practitioners, and policy-makers. Bolman and Deal

(2008) noted that from a structural framework, organizational leaders are social engineers who are concerned with the alignment and assignment of structural and functional elements of the organization, including existing technology and the organizational environment itself in order to achieve organizational ends. Thus, school district leaders and school site leaders charged with implementing and administering the BIC program would be concerned about the program's ability to achieve its purpose and to facilitate the achievement of the school's established goals and objectives. Such a leader would be concerned about ensuring that the systems and procedures in place are fully functioning and that they take precedence over personal agendas and extraneous pressures on the BIC program. These leaders would also be concerned with ensuring that existing BIC program structures are working in concert with the school's current circumstances and goals (Bolman & Deal, 2008), such as facilitating student achievement gains.

From Bolman and Deal's (2008) human resources frame, organizations are familial organizations that respect and value humans' needs, skills, and relationships within the contextual setting of their labor. From a human resources perspective, school leaders would empower other members of the school to contribute to the school's goals and culture. Thus, a school district leader or school site-based leader who is charged with implementing and overseeing the BIC program would be concerned with the assumption that people and organizations actually need each other (Bolman & Deal, 2008). This lens is consistent with the social welfare aspect of the BIC program in that the program was viewed by leaders as providing individuals and families important social benefits.

When viewing the BIC program from Bolman and Deal's (2008) political frame, one gains the perspective that the program's organizational existence is part of an

organization wherein individuals and/or group interests compete for power in a competitive marketplace. Accordingly, key concepts of the political frame include conflict, competition, and power within the organization. From this political perspective, organizational leaders and other members advocate for their special interests and seek power and resources to achieve a variety of personal and organizational agendas and goals. Thus, a school district leader or school site-based leader who is charged with implementing and overseeing the BIC program from a political frame of reference would be concerned with identifying and understanding the values and opinions of the myriad number of stakeholders whose attitudes, beliefs, and relationships ultimately determine the effectiveness of any school's BIC program.

From Bolman and Deal's (2008) symbolic framework, organizational leaders inspire others within the organization by affirming and reaffirming organizational goals, rituals, stories, ceremonies, and associations with people who are meaningful to the organization's identity. Thus, from a symbolic frame of reference, a school district leader or school site-based leader who is charged with implementing and overseeing the BIC program would likely be concerned with maintaining the value of and meaning behind various events that occur and milestones that might be achieved within the school that support the school's purpose, vision, and overall meaning to the community it serves. These leaders might celebrate the fact that the BIC program serves as another important symbol that reinforces the importance and value of our nation's public schools as important vehicles of social change.

Based on my findings presented in Chapter 4, the implementation of the BIC program meant something to each of my research participants, each of whom holds a

different position of responsibility in the two respective schools. Thus, participants viewed the BIC program from multiple realities or frames of reference. The BIC program carried different meaning for different stakeholders depending on stakeholders' own place within the reality of the BIC program and their views, biases, and perceptions of the BIC program should be factored into decisions made by legislators who have historically supported mass feeding programs in schools, as well as factored into decisions made by local politicians, school district superintendents and school boards at the district levels of leadership, and by school-site principals, teachers, parents, staff, and students at the school level, in order to ensure the BIC program is implemented with success.

Bolman and Deal (2008) noted "any event can be framed in several ways and serve multiple purposes" and that "multiple realities produce confusion and conflict as individuals look at the same event through different lenses" (p. 313). In any organization, events that occur can be interpreted and acted upon in a number of ways. It is incumbent upon organizational leaders to deftly and successfully understand these various interpretations and actions in order to move organizations forward and upward. Accordingly, an application of Bolman and Deal's Four Frames theoretical framework through which one can view and interpret life and events in organizations through its structural, human resources, political, and symbolic perspectives, was an appropriate theoretical lens through which to examine the BIC program in this research study.

When considered from multiple frames of reference, school district level and school site-based leaders can gain a deeper understanding of the BIC policy and program implementation mechanics, its impact on people and resources, and the meaning created

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by and reinforced through its daily implementation. Ultimately, through the application

of Bolman and Deal's Four Frames to the BIC program implementation, the structural,

human resources, political, and symbolic, I gained a comprehensive understanding of

leaders' perceptions of the BIC program itself, as well as important insights into various

school-level and district-level political values and cultural norms that influenced the way

leaders perceived the BIC policy and program implementation in their district and/or

school(s) and overall program success.

Limitations of the Research Study

There are limitations to this study that must be acknowledged. As Creswell

(2013) noted, "The data collection in case study research is typically extensive, drawing

on multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews, documents, and

audiovisual materials" (p. 100). The research methods I described in Chapter 3 were

appropriate for this case study research, the time allotted, as well as for my desire to gain

insights into stakeholders' perceptions of the BIC program. Admittedly, the number of

research participants in this study made this study relatively small in scope as the findings

were based primarily on the responses of 12 participants who responded to 10 semi-

structured interview questions tailored to address my two research

questions. It is possible that I could have conducted additional interviews that might

have yielded similar or different perceptions of and/or recommendations to improving the

BIC program that are not included in this research study. Still, I am of the opinion that

the leaders' perceptions of and recommendations for the BIC program provided sufficient

insights into the reality of the program at work in their respective schools and classrooms.

Of course, any conclusions I draw from this research study cannot be extended beyond

the scope of this population and applied elsewhere with absolute certainty. However, given the fact that the phenomenon being studied, the BIC program, was a breakfast delivery model specifically designed to facilitate the serving of daily breakfast meals to students in the classroom setting, there does exist, in my opinion, a strong likelihood that the perceived academic and social benefits of the program, as well as its flaws and challenges, and recommendations for future success, could very well be applied to most schools and classrooms.

In addition to the relatively small number of research participants, there existed another important limitation to this research study that must be acknowledged. I conducted my research at two public elementary school campuses located within a single public school district in southern California. Thus, the results of this research study might or might not be immediately generalizable to middle school or high school campuses whose bell schedules and course offerings, for example, like having an advisory or homeroom period, might facilitate a more traditional implementation of the BIC program without modifications.

Third, in hindsight, this study was also limited by my own personal experiences as an urban middle school principal, father, and as a doctoral student. A central characteristic of qualitative research is the acknowledgement of one's own biases and positions, or point of view. Accordingly, although I attempted to objectify and/or minimize my biases in favor of the BIC program throughout this study, I must acknowledge that my support for the program, in general, may have become evident at times.

The findings presented in Chapter 4 represent the perceptions and

recommendations of district-based and school-site-based leaders on the BIC program.

While conducting my interviews, visiting campuses, and district offices, I was engaged in

a continuous process of self-awareness and self-reflexivity as a researcher. Accordingly,

I wrote copious notes and reflections and questions on my interview transcripts during

the coding process, on my BIC observation protocol, and on hardcopy drafts of these

dissertation chapters for the purpose of guiding my research as one who remained

mindful of the importance to allow my research participants' respective voices and their

own perceptions and recommendations to emerge and make meaning independently of

my own biases.

Recommendations for Additional Research

There are gaps in the body of BIC program literature. First, most literature on

school meal programs are centered on the NSLP, out of which the federal SBP came to

fruition. BIC is a more recent service delivery model that remains subordinate to the

overall SBP. Naturally, there is less available literature on BIC than there is on the

overall SBP. Accordingly, this study might serve as a catalyst in advancing additional

research on the BIC program as the program continues to gain traction in school settings,

especially in large urban public school districts throughout the United States and in

countries around the world.

Secondly, the bulk of school breakfast literature focused largely on nutrition, food

quality, and participation rates without extensive discussions that link specific breakfast

service delivery models with specific types of schools and partipation rates. Given the

fact that the two schools in this study made a variety of grade level and/or classroom-by-

classroom modifications to BIC implementation, it seems appropriate to conduct additional research at all levels of K-12 and higher education to learn more about which breakfast service delivery models work best for which schools and why these models worked.

Finally, there exists a lack of research on the perceptions of district level and school site-level leadership personnel on BIC implementation at the district and school levels, respectively, apart from district-produced press kits, toolkits, and public relations campaigns that advocate for overall BIC implementation. More research is needed to include district-level and school-site leader stakeholder perceptions of the BIC program in order to determine how the program is working in their districts and at their school sites. In other words, without glossy press kits and fact sheets, how do the people who are actually implementing the program at the site level perceive the BIC program at their respective sites? Without important feedback on BIC program implementation from those practitioners who are actually deciding to implement it at the district level, and without important feedback from those practitioners who are administering it in elementary, middle, and high school levels, and without important feedback from those practitioners who are making or preparing breakfast, serving it, eating it, and cleaning it up, opportunities for learning about shared best practices and about mistakes with regard to implementation will be lost or otherwise limited in value to respective school sites.

Finally, it might be informative to investigate what kinds of breakfast programs exist in school districts around the world and what lessons, programs, and/or processes might then be implemented here in the United States as a result of those findings.

Conclusion

Overall, the findings of this study revealed that school-site-based and district-based leaders perceived the BIC program to be a valuable social program with important benefits and with some flaws that challenge program effectiveness. Ultimately, these leaders perceived the BIC Program to do and/or have the following: provide and facilitate daily access to nutrition and health in our youth; provide relief and support to food insecure households; provide a variety of academic benefits; contain logistical flaws that challenge BIC program effectiveness; and the capability of benefitting from stakeholders' recommendations for differentiation and accommodations to be made to the program in order to ensure long-term BIC implementation success at respective sites.

Specifically, these leaders perceived the BIC program to be a valuable program that required modifications in order to make it work better in teachers' respective classrooms. Additionally, they perceived participation rates and the amount of leftover or wasted food to be strongly related to BIC program menu choices available and accordingly, recommended that menu choices be reviewed and upgraded for improved flavor and nutritional. Leaders' also perceived school site support for the program, from teacher buy-in to actual investments in support personnel who can help to clean up spills and empty trash, to those who would allow teachers to make modifications to the program, as important for overall program success. Lastly, leaders recommended schoolwide food donation programs and classroom food storage systems be established for the purpose of donating food to those in need inside or outside of the school or classroom.

In the final analysis, it is important to ensure that any additional research on the BIC program includes input from all stakeholders who might have a vested interest in the BIC program. More research is needed in order for district and site-level leaders to learn what best practices and program models will ensure BIC program success at various school sites and levels. Creighton (2012) noted "implementing and sustaining successful breakfast in the classroom programs require the participation and support of a range of stakeholders" (p. 497). Fully engaging district and site-level leaders in discussions about and in decisions prior to program implementation will make the BIC program much easier to digest.

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Appendix A

Internal Review Board Form

CALIFORNIA LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

CLASS PROJECT APPROVAL FORM

An instructor of a course where a research project involving human subjects is one of the course requirements is to submit an *Application to Use Human Participants in Research* to the Institutional Review Board (see http://www.callutheran.edu/irb/ for procedures and forms).

The instructor is also to complete an online course, "Human Participants Protection Education for Research Teams," offered through the National Institutes of Health website.

http://phrp.nihtraining.com/index.php
Completion of the course would be verified by a Completion Certificate, which should be saved, printed and provided to the IRB with your application.

The instructor must also collect this *Class Project Approval Form* from each student/group and maintain it on file. Students may not begin research until the instructor gives them <u>individual</u> approval to proceed. (Note: This procedure applies only to research projects that pose no or minimal risk to participants and that are not intended for dissemination/presentation outside of the University. Where greater risk is foreseeable AND/OR the project is intended for outside presentation, the individual student must submit an *Application to Use Human Participants in Research* to the Institutional Review Board.)

Class Project Approval Form

Student: Kurt S. Lowry
Student email: klowry@callutheran.edu
Instructor: Dr. Janice Tucker
Course title: EDLD 636 – Dissertation Defense

1. Methodology and Research Objectives
Case Study Methodology:
A Case Study Research Methodology will be used to determine school district-level and
school site-level stakeholder leaders' perceptions of their school district's and/or school's
implementation of its "Breakfast in the Classroom" (BIC) program.

Methods:
The study will involve use of the following methods: 1. stakeholder survey/
questionnaire; 2. semi-structured interviews; 3. researcher observation of the BIC
program implementation; 4. Document review and analysis, including a review and
analysis of breakfast participation data for the district and/or the school regarding the
number of school-provided breakfast and lunch meals served during the year prior to and
the year the BIC program was implemented in the district and/or the school.

The Stakeholder Leader/Participant Survey/Questionnaire is designed for each
participant/stakeholder to complete in approximately 5 minutes. The purpose of the
questionnaire will be to gather basic stakeholders' demographic and district and/or school
role information, as well as to determine stakeholders' general knowledge and
perceptions of, and attitudes toward the BIC program.

The Semi-Structured Interview is designed for each participant/stakeholder to be
completed within approximately 45 minutes. The interview questions will help to answer
the research questions. I will be the only researcher to collect data for this study.

The Researcher Observation of BIC Program Implementation is designed to be
completed within 15-30 minutes, the approximate amount of time _____
School District and/or school has allotted for BIC program implementation each morning.
Researcher might conduct observations of program implementation on 1-3 mornings
during this study.

The Document Review and Analysis (District and/or School-provided breakfast and
lunch meals served via the BIC model). Data collection will include data from the 2012-
2013 academic year through the current 2013-2014 academic year for comparative
purposes.

The data will be reviewed and analyzed with findings and conclusions documented and
included in the final written report.

Specific data to be reviewed may include: Month-by-month Comparative Schoolwide
Student Attendance Data, Breakfast and Lunch "Participation Report," Month-by-month
Comparative Student Discipline Referral Records; participating students' periodic
assessment data.

A Note on Research Study Participation:

All participation in this research study is 100% voluntary and participants can discontinue their participation in this study at any time. At the conclusion of this study, all participants will be provided summaries of preliminary findings. Participants will also be provided the opportunity to comment on these findings.

Research Objective:
The research objective is to determine district-level and/or school-site level stakeholder leaders' perceptions of _____ School District's/School's BIC program implementation.

Research Questions:
    1. What are district-level and school-site level leadership personnel perceptions of the "Breakfast in the Classroom" program?
    2. What best practices, program models, resources, and other considerations are needed to ensure "Breakfast in the Classroom" program success at the school site level?

2. Description of Participants
Age range: 22-65
Sample size: 5-8 Participants

The participants were selected through the use of purposeful sampling. Participants were selected because they fit into one of the five categories of personnel the research will target. I intend to secure 5-8 of the following district-level and/or school site-level leadership personnel: One or two district-level superintendents and/or directors; a school-site principal; one or two district-level or site-level coordinators; one to three participating teachers; a cafeteria manager or cafeteria worker; one or two plant managers or other custodial staff.

Possible Sample source(s):
    X District-level Superintendent(s)
    X District-level Director(s) and/or Coordinator(s)
    X School-site Principal (Elementary and/or Secondary)
    X School-site Coordinator(s)/Faculty
    X School-site Cafeteria Staff
    X School-site Custodial Staff
    X Parent(s) of Student(s) at the Participating School within the school district

3. Informed Consent
See *Requirements and Template for Informed Consent,* available at http://www.callutheran.edu/irb/, for the necessary elements for informed consent. Informed consents MUST include all information mentioned in the template on the IRB website.

Attach a copy of the proposed informed consent form(s). Where informed consent will be obtained orally, describe. Where participants are sampled from agencies or other

schools, letters of informed consent from these sites must also be attached. Any requests for waiver of these requirements must be justified.

Educational Research Voluntary Participant
Informed Consent Form

August 26th, 2013

Dear _____,

My name is Kurt S. Lowry, Principal of Crescent Heights Language Arts/Social Justice Magnet Elementary School in the Los Angeles Unified School District. I am also a 3rd year doctoral student in the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership (K-12) Program at California Lutheran University located in Thousand Oaks.

As part of the requirements needed to earn my doctoral degree, I will be conducting a qualitative research case study.

The purpose of my particular research study is to determine school district-level and/or school-site level stakeholder leaders' (district-level superintendent, district-level director, school site-level principal, program coordinators, teachers, cafeteria manager, custodial staff, other staff, and/or parents) perceptions of their district's/school's "Breakfast in the Classroom" (BIC) program implementation.

The data collected will be summarized by me (the researcher) and included in my Dissertation as findings. All information collected by me (the researcher) will remain confidential. I (the researcher) am the only person who will know the identity of the participants who contribute to this study and, if necessary, I will assign pseudonyms to participating individuals and to the district/school(s) named and/or otherwise referred to in the surveys/questionnaires/interviews/student data. After a recommended period of 3 years, all data and documentation pertaining to this study, with the exception of the final written dissertation, will be shredded or otherwise destroyed.

Participants in this study will all be 22 years of age or older. Participants will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire from which I will gather nominal data. In addition, I (the researcher) will interview each participant and I (the researcher) will record participant responses during interviews.

The questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes to complete and the interview will last approximately 45 minutes. Participation in the study will begin _____ and conclude on or before _____.

Participation in this study is 100% voluntary and confidential. Any participant can discontinue participation at any time and can choose to not answer any question asked of him/her from the survey and/or during the interview.

I, the researcher, find no potential risks or discomforts caused to you or others as a result of your participation in the study. Additionally, there are no benefits to participants, other than to assist with educational research.

I (the researcher) am willing to answer any and all questions you might have before actual research begins. I (the researcher) can be contacted via email at or klowry@callutheran.edu or xxxxxxx@xxxxx.net or by calling me via telephone at (xxx) xxx-xxxx).

Additionally, further information on research participants' rights, the research study, or research-related injury can be obtained by contacting the researcher or faculty sponsor at the contact information below.

Researcher:
Kurt S. Lowry, Principal
School name
Address
Cite, ST, Zip
Telephone: xxx-xxx-xxxx
Facsimile: xxx-xxx-xxxx
Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxx.net

Faculty Sponsor/Dissertation Committee Chair:
Dr. Janice Tucker, jtucker@callutheran.edu

_____   <u>26AUG2013</u>
Signature of Principal Researcher   Date

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

4. Procedures for Ensuring Confidentiality of Data
To protect the identity of participants, all names of school district(s), school(s), and/or school personnel will be given pseudonyms. All data collected will be stored on a password-protected computer and the computer itself stored in a locked cabinet within a locked office.
Only the researcher will know the identity of each participant and after the recommended time of three years, all files will be shredded. Additionally, all computer files will be erased.

5. Project Materials
Included are copies of the survey/questionnaires and semi-structured interview questions to be used in this study, as follows:

Stakeholder Leader/Participant Demographic Survey

Select ONLY ONE answer for each of the following questions.

1. A.hat is your most recent or current and official position and/or role with the school district/school?
    a. Site-Level Administrator (Principal/Asst. Principal)
    b. Classroom Teacher/Coordinator/Coach
    c. Staff - Cafeteria Mgr./Worker
    d. Staff - Custodial/Other
    e. District Director/Superintendent
    f. Community Member/Neighbor/School Volunteer

2. My age range is:
    a. 22-25
    b. 26-34
    c. 35-49
    d. 50-59
    e. 60-over

3. I have worked at or otherwise been associated with this school district/school for the following period of time:
    a. Less than 6 months
    b. 7 months to 2 years
    c. 3 years to 5 years
    d. 6 years to 10 years
    e. Over 10 years

4. I am:
    a. Male
    b. Female
    c. Decline to state

Appendix C

Participant Leader Interview Questions

1. What is the ***purpose*** of the "Breakfast in the Classroom" (BIC) program?
2, Describe ***how*** the BIC program is implemented at your school. What does it look like?

3. What kinds of support exist at your school to facilitate a successful BIC program?

4. What challenges exist at your school that adversely impact implementation of the BIC program?

5. What evidence is most important when considering whether or not your school's BIC program is successful?

6. What other evidence should be considered when determining whether or not the BIC program is successful?

7. When you first learned that this school was going to implement a BIC Program, what were your initial thoughts?

8. How has your opinion of the BIC program changed over time?

9. How has your school district's/school's implementation of the BIC program impacted the students?

10. What changes, if any, need to be made to the BIC program at your school to ensure its long-term success?

Certification

Read and sign below:

Student:
I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information provided above is complete and accurate. I agree to obtain approval from the IRB for any modifications of the above protocol as described.

_____   <u>26 AUG 2013</u>
Signature   Date

Instructor:
I understand that I am responsible for overseeing the research and agree to ensure that it fulfills the highest ethical standards in the field, including but not limited to obtaining full

informed consent from all relevant parties, participants' assurance of voluntary participation, and anonymity and/or confidentiality. I accept responsibility for ensuring that the rights, welfare, and dignity of the participants in this study have been protected and are in accordance with applicable federal/state laws and regulations and the University's *Institutional Guidelines for the Treatment of Human Participants in Research*. I ensure that all personnel conducting the work of this protocol have or will receive appropriate training in the ethical use of human participants in research.

I am responsible for maintaining records to document fulfillment of this standard of care.

Signature (Dissertation Chair) _____ Date_____

Appendix B

Stakeholder Leader/Participant Demographic Survey

Select ONLY ONE answer for each of the following questions.

1. What is your most recent or current and official position and/or role with the school district/school?
   a. Site-Level Administrator (Principal/Asst. Principal)
   b. Classroom Teacher/Coordinator/Coach
   c. Staff – Cafeteria Mgr./Worker
   d. Staff - Custodial/Other
   e. District Director/Superintendent
   f. Community Member/Neighbor/School Volunteer

2. My age range is:
   a. 22-25
   b. 26-34
   c. 35-49
   d. 50-59
   e. 60-over

3. I have worked at or otherwise been associated with this school district/school for the following period of time:
   a. Less than 6 months
   b. 7 months to 2 years
   c. 3 years to 5 years
   d. 6 years to 10 years
   e. Over 10 years

4. I am:
   b. Male
   c. Female
   d. Decline to state

Appendix C

Participant Leader Interview Questions

1. What is the ***purpose*** of the "Breakfast in the Classroom" (BIC) program?

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6. What other evidence should be considered when determining whether or not the BIC program is successful?

7. When you first learned that this school was going to implement a BIC Program, what were your initial thoughts?

8. How has your opinion of the BIC program changed over time?

9. How has your school district's/school's implementation of the BIC program impacted the students?

10. What changes, if any, need to be made to the BIC program at your school to ensure its long-term success?