

MORALS, VALUES AND ETHICS: THEIR IMPACT ON THE DECISIONS  
OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

by

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APPROVAL

The abstract and dissertation of Jon Charles Pede for the Doctor of Education in Leadership were presented January 2015, and accepted by the examining committee.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this grounded theory qualitative study is to examine how principals in a large suburban school district in the Northwest United States, define their educational ethical philosophy and the role of their own morals and values in the development of this philosophy. It will also explore what role their ethical personal morals and values affect their ethical philosophy within their leadership through the daily decisions they make and how the role of ethics by principals are situated within the scope of the ethics of justice, care, critique, community, and profession based upon their decision-making as defined by Shapiro (2006), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), and Shapiro and Gross (2013).

Today, school structures are increasingly more complex and as a result pressure on principals to lead ethically is a key factor for student achievement outcome (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). Growing demands in educational reform are creating increased uncertainty of leadership direction within the role of the school principal (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). These ethical conflicts dramatically affect decision-making by principals, which may ultimately detrimentally affect the lives of students in our educational system. This may be a result of principals making decisions based upon their own morals and values, conflicting directly with actual student need.

Findings in this particular study include at least 38 identified values and 36 identified morals with little commonality between the principals interviewed. These findings in this study evoke a strong indication of the influence personal morals and values on the role of school principal.

These findings also add to the existent literature on the role of morals, values and ethics of school principals by focusing on their unique and personal foundations and the possible influences these experiences have on the development of the ethical philosophy within each school principal.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“The Journey of a Thousand Miles Starts With a Single Step.” – Laozi

This quote has a double meaning for me regarding my dissertation. Personally, it seems like a thousand miles ago I took the single step to start and now here I am at the conclusion. Professionally, I believe that in order for principals in schools to really understand how to best lead their schools they need to know who they are and how it can and will affect their schools, particularly the students. This dissertation has been a labor of love (and sometimes frustration) for me. I truly believe the thinking regarding morals, values and ethics is the best starting point for hard discussions, regarding equity, equality, and finding best-practices in schools matching student and school community need. I really hope someone will read it and have that same revelation that I did almost three years ago when I first started my doctoral program.

It is impossible to acknowledge everyone, as there were so many people who helped me in this journey. First, I would like to thank my committee, Dr. Dawn Montgomery, Mr. John Lenssen, and Dr. Ken Brinson. I especially want to thank Dr. Brinson who helped me put my thoughts on this topic into intelligent words. Every time I talked with him I felt a little smarter and knew I could finish this beast. You were a great Committee Chair. I also want to thank Dr. Carolyn Carr for encouraging me to write a piece on ethics. You were right Dr. Carr; this is what I should write about. I also want to thank Dr. Sue Feldman. She was instrumental in turning me on to

grounded theory. This was a turning point for me. As much as we bantered back and forth about many topics I have tremendous respect for her work on research. I also would like to thank my friend, Christie Woodard who has stood by me every step of the way.

I would like to thank my parents for encouraging me in my career in education. My mother the teacher is an instrumental part of my ethics in education. She has inspired me to be a better teacher every day. I also want to thank my father who has always encouraged me to be a leader rather than just a follower. His advice resonates in my head to be a smart, caring, and professional leader.

Finally and most importantly, I want to thank my partner of 15 years, Tom. Without his love, guidance, support, help and occasional critique, I would not have been able to complete this dissertation. He had to listen to me rant and rave about my research for the past 3 years. In many ways, this dissertation is his as much as it is mine. I love you!

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

“Never forget where you came from young man.”

Judy Pede, Teacher and Mother of the Researcher

It is these words with which I started my career as an administrator and specifically the building of a foundation of values in which I based my educational philosophy. My mother spoke these words to me when I told her of my promotion to Assistant Principal. I had been a special education teacher for 10 years leading up to becoming an administrator. Prior to this promotion, my mother and I had the unique experience of teaching within the same school district. She understood my role as a teacher and I was very aware of hers. She had been a teacher off and on for almost 30 years when she gave me this advice. I grew up knowing I would be a teacher as I lived most of my life in a teacher's house and had been exposed to her values and ethics as a teacher. The values my mother demonstrated to me through her actions as a teacher, her discussions of the needs of her students and her commitment to education were values I later adopted when I entered the field of education.

When she told me to “never forget where I came from” she wanted me to remember I was a teacher first, a teacher last, and foremost to remember my goal was to do what was best for all students. To this day, I use this simple but strong phrase as one of my core values in my ethical philosophy in education. As I later went on to become a principal, and now district office administrator, I watched and continue to

watch as principals struggle to find their ethical philosophies. They are confronted daily with a complex constellation of factors such as their own morals, values and professional obligation which have direct impact on their ethical decisions.

Throughout my career I have witnessed principals making decisions in which I have wondered about their ethical reasoning. In contrast, I have witnessed the opposite where their personal morals, values and ethics toward student need were evident and clear in decisions made benefiting students. This study is personal for me as there have been situations in my career as a principal where my morals, values, and ethics in my decisions have been called into question. It is this very reason a study on the ethics through the decisions of the school principal and how their own morals, values, and ethics play a role having a direct effect on students is important.

Educational practices, policies, and systems such as statewide assessments, legislative initiative, teacher evaluation and school funding are often at odds with the ethical beliefs of many school principals (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). Growing demands in educational reform are creating increased uncertainty of leadership direction within the role of the school principal (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). Through my own experiences as a principal and experiences shared in discussion with my colleagues, these ethical conflicts dramatically affect decision-making by principals, which may ultimately detrimentally affect the lives of students in our educational system. This may be a result of principals making decisions based upon their values and beliefs conflicting directly with actual student need.

The demographic make-up of the school principal historically has not had significant change in the past 100 years (Blount, 1998; Brown, 2005; Kafka, 2009). Principals at all school levels nationwide continue to be overwhelmingly White, Christian, male, acknowledged heterosexual and middle class, often bringing belief systems from these views to their increasingly pluralistic schools (Brown, 2005; Kafka, 2009). Pluralism as defined by England (1992),

Is a society in which members of diverse ethnic, racial, religious and social groups maintain participation in and development of their traditions and special interests while cooperatively working toward the interdependence needed for a nation's unity. (p. 1)

In my experience as a principal, as our schools become more recognizably pluralistic so have the needs of the students. It is no longer realistic for a school to focus on the majority population and expect students who do not fit the majority demographic to have their needs met. Are the systems in schools a reflection of the growing pluralistic need or are they based upon the school leadership whose morals, values and ethics may be in conflict with the school population?

In my current role as a district administrator and as a former principal I have observed firsthand the contrast between school population and school principals who are most commonly reflective of the White, Christian, middle class, male, heterosexual demographic ultimately creating a void of multi-cultural based leadership for all students. As Kafka (2009) explained, "Historically, however the role of principal itself has not radically changed, even as the political environment surrounding it has" (p. 329). In Oregon specifically a changing demographic in

schools within ethnicity, language other than English and growing disparity in socio-economic status (Oregon Department of Administrative Services, 2011), as well as recent national growing acceptance/tolerance toward sexual orientation demands either a demographic change in leadership or a change in educational philosophy of our current school principals which is more reflective of their increasingly pluralistic school. The need for a study focusing on the role of values, morals and ethics within the principalship becomes more apparent as they will have a direct impact on the growing diverse needs in all our schools.

Today, school structures are increasingly more complex and as a result pressures on principals to lead ethically is a key factor for student achievement outcome as they will need to focus on all student need rather than the majority populations (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). In order for principals to become leaders based upon the needs of the school population, leadership in educational structures must change. As Kafka (2009) definitively stated, the demographic and leadership role of the principal has historically stayed static resulting in status structures and systems in schools. Through my experiences as a school principal in both California and Oregon, I have observed how both the demographic and leadership of the school principal continues to stay static. This lack of change does not reflect a growing diverse school population ultimately leading to systems created through a White, middle class, heterosexual, Christian-based viewpoint. As a result, systems are not aligned to actual student need, as they are not reflective of the values, morals and ethics of a pluralistic school community.

As asserted by Frick (2011), rules, regulations and policy are not the stopping point of ethical and moral leadership. Although educational systems are often filled with regulations and rules detailing the exact decision a principal can make for his/her school, many of these systems are only one aspect in decisions making. For example, principals are bound to follow federal and state laws regarding educational policy, school board policy and district office directives, but some may find themselves in a position at times where the law or policy may be contrary to the needs of the students as they tend to be directed by broad interpretation for all students (Frick, 2011). Principals will need to be able to determine when and how to go beyond rules, laws and policies ensuring student success for all.

Ethics in schools as defined by Frick (2011) are the thinking and reasoning behind the actions leaders make daily. To warrant every student has a school experience ensuring all needs are met, ethical leadership is necessary (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). Garrett-Staib and Maninger (2012) also described the ethical principal as one who is more concerned about “behaving responsibly than about always being right” (p. 27). A school leader who does not define themselves by only rules and regulations is willing to go beyond this style of leadership practice (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). As a principal, I was placed in unique situations in which my leadership decisions and/or my colleague’s decisions were in conflict with regulations. For example, regulations such as No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 created systems requiring principals receiving Title 1 funding to increase their school’s statewide assessment scores in reading by a yearly incremental amount or

face disciplinary action toward either their school or themselves or both. Colleagues of mine opted to use reading programs promising an increase in reading scores even though this created inequitable practices resulting in a longitudinal decrease in scores for students as they advanced through grade levels. Examples include using materials in English with students whose primary language may be different than English. Other materials gave reading instruction based upon phonemic awareness to bolster their fluency skills but gave little instruction for reading comprehension. As students moved up in grade, students whose primary instruction in reading was through these specific intervention reading programs could not keep up with students who were instructed in general core materials. Was this reflective of a value toward regulation or personal belief in “following rules?”

In contrast, there were a few principals, such as myself, who opted to find alternate solutions reflective of student need rather than use regulatory practices as dictated by law or policy. I cannot speak for my colleagues who appeared to have shared beliefs but I believe I needed to willingly disobey law and policy in order to ensure all students were successful. I have observed this type of principal who is reflective in practice and opts to forego the system as dictated by practice or policy for student growth. While I am not suggesting this as a practice, at times this not only serves their community better but also leads within a greater global ethical view (Bergmark & Alerby, 2008). As shown in the example in the previous paragraph, it is my belief the ethical educational philosophy a school principal uses to define their decision-making can be more detrimental than beneficial for students depending how

much of their own personal values and beliefs they choose to incorporate them and how they chose to employ them.

### **Statement of the Problem**

As a former school principal my ethical beliefs, how I made ethical decisions and the many barriers I had to contend daily gave me opportunity to have greater reflection on my leadership. Frequently, I discovered situations where I needed to use established regulations and rules benefiting a majority of my students rather than make decisions based on the needs for groups of students or individual student need. The regulatory systems I believed I was obligated to enforce were often contrary to what I personally believed was best for students. Frick (2011) contended:

Behaviors of school officials are likely to be influenced by personal values or motivational bases that affect valuation processes, particularly “value groundings” that are rationally derived and lead to decision making that is either consequence or consensus based. (p. 528)

Do personal ethical values and morals a leader chooses to use negatively affect the ability to make decisions for student need or can they be used to encourage greater reflection in decisions resulting in a personal change in a principal’s ethical philosophy? As a result of principal influence on student success, a study of the role of values, morals and ethics within the decisions of the school principal is important and relevant.

Currently in my capacity as a district level administrator, I am witness to decisions principals make with little regard to ethically based practices addressing the needs of all members of the school community. Their decisions often give the student

group most reflective of their personal background priority which is often White and middle class. I see daily how principals still use practices in instruction not serving the needs of all students. For example, laws such as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 require the use of research-based intervention instruction such as *Language!* (Greene, 2009), *SRA: Early Interventions in Reading* (McGraw-Hill, 2013), *Horizons* (Engelman & Hanner, 1998), and *Houghton Mifflin Reading* (Harcourt, 2008) as some examples used in Oregon, take little into account the individual needs of a growing pluralistic school community. These research-based programs are designed for students reading intervention regardless of background, culture, language or individual need. While many of these programs have become to be considered inappropriate in Oregon, some principals still require the use of them. Were these decisions in choosing curriculum and instruction for teachers a product of systemic leadership through law or is this an act speaking to their own ethical belief system? If they are acting within their belief system what factors such as values and morals have the greatest influence on creating their ethical philosophies?

Ethics in education are viewed in a multitude of different frames. For the purpose of this study, I refer to the ethical paradigms of justice, care, critique, community and profession (Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011) While principals may not define their ethical philosophies within these parameters, their daily decisions can be directly analyzed through these paradigms when viewed by how they address student need in a pluralistic school. The decisions principals make have direct results on student academic experiences, which are potentially

beneficial or detrimental. Further, I used the framework of ethical paradigms as a measurement of ethical decision-making toward practices in schools benefiting all students.

As the education world rapidly develops, a principal needs to be the leader who can respond to daily dilemmas in decision-making (Shapiro & Gross, 2013). In my own experience as a principal, I have learned it is imperative for the principal to cultivate an ability to adapt to situations through a reflective manner allowing them to use multiple ethical paradigms. As adaptations occur, the principal may develop and maintain an ethical belief system with a focus on what is in support of the student. I have observed in this new age of accountability how school administrators are increasingly looking for legal precedent and regulation while seemingly foregoing doing what is right for the school and individual student. When this happens, questions should arise regarding whether or not the principal finds conflict with their ethical philosophy.

Through personal and professional conversations with school principal colleagues, I have observed a conflict between ethical practices in leadership benefiting all students and the actual decisions in our schools. These principals talk about doing what is best for a student but when viewed through an ethical lens, this is far from it. As Garrett-Staib and Maninger (2012) stated:

We can no longer assume educational figureheads have high levels of ethical content just because they have chosen the noble field of education in which to work, nor is it evident in the preparations programs from which they are trained. (p. 26)

Principals placed in situations in which the regulation has little room for interpretation, may revert toward a “situational” ethical belief system (Campbell, 2000). An example of this situational decision-making may manifest itself through decisions a principal makes using their own personal values to determine how to solve a problem at hand. If a principal’s own situational viewpoint is contrary to the student’s background or need then this could result in a decision not reflective of their students. This situational ethical belief system inhibits a leader’s ability to understand the complexities of each student’s needs and thereby makes decisions negatively impacting their school (Reitzug, 2008).

The purpose of this study is to determine how, if at all, ethics in education play a role in the daily decisions and dilemmas principals face in the school community. In addition I want to explore what role morals and values play in defining principals’ ethics and if any of these are factors contributing to the creation of a personal ethical philosophy in education as defined by their leadership decisions.

I believe the answers to these questions not only show how ethics impacts school leadership and how principals incorporate ethics into their decision making, but also provide insight into what factors may define their beliefs. Current literature on ethics defines many ethical paradigms and how principal situational decisions may be viewed through these paradigms (Begley, 2004; Begley & Johansson, 2008; Shapiro, 2006; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011; Stefkovich, 2007). It does not however postulate in great detail or define what role values and morals influence

the definition of ethics and ethical philosophies each principal may form while making leadership decisions affecting all students.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine how principals define their educational ethical philosophy and the role of their own morals and values in the development of this philosophy. Participants from this study were from a large suburban school district within the Northwest region of the state of Oregon. This study also explores what role their ethical personal morals and values affect their ethical philosophy within their leadership through the daily decisions they make. The results of my study examine how the role of ethics by principals are situated within the scope of the ethics of justice, care, critique, community, and profession based upon their decision-making as defined by Shapiro (2006), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), and Shapiro and Gross (2013). Finally, the results indicate how their ethics in educational philosophy may be beneficial or detrimental to the school experience of all students through their decisions.

### **Significance of the Study**

School administrators are “duty-bound” by their role as the leader of a school to ensure each child has their best interests served (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). School leadership is increasingly scrutinized through accountability laws resulting in increased public pressure. In the past decade there has been a greater call for principals to move beyond the sole responsibility of manager of a school building to becoming more of an instructional leader. Over the past 10 years, with the inception of

regulatory practices such as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, school accountability is more prevalent at the federal directly affecting the local level. As explained in previous sections I have personally witnessed as school accountability rises, so does the accountability of the school principal. A study focusing on morals and values within ethical philosophies in decision making is necessary to engage principals to be more reflective in their decision making process as they fulfill the needs of students.

Our schools are continuing an upward trend toward greater diversity. Student diversity in ethnicity, cultural identity, sexual orientation and gender roles are often at the core of student needs. Decision-making by principals need to be based in sound practices focusing on the certainty all students are given the opportunity to have their needs met (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). This requires a principal to develop strong ethical leadership promoting practices allowing all students success to meet their needs within their school careers (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). As a result of this ethical leadership, principals are expected to do more in relation to their schools than ever before. As Kafka (2009) stated:

Being an effective building manager used to be good enough. For the past century, principals mostly were expected to comply with district-level edicts, address personnel issues, order supplies, balance program budgets, keep hallways and playgrounds safe, put out fires that threatened tranquil public relation, and make sure that busing and meal services were operating smoothly. And principals still need to do all those things. But now they must do more. (p. 319)

Historically, educational decisions in schools have been based upon a focus of top down managerial decision-making often driven by policies, budget, and law as well

the personal beliefs of the school principal (Kafka, 2009; Rousmaniere, 2007). More often than not, these decisions are aligned with the majority population reflective of White, Christian, heterosexual, middle-class society. Decisions by the principal directly affecting students of color or English as a second language were created through this myopic viewpoint.

With growing diverse demographics and the intense accountability based focus on schools now, decision-making must be based on ethical leadership with the goal of understanding and connecting with all student populations (Branson, 2007). As Branson (2007) emphatically stated:

In these changing and uncertain times, people want their leaders to live by the virtues of not producing harm, of doing good, of honouring others, of taking positive stands, and of behaving in ways where self-interest is not the driving motivation. (p. 226)

Communities want to trust their school leaders make honest and good decisions for their students (Northouse, 2013).

The intent of this study is to identify how principals define their ethical philosophies and what personal or professional morals and values play a role in creating these beliefs. It is my desire in this study to assist principals in defining ethics in the development of their educational philosophy by examining specifically those values and morals creating their definitions. In addition, I focus on the application of these ethical beliefs in the daily decisions of school principals as the principal creates the environment for the educational experience of the students in their school.

### **Definitions of Terms**

For the purposes of this study I use the following definitions of the different paradigms of ethics (Justice, Care, Critique, Community, Profession) and terms related to ethics as based upon the work of Begley and Johansson (2008), Davidson and Griffin (2000), Eyal, Berkovich, and Schwartz, (2011), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), and Shapiro and Gross (2013).

**Ethics:** The paradigm of ethics is an individual's personal beliefs regarding right and wrong, good and bad (Eyal et al., 2011). Many factors may play a role in the definition of ethics. The role of values, beliefs, experiences, and education may be contributing factors for defining ethics.

**Values:** These are the "conceptions of the desirable" motivating individuals and collective groups to act in particular ways to achieve particular ends (Begley & Johansson, 2008, p. 428). Valuation of beliefs may be the driving force for principals to define their ethical beliefs. However, the values principals chose to use may not be personally driven. Values derived from professional organizations within employment roles may have a greater force for value creation than personal belief.

**Ethic of Justice:** This ethical paradigm focuses on the "rights and law and is part of a liberal democratic tradition" (Shapiro & Gross, 2013, p. 22; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011, p. 11). These are the procedures to make decisions to provide equal access for all people (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011, p. 11). While this ethic is often a driving paradigm for leadership providing equity for all students through an equality lens, it can lead to a limitation for equitable access of education for all students as it

does not take into account individual needs. The ethic of justice is often driven through a collection of legal precedent, rules and regulations from governing bodies, and past practice.

Ethic of Care: This ethical paradigm positions the educational leader to think beyond a one size fits all model and allows for the individual needs of the student to be the guide to ethical decision-making (Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). As defined by Eyal et al. (2011) the Ethic of Care “is the empathy and responsibility for the well being of the individual” (p. 398).

Ethic of Critique: Many systems, policies and practices of schools are contradictory to the benefit of all students. Principals are challenged daily to be reflective toward their decision to decide if the educational system benefits students’ abilities to be successful. The Ethic of Critique examines the social and institutional dimensions of life and allows the principal to decide if the system is detrimental or beneficial to student success (Begley & Johansson, 2008; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011).

Ethic of Community: An ethical belief system of a group may not be solely from the leader as the members of the community may have as much voice and substance as the leader. The principal takes into consideration the values, beliefs, and desires of the community when making ethical decisions for the benefit of all students (Eyal et al., 2011; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011).

Ethic of Profession: As defined by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011) the ethic of profession is a “dynamic process requiring administrators to develop their own

personal and professional codes” (p. 22). These codes of ethical belief are derived from a principals own belief systems from their educational, personal, and practiced backgrounds.

These terms were used as a guide to defining ethics in my study. They were not the entire focus of the creation of the ethical philosophy of school principals as their leadership actions fluctuate in and out of different ethical paradigms during their tenure as leaders based upon their students’ needs.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions define the course of this study:

1. How do principals in a suburban Northwest school district in the United States define their ethical philosophies within the role as a school principal?
2. What role, if any, do their personal morals and values affect their ethical philosophies and how are these morals and values reflected in their decision-making process?
3. How are the ethical paradigms of Care, Justice, Community, Critique, and Profession as defined by Vokey (2005), Shapiro (2006), Langlois and Lapointe (2007), Eyal et al. (2011), Frick (2011), Furman (2012), Garrett-Staib and Maninger (2012), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), and Shapiro and Gross (2013), reflected, if at all, within their decision-making process?

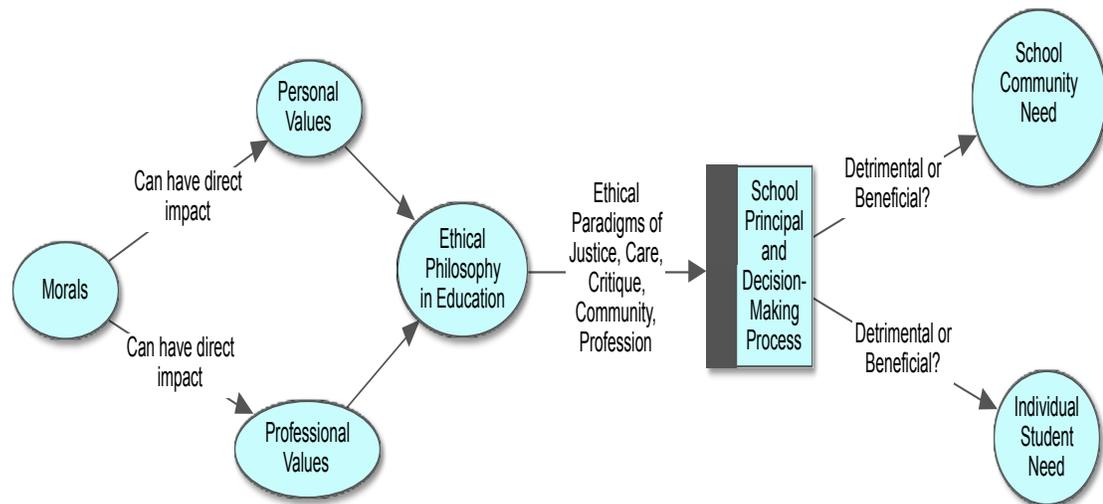
### **Theoretical Framework**

The current structure of the role of the school principal is ultimately less predictable, less structured and more conflict driven than any time in public school history in the United States (Begley & Johansson, 2008). Our school populations are increasingly becoming more pluralistic, making principal decision-making a more complicated process (Hughes & Jones, 2010). The need for ethical leadership is in

greater demand through the unique needs of a diverse student population. These demands create situations where ethical dilemmas are day-to-day occurrences even as the principal is obligated to provide success for students in school communities (Eyal et al., 2011). School principals through their role possess a tremendous amount of direct decision-making ability determining the best interests of students within the decisions principals make toward their schools. As the individual needs of each student increase the principal has a moral obligation to make ethical decision reflecting these needs (Frick, 2011).

A study of ethics in school leaders is necessary to understand the foundation of decision-making, which may or may not be in the best interest of students. At the heart of ethical decisions are personal morals and values the school principal reflects upon and uses in their leadership (Frick, 2011; Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). As Frick (2011) stated, “ethics study the underlying beliefs, assumptions, principles, values that support a moral way of life” (p. 527). Morals and values through a personal or professional experience, gives principals a mechanism to develop a moral compass in which to lead their school. Ethical theory assumes acting ethically means acting within well-developed ethical principles (Vokey, 2005). The ethical lens a principal uses to develop their leadership is formed from the viewpoint of how principals see themselves and how they see others (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). As shown in Figure 1, morals create values leading to the development of ethical philosophies, which in turn leaders use to make decisions affecting student need (Begley, 2004; Begley & Johansson, 2008; Eyal et al., 2011; Furman, 2003, Shapiro, 2006; Shapiro &

Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). These ethical philosophies may be placed within the ethical paradigms of Justice, Care, Critique, Community and Profession (Shapiro, 2006; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). As viewed through my own personal experience as a school principal, personal ethics, morals and values may be used to day-to-day decisions affecting student need.



*Figure 1.* Ethical development. Sources: Begley (2004), Begley and Johansson (2008), Eyal et al. (2011), Furman (2003), Shapiro (2006), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), and Shapiro and Gross (2013).

The study of ethics is important, as ethics are vital for decision-making as they provide a foundation for moral deliberation (Hughes & Jones, 2010). The study of ethical decision-making in school leaders delves into the center of personal values principals often used to develop their ethical belief system and philosophy. This study also provides knowledge of the factors principals use to make day-to-day decisions

where there may be value conflicts. Finally, a study of decision-making demonstrates how differences between the leaders' morals, values and ethics and those of the community may clash (Vitton & Wasonga, 2009).

### **Limitations**

This research had two limitations. The first limitation is directly linked to the sample population as the topic of the research does present a personal risk to individual principals. Principals are encouraged to speak truthfully and openly about their personal beliefs and the factors having the most influence. These influences and beliefs may be contrary to the beliefs of their school district and can illicit a tangible fear while giving their definition and factors related to it. Additionally, my current job role is a district level administrator and was a principal prior to this role in the same school district. In my current role, I am neither a supervisor nor evaluator of any of the participants. The second limitation is the varied background and experiences of each school principal. As principal training varies and each principal comes with different personal backgrounds it is exceptionally difficult to focus on a single school of thought in principal training. This study takes into account the multiple views of educational philosophy and acknowledges how individual educational experiences will have direct influence on the ethical definitions of school principals.

### **Delimitations**

The focus of this study is to determine the definition of a principal's educational ethical philosophy and the impact of the role of morals and values of this ethical lens on their leadership. I have chosen to focus on the northwest region of the

United States due to personal accessibility. The school district I used in my research has a large sample population of school principals but it is not intended to be a reflection of principals nationwide. A final delimitation focuses on the type of methodology used in my study. I chose to use the qualitative methods research model Grounded Theory based upon the work of Glaser and Strauss and revision by Charmaz (2012). Grounded theory methodology focuses on the development of theory based upon data collected within participants' experiences. This methodology is a constructivist paradigm methodology as defined by Guba and Lincoln (2004). A methodology within a constructivist paradigm is necessary as morals, values, and ethics are subjective and possibly unique to each principal. Through the use of grounded theory, I demonstrate how ethical philosophies are social constructions within the morals and values of school principals and also show there is not one clear path to developing and defining an ethical philosophy. This study also explores how many factors such as morals and values play a significant role in the decision-making principals make affecting student need.

### **Assumptions**

This study includes the following assumptions: (a) the selected principals interviewed freely and gave an accurate and honest representation in their statements regarding their morals, values and ethical philosophies as they related them to their experiences and backgrounds; (b) the data collected gives a strong description of the role individual morals and values play in their decision-making process; and (c) the

data collected gives an accurate representation of the role of ethical paradigms of Justice, Care, Critique, Community and Profession in their decision-making.

### **Organization of the Study**

Five chapters make up this study. Chapter 1 includes the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, definition of terms, research questions, theoretical framework, limitations, delimitations, and assumptions.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature including the definition of ethics I have chosen to base my research upon. It explores and expands upon the paradigms of ethics including the ethics of justice, care, critique, community and profession and how school principal decisions may be viewed through them. It discusses and elaborates the current literature on how morals and values affect ethics in schools and are related to the ethical paradigms. Further it describes how principals use morals, values, and ethics to make transformative change in their leadership through reflection of leadership practice. Finally, it examines daily dilemmas and the use of values, morals and ethics to make leadership decisions for all students.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology of this research study through grounded theory. It explains the use of a qualitative approach to research and give brief descriptions of grounded theory through a constructivist paradigm. This chapter explains the selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis techniques.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the entire study, discussion of the findings, recommendations for future research, final thoughts and conclusions.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the current research on the significance of ethics in leadership in schools through the decisions of school principals and the effect of this leadership affecting the educational experience for all students. It also explores the role of morals and values in ethics and the influence on principals' ethical philosophy. Diversity in schools and a growing accountability on the achievement of different groupings of students increasingly provides impetus for principals to develop leadership focusing on the needs of all students in their educational careers (Auerbach, 2010; Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012; Hughes & Jones, 2010; Northouse, 2013). Even with the increase in accountability for high achievement for all students, decisions made by the school leader can often create barriers for students as the principal's personal morals and values may define ethical philosophies and leadership decisions.

Copious research exists on morals, values, and ethics in school leadership (Begley, 2004; Furman, 2012; Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012; Gross & Shapiro, 2004; Shapiro, 2006; Stefkovich, 2007; Vokey, 2005). Research on ethics in educational leadership focuses on defining ethics in a singular application by school leaders but often does not focus on the relationship the personal beliefs and values

school leaders bring to their ethical philosophy (Begley, 2004; Bergmark & Alerby, 2008; Calabrese, 1998; Campbell, 2000). These decisions are examined through the viewpoint of a singular ethical paradigm and often not with attention paid toward the impact of personal morals and values within these decisions.

During the 8 years I was a school principal in both California and Oregon, I watched how the focus in education turned toward teachers and their impact on rigorous and comprehensive instruction for marginalized students. At the same time, the importance of the school principal on the direct impact on marginalized groups was steadily ignored. Traditionally, the school principal has been and is often portrayed by many in the role as a manager to provide the effective functioning of the school and not a significant factor for the development and leadership to assist in student need (Blount, 1998; Brown, 2005).

My research in this review elaborates on the application of the ethical philosophies of school principals through decision-making in response to school based dilemmas and the impact of personal morals and values in principal leadership. I begin with a review of the history of the school principal and historical leadership to illustrate how “traditional” values based upon a White, male, middle-class, heterosexual, Christian male viewpoint played a role in school leadership. I further my review through an examination of the effect of personal and professional morals and values in the development of an ethical school philosophy and resulting school leadership.

The next section defines authentic and transformative leadership as a result of morals, values, and ethics through reflective practice as seen through current research (Bergmark & Alerby, 2008; Branson, 2007; Combs, 2003; Eyal et al., 2011). I focus on the area of ethics and the multiple paradigms of ethics in educational leadership as defined by current scholars (Shapiro 2006; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011) in ethical research as well as present realistic examples of each. This review focuses on a working definition of ethics in education through the ethics of justice, care, critique, community and profession and how these paradigms are tied to the leadership of school principals. I conclude with ethical dilemmas and focus on the impact of ethical philosophies of the school principal. My study expands upon the body of knowledge of ethical philosophies of school principals showing how ethics tied to personal morals and values are a key component of leadership affecting decision-making.

### **History of the Role of the American School Principal**

The origins of the modern school principal in the United States and leadership hierarchy are documented in the nineteenth century (Rousmaniere, 2007). The position of the principal was initially created to address the growing needs of a new system of schooling. These schools, which in prior years were not graded or hierarchal, began to place students by age and achievement in a single classroom with a single teacher (Rousmaniere, 2007). Initially, these positions were created as a principal-teacher. The principal-teacher was typically a White male who also carried out clerical and administrative duties as well as reporting directly to a district superintendent (Kafka,

2009). The principal-teacher had a connection to students and staff in the role as a teaching administrator. The role of principal-teacher kept school leaders connected to students directly as a result of daily interaction as they were in a semi-teaching role (Blount, 1998; Kafka, 2009).

In the early twentieth century, the role of the principal-teacher shifted as the principal-teacher, often a White, married, Christian male, began to move away from teaching responsibilities and became the primary manager, supervisor and administrator of the local school (Blount, 1998; Brown, 2005). The traditional role of principal was developed by men as women assumed the role of teacher (Blount, 1998). The responsibilities of the teacher were seen as feminine whereas the role of manager and leader became the developed and accepted masculine role (Blount, 1998). The principal in a managerial position was expected to address instructional practice from the view of the principal as supervisor of all staff and moving further away from the needs of individual students. Documentation from the early 1930s described principals as:

Expected to observe classroom lessons daily, participating at times to have their influence felt. They were expected to conference with teachers, provide personalized instruction and advice, and rate teachers on their performance and of the students performance. (Kafka, 2009, p. 323)

Interesting to note, during a period of the early twentieth century, most elementary principals were White women and most secondary principals were White males as elementary education was deemed a feminine nurturing role and secondary education was designed to truly educate (Blount, 1998; Kafka, 2009). While there was some

gender diversity, there was little diversity connected to other ethnicities, religions, or sexual identity, as these were not considered an American norm (Kafka, 2009).

However, despite a growing student body and calls for greater leadership in the role of the principal little changes were made in the overall face of the principalship.

Principals throughout the middle to the end of the twentieth century grew and continued to be White, heterosexual, middle class Christian men (Blount, 1998; Kafka, 2009).

Principals continue to maintain responsibilities focusing management of school buildings, supervising instruction, coordinating curriculum and monitoring student behavior and progress all the while using decision making role models from an earlier historical role (Marks & Printy, 2003). The role of the early principal bears a striking resemblance to principals in present day.

As the twentieth century progressed the demographics of the American principalship undertook a dramatic shift (Rousmaniere, 2007). Prior to World War II, women held many principal positions in elementary schools. “In the United States between 1900 and 1950, over two-thirds of American elementary schools had women principals” (Rousmaniere, 2007, p. 15). Positions for women as secondary school principals were rare. An elementary principal position required a minimal amount of education and certification, while a college level degree was required for secondary positions (Blount, 1998; Rousmaniere, 2007). This requirement excluded women from secondary positions, as they had limited access to college and universities (Rousmaniere, 2007).

Starting in the 1920s, university programs in school administration began nationwide. These programs were “explicitly limited to men through recruitment practices and gender quotas in graduate programs” (Rousmaniere, 2007, p. 17). The process of university recruitment gave rise to hiring heterosexual, Christian, White, middle class men, practicing in educational leadership from a clearly defined perspective. As Rousmaniere (2007) explained, “The athletic, married male principal offered school districts a vision of stability, hetero-normativity, and professionalism” (p. 17). The process of gender and racial organization of principals from these views continued well into the twentieth century leading to a solidification of the role of the principal still in practice today.

From the middle of the nineteenth to mid-twentieth century, American schools were racially segregated (Rousmaniere, 2007). This was particularly evident in the southern states. Prior to *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the landmark Supreme Court case ending racial segregation of American schools, black school principals were common in segregated schools systems (Rousmaniere, 2007). As Rousmaniere (2007) stated, “black educators worked in almost complete isolation from whites, whether in legally segregated schools in the South, or in de facto segregated schools in the North” (p. 19). Black principals in segregated schools were seen as role models serving as both school leader and liaison in their communities. This important connection between school and community gave culturally relevant leadership with direct connection to service the needs of the population of traditionally Black

communities. Principals culturally connected to the population they served made decisions based on their cultural belief systems which often matched student need.

A significant change in the role of the school principal occurred with *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) as many Black principals were replaced with White male principals. In the 10 years following the Supreme Court case, the number of black principals in the South was reduced by 90% (Rousmaniere, 2007, Tillman, 2004). The demographic of the principalship changed as Tillman (2004) described, “In the late 1960s, when the enforcement of desegregation was at its peak in the American South, black principals were eliminated with what one investigating body called ‘avalanche-like force and tempo’” (p. 112). The elimination of Black schools principals during and after the 1950s severed the connection between the leader of the school and the community they served. The school leader who was culturally connected to the needs of the school populace was replaced by a demographic shift in leadership who did not have any legitimate relevancy to the climate, culture and needs of the community as Black principals in primarily Black schools were replaced with White principals in integrated schools (Rousmaniere, 2007).

Schools systems embedded with White, middle class, male values were a direct result of the elimination of principals of color and women throughout the twentieth century (Rousmaniere, 2007). The changes to the American educational system of the twentieth century paved the foundation for leadership roles today toward White, male, heterosexual, Christian, middle class values and beliefs. School cultures and student needs are changing demographically at expeditious rates in public schools

necessitating an examination in the ethical philosophies derived from principals toward their leadership. In the next section I examine the current role of the school principal in a dynamically changing school population.

### **The Role of the Principal in a Pluralistic School Community**

A growing demographic change in the American school system places principals in positions where ethical beliefs leading to decisions focusing on student needs are paramount to ensure all students are successful in school (Shapiro & Gross, 2013). While the need for leadership with an ethical focus is of great importance, the position and leadership of principals remains similar to their early counterparts of the twentieth century (Blount 1998; Kafka, 2009; Rousmaniere, 2007). The lack of evolution in leadership roles stifles decision making from an ethical philosophy, as the principal is not always a reflection of the community served.

School leadership with students needs at the core of their ethical belief demonstrates the greatest success (Thurston & Berkeley, 2010). However, the structure currently in place does not assist a majority of the populace in our school systems. More often than not, school leadership uses a “cookie cutter” approach to assist student need (Thurston & Berkeley, 2010). This approach may be viewed as the personal values a principal brings to a school through their leadership decisions. By examining the ethical philosophies of the helm of leadership in our schools there is clear indication of the lack of leadership not reflecting the students and communities they serve, particularly if the community is not White and not economically middle class (Kafka, 2009).

The demographic face of school principals in the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century did not become a reflection of diverse school populations.

Rousmaniere (2007) demonstrated:

In 2002, less than 10% of all American Principals were African American, and only 4% were Hispanic, at a time when students of color constitute a majority of enrollment in urban public school systems. Even in urban schools with predominantly minority student populations, only one-third of all principals were African-American. (p. 21)

While studies and policies in the last 20 years have shown community involvement is critical to student achievement, the role and face of the principal has not changed, thereby hindering the ability of communities and schools to reach out to each other (Auerbach, 2010). Without the ability to connect with a community, which might have different morals and values resulting in a different ethical philosophy other than their own, the principal may have a harder time making leadership decisions authentically connected to the population they serve (Auerbach, 2010).

As a former school principal, it is my belief school experiences reflecting the culture of the community provides opportunities for students to experience connections to their educational experience. Every piece of the school system authentically reflecting the students' needs and beliefs gives students hope the leaders respect and care for them (Thurston & Berkeley, 2010). It is critical for students to feel a connection to their school experience in order to be successful. Students must feel a sense of caring through the systems created by the principal (Webb, Shumway, & Shute, 1996). Through a system of caring which goes beyond formal education,

students should see their values, beliefs and needs reflected and not those of a person whose beliefs maybe different (Webb et al., 1996).

When a principal makes authentic leadership decisions with an ethical philosophy promoting assisting the needs for all students, he or she does so with the risk these decisions may run counter to policy, regulation and even their own personal values. However, school principal leadership overwhelmingly has not changed to adapt to this leadership role. As the principalship developed into a more formalized position, “it was designed to be more closely aligned to and responsive to district offices than to teachers’ classrooms” (Rousmaniere, 2007, p. 22). In essence, historically the role of the principal evolved toward a role based upon morals, values and ethical philosophy enveloped within the demographic within the majority of American school principals; White, heterosexual, male, and middle-class. The following section addresses how student need should dominate ethical accountability and responsibility among school principals.

### **Ethics and Professional Accountability and Responsibility**

Educational accountability during the past decade has focused increasingly on the teacher as the provider of practice to raise student achievement (Starratt, 2005). However, it is the principal who ultimately is accountable for the outcomes for all students in a school. The level of accountability a principal faces is higher now than previously seen in American education (Starratt, 2005). As described previously, accountability through legislation such as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 in which standardized test scores define the success of a school places principals in

situations is a prime example of conflict between regulatory practice and student need. As Shapiro (2006) described, “Currently in the U.S public schools, accountability is very much in vogue” (p. 2). With this hierarchy comes a dearth of accountability policies the principal must navigate in order to make decisions for students, staff and parents (Shapiro, 2006). Darling-Hammond and Synder (1992) described five types of accountability a principal must successfully navigate: political, legal, bureaucratic, professional, and market. Gross, Shaw, and Shapiro (2003) added four additional levels of accountability: parent, fiscal, student, and personal. There is greater genuine concern within principals regarding the fear of losing their leadership position due to the nature of difficulty of navigating the many layers of accountability (Hughes & Jones, 2010).

Due to the fear and increased layers of accountability, principals often find themselves in a paradox in which the principal must balance the need to be accountable to law, policy or practice versus the need to be accountable to student needs (Shapiro, 2006; Starratt, 2005). School principal accountability, as Shapiro (2006) explained, has been transformed “from a notion that schools need to be responsive and responsible to community concerns to one in which numbers are used to demonstrate that schools have met their minimal requirement” (p. 2).

Accountability for student success and responsibility for student success are not synonymous. Where in the role of the principals does responsibility become a factor and how is this responsibility tied to ethics?

Many of the everyday decisions principals make are solved using policy, regulation and past practice in which they are accountable to follow (Shapiro, 2006; Starratt, 2005). Often these practices serve principals well enough to make good decisions benefiting many of their students (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). However, there are decisions requiring the principal to make which may be “undesirable or desirable” (Hughes & Jones, 2010, p. 52) ultimately contrary to policy, regulation or practice. An example of an undesirable decision in which I have observed as both a principal and a school district administrator is the use of a standardized data to determine student growth without looking at a student’s history within a context of personal or educational background. Principals who chose to determine growth based upon the individual needs of students and rather than from a myopic view as standardized test data are often at odds with policy and legislation. At this point school principals are no longer making decisions from an accountability lens but from a lens of responsibility. Shapiro (2006) defined responsibility as “coming from within [and comes from the] heart rather than the head, and is an ethical concept” (p. 3). The principal who accepts responsibility for all students needs is reflective in practice and sees students as individuals. This position often creates situations in which the principal must make decisions running counter to policy, regulation, and practice within the school system (Frick, 2011). It is in these situational ethical dilemmas the values a principal views as important are clearly shown (Bergmark & Alerby, 2008). Through my experiences as a school principal and the research I present, I believe a

change in leadership from accountability evolving to responsibility sets the stage for principals to lead within an ethical frame.

Schools are in themselves replete with situations creating a conflict between accountability and responsibility. An example of the type of this type of conflict can be seen in the response to intervention programs used during the era of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 versus the need for culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum. During this period, programs used in schools as scientifically research based took little into account the cultural and linguistic differences in children. During my tenure as a school principal this was an increasingly divisive dilemma. It forced me to decide whether I follow policy and practice or do what I believed was ethically best for the students through a level of cultural competency. I chose cultural competency as it was my belief in the need for students to find connections to school curriculum through their ethnic and linguistic connections rather than pre-set program based upon White, middle-class norms.

Ethics and ethical decisions are more than the rules, past practices and regulations as set forth by educational organizations such as school policy, district policy or state and federal regulation (Frick, 2011). Principals are often torn between doing what is right for the student while at the same time exhibiting loyalty and commitment to their colleagues and organization (Marshall, 1992). Often the norms and rules of the organization are the very reasons for the division over the need to be accountable and the responsibility for the student (Frick, 2011). This level of division over accountability and responsibility is precisely the reason for ethics in leadership

rather than the rigidity of policy, regulation and historical practice. What impacts a principals' ability to shift from accountability to responsibility? In the next section, I describe the role of values and morals in ethics within the role of the principal leadership. I also explore the five ethical paradigms and the connection between a principal's personal belief systems.

### **Ethics**

What are ethics? As a former principal if asked to define my ethical philosophy I would have been hard pressed to do so. I could give examples of ethical decisions I believed to be correct or right for students; I may have even come close to a definition. I believe I was a good principal, making decisions in a manner benefiting all students. However, through my research I have started to look back at my decisions and question my own ethical philosophy. This circles back to the original question: What are ethics?

There are many definitions of ethics in current research each having a definitively different interpretation when applied to educational leadership. Eyal et al. (2011) described ethics as an individuals' personal belief regarding right and wrong, good and bad. Calabrese (1988) posited ethics as the "respect for all members of society, tolerance for alternative opinions, culture and equitable resource allocation" (p. 2). Frick (2011) explained ethics as the thinking and reasoning and separates out the actions as morality. As demonstrated in the definitions presented from literature, ethics is not as simple a task as creating a set definition applied to all situations. Research in education however has attempted to define ethics in education and yet

there is not a “one size fits all” definition applicable to all situations. Through my own personal experiences and observations of decisions from my principal colleagues, I believe the definition of ethics in education is approachable from the role it plays in our schools today through the daily decisions principals make to address student need.

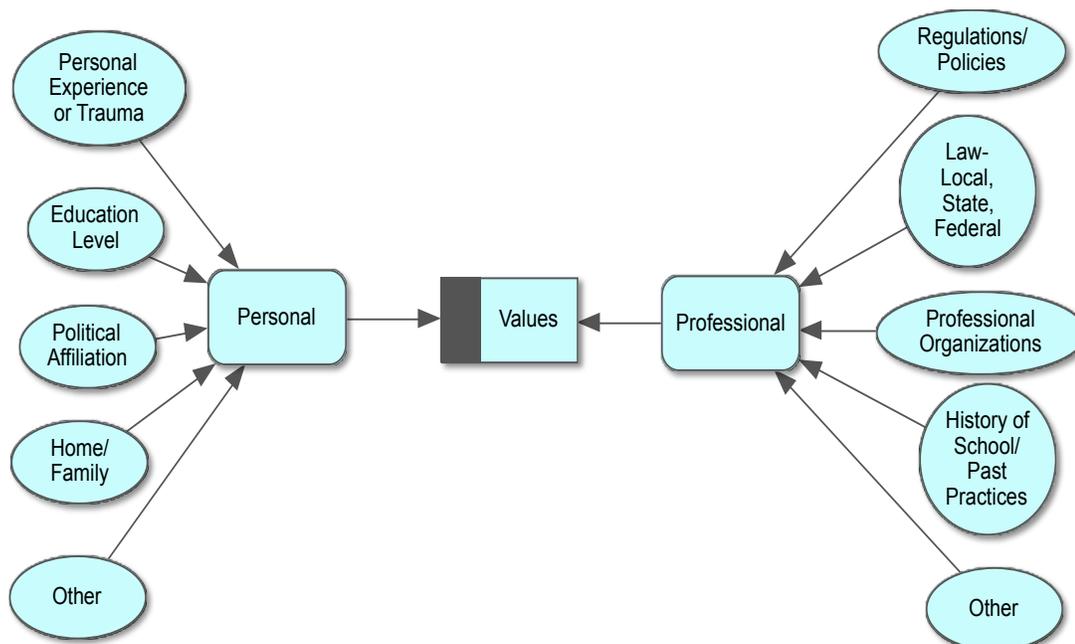
Ethics is relational as it focuses on the needs of “the other” (Bergmark & Alerby, 2008, p. 42). In this vein ethics is also situational. It should not be motivated by the morals and values of the leader, but rather through the needs of the student (Bergmark & Alerby, 2008). As such it is a process requiring the leader to determine what part of their moral fiber will define their position toward others. In this position a principal must reflect on where their morals and values fit within their ethical philosophies (Niesche & Haase, 2012). The following sections expand upon my belief regarding how their ethical substance based upon personal morals and values is at the very heart of their leadership through their role as viewed through the daily dilemmas they face and how they respond using their ethical philosophy.

### **The Role of Values in Principal Leadership**

What are values? This is a very subjective question. Each person can identify different values shaping their beliefs. In my role as principal I relied on my personal and professional values to guide my practice. Simply put, I would define my values as beliefs guiding the definition of right and wrong in all areas of my life. Gill (2003) described values, “as principles held dear in people’s hearts by which they live (and sometimes die)” (p. 313). Begley and Johansson (2008) were equally succinct in their definition of values as “those conceptions of the desirable that motivate individual and

collective groups to act in particular ways to achieve particular ends” (p. 421). The definition of values especially in our schools is subjective and open to individual definition. Values exist through a variety of different sources either personal or professional.

The role of schools and the accountability of school principals are rapidly changing in order to meet the needs of all students (Vitton & Wasonga, 2009). Education in itself is one of the most value-laden issues in our society today (Vitton & Wasonga, 2009). Values in schools are reflected in student behavior expectations and discipline, test scores, citizenship, curriculum and instruction and post schooling beyond high school. The conflict apparent within school values is the disconnection between those who create these values and the students and communities in which they are projected and placed in positions to accept. School principals are increasingly more cognizant of value driven needs in our schools due to the increasingly pluralistic communities from which our schools draw students (Begley & Johansson, 2008). The school principal faces a plethora of factors making up the need for value driven decisions in our schools. Begley (2004) described some of these factors driving a principals leadership decisions as: “self, group, profession, organization, community, and culture” (p. 2). Personal and professional influences (Begley, 2004; Begley & Johansson, 2008; Vitton & Wasonga, 2009) drive value creation in our schools placing principals in unique positions to define what values they will use to make decisions (see Figure 2). Ultimately, the values a principal uses and project in their leadership drives their ethics and the ethics of their school (Begley & Johansson, 2008).



*Figure 2.* Personal and professional influences on values. Sources: Begley (2004), Begley and Johansson (2008), and Vitton and Wasonga (2009).

Principals may use parts of values gathered from experiences, background, home life, professional experiences, regulation, and policy to guide their decisions. As a former principal, my role as the principal created the catalyst for value driven decisions and ultimately making me the determinate and voice of the values of the school community. The following question becomes relevant: Do all principals share the view in which their values determine the values of their school?

Values influence the ability for principals to problem solve both directly and indirectly. Directly, values act “as preferences” and dictate directly to the school leader the action needed to be taken (Law & Walker, 2005). The values a principal brings to their actions act as filters to help them determine which external factors are

relevant to their actions. Law and Walker (2005) determined principals indirectly use values as a way to substitute directly problem solving knowledge. A principals' values whether personal or not, are visible through the actions they take toward the daily dilemmas they face (Bergmark & Alerby, 2008). The principal through their hierarchical position drives the beliefs and ethics of the school through their morals and values (Bergmark & Alerby, 2008).

The role of the principal as leader must be the model for the school community and its values (Hughes & Jones, 2010). These values as driven by the principal should be a direct reflection of the school community beliefs and attitudes (Hughes & Jones, 2010). As Bergmark and Alerby (2008) determined, "Schools that display the shared values of fairness, justice, respect, cooperation and compassion have a positive sense of community, supporting and motivating both teachers and students" (p. 46). However, conflict between the values a principal brings to their decisions may not match those values of the school community.

More often than not, the principal is not only the driver of the values, beliefs and ethics of the school community but the actual designer (Eyal et al., 2011). Principals ultimately make value-laden decisions and how the school leader thinks and believes regarding their leadership translates distinctly the school values (Eyal et. al. 2011). Personal values of the principal reflect "underlying human motivations, and shape subsequent attitudes, speech, and actions" (Viton & Wasonga, 2009, p. 93). Values are a result of a foundation within a moral belief system in which personal

ethical philosophies are described and created. The following section describes the role of morals as derived from values in the role of the school principal.

### **The Role of Morals in Principal Leadership**

Morals as posited by Hughes and Jones (2010) “begins at this point of knowledge of natural law, a use varying with the active system of dispositions and desires” (p. 54). In other words, the morals one uses are derived by the knowledge one has through lived experiences and used in context of the situation. A principal’s daily decisions are replete with moral decision-making. Langlois and Lapointe (2007) aligned moral leadership with the highest level of “development and skills in post modern leadership” (p. 249). They ascertained a school leader at this level understands every action taken in a school or decision made has immediate and long-lasting impact on the life and educational experience of people in their school.

Who determines morality in schools and how is morality in school leadership defined? The school is a system based upon values projected to the school communities often from the school leadership determining what is morally right for student need (Furman, 2012). A school needs a leader who will go beyond the basic management of a school and develop a morally just system (Sagnak, 2010). Furman (2003) described schools as “moral communities” (p. 3) requiring specific leadership based upon “moral authority” (p. 3). Are morals subjective based upon the values learned from the background experiences of the school leader and how much impact do individual morals have in the role of the school principal?

Leadership with a solid moral foundation as described by Furman (2012) is leadership engaged in the understanding of others, a focus of community and interpersonal skills, communication with ongoing dialogue allowing all voices to be heard. The Principal as leader of the school uses a high sense of morality to project legitimacy and vision of the school organization. By doing so, the principal is in essence the sole person in charge of focusing the moral obligations of the members of the school community to be ethically just for all students (Sagnak, 2010). However, the idea of ethically just may be dependent on the morally driven ethical philosophy of the principal.

Each principal brings a different set of personal morals and values to define their daily moral leadership. Vitton and Wasonga (2009) determined the need for principals to analyze and reflect on the context of their decisions for students. Three components of moral behavior in school principals lead to contextual decision-making: Moral Sensitivity, Moral Judgment, and Moral Motivation (see Figure 3).

Moral sensitivity directs the principal to interpret a situation through reflective questioning such as who is affected, how does the decision affect the welfare of the school community and how do the members of the school community regard leadership (Vitton & Wasonga, 2009)? An example of moral sensitivity through my lens as a former principal, are school-based systems of student discipline needing to reflect on how the discipline system helps or hinders a student. Is it perceived as biased toward one group of students and ultimately does it change the climate of the school culture?

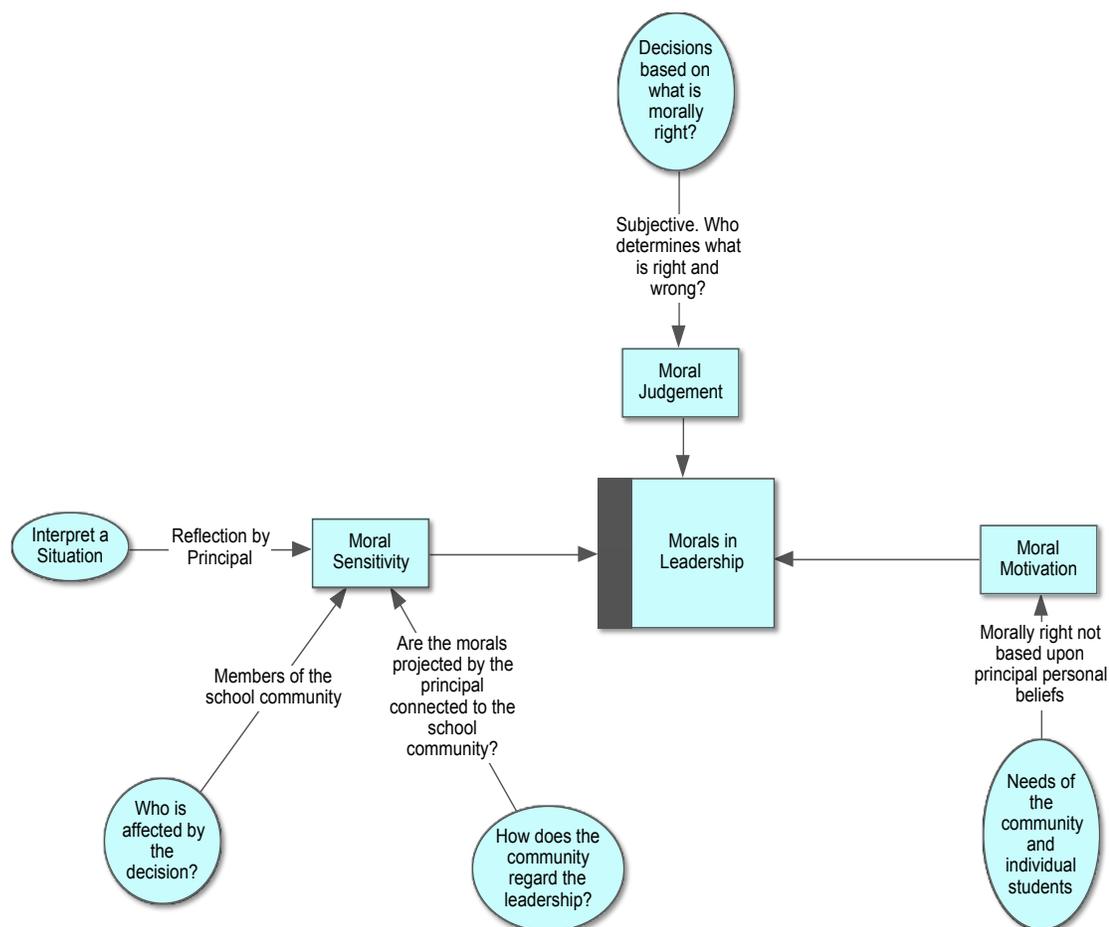


Figure 3. Three components to moral behavior. Source: Vitton and Wasonga (2009).

Moral judgment directs the principal to make a decision based upon what is morally right as defined by his or her own personal or professional beliefs. By designating a decision as right, a message is projected as the correct course of action (Vitton & Wasonga, 2009). Moral judgment in itself can be subjective. It is the determination of the principal in their role as school leader to understand, interpret and project what is right and what is wrong (Vitton & Wasonga, 2009).

Moral motivation directs the principal to make decisions based upon moral values versus their own personal values (Vitton & Wasonga, 2009). Principals may

make decisions based upon what is morally right in the eyes of the community and student need rather than their own personal belief. An example may be the following: a principal whose personal moral compass is based upon religious beliefs may be faced with a student dilemma which is opposite of their religious upbringing (i.e., teen pregnancy, sexual identity). Each of these three components provides a guide for the principal to develop a leadership style allowing for context of situation, voices of the school community, and projection of school values, morals and beliefs.

The moral direction of the school community is contingent upon the beliefs of the school principal affecting their decision-making. The moral compass a principal has can either be negatively or positively impactful toward student need (Hightower & Klinker, 2012). This leader must find the courage to look beyond their personal morals and values and be willing to change their beliefs and listen to the communities they serve (Shapiro, 2006). In the next two sections I examine how morals and values create the framework for authentic and transformative leadership.

### **Authentic Leadership**

Daily personal and professional influences can be problematic areas for principals as they make authentic and ethical decisions. The definitions of authentic leadership (Auerbach, 2010; Branson, 2007; Crippen, 2012; Northouse, 2013; Walker & Shuangye, 2007) and ethics often vary with great subjectivity as principals are expected to lead authentically and ethically daily to ensure the needs of their students are met. In my role as a principal I found the definitions to be subjective yet the behavior is expected and leadership in school buildings is often perceived as

ambiguous and lacks clarity when the school community vision is different from the viewpoint of the principal. As Walker and Shuangye (2007) described building leadership as “exercised within an institutional context, one which is certainly not neutral in terms of structure or equality” (p. 188). Ideally, a principal who focuses on morals through a democratic leadership style sees themselves as the messenger of the voices of the school community thereby using their role as leader to ensure authentic leadership choice in decision-making (Walker & Shuangye, 2007).

Principals are influenced daily from multiple sources (personal, professional, community, student need) affecting their decision-making capacity (Walker & Shuangye, 2007). Often these influences can be different according to who is viewing the situation. Decisions made by the principal may be counter to authentic ethically based leadership as they show greater reflection of personal or professional beliefs than actual student need (Walker & Shuangye, 2007). An example I have been subjected to as a school principal within the last decade is the use of systems of intervention for reading instruction in our schools. Through my experience as a principal, I witnessed systems removing students of color and second language learners from their White peers to receive instruction in reading and math. This type of decision is contrary to the needs of the students as it separates them and thereby not giving the students equitable access to instruction as their White peers. Principals may see their decisions as just and equitable based upon their own experiences, yet the community, however, may see the opposite, as their backgrounds between leadership and the community often do not share similar experiences and backgrounds. An

authentic leader is a thoughtful leader focusing on building relationships with their school community. They understand the importance of “trust, empathy, and dialogue” (Hightower & Klinker, 2012, p. 106) as key components when working with communities with values different than their own.

The personal history and background of the principal can be in conflict with the need to develop authentic ethical decision-making benefiting all students (Walker & Shuangye, 2007). The goal for principals to be ethical and authentic leaders is further complicated when the leaders upbringing and belief systems are divergent from the belief systems of the school community in which they serve (Walker & Shuangye, 2007). This interplay between principals’ personal beliefs and school communities can be a continuous struggle unless the principal determines the exact needs as viewed through the eyes of the community (Walker & Shuangye, 2007).

Often the school principal becomes mired down with complex situations requiring them to make immediate decisions. At this point, a principal may move away from authentic leadership and become more dependent on their beliefs to help them make decisions (Hightower & Klinker, 2012). The quality of decision-making regarding authentic ethically based decisions may be compromised if the principal relies on their own beliefs, dispositions and personal goals (Hightower & Klinker, 2012). The cultural divide between the personal belief of a principal and the school community may never be completely resolved as each principal will bring a different set of cultural values to leadership roles.

The ability to become an authentic leader based upon ethical practices benefiting all students is achievable through transformative practices. These practices engage the principal in deep reflection and help them to see beyond their own belief systems. In the next section, I focus on transformational leadership and how this practice engages principals to change their ethical philosophies from themselves to those of their students and community.

### **Transformational Leadership**

True transformational leadership occurs when principals are able to see not only why their ethical systems conflict with student needs but also realize their willingness to change is equally important (Poutiatine, 2010). Transformation as described by Poutiatine (2010) as “a multidimensional, multi-level, qualitative, discontinuous, radical organizational change involving a paradigmatic shift” (p. 195). In a transformational paradigmatic shift, change by those who oppress and leaders whose leadership oppresses cannot occur without consent to change their belief systems (Poutiatine, 2010). Even though the transformational process is initiated by individual choice, once a principal makes the decision to confront and evaluate their ethical belief system, it can be forever changed. Poutiatine explained, “individuals retain the choice to engage in the transformational change process but once the process is entered into, all levels are inevitably affected” (p. 198). As morals and values are part of the personal nature of a person’s belief system, transformational leadership becomes part of the person and cannot be reversed without a new change to occur.

In order to achieve transformational change the principal needs a highly developed moral philosophy (Sagnak, 2010). The practices of principals in authentic and transformational leadership are beyond the individual values and beliefs. They engage in reflection of their ability often looking beyond their own or others self-interests to provide ethical leadership based upon the needs of all students (Sagnak, 2010). While it appears transformational leadership is based upon universal values, however as shown previously in this review (Bergmark & Alerby, 2008; Law & Walker, 2005), decisions from a school principal are often affected by individual choice based upon their own morals and values. School principals who are practitioners in transformational leadership understand school policies and practices need to be written from a utilitarian perspective rather than a zero-tolerance perspective (Sagnak, 2010). Their leadership reflects care for the individual as well as the whole community. It is my belief through personal observation transformational leadership is difficult for many school administrators. This type of leadership is often at odds with strict regulatory practice which many principals daily direct their decisions (Hightower & Klinker, 2012). Regulatory practice often solidifies decisions and cements a principal's belief whether it benefits a student or not. They understand how regulations, policies and practices such as student behavior and instructional practice are not broad brushes where individual student need is passed over by the need of the whole community (Hightower & Klinker, 2012).

The principal's voice in transformational leadership is the vehicle to move the school community to transformational practice rather than allowing the individual

members to function based upon their own self-interest (Marks & Printy, 2003). Transformational leadership as demonstrated by the actions a principal makes may determine the course of action a school will take to make authentic decisions based upon student and community preventing their subjective self-interests (Marks & Printy, 2003). Transformational leaders reflect upon the effect of their own values and beliefs on the school community. They understand how their values and beliefs play a significant role in the voice of school toward transformational change. Principals additionally realize they are not be completely objective in their decision making as there is a level of subjectivity based upon what each principal brings from their own developmental history either personal or professional (Marks & Printy, 2003). They also are cognizant of how this background is used in context to decisions they make regarding student need (Hightower & Klinker, 2012).

The main purpose of transformational leadership is to change the “values, beliefs and attitudes of the followers” (Sagnak, 2010, p. 1137) from their individual interest to a belief system benefiting all students. Transformational change in the organization is dependent on the ability of the leader to grow in their own personal morals, values, and ethics (Poutiatine, 2010). As Kegan (2000) determined, “Transformation in this is requiring a paradigmatic shift, a fundamental realignment of how an individual understands the world and his or her own place in it” (p. 49). However, in order for the organization to undergo this type of transformational change it is necessary for the leader to transform their thinking and beliefs before organizational transformation can occur as Hightower and Klinker (2012) stated,

“moral transformative leadership is leadership that deliberately reflects upon and attempts to solve intractable, complex, messy problem” (p. 109). Hightower and Klinker described the transformational principal as constantly reflecting upon their personal backgrounds and beliefs and understand how they benefit or are harmful to decisions they make for students.

Research in transformational leadership suggests two orders of transformational change should occur before the values, beliefs of the individual change away from their self-interest. Poutiatine (2010) described first and second order change as critical for transformation of the leader. First order change is the learning from “external forces” shifting the principal’s view from individual values to organizational values with second order change recognizing organization need but also deep reflection of underlying beliefs creating values and ethics in the leader (Poutiatine, 2010). Without a first and second level transformational change it becomes exceedingly difficult for a principal to make ethical decisions benefiting all students. As Poutiatine stated,

We may be able to change our behaviors without changing our beliefs but we cannot *transform* without our behaviors, competencies, beliefs, identity, and mission all participating in the reconsideration and reform. (p. 198)

Transformative leadership, as described by Poutiatine, cannot happen without the school leader engaging in reflective practice of their knowledge, beliefs and values. The leader of the school has a moral obligation to be thoughtful and reflective in their practice. Hightower and Klinker (2012) summarized it best, “thoughtfulness is a moral failing” (p. 109). It is through a process of reflection school principals must undergo to

illicit a change in their beliefs and ethics in leadership (Ntseane, 2011). The following section discusses the reflective practice in leadership with morals and values at its core.

### **Reflective Practice**

Growth in educational accountability has created a world engaging the school principal to be reflective in a greater degree than any other time of public education in the United States (Combs, 2003). Reflection in educational leadership is beyond the examination of decisions as “good or bad” but instead focuses on the depth of “why” these decisions were done on the onset. Reflection as described by Peters (1991) involves the thinking and learning leading to self-development. Barnett (1990) explained reflection as bringing the knowledge and experience a leader gains to a level of consciousness to determine the appropriate course of action. Thurston and Berkeley (2010) explained how reflection by leaders in schools fosters care for the individual student through partnerships with all members of the school community. Osterman (1991) posited reflection as the development professionally a leader takes in order to make significant change.

In order for principals to focus on the needs of their students using authentic and transformative leadership with an ethical philosophy, they must first look within themselves (Northouse, 2013). Principals need to be able to look at their own personal belief systems, enabling them to act with greater purpose and have greater awareness of their own abilities in order to become authentic and transformative leaders through ethical beliefs reflecting the students (Branson, 2007). This type of self-reflection

requires the principal to balance their values within their actions toward the needs of all members of the school community. This reflection in itself is the most difficult.

Law and Walker (2005) described this balance:

Principals need above all, to reflect on and grasp their own values. In value clashes, they have to prioritize their values between several alternatives, such as teacher harmony, justice, respect for seniority, allegiance to the sponsoring body or the well-being of students. It may be useful for principals to not only be aware of the substance of their values, but also their value properties, such as the degree of consistency clarity and commitment of their own values, which in turn impact the ways they manage problems. (p. 75)

This self-reflection allows leaders to acknowledge and understand their own “physical and cognitive limitations” (Branson, 2007, p. 226) and to become aware of the propensity for their thoughts to be influenced by personal values and inaccurate information may be a result of their beliefs, and to account for the connection of their actions with the lives of others. Through the ability to be self-reflective the principal becomes aware of the school community.

A self-reflective leader understands his or her decisions have a strong effect on the staff, students, and the community (Northouse, 2013). In addition to understanding their personal beliefs, the principal also needs to understand the groups within the community following the leadership. The school community, who may be staff, parents and students, are an integral aspect of the decisions a principal must make and only by understanding this group can the principal make these decisions authentically (Crippen, 2012). As noted earlier in this review, historically understanding of the needs of the community from their lens has become progressively divergent from the viewpoint of the principal. Self-reflection based upon the community allows the

principal to understand the bias they may have as a result of their background, learning and understanding of the world.

Principal self-reflection is most effective when there is an understanding of the community in which they serve (Auerbach, 2010; Northouse, 2013). One way to gain access to this community is through shared leadership. As Auerbach (2010) described, principals should “focus on their role as bridgers rather than buffers and promote building and shared accountability” (p. 731). As a principal develops his or her self-reflective practice with a greater understanding of community, they will be able to make decisions regarding pedagogy and practice causing barriers preventing student needs from being addressed in schools. Through reflection the principal has a greater understanding of the connection between the school community and culture, decisions regarding pedagogy and the decontextualized application in instruction need to be examined (Law & Walker, 2005). An ethical principal examines pedagogy in relation to the cultural and learning needs of all students (Walker & Shuangye, 2007). Awareness of where culture connects to teaching and learning is necessary when the principal makes curricular decisions. The school leader sees “cultural influences as opportunities to expand their knowledge of learning styles and their repertoire of teaching techniques, classroom management and curriculum tailoring” (Walker & Shuangye, 2007, p. 194).

Leadership from an ethical philosophy is developed by the morals, values, and reflection of a school principal (Auerbach, 2010; Bergmark & Alerby, 2008; Crippen, 2012; Law & Walker, 2005; Walker & Shuangye, 2007). Ethical decisions are to a

large degree the essence of the school principal's leadership. Through reflective practice principals are able to determine from the ethical philosophy in which to base their decisions (Northouse, 2013; Thurston & Berkeley, 2010). Awareness and reflection of their own personal beliefs allows the principal to be leaders in ethical practice in the school community (Bergmark & Alerby, 2008). As Webb et al. (1996) stated:

Reflective leadership is manifest when personal integrity is as important as we have represented it to be to students, therefore, it behooves me to make sure that I am honorable in my work with faculty, staff, and students—that I act congruently with my deepest personal beliefs. (p. 52)

Morals and values originating from personal beliefs often show themselves in the ethical philosophies in the leadership of principals. Transformative change within the school leader allows for decisions to be framed within multiple ethical paradigms. Extensive research in ethics in school leadership has been conducted through five ethical paradigms. Each of these ethical leadership paradigms focuses on need from the group, individual, community, the leader and the professional role of the principal themselves. In the next section, I explore the five paradigms of ethics in school leadership.

### **Ethical Paradigms**

Principals daily face multiple ethical leadership decisions and must make decisions conflicting with policy, practice or even their own belief system. As a former principal, my actions and decisions were daily analyzed by me and more importantly the school community I served. While at the same time I was not aware of

research in ethical paradigms, I now can reflect back on some of the decisions I made and place many of them within each paradigm. The ethical paradigms I reference for this research paper are: Ethic of Justice, Ethic of Care, Ethic of Critique, Ethic of Community, and the Ethic of Profession as defined by Furman (2003), Shapiro (2006), Shapiro and Gross (2013), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), and Stefkovich (2007).

As a principal I did understand how my actions viewed by students defined my leadership. In these actions, students were able to determine what type of a leadership I would provide for them. While they may not know or understand ethics, they were cognizant when my leadership focused on either whole group need or individual needs. As Thurston and Berkeley (2010) affirmed, “student learn justice and care through the practice and experience of justice and care with responsibility for assuring that justice and care are established and persist” (p. 28). Ethics is not only a set of beliefs and philosophy for students need but also how principals act and transform themselves. Foucault (2000) stated:

Ethics is a process in which the individual delimits that part of himself that will from the object of his moral practice, define his position relative to the precept he will follow, and decide on a certain mode of being that will serve as his moral goal. And this requires him to act upon himself, to monitor, test, improve and transform himself. (p. 278)

It is through this form of reflection of ethics and the values and morals contributing to individual ethical philosophies and the practice among many school leaders of using only one ethical paradigm when decisions are made in schools.

In our increasingly pluralistic schools through growing diversity and cultural differences many ethical norms principals once held now clash with new ethical

norms. Currently principals are in positions to create and change new ethical philosophies reflecting diverse needs (Hightower & Klinker, 2012). I believe in a multiple paradigm theory as an approach many principals need in order to achieve success for all students. In the next section I encapsulate research on the ethical paradigms in relation focusing on the role of the school principal.

### **Ethic of Justice**

In my career as a principal I was trained to observe, interpret and adhere to law, policy, regulation and practice. Guided by these four areas, principals such as myself often use them as the sole factor in their decision-making. Clearly, schools need to have a foundation of law, policy, regulation and practice. The ethic of justice as defined in chapter 1 is an ethic of rules and laws. The very existence of this ethical practice for school principals is as Delgado (1995) described having faith in the legal system. As a foundation for school policy the ethic of justice is designed to give an equality lens for principal decisions for all students. This ethic is designed to implement a framework for the universality of the rules for all people to adhere not only our schools but in their experiences beyond schooling (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011).

The ethic of justice allows principals to create and operate a system based on the concept of fairness. Eyal et al. (2011), Starratt (2005), and Shapiro and Stefkovich, (2011) defined this ethic through two smaller ethics: the ethic of fairness and the ethic of utilitarianism. The goal of an ethic of fairness is to strive to guarantee equal treatment and fairness for everyone based upon “universal standards” (Eyal et al.,

2011, p. 398). These universal standards are applied to everyone beyond specific people or circumstances. In essence, the situation does not guide the action, but the rules of law, regulation and practice do so. In conjunction with an ethic of fairness, an ethic of utilitarianism is designed to give a sense of fairness to each student (Eyal et al., 2011). However the focus of utilitarianism is through an overall benefit for the majority with little to no regard to potential harm to individuals (Eyal et al., 2011). The connection to the concepts of fairness and utilitarianism can be attributed to the common belief of equality for all in our laws (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). It is through a mode of subjection a principal makes decisions on which rules, policies and practices they use. A principal must “establish their relationship to the rule” (Niesche & Haase, 2012, p. 279) and determine if there is an obligation to the rules application of practice. The ethic of justice is established as standards which are reflective of the dominant culture within a community and by this nature become the cultural norms established for all to adhere in their daily lives (Hightower & Klinker, 2012). In reflection, the standards established through an ethic of justice do not always make it beneficial for all needs of all members of the school community as they may clash with cultural beliefs and systems different than the dominant culture.

The application of rules, laws, policies and regulations is a normative part of the ethic of justice. Adherence of only this ethic does create a level of uniformity in the leadership of the principal (Eyal et al., 2011; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). But does the ethic of justice mean ethical treatment of student need? Is it moral and can be defined as truly ethical? Frick (2011) answered with, “Moral leadership and ethical

administrative decision making require more than the mechanical application of existing rules, regulations, and various levels of school and school-related policy” (p. 527). Ethical work as defined by Niesche and Haase (2012) is not formalized. This work is dynamic and continuing activity rather than strict adherence to formal policies and regulations. An ethical leader is reflective of their practice and understands how an ethic of justice can be more detrimental than helpful when taken into specific context (Branson, 2007; Combs, 2003; Osterman, 1991).

Reflective practice, as stated by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), should be part of an ethic of justice guiding principles to ask three basic questions:

Is there a law, right or policy that relates to a particular case?  
Should it be enforced?  
If there is no law, right or policy, should there be one? (p. 3)

The application of strict equality through the ethic of justice is more often seen as a “construction of practice” rather than a strong thoughtful ethical system (Frick, 2011, p. 533) as it leaves little room for reflective practice due to strict adherence to law, policy and practice. An additional question through reflective practice of the ethic of justice might be: Is my decision based upon policy or practice showing the care needed for individuals as well as the whole of the school community?

Through reflective practice a leader may be able to move beyond rules, laws, regulation and policy to an ethical system reflecting on individuals. In the next section, I explore the ethic of care in contrast to the ethic of justice.

### **Ethic of Care**

If you speak only one language, you wear blinders and you see things only one way. If you speak two languages, three languages, even four, you can appreciate things in so many different ways. (Langlois & Lapointe, 2007, p. 252)

The ethic of justice provides principals a guide to lead within a framework designed from a viewpoint based upon universality (Eyal et al., 2011; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). This universality as shown in the previous section has little to no regard for individual needs. Principals are placed in ethical dilemmas where a situational decision is dictated not by the needs of the group or the need to be equally fair but instead it is directed by the needs of an individual (Shapiro, 2006; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). This need may and is often in contrast to the needs of the group. Through an individual need, the principal may be faced with an ethical dilemma (Begley, 2004; Begley & Johansson, 2008). Should the principal decide to act from a universalistic lens or rather focus on the needs of the individual knowing this decision will be examined under intense scrutiny? Vokey (2005) described this type of ethical leadership as the ability to preserve the values of ethical principles from an individual viewpoint rather than a “hierarchy of principles” (p. 126) to be used for specific situations. This ethical dilemma may in some way force a principal to move from the ethic of justice to the ethic of care to address an individual need over a group practice.

The history and foundation of the school principal is based upon regulations, law and policy, yet it is increasingly moving toward individualistic decisions to ensure

the needs of all students are met (Shapiro 2006; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). Ethical systems where student need is a foremost concern based upon the well-being of an increasingly pluralistic school community requires principals to become leaders with greater responsibility for the individual needs of all students (Eyal et al., 2011). Ethics in leadership as described by Furman (2012) focused on the needs of the individual to help develop and transform one's beliefs and values in ethical philosophy to make leadership decisions for others based upon specific situations which principals are confronted daily. As a principal it was clear to me the necessity for each aspect of a student's school career from behavior to instructional practice should be viewed within an ethic of care as students have backgrounds, needs, and levels. As Bergmark and Alerby (2008) articulated,

Variations in instruction and learning methods, assessment methods and student influence can be seen as a question of adjustment to students needs, talents, and different learning styles, which concerns achieving an ethic of care. (p. 49)

In order for a principal to focus on the individual, there is a need to hear, respect and understand the multiple voices of the school community (Vokey, 2005). Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011) stated the need for a commitment from leaders to consider all voices in their daily decision-making process. This contrast significantly differs from the ethic of justice as creating an ethic of care is based upon the care of the individual needs of the members of the school community (Shapiro 2006; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011).

An ethic of care as contrast to the ethic of justice requires the “absolute regard” for the individual and their specific needs based upon the relationship between the principal and the individual (Furman, 2003). This ethic contrasts from the hierarchy of rules and regulations and instead focuses on relationship and connections of individual situations (Shapiro & Gross, 2013). Through the idea of caring rather than following universal rules transcends typical leadership roles in schools (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). The ability to care for individual needs connected to transformational leadership is the solid foundation of successful systems of education for all members of the school community (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). Within an ability to transform an educational philosophy from an ethic of justice to an ethic of care requires a level of deep reflection where care is at the center of decision making rather than using a ubiquitous set of regulations (Combs, 2003).

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011) described the deep reflection of school leaders in the ethic of care as “head learners” (p. 18). The head learner is the leader who listens to and reflects upon the voices of the other members of the community. The head learner principal is cognizant of different cultures, respects diversity, and understands the need for communication, observation and response to others (Shapiro & Gross, 2013). The reflective head learner leader asks themselves the following questions:

Who will benefit from what I decide?  
Who will be hurt from my actions?  
What are the long-term effects of my decision I make today? (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011, p. 18)

Through this deep reflection the school leader understands how the ethic of care and the ethic of justice clash when a principal decides to focus on individuals rather than groups. This type of clash prompts the principal to critique not only the decisions made from the ethics of justice but their own actions from the ethics of care. In the following section I explore the ethic of critique as it pertains to the reflection of ethical leadership decisions.

### **Ethic of Critique**

As described in the section on the ethic of care, deep reflection is required to completely understand the needs of all students through care rather than universal rules and policy. However, deep reflection is not enough if every student is to have their needs met to be successful in schools (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). The student based ethical principal sees themselves, the members of their community, their relationship to each other and how it culminates into an ethical philosophy in which to make decisions (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). Through deep reflection of decisions, policies, regulations and needs of students, the principal comes to understand how being a head learner is not enough to make lasting change for students' needs (Frick, 2011). The ethical principal through critique becomes less concerned about being right instead acts within a responsibility toward student and community needs. They understand the necessity to make decisions contrary to the professional group consensus or their own personal consequences (Frick, 2011). This ethical leader makes decisions encompassing the ethic of critique.

In the previous two sections, I have discussed the foundation of ethical paradigms through rules, laws and regulations in the ethic of justice. In contrast, I have shown the ethic of care focusing on the individual needs of each student rather than focusing on law and regulation. A leader who focuses on the ethic of justice and the ethic of care still views the needs of all students as equal rather than equitable (Vokey, 2005). It is through this view the ethic of critique becomes an important part of the ethical principals' decision-making process.

The ethic of critique as defined by Vokey (2005) is the understanding of the unequal relationships of power and privilege amongst different groups. Eyal et al. (2011) stated it is the principals' obligation to re-examine and confront the institutions and structure causing harm to weaker populations. Through an ethic of critique a principal analyzes all parts of the school system to examine whether or not they are connected to student needs and values (Langlois & Lapointe, 2007). This examination of policy and practice is not limited to the organizations but also a self re-examination of personal past practice. As Shapiro and Gross (2013) determined, the ethic of critique examines the inconsistencies of rules and practice and challenges the issues of inequity arising from them. However, it is not through re-examination of policy and practice eliciting change, but the activism required of school leaders to ensure the needs for all students are met.

The framework of the ethic of critique is not only the reflective and re-examination of policies and practice but also a disruption to the normative policies and practices to prevent further harm to students. Frick (2011) described the ethic of

critique as replete with moral examination of structures in our institutions including being an activist against the practices and procedures inhibiting student needs to be addressed and met. This ethic allows principals to ask the following questions:

Who makes the rules and policies?  
Who benefits from them?  
Who has the power?  
Who are silenced? (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011, p. 27)

Frick (2011) also examined the need for principals to make a personal investment in the lives of each student in order to have the moral courage and drive to disrupt processes causing harm. With this active reflection of school systems through critique it is the responsibility of the leader to help to reframe and redefine the practices in the institutional system (Shapiro & Gross, 2013).

The ethic of critique focuses not only on those who have a voice in the school community but more so on those who are silent (Shapiro & Gross, 2013). In the next section I examine the ethic of community, its connection to the silent voices, the need for all voices to be heard and how there is a need for principal decision-making to examine and understand all voices in the community.

### **Ethic of Community**

As reviewed in the previous section the deep reflection and re-examination of policies and practices brings to light through activism the voices of those in the school community who are not heard (Shapiro & Gross, 2013). In my experience as a principal, I found the greatest voices most often listened to by the principal were members of the school staff. It is important to note the different communities through

which a school is created. School communities may not be just teachers and staff, but may include students, parents, the greater community surrounding the school, and even smaller specific communities such as students with disabilities, students of color, parents of color, and same sex parents. The ethic of critique examines practices and policies prohibiting the voices of some members of the community it does not establish the ethical philosophy necessary to bring volume to these voices (Eyal et al., 2011).

The ethic of community as defined by Eyal et al. (2011) is the consideration of “all values, beliefs, and desires of the community” (p. 398). This ethical paradigm is difficult for many principals to adhere, as it would require the leader to not only listen and understand the voices of community but be willing to allow them to move from a “heroic” leadership style in their decision-making process (Furman, 2003). This style of leadership places the principal as the sole transformer in leadership. In order for all voices to be not only heard greater democratic power for members of the community resulting in having say into the ethical philosophy of the school will need to occur (Furman, 2003). The principal will need to abandon to some degree the heroic leader and embrace the viewpoint of shared decision-making. Furman (2003) described the heroic leader as an individual with a “single-mindedness to pursue their own vision” (p. 5). This vision is often apart from others in the community who may or may not share this vision. With the paradigm of the ethic of community the principal must embrace a more democratic visioning of the school and give each voice a say in the values of the ethical school system.

A democratic process in the ethic of community gives everyone who has a stake in and is a participating member of the school community the ability to internalize the needs of the school and create a community of leaders in contrast to notion of the heroic leader (Furman, 2003). A framework of listening, respect for the community, knowing and understanding the community and providing an on-going dialogue allows all voices to be heard and participate in a democratic process in school decisions (Furman, 2003). Accessing this type of ethical leadership paradigm allows all members of the community in partnership with the principal to be transformational leaders as they address the barriers students face daily themselves (Furman, 2003). This process gives members of the community a moral obligation to engage and participate in the moral purpose of the school and the on-going daily challenges it faces (Furman, 2003). Simply, the ethic of community is a “distributive model of leadership” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011, p. 24).

While the ethic of community highlights voices of the school community for a school principal, outside factors may contribute to their decision-making. In the next section I explore the ethic of profession as organizations have direct impact on ethical philosophies.

### **Ethic of Profession**

The goal of ethics as defined by Garrett-Staib and Maninger (2012) is to make the best decisions for individuals and organizations. Each day principals are faced with tremendous decisions requiring a strong ethical philosophy. As a former principal I knew to some degree my decisions no matter how large or small had tremendous

impact on my students' success. I would not have been able to determine my ethical philosophy at the time of these decisions. While researching the leadership methods of school principals, Frick (2011) determined many of the principals in his study could not define their own ethical beliefs. Through my experiences and observations I have become consciously more aware of the decisions principals make daily are increasingly revolving around many of the ethical paradigms of justice, care, critique and community. While each of these paradigms has student need at the heart of the paradigm, none of them connect with codes of ethics within the actual profession of the school principal.

The ethic of profession places students at the heart of the ethical paradigm and as Furman (2003) stated is complimentary to the other ethical paradigms. This paradigm focuses not only on the personal codes of the leader but also on the professional codes associated with the role of the school administrator (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011).

This ethic is a combination of the personal codes developed through morals and values and the professional codes of the various associations and organizations linked to the role of the profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). Organizations within the state of Oregon such as the Oregon Department of Education and the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission provide documentation on standards for educators. Oregon Educational Leadership/Administration Standards from the Oregon Department of Education (2008) and The Ethical Educator and Professional Practices from the Teacher Standards and Practices

Commission (2004) contain professional standards and definition of the roles of an ethical school leader.

The ethic of profession by its very nature requires the school leader to take the professional codes associated to the role of principal into account when making ethical decisions for students (Vokey, 2005). However, the codes as set forth by these organizations tend to be overly generalized and do not give principals enough philosophical tools for individual decisions (Vokey, 2005). Due to the overgeneralization of these codes a school leader must create a professional code not only based on the codes of their professional roles but also within the context of personal values and morals (Vokey, 2005). Langlois and Lapointe (2007) have the understanding that the ethic of profession as an “isolated and fragmented phenomenon” (p. 258) as many principals are not using one ethical code to guide them. Rather, they are reflecting on how their own values and the values of organizations guide and lead them to their individual actions.

For many school administrators, codes and standards set forth by professional organizations are often guidelines rather than a practice application of daily decisions (Shapiro & Gross, 2013). In his research on school leadership, Frick (2011) explained how principals often see the codes of professional organizations as the “culprit in situational dilemmas” (p. 533) as there were no clear guidelines in which to base decisions. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011) determined the ethic of profession may actually create clashes between many different codes as it seeks to blend in

professional codes with other codes. They determined clashes could exist between the following ethical codes a principal must navigate in their leadership role:

- Clashes between personal codes and professional codes
- Clashes within professional codes
- Clashes of professional codes between administrators
- Clashes between leaders' personal and professional codes and the codes set forth by the community through culture and practice. (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011, p. 21)

Each of these clashes potentially cause a dilemma for the principal as it builds confusion in deciding which ethical role to take in particular situations (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). Situational dilemmas are a large part of the principals' daily decision making and confusion in ethics creates a conundrum for leaders in their actions (Shapiro & Gross, 2013).

Each day a principal must make a decision ultimately having an effect on the school community and/or individual students. Through my research within the lens of the ethical paradigms principals may not know about the five ethical paradigms but their decisions can be viewed through each (Eyal et al., 2011; Frick, 2011; Furman, 2012; Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012; Langlois & Lapointe, 2007; Shapiro, 2006, Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011, Vokey, 2005). See Figure 4.

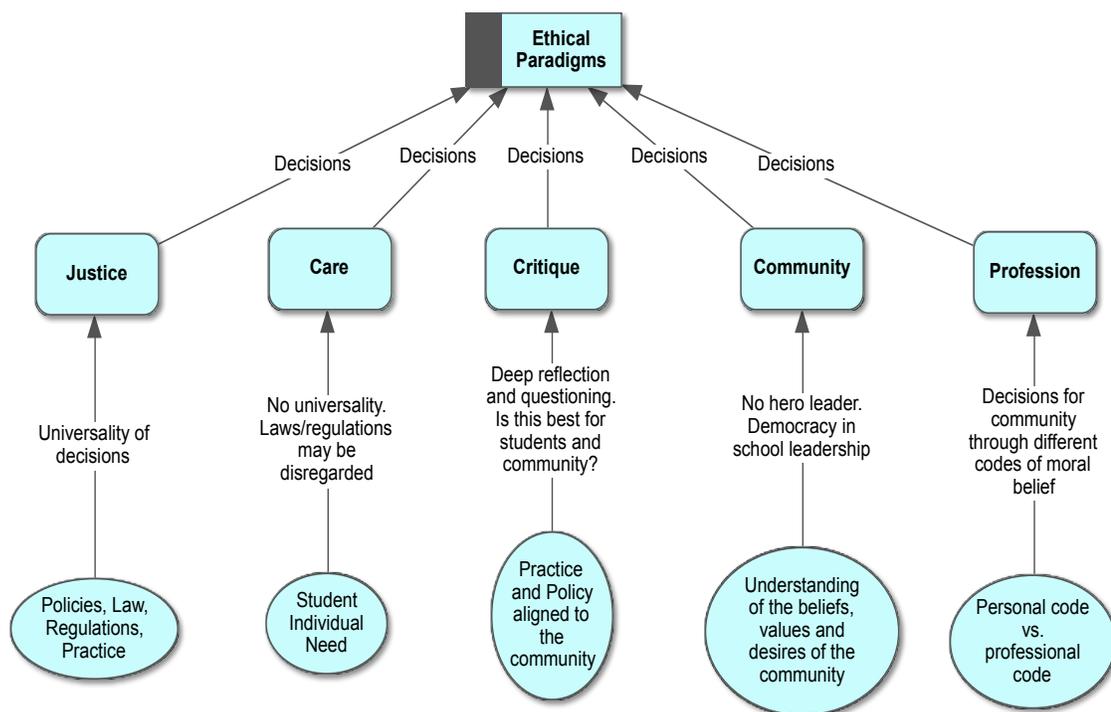


Figure 4. Five ethical paradigms. Sources: Eyal et al. (2011), Frick (2011), Furman (2012), Garrett-Staib and Maninger (2012), Langlois and Lapointe (2007), Shapiro (2006), Shapiro and Gross (2013), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), and Vokey (2005).

Some principals may place every decision they make in one paradigm or another whether it is the ethic of justice, care, critique, community or profession. What remains to be seen are the number of decisions principals make which fall into multiple paradigms and further how their own personal values, morals and ethical philosophies affect these dilemmas and decisions they must make daily. In the following section, I examine ethical dilemmas and principal leadership.

### **Ethical Dilemmas in a Principal's Decision-Making**

Changes in school dynamics due to a greater need for better quality in education and complexity of reform movements situate principals as Law and Walker (2005) stated in “wicked problems” (p. 62). In these problems, principals see

themselves faced with ethical dilemmas as the rules and regulations they rely on become less helpful as the needs of the school community get increasingly more complex. As schools become more pluralistic principals may find themselves in situations where their background does not match the community in which they serve. In this role, leaders are placed daily in ethical and moral dilemmas when considering specific action to take for students (Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012). Sun (2011) described these ethical dilemmas as “unpleasant alternatives linked to right or wrong” (p. 23). Campbell (2000) defined ethical dilemmas as produced from a conflict between the various needs of the individuals in the school community and the determination of what is right or wrong in very complex situations. Vitton and Wasonga (2009) identified three characteristics of moral dilemmas:

- The right thing to do based on fairness and justice versus the quickest solution
- Understanding of the facts of the situation including what the possible consequences might be
- Personal moral conflict between what needs to be done versus what the leader believes. (p. 98)

Historically, the leader of the school faced these dilemmas from a justice paradigm focusing on laws and rules through regulatory hierarchy rather than focusing on the individual (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). For many principals this is still the method many chose to use (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). Moral dilemmas however, act as a catalyst for principals to work through to provide for the success of their students.

With increased accountability and the need to focus on the individual as well as the group needs, principals are being faced with multiple ethical dilemmas requiring

multiple ethical paradigms (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). These multiple ethical paradigms are opposite of earlier approaches in school leadership which often focused on a single paradigm (Eyal et al., 2011). Today's principal must wear many ethical hats, which change not only daily but often many times during the day as well. The ethical leader is one who recognizes the ethical dilemma and can respond to it.

### **Conclusion**

The role of the school principal is replete with complicated decisions made daily for student success. Hughes and Jones (2010) stated ethical leadership should be “grounded in central core principles that are unshaken by dilemmas and other positional related difficulties” (p. 58). I contend this is impossible in today's principal role. It is this type of complication placing principals in the confusing position of navigating multiple ethical paradigms, morals, and values. A deep reflection of their own belief system should be a critical part of a principals' decision-making process. It through their own knowledge of themselves and where decisions come from can a principal focus on course of action benefiting students. Law and Walker (2005) stated:

It may be useful for principals to not only be aware of the substance of their values but also their own value properties, such as a degree of consistency, clarity and commitment of their own values, which in turn impact the ways they manage problems. (p. 75)

As described in this chapter values create morals in turn creating multiple ethical lenses (justice, care, critique, community, profession). It is through these lenses principals develop authentic and transformative leadership creating frameworks for student success when making decisions.

Each principal comes to their positions with different morals, values, and ethics. As stated by Vitton and Wasonga (2009), educators do not always share the same morals, values and ethics related to what is right, good and best for students. It is up to the principal as leader of the school to constantly evaluate and reflect upon themselves and their beliefs to determine if what they believe as right and wrong may be different than those of the school. Niesche and Haase (2012) ascertained ethics as a “continual questioning and adjusting of thoughts and actions” (p. 278) regarding what is right and wrong through a process of reflection through the impact of students. In deep reflection of values, morals and a development of ethical philosophy a principal goes through a process of personal change. Transformational change of a school principal requires the leader to transform themselves into the ethical subject of their own behavior (Niesche & Haase, 2012). This is the core of transformational leadership.

As demonstrated in this chapter, values, morals and ethics create leadership directly affecting decision-making having direct impact student need. But what are these values and morals principals bring to their schools? How are these morals and values reflected in the five paradigms and how do the five paradigms affect principal decision-making? As described by Vitton and Wasonga (2009) principals can only make change in their moral and ethical judgment by acknowledging their own personal beliefs and experiences, understanding the needs of others and experience new and different situations challenging their beliefs and assumptions. As Foucault (2000) succinctly stated, “In order to govern others one must be able to govern one’s

self” (p. 268). It is within this context through my research I hope to determine what factors lead to values and morals in the application of ethical paradigms by school principals and how they affect their leadership.

Chapter 3 describes the research study design including methodology (Grounded Theory), participant sampling and selection, instrumentation used, data collection, and analysis. This chapter also gives a brief overview of grounded theory methodology.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH DESIGN

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative study based upon Grounded Theory was to determine how principals define their ethical philosophies in education, how their personal morals and values impact this definition and to examine the impact of morals and values on their decision-making as applied through the lens of the five ethical paradigms of Justice, Care, Critique, Community, and Profession (Eyal et al., 2011; Frick, 2011; Furman, 2012; Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012; Langlois & Lapointe, 2007; Shapiro, 2006; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011; Vokey, 2005). The following research questions were presented as the foundation of this research study:

1. How do principals in a suburban Northwest school district in the United States define their ethical philosophies within the role as a school principal?
2. What role, if any, do their personal values and morals affect their ethical philosophies and how are these values and morals reflected in their decision-making process?
3. How are the ethical paradigms of Care, Justice, Community, Critique, and Profession as defined by Vokey (2005), Shapiro (2006), Langlois and Lapointe (2007), Eyal et al. (2011), Frick (2011), Furman (2012), Garrett-Staib and Maninger (2012), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), and Shapiro and Gross (2013), reflected, if at all, within their decision-making process?

Chapter 2 provided a literature review on the current research on the impact of morals and values on authentic and transformative leadership as well as defined the ethical paradigms as viewed historically in the role of the principalship. Chapter 3 outlines the research design for this study, the selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

### **Research Design**

Grounded theory methodological design allows for researchers to form a foundation of a theory based upon the concepts developed from collected data through constructed experiences (Charmaz, 2012). As Jones and Alony (2011) stated, “grounded theory is an ‘inductive, theory discovery methodology’ allowing a researcher to develop theory of a topic while simultaneously grounding it in empirical observations or data” (p. 96). Through a detailed, rigorous, and systematic analysis of data, grounded theory allows the researcher to develop initial hypothesis of concepts from the research questions. Through this form of data collection a researcher has the ability and freedom to explore an area of research and allows other issues within the topic to grow (Jones & Alony, 2011).

There are different forms of qualitative methodology which may be used in research toward the use of ethics, morals and values in educational leadership (Charmaz, 2012). Forms of methodology such as phenomenology or ethnography for example may be applied to the research of the role of morals, values and ethics in the role of the principalship as each methodology explores the individuality and construction of the topic (Charmaz, 2012; Jones & Alony, 2011).

Grounded theory however, provides a stronger methodology due to the subjectivity and personal construction of morals, values and ethics (Guba & Lincoln, 2004). Grounded theory is distinctly rooted in a constructivist paradigm through the personal nature of the creation and the place morals, values and ethics play in the role of the school principal as well serving as a path to learn about the “world we study” and provides the method for developing theories to understand them (Charmaz, 2012, p. 10). As Charmaz (2012) stated, “we construct our grounded theories through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices” (p. 10). As I have witnessed and participated first hand as a principal, the creation and use of morals, values and ethics in decision-making by a school principal is a construction based upon the subjectivity of the individual.

As defined by Guba and Lincoln (2004), constructions are not “more or less true in any absolute sense, but simply more or less informed and/or sophisticated” (p. 26). In this lens, a construction such as morals, values and ethics are seen as viewpoints from an individual and not world-views or an exact picture for all principals. Guba and Lincoln defined paradigms as human construction which are not provable in any “conventional sense” (p. 22) as there is no way to state one is correct over another. In this sense, grounded theory provides an interpretation of how morals, values and ethics are incorporated in decision-making within the role of the school principal. It does not give a decision of right or wrong but rather the impact they have on decision-making and the effect of decisions on student needs.

Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss originally designed grounded theory while researching dying patients in hospitals during the 1960s (Charmaz, 2012). The result of this study saw the creation of grounded theory exploring strategies of research advocating for the development of theories from research grounded in data rather than answering hypotheses from existing theories (Charmaz, 2012). Their goal was to create “abstract theoretical explanations of social processes” (Charmaz, 2012, p. 6). The major components of grounded theory were clearly defined to allow researchers the ability to develop newly constructed theories based upon hard data. The following describes the components of the original Grounded Theory design (Charmaz, 2012).

- Simultaneous involvement in data collection and analysis
  - Constructing analytic codes and categories from data, not from preconceived logically deduced hypotheses
  - Using the constant comparative method, involving making comparisons during each stage of the analysis
  - Advancing theory development during each step of data collection and analysis
  - Memo-writing to elaborate categories, specify their properties, define relationships between categories and identify gaps
  - Sampling aimed toward theory construction, not for population representativeness
  - Conducting the literature review *after* developing an independent analysis.
- (p. 5)

Glaser and Strauss believe theory development should be created within the data collection through the construction of codes and categories but not through “preconceived logically deduced hypotheses” (Charmaz, 2012, p. 10) from extensive literature review. In fact, they originally advocated for a delay in creating a literature review until after initial research data were taken (Charmaz, 2012). This was to avoid developing codes and categories from previously done research. Theory was to be

developed through coding from memo-writing (Charmaz, 2012). Codes were to be developed in phases. Open, Focused and Theoretical phases with sub-coding within each such as axial, line-by-line, in-vivo for example were to be developed as data was collected and analyzed (Charmaz, 2012). Sample populations were not designed to represent entire populations of a subject area but rather toward possible theory construction within a small population (Charmaz, 2012). This was the basis for grounded theory design by Glaser and Strauss until the 1980s when Anselm Strauss moved toward verification of theory through a literature review and later confirmed this move through his work with Juliet Corbin in the 1990s (Charmaz, 2012). This led to a division between Glaser and Strauss on what constituted true grounded theory.

The division between Glaser and Strauss resulted in two distinct camps on grounded theory (Charmaz, 2012; Jones & Alony, 2011). Glaser continued his beliefs of grounded theory based upon a method of discovery from gathered data. Strauss moved toward a verification of theory (Straussian Model) based upon theories gathered from a literature review allowing the researcher to have a general idea of where to begin (Jones & Alony, 2011). For the purpose of this research study I used a model of grounded theory based upon the later work of Anselm Strauss with revision by Charmaz (2012). The model of grounded study used in my study creates hypotheses gathered from personal observation through lived experiences through interviews and an in-depth literature review (Charmaz, 2012).

This research study was designed to explore the impact of personal morals, values and ethics in decision-making of school principals. Through a methodological approach based upon Straussian grounded theory I explored the role of morals, values and ethics within their definition of an ethical philosophy, their decision-making and how these decisions are viewed through the five ethical paradigms of justice, care critique, community and profession.

### **Selection of Participants**

The target populations of this research study were principals from a K-12 school district in the Northwest region of the United States. This sample was designed to show a representation from each level of public education. The school district chosen has a large enough depiction of diversity in school principals. As discussed in Chapter 2, historically the principalship in American schools has been predominately male, White, middle-class, heterosexual and Christian. However, with changes in society, law and education, many principals come from different backgrounds. Principals within this school district are represented in many different groupings: persons of color, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, and experience.

Charmaz (2012) described initial sampling as the start of the research process including establishing “the criteria for people, cases, situations and/or settings” (p. 100). Often within qualitative research errors are made to chosen representative sampling aiming for generalizability of the research hypothesis (Charmaz, 2012). Random sampling, often done in generalized qualitative research depends on a large sampling population (Maxwell, 2005). Due to the use of grounded theory using a

smaller sampling within a large district in the Northwest United States sampling for this research study was done using purposeful theoretical sampling. This direct type of sampling was used to gather data specific to the research questions, which are subjective in nature and not generalizable to greater populations of school principals (Charmaz, 2012). Purposeful theoretical sampling is used solely to obtain data to help clarify and explain categories of research data toward the development of grounded theories. The goal of this sampling method is as Maxwell (2005) described allows for “comparisons to illuminate the reasons for difference between settings and individuals” (p. 90).

Initially nine school principals from the three areas of public schooling (elementary, middle and high) were contacted by me via my Lewis and Clark email and invited to participate in the study. Three principals representing each level of K-12 public education were chosen by the researcher, as a representative sampling of elementary school, middle school and high school principals. The goal of the sampling was designed to provide a mixed sampling based upon ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age and language. Participants were from one large school district within Oregon and were easily accessible by the researcher. Participants in the study were sent a letter of introduction via my Lewis and Clark email (Appendix A) describing the intent of the study and an overview of their participation in the study. A consent form (Appendix B) stating confidentiality would be established for all participants and an understanding of the nature of the study was introduced, reviewed, and signed at the scheduled interview. The consent form informed each principal their names would

not be used, personal information would not be revealed to their school district and specific codes would be assigned to them to ensure confidentiality. After each principal was contacted and a signed consent form was obtained each principal was assigned a code to ensure confidentiality. Elementary principals were assigned E1, E2, and E3, middle school principals M1, M2, and high school principals H1, H2, and H3. For confidentiality purposes, the consent forms, tapes, and data are kept in a locked file in the researcher's home in case there are questions or concerns regarding the research study and will be destroyed after 7 years as the research sampling and data may not be as current and valid as a newer research study.

### **Instrumentation**

Grounded theory methodology requires explicit data collection through interviews, observations, and a connection between the researcher and participants in the study. Intensive data collection through interviews is a decidedly strong match in grounded theory. Interviews as Charmaz (2012) described are "open-ended, yet directed, shaped yet-emergent, and paced yet unrestricted" (p. 28). Data collected from interviews in grounded theory can be used to gather views of a person's subjective world (Charmaz, 2012), as is the situation with the nature of morals, values and ethics.

Participants in the study were invited to participate individually in 90 minute interviews at an agreed upon location. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed later for data collection by the researcher. Audio recording was chosen as it presented a less risky form of data gathering giving each participant the ability to be open without the pressure of being seen by others. Video recording was considered but

determined to be risky as it may make the participants uncomfortable resulting in apprehensive answers to the questions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using 15 initial open-ended questions (Appendix C) leading to questions developed from themes from current literature on morals, values and ethics (Eyal et al., 2011; Frick, 2011; Furman, 2012; Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012; Langlois & Lapointe, 2007; Shapiro, 2006; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011; Vokey, 2005).

1. What is your role in your school?
2. How do you define the role of the school principal?
3. How do you define morals and values and how are they different?
4. What values did you grow up with which you still connect with today and what lead to the creation of these values?
5. What values have you developed as an adult, which are different than you what you grew up with?
6. What values have you developed professionally in your career?
7. How are the values you have developed seen in your personal life and in your role as principal?
8. How would you define what is morally right and wrong personally? Please give an example.
9. How would you define what is morally right and wrong professionally? Please give an example.
10. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong personally and decisions you had to make in the role of principal? Can you give an example? (How did you resolve this conflict if at all?)
11. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong professionally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal? Can you give an example? (How did you resolve this conflict it at all?)
12. Describe decisions in your role as principal requiring you to follow a policy, regulation or law you felt was in conflict with a student need? If so, describe the situation.

13. Describe a situation in which you had to make a decision addressing the needs of an individual over the needs of a larger group. What risks if any were involved?
14. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal benefiting one part of your school community and denied another? If so, describe the situation?
15. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal which caused you later to reflect on those decisions and reverse them? If so, describe the situation?
16. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal you felt was in contrast to the traditional role of the principal? If so, describe the situation?

Question 1 and 2 were designed to have the participant identify their role within their school. This gives the participant to start from the beginning to define their role in their school. A response may be as simple a statement, “I am the principal” to an answer with greater depth through a statement such as “I am the educational and curricular leader of the school.” Each of these responses may lead to the understanding of how their own morals, values and ethics define their role.

Questions 3 and 4 allow the participant to the opportunity to define the difference between morals and values and their relationship to their personal development. As Hughes and Jones (2010) have stated morals are the creation of lived experiences and can be used in context to situations as adults.

Question 5 and 6 further discuss the personal development of morals and values through value definition through the experiences of adult influences rather than childhood experiences. Each of these questions move closer to developing an ethical philosophy.

Question 7 directly searches for a conflict between morals and values in the personal and professional life of a school principal. This question may give the participant an opportunity to reflect upon their decisions as a principal and how their personal morals and value directly influence their ethical philosophy.

Questions 8, 9, 10, and 11 are developed from the work of Furman (2012) and Sagnak (2010). Through their work, they discussed how the principal is often the determinate of what is morally right and wrong in a school. These questions allow the participant to give specific examples of what is considered morally right and wrong. The questions also explore possible conflicts between personal morals and values and decisions directly contrasting a principal's personal belief. Through my own experiences as a school principal the principal is often the moral compass of the school and sets the stage as how the school will respond to morally right and wrong situations.

Questions 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 are directly related to the ethical paradigms based upon Shapiro (2006), Shapiro and Gross (2013), and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011). Question 12 is aligned to the ethic of justice. It allows the researcher to determine through this question and possible follow up questions how the participant examines rules, regulations and practices in schools benefiting the majority. Question 13 directly aligns to the ethic of care. This question allows the researcher to explore the role of individual need versus group need and the possible risks taken when principals make decisions for individuals over a group. Question 14 is correlated to the ethic of community and care. These two ethical paradigms are similar in nature and

can be addressed in a single question with possible follow up questions for further data gathering. Question 15 is directly related to the ethic of critique. It also addresses the process of reflection and shows how some principals go through a transformational change when they begin to apply an ethic of critique. Question 16 is based upon the ethic of profession. This question is unique as participants may give different responses based upon age, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity. This question is designed to explore and challenge the traditional role of the principal.

Open-ended interview questions are used in qualitative research to ensure data analysis is consistent and accurate among all participants (Patton, 2002). As demonstrated by Patton (2002), there are four main reasons for researchers to conduct open-ended interviews:

1. The exact instrument used in the evaluation is available for inspection by those who will use the findings in the study
2. Variation among interviewers can be minimized
3. The interview is highly focused so that the interviewee time is used efficiently
4. Analysis is facilitated by making responses easy to find and compare.  
(p. 346)

The goal of the semi-structured open-ended interviews was as Charmaz (2012) explained, “to explore, not to interrogate” (p. 29) the interviewee. Interview questions were created through an assessment of themes from current research and literature regarding morals, values and ethics within the role of the school principal corresponding to the research questions of this study. Each question gave the participant the ability to define the relationship between morals, values, and ethics within their role as a school principal. Probing questions were built into the open-

ended questions allowing the participant to expand on their initial responses. These questions were developed during the interview process, as are specific to the answers given by the participants. Open-ended questions allow the researcher to query and probe if a response has a specific lead to follow. Questions were designed to be open-ended rather than more specific including probing questions to avoid forcing the interview data into specific preconceived categories. These data afforded the researcher the ability to gather themes on the role of morals, values and ethics from each unique participant within a K-12 public education setting.

### **Data Collection**

Interviews were conducted with each participant at a pre-arranged time and location. Each interview was scheduled for 90 minutes to allow for set up of the interview process, review of the questions with both the participant and researcher and follow-up questions after the interview was concluded. Interviewees received a copy of the interview questions 2 days prior of the interview by email for their reference before any interview took place, however it was not a requirement for them to review them prior to the actual interview. Allowing the participants to have a copy prior to the interview gave them the ability to think about their morals, values and ethics. Each question in the interview process allows for detailed examples. These may not be as easy to access within an on the spot interview and allow for a smoother interview process. Charmaz (2012) described the benefits of having an interview guide such as pre-determined questions as helpful to allow the researcher the opportunity to fully concentrate on the actual conversation in the interview.

Interview questions were developed prior to the interview by delineating topics and drafting questions based upon themes from the literature review consistent with the research questions. However, as Charmaz (2012) described, interviews should be a “flexible emergent technique” (p. 29) allowing for ideas and issues to emerge during the interview allowing interviewers the ability to pursue leads if necessary. This may include focusing on morals, values and ethics from individuals based upon their relationship to specific demographic groups (i.e., ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, gender, disability).

Each interview was audio taped and transcribed by the researcher to ensure accuracy in recording and data collection. Interviews were recorded with a digital recorder allowing for saving of interviews on a computer rather than a tape. Notes were taken on an iPad using the SuperNote application allowing for note taking and recording simultaneously. Transcription allowed for the interviewee to review and revise if necessary per a member-check. Charmaz (2012) discussed a constructivist interviewer encourages the participants “definition of terms, situations and events and try to tap his or her assumptions, implicit meanings, and tacit rules” (p. 32). Data collection techniques such a more formal structured interview, surveys or in-situ observations were not appropriate to the collection of data in this research study.

### **Data Analysis**

Grounded theory places emphasis on comparisons in data as it is collected rather than wait until the research is completed. Data were compared within the beginnings of data collection not at the finality of the research project. Within this

context data were compared to emerging categories or themes and allowing concepts and categories to demonstrate relationships between them (Charmaz, 2012). The grounded theory semi-structured open-ended interviews allowed the interviewees to speak directly to their specific morals and values and the effect on their ethical philosophy in education.

Grounded theory seeks data, heavy description of events and terms, answering fundamental questions about what is actually happening and then developing theoretical categories to understand it (Charmaz, 2012). Upon completion of each interview, immediate notes and memoing were taken within 24 hours to ensure accuracy, analysis of data, and initial coding. Memo-writing in grounded theory is crucial as it prompts the researcher to analyze data, create codes and make comparisons early in the research process (Charmaz, 2012). Memo-writing assists researchers to “construct analytic notes to explicate and fill out categories” (Charmaz, 2012, p. 72). Memos through the data collection process allow researchers the ability to make comparisons between the copious amount of data and codes created during the process. It allows comparisons between data and data, codes and data, codes and categories, and categories and concepts (Charmaz, 2012). This is essential in a subjective research study focusing morals, values and ethical philosophies, as there is not a clear definition of right or wrong. Raw data collected from the transcription of interviews including observations during the interview process are included in the Appendices to allow for readers of this research study to interpret the data to check for any bias on the part of the researcher.

Analysis of the transcribed interviews resulted in coding through open coding of themes within the interview data. Open coding allows the research to remain open in the exploration of “theoretical possibilities” (Charmaz, 2012, p. 47) delineated from the data. During open coding Charmaz (2012) suggested the following questions:

- What is this data a study of?
- What does the data suggest?
- From whose point of view?
- What theoretical category does this specific datum indicate? (p. 47)

Open coding of data allows the researcher to look at actions and code data as actions (Charmaz, 2012). This allows researchers the ability to look for existing theoretical possibilities before creating new conceptual theories (Charmaz, 2012). Data collected from the participants allows the researcher the ability to initially understand how data can be categorized within the current research of literature and then begin to see how the categorized data can be used to create new theoretical concepts (Charmaz, 2012).

Initial open coding concepts used were line-by-line coding and in-vivo coding. Line-by-line coding as described by Charmaz (2012) allowed the researcher to initially name each line of the written transcription of the interview. This type of coding allows researchers to separate data into categories and see the process of creation of the category (Charmaz, 2012). In-vivo coding is generally referred to as codes participants use for unique or special terms (Charmaz, 2012). These codes “preserve participants meanings of their views and actions in the coding itself” (p. 55). As each participant’s morals, values and ethics are subjective and unique the use of in-vivo coding becomes relevant. Coding and analysis of the transcribed interviews was done by the researcher

allowing for differentiation and easier coding of line-by-line and in-vivo coding during the open coding phase of the analysis.

Following open coding, each category generated within the data was analyzed through focused coding. As described by Charmaz (2012), focused coding “means using the most significant and/or frequent codes to sift through large amounts of data” (p. 57). Through focused coding, any preconceptions regarding the topic can be confirmed. Focused coding allowed the data to be collected into more specific categories related to the participants and their views of morals, values and ethics.

After the saturation point of focused coding, the categories and codes collected were analyzed through theoretical coding. This type of coding is a sophisticated level of coding following focused coding allowing the researcher to see the relationships between categories developed in focused coding and then tell the “analytic story” as a result of the relationships and move them in a theoretical direction (Charmaz, 2012).

Through the use of descriptive data gathered from interviews, memoing, and the use of open coding, focused coding and theoretical coding, grounded theory themes emerged from the participants regarding the role of morals, values, and ethics in the school principalship and their effect on decisions principals make toward meeting the needs of students.

### **Summary**

This study in grounded theory methodology was to gather how principals in K-12 public schools within the a large suburban school district within the Northwest United States view how their personal morals and values affect their educational

ethical philosophy. This study sought to determine the affect morals and values play a role in decision-making regarding student need and how these decisions fit into the ethical paradigms of justice, care, critique, community and profession.

Participant sampling was purposive as it sought at least three principals from each area of K-12 public education within a large northwest school district in the United States. A total of nine principals were interviewed in semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions. Each interview was conducted in 90 minutes or less and was taped and transcribed for each participant. Each participant received a copy of the transcription to ensure for accuracy and understanding of key concepts and specific terms. At the conclusion of each interview, transcripts were coded and memo-writing was used to extract comparisons within the data. Analysis of the data included the use of open coding (using line-by-line and in-vivo coding), focused coding and finally developing theoretical coding to complete the analysis.

Chapter 3 outlined the research design, the appropriateness of the methodology chosen, gave a brief description of the sample population, and presented the data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter 4 addresses and synthesizes the results of the current study. Chapter 5 explores the conclusions, implications, and recommendations from the findings including future work in this area of research.

CHAPTER IV  
FINDINGS: EIGHT CASE STUDIES

**Introduction**

The research in this dissertation has never been about a definition of the role of the school principal. It has been about the individual who holds the title and role of school principal, their beliefs and what they bring personally through experiences to create their role. Often throughout my tenure as a school principal, my colleagues and I would say the only way to understand the role of the principal is to become one. During my interviews with eight participants, I had the distinct privilege to bond with them, understand them, and see how their role as principal was directly affected by who they were personally and professionally, as I too could relate from much of what was said by them during their interviews. Charmaz (2012) described the grounded theory researcher connecting best when having a context with the participants while researching a particular subject. As a former principal, I felt this was a comfort for many of the participants as they felt I could relate to them, their roles, and their decision-making.

The ethnicity and age demographics of each participant are shown in Table 1. Each of the participant principals are in the same school district in the Northwest United States.

Table 1

*Participant Demographic*

Name Code	Approximate Age	Ethnicity	Gender	Years of Experience as Principal
E1	Mid-30s	White	Male	3
E2	Late 50s	White	Male	15
E3	Mid-30s	Latina	Female	3
M1	Mid 40s	White	Male	6
M2	Mid 50s	White	Female	2
H1	Late 50s	White	Female	3
H2	Late 40s	White	Male	14
H3	Early 60s	White	Male	10

Each interview was done one to one at a location of their choosing. Each principal chose to meet with me in a private location in his or her school office, my office or a conference room in order to have a confidential conversation. All interviews were scheduled for 90 minutes and on average would run from 45 minutes to an hour. Each participant had a concern regarding confidentiality and anonymity. To address this issue, each participant was given a letter/number combination rather than a pseudonym name.

Case stories are presented through themes found within the framework of the literature review: role, morals (right and wrong), values (personal and professional), and the ethical paradigms of justice, care, critique, community, and profession. Specific themes related to their individual cases are also represented as they describe who they are as a person and as a principal. In order to maintain the integrity and to focus of their words, professional references are used at a minimum. My goal in this chapter is to use their voice to describe their own individual morals, values, and ethics.

### **Case 1: E1**

E1 can be described as a White male in his mid-30s. He has currently been an elementary school principal for the past 2 years. His career has spanned from teacher, teacher on special assignment, district administrator and currently elementary school principal. E1 chose to meet at the district office in a small conference room rather than his school for this interview. While E1 presents as more gregarious in discussions, his interview lasted a little over a half an hour and he was fairly succinct in his answers at first but became more comfortable and was able to talk about himself, his role, his morals, values and ethics.

#### **Role**

Since E1 was fairly new to his role as school principal I was surprised at his definition of the role of the principal. In my experience as a principal and with lengthy discussions with colleagues, a description is usually difficult to describe in the early years of a principalship. E1 described the principal with the following words: “coach, guide, and instructional leader.” His description also saw the principalship as both supervisory and instructional which he was able to differentiate between. He described the supervisor as necessary to ensure good teacher performance, whereas he saw the instructional leader as:

Knowing where our students are performing and what their needs are, and making sure my staff are as prepared as possible to meet those students needs with growth being the ultimate goal . . . academic.

During his description of his role, E1 discussed the multi-faceted role of the principal as he sees himself as both a coach and a model for his students, taking pride in this role.

With students would be um I would be kind of a coach and role model and um I take great pride in that part with students that I want to be seen as you know a fair, honest individual with them and recognizing where they are coming from with diverse backgrounds they have as I support them.

Evident in his description of the role of the principal is the desire to be a role model and coach for members of his school community. I was curious to know more about his morals and how they would be portrayed in his principalship.

### **Morals**

As Furman (2003) stated, “schools are moral communities requiring the development of a distinct leadership based in moral authority” (p. 1). Interestingly during our interview, our conversation on morals was clearly defined by his background and equally fascinating is his description of change of his moral character due to a change he recently had in his life.

E1 started the interview by describing morals as a personal standard of behavior for him and described them as what is acceptable or not acceptable for him in society. Interestingly to note, he was very clear this definition was for him only. His morality as he stated were his clear actions. When asked to define who defined acceptable he talked about his past and how factors growing up originally defined his morals.

E1 grew up Catholic and was raised believing in church doctrine having a significant impact on what he believed to be morally right and wrong. It was clear early on in the interview the impact the Church had on his belief system. As E1 stated:

However, I will weave in part of my background was a strong religious base in Catholic religion. So I went to Kindergarten through eighth grade in Catholic School. And so for me when I think of acceptance I think it was there was this huge religious presence that's uh . . . kind of shaped and molded me and as I got older I learned to . . . I learned to . . . how do I say this? Um . . . reevaluate what may or may not be right in the church's eyes versus mine.

What E1 alluded to in his interview was a change and acknowledgement of his sexual orientation. Recently, E1 recognized his sexual identity. Up to a few months prior to our interview, E1 was in a heterosexual marriage. He recently "came out" as a gay man. While he is not completely "out" to his school community, this had a significant impact on his moral development as it had focused him to be reflective on how his morals align with society, his family, his school as the principal and the values he creates from them.

### **Values**

Early in the interview E1 was able to identify many core values he uses in his leadership role as principal. He was able to define his values as a core internal belief residing in each individual. Two values were clearly identified in our interview: responsibility and acceptance. Each of these values was created from events in his life impacting him and his role as principal.

**Value of responsibility.** When discussing responsibility, E1 stated up front from early in his life he has felt a need to be responsible. He defined this value as “kind of always being open and um . . . I guess I’ve been . . . I like to think of myself as a helper.” His development of responsibility was born from a specific event in his life when he was 15. E1 described how he lost his father to suicide. This event forced him to become a leader in his family, ultimately taking over many of the responsibilities his father would have had.

And why is it responsibility? Um I lost my dad to suicide when I was 15 and I think at that point I grew up pretty quickly and so for me I felt I had a responsibility to my family specifically my mother. I was the youngest but it was just her and I after that so making sure that the house was running, bills were paid, mortgage was paid. She was going to work, I was going to school but um . . . you know I think from that point I was a responsible kiddo but I also then . . . I just . . . it increased significantly following that event so . . . um yeah.

E1 stated clearly to me, how this event has stayed with him all throughout his adult development. The impact on his life was significant and looking at his career path, it is clear his need to be responsible and help others has been shaped by a value of responsibility.

**Value of acceptance.** Through the events of E1’s life, his values had shifted as his moral compass had shifted. His recent change in his life through his sexual orientation had played a significant role in this change. Early in his life, his definition of who he was and how he acted was based on societal norms as he described as, “the societal norm or role with the pack of you know boys date girls and they get married.” Until recently, E1 had not considered himself to be part of a minority group and had

never experienced the feeling of marginalization. He saw how his status through his sexual orientation had changed him and had placed him in a group often lacking acceptance in education. This change had prompted his thinking about how he lives his life and the experiences he chooses to have.

There is just a lot more diversity I am surrounding myself with and personally going back to my changing sexual orientation. I think that I . . . ultimately that was the greatest gift I could give myself because I had to accept myself.

It was clear in our discussion how acceptance was becoming a significant part of his value system not just personally but also professionally. He believed his value of acceptance helped lend credence to not only acceptance of him, but also how he showed the value of acceptance plays a role in his leadership as a principal.

So when I think of acceptance and respect . . . I just . . . those are lenses I can have in both worlds and do that with students and staff and just make sure that if I hear some negative language that is harassing or bullying whether you know it's race or weight or skin color or whatever or sexual orientation which is you know not frequent at the elementary level but I just keep that lens that everybody is accepted here, everybody has a place here. You know we are um . . . we are all here to learn.

E1 articulated how he believed he needed to be accepted as a gay male but also as a principal who happens to be gay. E1 was very concerned about how he would be perceived in his school community. His sexual orientation had become a focal point of his belief in acceptance of all students. He believed very strongly in the need to be “authentic as both a gay man and a principal” as it would lend greater credibility for students and for his own children. As Gross et al. (2003) stated, “moral leadership demands a steep investment of the genuine or authentic self of the educational leader” (p. 7)

### **Morally Right and Wrong**

During our interview, E1 described what he believed to be both morally right and wrong personally and professionally. He described morals early in our interview as a “standard of behavior” which he measures his values and actions. When asked about what was morally right and wrong personally, E1 gave clear definitions of morally wrong. These were specifically described as lying, cheating, stealing and hurting others. Yet when asked about what is morally right, his answers became less specific and focused on broader definitions. He described morally right as, “something that would be going back to my standards of behavior that I treat people kind and respectful. Being well intended in my actions would align to that.” As the interview proceeded, E1 was asked to define morally right and wrong professionally. He defined these as similar to his views on morally right and wrong personally. What is interesting to note is a comment E1 made regarding where people function morally in society. Toward the end of answering the question, E1 stated he believed people were at different ranges where they are at morally. As a follow up question, I asked E1 if right and wrong morals blur. His answer was very telling as he described how they did not blur for him but he did not say about others.

Throughout our interview, E1 began to add more about how his sexual orientation played a significant role in his principalship. When asked about conflicts between what he believed to be morally wrong professionally and decisions he had to make as a principal, E1 described in length an incident with an organization, which was directly tied to his personal beliefs. This national organization has historically

been opposed to homosexuality within its members. He was asked to maintain this organizations program locally at his school. A clearly defined conflict between what he felt was best for his school and still maintain the “authentic” role he desperately wanted to project to his school happened.

I remember 2 days in particular. The first when it came across my desk just thinking there, “Fuck really?” Like everything about me personally is in conflict with this organization and yet it does serve a need that does benefit my school for years to come. Students, staff, and my community for that matter.

It was very apparent during the interview, he had faced a moral conundrum he felt he was unable to resolve for himself, but at the same time he felt had to be resolved for the school and community. Ultimately, he decided to renew the program at his school even though it would be contrary to his personal beliefs. An action decision of this nature, conflicting with E1’s morals and values made me wonder about where he was in his ethical actions within the five paradigms.

### **Ethical Paradigms: Justice, Care, Critique, Community, Profession**

**Justice and critique.** When E1 was asked about a law, policy or regulation conflicting with student need, E1 described a practice his school had been using for years. I found this fascinating as E1 has a strong background in special education through previous roles he had held in the school district and rather talk about laws such as IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act) he spoke about a tiered reading system his school had implemented. He described how shortly after becoming principal of his school he dismantled the program because he felt it segregated and

removed students. He described this best when talking about why he removed this system in his school.

I don't believe I will change their beliefs or their morals around some of these things but I can interrupt it and have an impact in that capacity and I can give them different scenarios and data around best practices for students that I think are in the best interest of them.

The practice he described in his interview was a practice long held in his school district. It did ultimately impact special education and the labeling of students. His role as principal and former special education administrator has given him insight into laws and ultimately practices in his school. It was clear in this statement, E1 was making decisions for his students at his school through his own lens as he described as, "best practices I think are in the best interests of them." His vision of what he believed is best drove his decision to move from an ethic of justice to an ethic of critique for his school to create actions regarding this practice.

**Care.** E1 is in his third year of his first principalship and had, as he described, many opportunities where he had to make decisions for students benefiting the needs of one student over the needs of a larger group. In his case, the larger group was the staff of his school. He described a situation regarding a conflict between the wishes of the staff for removal of an African-American student to either a special education placement or stricter disciplinary measure due to behavior displayed by the student. During his description, it was evident there was a potential of serious conflict between his staff and himself due to the decision he made to keep this student in his school

rather than make a decision which may have a negative impact on the student against his staff's wishes.

And I think a couple of my staff thought, "what the fuck is he doing? Like this girl needs to have an aide or be in a program." I know she does not and so we made it a point to stop or interrupt the statistic of she was not . . . you know . . . a male but she was a female African-American labeled ED (Emotionally Disturbed).

He later described in his answer, how the role of his values of acceptance played a large part on his decision to meet this girls' needs over the needs of his staff.

**Community.** E1's school is a smaller, rural school in the Pacific Northwest. He described it as a "country school." The majority racial/ethnic demographic at his school is predominantly White, with a small but growing Latino population. He described his school systems and communication as being monolingual in English when he arrived. E1 discussed he was able to give voice to his Latino population, which traditionally had little communication to and from his school through actions he had undertaken to disrupt the monolingual communication. He also recognized the need to be able to balance the voices of the populations within his school. He described a decision he made to make sure that all voices were represented.

I have an interpreter with me at all times. I have two. I have an ASL interpreter and a Spanish interpreter for all events. So that's new. And initially that frustrated my White families because it just takes longer and I got two interpreters alongside me for any kind of assembly and this whole I just . . . Initially, I am like the wave of like "learn English" was seeping out of the crowd at me. That's changed but when I think of the White privilege at my school in particular that they just didn't care. They didn't address it so to have a Spanish interpreter for example was a natural common thing, which brings in all families.

As with many of his decisions described in our interview, the value of acceptance seems to be a common theme. His need to make sure everyone is accepted at his school, whether through changes in discipline, instructional practices or communication, this lens is the core of what he believes.

**Profession.** E1's answer to our last question was the most surprising as it clearly showed the conflict between who he was as gay man and a principal. When asked about the traditional role of the principal, E1 stated he felt, "like I am the least traditional principal out there." Yet, at the same time he could feel the pull of his "country school" which he often felt pulled him into a more traditional role. He described how the community and school have traditional values conflicting with his.

When you enter the building you just fall into that role. And you fall into the norms within your little school community and in mine in particular I think it is very traditional. So I think for me I am always thinking, you know, how can I keep an equity lens out there and an acceptance lens whether it be race or sexual orientation.

In many ways, he does not fall into a traditional role of principal, as his school has never had an out gay principal before. He was writing his own ethical paradigm of the profession as his values of acceptance and moral belief of right and wrong dominated his actions.

### **Case 2: E2**

As I know each participant in a professional role, I had some idea of how their interview may go in depth and length. As I believed E1 would be gregarious in nature which turned out not to be the case, E2 has always presented himself as reserved in nature. I assumed his interview would be roughly the length of E1's interview. As it

turned out E2 was not only willing to talk, at times it felt as if he had waited a long time to talk about the subject matter of this research project. By the time our interview had concluded over an hour later, we had laughed, cried and I was feeling first hand his frustration and conflict between himself, the role of principal, and expectations placed on him, by either himself, his school community or his supervisors. Even though there was some predictability I was surprised at times by his answers as his interview was not as I expected.

E2 can be described as a mild-mannered White male in his late 50s or early 60s. He has been in education since he finished his undergraduate degree. He has been an elementary school teacher, Vice-Principal and eventually Principal. He has been in his school district for more than 10 years. It can be said E2 does not present himself as having strong or loud opinions in his district but in the course of this interview E2 was the opposite of this idea. As he settled into his seat in my office, he had printed out the questions I had sent him ahead of time which he had hand written notes on. Suffice it to say, E2 was ready to talk.

### **Role-Servant Leader**

From the beginning E2 had a strong opinion on the type of leader he was when describing his role in his school. He described himself as a leader of his school using words such as “providing direction, helping, and supporting.” However, the word he used frequently in our interview carrying a resounding theme throughout was Sergiovani’s “servant leader.” Shapiro (2006) described ethical leadership from a Sergiovani servant leadership lens.

It is important to realize that ethical leadership is not always rational. There is a need for the kind of leadership Sergiovani (2006), speaks of that is not just with the head and the hand, but also with the heart. Emotion enters the picture where good leadership, not management is concerned. It is important for leaders to be aware of their own emotions as well as other people's reactions, and know how to channel them appropriately. (p. 5)

When I asked E2 in a follow up question to describe the role of the servant leader, his answers fit the description Shapiro (2006) stated. He described himself as a leader who helped others, which was accomplished through his ability to take on many roles in his school allowing his staff to feel supported so they can teach and meet the needs of students.

I think it means that you um . . . really need to consider the needs of others before you consider your own needs. Um . . . I don't know . . . I am sure I don't do that in every situation but it does make sense to be um . . . a central part of how I operate working with people. I want to make sure they have what they need um . . . that could take on a lot of different roles.

As he would later describe his morals and values and his role as principal, the theme of servant leadership became more apparent.

### **Morals**

From the beginning of the questions on morals, E2 described them as the difference between right and wrong and was the second principal to describe morals as a definitive of this description. This theme would later become a focal point in my interviews with most of the participants. I was curious as to who defines his right and wrong for him and asked him to define it for me and surprisingly he seemed a little apprehensive about this question.

E2 believed right and wrong are defined as part of an individual's consciousness in their decision-making. He acknowledged moral right and wrong are partly social in nature, as society would set "common morals that society has said this is right, this is wrong" but he firmly believed it is up to the individual to define the difference between them.

I think the person themselves defines it. I think the reality for people is within the individual. I think there are some what most people would consider some common beliefs of morals that society has said this is right, this is wrong. Um, but in the final analysis I think each of us has to answer that question.

His beliefs in individual morality were linked to his belief in helping others and he defined morals as the ability to help those who cannot help themselves. This was very clear in his description of morally right and wrong professionally.

### **Morally Right and Wrong**

E2s belief of morally right was firmly rooted in his belief in helping others but when asked the question of defining morally right and wrong and giving a specific description of morally right and wrong, E2 found this was difficult for him. He described morally wrong as actions deliberately hurting another person. Through reflection and thinking his decisions thorough, he believed can prevent harm to people.

If you have an opportunity to effect a situation and you can either do something that would be helpful to someone or something that would be hurtful to someone that it's the morally right course would be to do something that is helpful to them.

Through his belief in servant leadership, the ability to help others becomes a central part of his role as principal. He believed that morally right and wrong professionally

and personally to be cornerstone for a person who helps those who are unable to do so for themselves. He sees himself specifically as having the ability through his role as principal to help those who cannot help themselves in the school system.

I tend to fall on the side of let's support the people who need support who can't get it themselves because they need a hand. Where other people who are in positions of being able to get things for themselves you know they should be thinking about helping some folks that you are not in that position that are not as fortunate. That sounds kind of corny but that's how . . . where I landed I guess.

E2 believed it is morally right to make decisions within this type of leadership style through a reflective process.

While some administrators or principals might consider E2's type of reflective leadership as "safe" without significant risk, he believed his reflections allow him to make decisions benefiting students through making better decisions regarding his staff. Throughout the interview he was very worried about his staff and in particular his teachers. He believed his teachers were the ones who should be making sure all students' needs are being met, as the teachers are in his eyes, "the experts" of instruction and their students. E2 described his morally right decisions were made through a reflective process which is needed in order to get buy in from staff on difficult decisions. He described the process as the following:

I am always looking to see where are we in terms of what I'm doing with the staff and how capable are they to help kids because of what I am imposing on them or asking them to do.

E2 saw his decisions having impact on teachers and in turn has direct impact on students. He believed it is morally wrong for him to not consider this impact.

And I know we always say we make decisions based upon what's best for kids and we do and I do. Um . . . I also know that at some point it's sort of like by going beyond that line you may be putting people under enough stress that's going to affect how they can serve kids.

While he believed he must make morally right decisions to get all student needs met, he saw his teachers as the conduit to making this happen. As we talked more about his values in the interview it became clear the pathway for decision making came from what he values most: helping people, hard work, and acceptance.

### **Values**

As we settled further into our questions, E2 spoke about his upbringing and where his values developed. He described the greatest influences on his value system came from his mother and later from his experience in sports. Both experiences helped create his beliefs in treating everyone with respect, valuing others and their place in his world. He spoke highly of his mother who was a housekeeper in a state hospital. He described working with her when he was in college. In this experience, he developed the value of responsibility, and hard work. E2 described his father as a hard worker and an avid athlete who did not encourage him to be perfect but rather to do his best. He believed this value has created his value of respecting his staff, treating people well and showing others the value of hard work.

I played a lot of sports when I was a kid and he (his father) was a really good athlete and he always said to me, just do the best you can. Don't worry about what happens. Just be the best you can do. And uh . . . they said that about school. You know, we just . . . we want you to do the best you can do. Whatever you got, what your grade is, of course we want you to do well but we just want you to do your best work and give your best efforts to the teachers. I think that has stayed with me. From the basic things. Treat people well, that kind of thing was always a part of it.

The value of treating people well and the need to do his best are central components of the values he described in his role as principal.

E2's values of treating people well and supporting others were not the starting point in his career in leadership. He described how early on in his career he believed in a more hierarchal form of leadership. He described as a young teacher, his leadership and management from a position of power.

So my path has been starting with very strong authoritarian beliefs about how to work with kids when I first started which was the common way to dealing with kids in the day when I first started teaching.

Later in his career, through reflection he realized the impact on this authoritarian belief was having on his leadership and the decisions he was making. He had a recent revelation about his leadership and his values of treating others with respect. In this retrospection, he came to the realization of the need to be consistent in his treatment of all people. This realization also pinpointed how adults are the key to achieving the goal of all of meeting student need. At this point in the interview, E2 became emotional and there was cracking in his voice as he described how some of his staff, do not treat people the way his staff wants to be treated. This has been an issue for him as he has had a difficult year with the adults who work with children in his school.

It just occurred to me this year that I don't have that difference in designation. I feel the same way whether I am dealing with adults or kids. I even . . . I've even said to people and certainly talking to other people about it is that um . . . if I treated kids the way some teachers want me to um . . . if I am treating them the same way they want me to treat the kids they would be furious and be filing grievances and be very upset. And I find that they get upset when I . . . they want me to treat really well but when I do, extend the same courtesy to the kids they feel that it is wrong because they feel I should be more powerful to the kids and I just more and more realize it just doesn't work.

E2 believed in the value of a servant leader with treating people with respect as the core of his leadership style in his role as principal of his school. He valued the need to get consensus on decision making rather than dictating to his staff or community about his decisions. Consensus building allowed him to see where people are at in their participation or action. E2 saw value in listening to his school community and seeing how their place in the decisions he makes are at different places. He recognized he has to make the final decisions for his school he cannot do this without understanding the variety of needs the members of his school community.

#### **Ethical Paradigms: Justice, Care, Critique, Community, Profession**

**Justice and critique.** As much as E2 described himself as a servant leader, he also described himself as a rule follower. The ethic of justice as Furman (2003) described is based upon how we treat each other with a “standard of justice” based on uniformity of decisions. This description in many ways could be said for E2’s decisions regarding his beliefs. He self-described himself as a rule follower and had said earlier when describing his morals, there are common societal morals indicating how everybody has a set of rules to follow. There are times he believed, when he has better ideas and thoughts than the rules he is hearing about from people in greater power. However, he would often follow the rule as it is already in place. This is a conflict for him as he wondered whether he should embrace the rule or create his own.

One of the stressors that I have is that there are times when I feel I have better answers than what I am hearing I have to do. And um I think we all probably feel that we’re all in that position. I certainly respect the people who are in positions above me. That comes in conflict with my basic belief that you have to follow the rules.

There are times he felt he needed to understand the “spirit of the rule” in order to enforce it rather than the entire rule, law or regulation as he felt it would give his teachers a greater opportunity to serve student by having a little latitude in rules.

And the fact that uh . . . I am a rule follower so I am going to do too much at one time. I try to figure out a way that will satisfy the requirement what we’re obligated to do. What’s the spirit of it? So that’s how I try to work it . . . is try really hard to follow the rules and do what we need to do. Um, but try to find a way to do what’s doable.

Throughout our interview I wondered how much conflict there might be between being a “rule follower” and being a servant leader. Does servant leadership clash completely with following rules, regulation and law? It was apparent an ethic of justice was firmly rooted in his decision making with an ethic of critique taking more of a lesser role. While Furman (2003) described an ethic of critique as looking “toward barriers to fairness” (p. 3), E2’s decisions to follow the spirit of the law would preclude he understands rules, laws and regulations which can also be a barrier to meeting student needs.

One aspect of his decision-making E2 made clear was the need for someone to tell him he could change the rules. While E2 tended to play it safe it with rules, he was willing to move toward decisions critiquing them and create actions in contrast to the essence of the rule. However, a person of higher authority would need to tell him he has permission to do so before he would initiate this type of change. He gave an example of mandates from his district office ultimately his responsibility requiring teachers to complete. E2 often felt these mandates hinder his teachers and cause them

to be overly stressed keeping them from helping students. It was not until he spoke to his supervisor he felt he could be comfortable changing the rules.

She (supervisor) has a very clear idea in her mind what is tight and loose and a good example when teachers were freaking out with we have to do this and we have to do that, and (name of supervisor) said, and I was really glad, because this was something that we needed at the time. And I was trying to go in this direction with the teachers but I wasn't sure I was on solid ground until got a chance to talk to (name of supervisor). She said, the only thing that is tight is that you need to teach to the standards and you need to know where kids are . . . Once that came out it took a lot of pressure off of me. So I could be a rule follower but have a lot of flexibility.

While we discussed the need to follow rules, E2 made it clear he was willing to change the rules as he recognizes the need to help individuals to meet their needs.

What was not clear is how much risk he was willing to as part of his role as principal.

**Care.** Throughout our interview, E2 spoke about the needs of students met through the needs of his teachers. Simply, he believed if his teachers' needs were being met through him, as a servant leader they would have the time, energy and drive to meet the students' needs when asked. He was very concerned about the amount of stress his teachers were under either through the impact on his decisions or the impact of district, state or federal mandate. When asked questions relating to the ethic of care, E2 spoke about his teachers rather than individual students. He was very worried about his teachers' mental wellbeing and described a situation where teachers in his school were pressuring him to make a decision benefiting the whole but not an individual teacher who had gone through some recent trauma. While he valued the team of teachers, as he described, "as one of the best teams in terms of collaboration," he still recognized the need to benefit one person over the needs of a group. E2

reflected upon this decision, as it seems to cause him difficulty in his decision-making. “But that was one there that it was a question of . . . you know . . . do I satisfy one person over another? It wasn’t really the good . . . the larger group.” For many principals, the needs of the students are primary and the way to help them is a direct path. For E2, the path to meeting his students’ need was through helping his teachers and creating a straight path without distraction for them.

**Community.** During the entire interview, E2 was very clear he was a rule follower but willing to bend the rules if needed by helping his teachers as a path for addressing student need. He had not spoken much about different parts of the school community and as we talked about community he related how he tried to avoid situations pitting one group over another. E2 spoke early in the interview about if he makes a decision for one group then he runs a risk of other groups needs may not be met. So in turn, he tried to stay neutral and create an environment giving everybody something.

You know I work so much in trying to create a situation in which the problem solving results in everybody’s needs being met that I try to stay out of these. I treat them like . . . you know . . . it’s something that I don’t’ want to be in that situation.

He described his decision making as the key to staying as neutral as possible and while he believed in getting input from his teachers he was willing to forgo a democratic system and make the final decision to make sure every group was getting what they wanted.

I don’t like to take votes, because once the votes comes out, half the people feel like they got what they wanted and half the people feel like they didn’t

have a say or we couldn't address it. What I always say is ok, if we did this, you don't get what you want. But if we do, do that then what can we do to make it seem doable for you guys. That's consensus. I really try to resist the vote.

Principals and other school leaders may see this as a safe way to proceed in making decisions as the principal. I wondered if his approach to his decision making process was a result of how he views the role of the principalship.

**Profession.** As discussed early in the interview, E2 viewed the role of the principal as someone who provides direction through a servant leadership role. The role of the principal is changing in the world of increased rigor, standardized tests and greater accountability. As much as E2 recognized the importance of these, he also believed he is a non-traditional principal as he was willing to take on the roles of others to help support his teachers. "I think I tend to do things that other people would say you shouldn't do that. You should delegate that. You should be in the classroom more, you should be . . . you should be other people's responsibilities." E2 believed the principal's role morally and ethically is to support his staff. He strongly thought the best way for all students to meet their needs is for his staff to have a supportive principal firmly rooted in servant leadership. This type of leadership is often reflective of a hero-leader as it is reliant on a specific individual's beliefs. E2 was writing his own version of the role of the principal, based on trust in his staff, support for his school and community, and belief this would help students and meet their needs.

I try to support folks and I think they really do believe that when it comes down to it most people um . . . aren't ok with doing that because it won't give them the influence on people they think they need to have. I think that you

can't not do it that way. I think if you really want to influence people, that's the way you influence, you help them, you trust them, you support them.

### **Case 3: E3**

My interview with principal E3 was the most personal of the eight interviews I conducted and used in my research. While I anticipated there would be some discussion from a personal level, I did not realize how significant this would be in her interview. I have had the pleasure of knowing E3 for the past 3 years. She is a third year principal having had the positions of instructional aide, teacher, and coach in her career prior to her current position as principal. She is an early 30s woman with Hispanic heritage. I use the term "Hispanic Heritage" as her life has many layers to it and I believe her story is a direct link to her decisions as a principal. It is important to impart a brief amount of personal history from E3 before examining her morals, values, and ethics and the role they play in her principalship.

E3's school is a large Title 1 elementary school with a large Latino population. It hosts a dual language program for students who speak Spanish and for students who wish to be bilingual. There has been significant economic divide in the past few years within her school community and some gentrification of the surrounding neighborhood is beginning.

### **The Role of Personal Trauma**

During many of the interviews, each principal had some emotional reaction; either anger, anxiety, sadness, happiness, or frustration. As E3 and I sat in her office of her school our interview became personal as she recounted a little of her background. I

believe this background has had significant impact on her role as principal. As I reexamined the data from the transcripts later, her story made more sense to me in context of her answers. E3 was able to open up a little on her history after I asked her about where the values of persistence, observing, and choosing her own success came from.

### **Adoption and Family**

E3 recounted to me her story starting with her early life to age seven growing up in poverty outside of the United States. She and her two brothers were orphans who were later adopted by White parents in the United States. She does not remember much of her life prior to being adopted but can recall the drastic changes she had to experience when coming to a new country, new family and new culture.

It was such a drastic change in life that everything I knew before then just didn't seem to make sense in a new country, with a new language, new culture, um . . . when you are faced with something that's so, so different, you have to find something that will get you through that.

As E3 continued with her background story, she had an emotional response I had not seen before through my work experiences with her. She is often described as very quiet and it was apparent her life story was deeply personal and filled with trauma, so an emotional response was surprising. It did give me insight into the depth of her trauma and furthered my belief it had a significant impact on her and now in her current role as principal.

E3 was adopted at a very young age with her younger brother and brought to the United States. Her adoptive parents were not of Hispanic heritage and did not

she speak Spanish as she did when she was adopted. This had a significant impact on her life, as she believed she had to be the one stable person for her brother and herself.

There wasn't anybody for him except for me and I had to help him and my parents, my adopted parents didn't understand our language, didn't understand how things had been for us before and so a lot of it was learning for them about life in (name of country).

Her trauma of being an orphan, her adoption and relocation, learning a new culture and language was compounded as her older brother was not with her and her younger brother when they came to the United States. She felt compelled to find him and keep her family together. "I wasn't adopted with both of my brothers at the same time so you know helping others meant figuring out where my older brother was, helping reunite our family, our bloodline, our biological family." The events of relocating, adoption and acculturation may have had a negative impact on anybody who would have gone through events such as these. However for E3, it shaped her beliefs, thoughts and outlook on not only herself but the role she would later play as a school principal.

I've heard the quote . . . there's no way to get um . . . not exactly sure how the quote goes but the only way to get through something is just go right through it. So you know the trauma in my life before being adopted um . . . just wasn't going to be the end of me.

With her background as a context, our discussion of her definition of the role as principal and her morals, values and ethics were a clear path from the past in which they had developed.

**Role of Principal**

As E3 settled into our interview, she described her role as principal from many different points of view. At times she focused on terms easily described as more traditional: bossy, coach, investigator, supervisor. However, it was not the words she used to describe her role but rather who she relied on to describe it. She looks toward the members of the school community to best describe her role. As of this interview she has asked students to tell her what she does as principal. The reaction she has received from students has caused her to reflect upon her role and of the importance of it. She saw herself a voice for those without a strong voice in the school community and system such as her Latino students.

I think my role in the school is to help a community that has not been seen in a certain light. Um . . . and I mean the role a principal is to produce successful kids so it's a very big role combining all of those things, effective teaching, um, learning, community identify, just bringing all those things together.

E3 described her role as an octopus with many arms as she explained, “doing many different things all at once with each of my arms.” Each of her decisions in this role is based upon her morals and values as she described are contingent on the needs of others and the reaction to her beliefs.

**Morals**

E3 was different than E1 and E2, as she stated she did not have a strong statement toward her own morals. While she did follow a similar path stating morals were defined as the difference between right and wrong she also believed her morals evolved. E3 strongly believed she was able to define her own morals but also felt the

evolution in her morality was created through her interactions with others. She discussed how her belief in her morals was created through not only these interactions but also needing to know why people reacted to her decisions. Through reflection and introspection, she would not only change her morals to adapt to situations and others, she also felt she needed to understand why people would react differently than her.

Well if they are my morals then I define what is right and wrong. But morals evolve and looking at others responses and others reactions helps me define my morals. I mean if I make a decision based on a moral and um, you know others are not perhaps not satisfied with that decision, you know then I need to figure out what's the basis for this and how am I using my definition of right and wrong in this decision.

Her individual moral definition is based upon her need to communicate what she believes to morally right and wrong. She saw morals as the ethical code of her beliefs. This ethical code is viewed in her decisions and as she described, “help guide me in my daily life.”

**Morally right and wrong.** As E3 expressed early in our interview, she based much of her morals and decisions upon her reactions to others. It was apparent in her answers to the questions regarding morally right and wrong she was very cognizant of how her decisions are interpreted. She defined morally wrong as intentional hurting and saw morally right as “steps to success.” Interesting to note was her approach to steps to success, as she believed it was possible to have missteps in her approach which may seem morally wrong but in the end a morally right outcome may occur.

I think anything that hurts someone physically or emotionally is wrong. Anything that provides a step to success is right. But I also think it is the net result that is . . . that defines morally right and wrong because you might take

. . . the process may be hard, you may take some wrong steps in the process but the end results could be much different than your original step.

As a result of this statement, she gave an example of two parent issues she dealt with in the past 2 years; each regarding placement of a child in a Dual Language program within her school. Her first encounter with a White parent was not received as well as she had hoped. She believed the parent to be wrong in their decision to pull their daughter out of the program and described her approach with the parent as very direct in turn did not go as well as planned. She reflected on this approach and how she handled this situation. While she felt morally obligated to explain to the parent what she believed, she later realized a difference between herself and the parent culturally. Her morals and the morals of the parent did not align. Later when a similar situation occurred she changed her approach to the situation. While this parent was Latino, she felt his concerns were closely aligned to the first parent prompting her to use a different approach of active listening, reflection and guiding. In the end the second parent had a different response than the first and kept their child in her program. As she stated later regarding missteps in her moral decision making as, “the steps aren’t always right but the end results can be.”

### **Values**

From early on in our interview, it was exceedingly clear E3 has strong values. She described her developed and strongest values as “those things that are important to me.” She described her strongest values as observing, persisting, and choosing for her own success. Each of these values emanated from the description of her life history

and the impact they play on her today. As described earlier, persistence in her need to survive after extreme trauma helped drive this value. Observing came from her arrival in the United States and not understanding the language and the culture and she realized early on this was critical for her own survival. Now, as a principal, she is able to take this value and apply it to her school and to members of her school community.

I think the observing comes from the feeling so foreign in a new place. Sometimes the best thing to do is stop talking and watch and listen. And now coming to this school in this role of principal, I had to listen to what people said about their school. The good things about the school, the challenges, what needed to be done and getting to know the staff here uh . . . I had to watch how they interacted and watch their body language, listen to the things they were telling me. Just observe their interactions with each other and with me.

As E3 would later go on to describe, she believed her ability to observe and learn gave her multiple perspectives in which to make decisions for her students, staff and school community. This is a value driving her leadership as she saw herself as needing to understand different roles and perspectives to help her staff make the right decisions in helping her students. She spoke of this when describing how teachers do not have the same cultural connectedness with their students as she does with them. A majority of her students are Latino and allowing her to share a cultural and ethnic bond with her students. She noted many of her White teachers do not share this same bond. She described how she has asked her teachers to change practices to best help these students but knew her own staff may have limits at times to their own learning. She valued knowing multiple perspectives and was not willing to push them to do something she also cannot do.

So professionally . . . I . . . you know developed that as well. If I am asking teachers to take on initiatives . . . I wouldn't ask them to do more that I could handle and it's not always the best because I feel like I can handle a lot and others can't. But I've learned to see it from other perspectives.

E3's values and resulting actions from them were a reflection of her own moral beliefs and personal trauma she has undergone. In her role, E3 has taken the value of observation, persistence and reflection to help her make decisions for her school community. As Combs (2003) stated, "expert principals in comparison to non-experts, were much clearer about their values and could use them as a substitute for knowledge, when domain specific knowledge was lacking" (p. 7). As E3 continued into her third year as principal her values were guiding her in filling in the gaps of knowledge.

### **Ethical Paradigms: Justice, Care, Critique, Community, Profession**

**Justice and critique.** When asked questions pointing toward her beliefs within an ethic of justice, E3 responded she understood the need for policies, laws, and regulations because as she stated, "they help guide the masses." She also firmly believed policies, laws, and regulation must be examined if it causes a student or students to not have equitable outcomes. She described a situation at her school with district policies regarding students on a federal free and reduced lunch program. She found the law a conflict with her community as it prevented students in need from getting the food they needed during the day. She also spoke about parents who often have greater voice in her community due to privilege wanting to be in specific programs. She often has to confront these voices to ensure those voices not having the

same privileges to have equitable opportunities. Through deep reflection she was able to reflect on her abilities and on the need to make changes in these types of laws, regulations and policies if they do not benefit all students.

**Care and community.** In E3's role she saw herself as the voice of those in her school who do not have a voice. Many times during our interview she spoke about the need to not only be the voice for her students who were not culturally and linguistically similar to her teachers but also a need to educate her teachers on how to teach these students. When asked about making decisions for individual students over a larger group she discussed a situation with a student who is Latino not connecting culturally with a teacher who is White. The teacher was adamant about not having the student in her class. The student's desire was to be put into another class due to a personal clash between the two of them. E3 elected to keep them together and educate them rather than move them as she saw benefit in helping each other learn to work together. She believed if she moved them it could cause greater impact for the teacher and the student as well as harm to her school as it would send a message contrary to what she believed best for the school community. E3 made an interesting observation regarding the needs of all members of her school community. As she stated succinctly, "Logistically it is hard to meet the needs of everybody."

**Profession.** In the beginning of our interview E3 described her role as "an octopus with many arms doing many things at once." She did not see herself as a traditional principal and has defined her own role based upon her own morals, values and ethics. She believed the traditional role has changed. She saw the role of principal

as driven by the many needs of her students and the voices of her community rather than outside organizations such as state, district and national definitions. As Vokey (2005) stated, “principals formulate their own, personal-professional codes of ethics, based on right versus wrong, who they are as a human being, and professionals, how they make decisions and why” (p. 129). This is the ethical course E3 has taken in her career. She knew herself, what she believed in, why she must interact with others and how all of these pieces fit together to meet the needs of her students.

#### **Case 4: M1**

M1 is one of two middle school principals interviewed for this study. Originally, there were to be three middle school principals but due to a professional conflict, one middle school participant removed herself from the study. M1 is a White, early 40s male principal with 7 years of experience as principal of his school. He has been in his school district for most of his career starting as a teacher, sports coach, assistant principal and principal. What is exceptionally unique about M1 is his background as related to his school. M1 grew up in the neighborhood of his school and attended his current school as a middle school student while growing up. Two of his children are in the neighborhood elementary school and another attends his school. He was very familiar with many of the families of his school. This is an interesting dynamic, as many of the families know him as principal of their child’s middle school but also as neighbor and friend. M1’s middle school is in an area of his city considered to be most affluent. His school has sharp divides in socio-economic levels in his school community, with two of the six elementary schools feeding into his school as

Title 1. He also has one elementary school considered to be the most affluent in his district.

### **Role**

M1 has been a principal in his school for the past 7 years. During this time period, the district has undergone a considerable number of changes ranging from supervisory models to instructional practice models for principals. As such, M1 has also undergone considerable change in his beliefs and role as principal of his school. As we sat in his office, he offered two definitions of his role as school principal. His first answer was based upon what he believes his district office defines a principal to be. “My role in my school is to um be um the instructional leader. Making sure that all kids are um . . . showing growth and achieving. I think that role is probably the most often defined by the district office.” This interaction made him uncomfortable as he shifted in his chair to reach for just the right phrase to use in his role. As he is a member of the community where his school is located he is also cognizant of what the community expects of him. He described the community member definition of him as a leader to make the school, “safe, work through issues, and be a conduit for their child’s educational experience.” But this was not the role he believed in. In fact throughout the course of his interview, he began to use a phrase which summed up what he believed was not only his role but also a solid foundation for his morals, values and ethics.

### **Making it Better**

Starting at the beginning and weaving its way through our interview, M1 began to use a phrase to describe not only what he believed to be his role as principal but also a foundation for his beliefs in his decision making process. Early on, when I pressed him to define the role as principal, he gave an answer very different than what his district and parent community defined for him.

So I define the role as trying to make everything better. I mean I feel like that is my main job. You know, how do I make it better. That's why I got into education to make a difference in my community. So how do I make it better? That is huge . . .you know . . . job but I guess if I just had to simply define it I would say, you know my role is to make everything better.

What made this answer so strikingly different was the neutrality of his answer.

Throughout our interview I wondered what it meant to “make it better.” Make it better for whom and through whose eyes was making it better going to affect? Toward the middle of our interview, M1 had used the phrase making it better a number of times and it was becoming very apparent this was important to him. It was time to get a straight answer as to the definition of making it better.

As M1 explained, his role was to help society through the role and actions of being a principal and to continue on a path to improving the lives of people. He felt if society did not continue to improve the wellbeing for everyone individually, it would start to have a negative impact on the greater whole. His role, as he saw it, was helping this process along to continue improvement. This includes working on a continual examination of his school's systems and improving services for all students.

So why is it important to make everything better? Because I feel like if we don't, if society as a whole doesn't continue to make things better then it gets worse. I don't know if there is a middle ground in that, things decay, um . . . so I feel like you are constantly having to analyze practices and you know work on getting better all the time. Both as individuals, as systems, and then you know your services obviously to the kids. And uh, I just feel like that over the last few years that things have not been optimal.

The last line in his commentary is probably the most important piece of his description of making it better. He went on to describe, the lack of monetary and personnel resources created a lack of resources to kids, enabling the system to become broken.

I am probably not the only one who feels some frustration about what we have at our disposal when it comes down to resources and uh . . . it feels like uh . . . I mean that feels like something that we are always trying to do . . . how do we make it better? How do we fix something?

His frustration at the changes in the past few years and the lack of resources have spurred his desire to make things better and yet as I sat and listened I could not help but wonder through whose eyes is he making things better? What would his morals and values say about his desire to make things better?

### **Morals**

When asked to define morals, M1 had some difficulty with his answer as he felt he was unsure of what morals meant. As seen with some of the other principals interviewed, he felt as if he should have looked up an answer to the definition of morals. He never felt secure in his answer and at times acted as if he were being judged which became more evident in his answer. His description of morals was connected to his belief in making things better as he believes in doing what is right for his school. "I guess morality you know means that you are acting in a way where you

are going to um do what's right . . . whatever that means.” Interestingly, M1 also described morals based upon a group norm and an individual's own cultural background. “When I think of morals I think of things that um . . . might be more like group defined within a culture.” If morals are created within a group defined by their culture, a question arises into whose culture are his morals derived?

M1 was a product of the school system in which he works. He grew up in and lived in the area where his school is located. While the majority of his school population is White and middle class, he has a growing Latino population and two Title 1 elementary schools populations feeding directly to his school. Are his morals and moral development tied to his school population or to his upbringing? M2 described his morals as a product of his parents and his childhood yet he felt he had developed his own set of morals based upon his experiences.

I think it's based upon my upbringing um . . . without a doubt a huge influence from my parents but yet at the same time I have developed some of my own values and maybe some different morals based on the culture and the experiences that I've grown up in. Even though some people would say it's similar. Um . . . I think that um you know time and society and you know learning has changed some of my opinions, some of my values from when I was a child or young adult.

He later would explain how some of his moral views have changed in his role as a principal when asked to describe what is morally right and wrong both personally and professionally. M1 believed it is morally wrong to hurt others through the systems created in schools. He gave examples of this in his views of Special Education and the services provided for students with a disability. There is a clear contrast between what

he believed to be a moral conflict between providing services and the service model he is obligated to follow.

I guess I have a whole moral conflict over special education. I really don't like special education very much. I know that there is a need for it but my experience has been as a principal that when you put a bunch of kids on IEPs that don't have a history of success in a classroom together that doesn't always cultivate a uh, a great, um, culture for learning.

What drives M1's morals is his need to make things better. He recognized his morality as defined by his experiences, beliefs in right and wrong and the lack of resources and systems ultimately hurting students. These are the drivers for his values.

### **Values**

As much as M1 believed his morals are driven by a group norm or through his influences as a child, he believed he set his own course on his values. He saw values as those things most important to a person. He individually created them even though they may have roots through his church, parents or experiences. "Values is a little bit more what's important to a person uh . . . so I think it is more individualistic based on . . . based on their upbringing and what they see to themselves about how they behave." M1 in his interviewed identified very concrete values based upon his upbringing. He described them as tolerance, respect, being present and communication.

**Values of respect and tolerance.** M1 described these two values as similar in origin and design. He discussed how respect and tolerance originated from his upbringing by his parents and also the church he attended as a child. He was very

comfortable talking about these two large role models for him. He described his church in particular as tolerant and progressive.

They came from my parents, they came from my um, church. We were always taught at church, the church that I attended was you know . . . that um . . . that you should treat . . . you know . . . everybody well regardless of their differences and things. Um . . . and I know some churches that may not be the case for everybody but the one I was raised in was very like tolerant, progressive church.

**Values of being present and communication.** The values of communication and “being present” were common themes in his description of values and his decisions and each is reliant on the other. He believed both communication and being present are key components for success of meeting the needs of his school community. He explained how he believed it is critical for his school to have communication built on relationships.

As a principal I really have had to try to develop I think better communication skills that is something that you know continually working with and figuring out ways to make sure I am connecting with everybody at school.

Essentially tied to his communication with all members of his community was his ability to be present. He described, being present as his ability to be visible to his school community. He was not comfortable sitting behind a desk and just managing his school. He would rather be out amongst the different members of his school community.

I guess some of the values I initially stated were be a contributor, be present, you know communication is obviously important. Some of just the basic, foundation, human behavior that makes successful people um . . . how are they seen you know in my role as principal? I know this . . . I try to be as visible as I possibly can at school. Um, I think it is incredibly important um . . . in the

hallways during passing time. Um, I really feel like that when I am in my office that um . . . I am not making the school better.

His values of communication, being present, respect and tolerance were evident in his discussion of his ethical decision making.

### **Ethical Paradigms: Justice, Care, Critique, Community, Profession**

**Justice and critique.** As with many of the principals interviewed, there is a general understanding of the need for a common set of rules for schools and school systems. In our conversation, M1 shared with me his frustration toward laws, rules, and regulations inhibiting student need. He spoke about not understanding why as educators we do not do things differently even when we know they are not working correctly. “I mean big things that never seem really to change that you are like you know like why don’t we look at doing this differently?” An example he gave regarding changes is the need to change dismissal of staff when an issue arises causing disruption to meeting student needs. He described his frustration of the dismissal of “bad educators” and the amount of perceived protection for them. While he understood the rules behind the dismissal process, he believed an examination of these rules should take place. He did understand his role within an ethic of justice but was willing to step in an ethic of critique when he believed the rules work against students.

**Care and community.** M1 stated he was very aware of the perception of his role within his community. He felt at times his role is nothing more than watching how others perceive his actions and as he described “mitigate disasters from occurring.” While he could not think of a time when he had to make decisions

benefiting one group over another or an individual over another, he believed individual students are not getting their needs met daily. While he did not say it happened directly in his school, he hinted it was happening all over our school systems including his own.

Um . . . I can't think . . . I'm not having a specific case come forward where an individual over the needs of a larger group. Um, I don't know if I have ever had to like . . . sacrifice or been in a situation . . . I don't know where there is just one individual over the needs of a larger group. Um, but I think this type of thing happens every day with our educational system comes down to students in the classroom. I think the needs of the individuals are often sacrificed because the needs of a larger group. I think that's what happens in classroom most days.

M1 was rooted in many ethical paradigms. He did not seem to let one paradigm dominate him as other principals have done. He wrote his own rules and at times, defined his own role.

**Profession.** M1 recognized his role as much larger than the principalship he inherited 7 years ago. Like principal E3, M1 believed his role is larger than anyone can imagine. He does not define himself by one set of rules or obligations and understands a balance between what his district is demanding, what is community is demanding and what he believes needs to happen in his school.

I feel like I probably have more duress and more pressure to balance what the instructional needs are within um . . . within the school than what a traditional might have . . . might have had to have to do. Um . . . you know I also think um . . . with um . . . within this community I work in um . . . you know we have had to . . . have had to change the way we talk about serving our kids, change the mentality of we tried to serve our kids because of the diversity that has happened here especially the second language learners and things like that. Um . . . so I feel like the principalship in 2014 is a huge . . . it's like a different world compared to 2004. Like just 10 years ago.

### Case 5: M2

M2 is principal of a large middle school in her school district. Her school is in an area of her community considered to be of lower socio-economic status. Significant portion of her students are of Latino heritage. She is in her third year of her principalship. She was previously the assistant principal of this school. She is White and in her mid-50s.

Most of the principals interviewed in this research, I have worked with to some degree. M2 was the only principal I had no relationship with either personally or professionally. Our interview however was personal, direct, and insightful. From the beginning I felt M2 trusted me to tell her story.

#### **Role**

From the onset of our interview, M2 discussed her difficulty with defining her role. She had previously been the assistant principal of her school and at times felt as if she was still in her former role. She initially stated she is transitioning from her previous role to her new role leaving her with an unknown description of her current role. However, as with many of the principals she described her “official” role as defined by her school district is instructional leader. She did not rest on this definition and later referred to herself as a “Jack of All Trades” which is a role of many positions.

That’s a very interesting question and I am glad you are not sharing this with anybody. Um . . . I am . . . I feel like I am still transitioning between being a vice-principal and a principal. I feel that for a variety of reasons. Um . . . currently I am without a VP so it’s very tricky. So I see my role in many different ways. I feel like I am a counsel both to students and staff. Um . . . I

. . . uh . . . my official role I think is instructional leader as seen by the school district. Um . . . I am also supervisor, definitely manager, and uh, the thing that comes to mind is jack of all trades which really is more of a VP description to be honest with you and I feel like I still have that. And I am working to narrow the focus a little bit in my role in my job and um . . . that is really challenging because I don't have the right people around me yet.

It should be noted M2 did have a temporary assistant principal who was a retired principal at the time of this interview. The current assistant principal assigned to M2 was at the time of the interview on a short-term leave of absence. The substitute assistant principal had been a principal in the school district for 6 years prior as both a middle school and elementary principal.

There is uneasiness for many of the principals when asked to define their role and statements made regarding how their supervisors defined their role made me wonder if there was a conflict between their beliefs and their district office belief. When asked about her role as seen from the district office she was very clear she had a different perspective. She felt her role demanded her to be attentive to many needs rather than just instruction. There is clear conflict with her regarding what her district believes in and what she believes.

It can't be. Because we have other roles but I feel like um . . . the district that is our primary role and I understand why they want that to be our primary role and yet that is really challenging because you have so many other things you have to take care of.

When pressed later in the interview if other principals had their roles defined she believed they had clear role definitions. Her struggle, as she stated is "viewing myself in terms of authority is hard for me." As she addresses her morals, values and ethics

during the interview, her role became more defined and reflected more of who she is, what she believes personally, and her belief to meet the needs of all students.

### **A Belief in God**

From early in our interview M2 spoke of her connection to religion and a strong belief system. Her religious views were not developed as a child but later in her adult life. She identified herself as Christian within a Presbyterian denomination. “Well I am Christian. I am technically Presbyterian. But don’t really . . . those lines don’t matter to me. I am Christian.” Her faith is a strong piece of who she is and what she believed in as she relied on it for her strength for her moral compass. She credited her connection of her religion to her passion to help students and is willing to extend this belief to others if she felt it was safe to do so and has at times offered to pray with and for families.

I probably shouldn’t say this but there are times where I know a parent is Christian and I have offered to pray for them. We have not prayed together necessarily but I have brought that up in my conversations when I feel it is appropriate or they’ve expressed that to me. And with co-workers as well which I think . . . for me that has been really powerful.

As much as she is connected to her religious faith, she described how she follows the pieces of religion she chooses and recognizes the contradiction and confusion it may cause her. This belief is very strong and when she sees contradiction she is not afraid to question it.

So for example, people saying it isn’t ok for . . . there is a huge thing in my church right now. We have a lesbian couple that got married in my church last week and my church is up in arms. How dare anybody let that happen and these people, these women . . . wonderful women have been going to our church forever and they just finally decided they want to do this and you know.

And uh . . . it's teaching our church apart and I think who are you to judge what is right or wrong there you know what I mean? It's love and isn't it what life is all about? That's what Jesus preached. It's all about love.

As she described the situation happening in her church it was evident she was willing to question and critique others beliefs when it is clearly against what she values and believes morally.

### **Morals**

Initially M2 started our interview as stating she looked up a definition of morals online prior to our discussion. She described the definition she preferred as, “things that we learned growing up, things that we learned, perhaps from our church, things like that.” Her definition of morality and her moral belief system was not clear to her and it was not until we talked about morally when she had clearer answers. Ironically, M2 often has a clear definition but, instead of saying what she believed, she had to talk it out in order to understand it. What intrigued me the most was her lack of a clear description of her moral beliefs and it was not until she delved into morally right and wrong, that a clearer picture of who she was, morally, appeared to her.

**Morally right and wrong.** M2 started this part of our interview with a similar trepidation toward finding an answer to morally right and wrong as she did with her definition of morals. She initially explained this was a “very broad question.” She had trouble finding answers as she was looking for what she believed I might want in my interview with her rather than developing an answer from her own beliefs. She later explained, morally wrong is hurting other and imparting others beliefs on people, while morally right was the need to treat all people with respect, opportunity.

I guess it goes back to that feeling that everybody deserves an opportunity. Everybody deserves to be treated with respect . . . . it isn't fair of for people to hurt others or to judge others oppress others, based upon their own views of what's ok or not ok or you know um . . . I don't know.

M2's uneasiness to answer the question on morality was interesting as, in her role of principal, she may be placed in frequent positions to make decisions having an impact on her morals. As such, I decided to follow up with a question directly asking her to tell me who defines what is morally right and wrong. It was at this point it became apparent her belief system was firmly rooted in her faith. She described God as being the answer to morally right and wrong. Her faith had given her a strong belief in who decides morally right and wrong and the result of what would happen if either of these were violated.

Um . . . well I don't . . . this may not sound right or whatever but ultimately God does because I do believe that there's a judgment day and when all is said and done it's going to come down to did we walk the walk of you know what Jesus preached. So um, you know I think that's really what it comes down to.

I wondered at this point if her reluctance to describe her morals was in fact related to her faith and possible contradictions due to her role as a public school principal.

Would her values be reflective of her faith and if so would those be in conflict with student need or be complimentary to them?

### **Values**

As she did with morals, M2 struggled at first with a definition of values. She used an online description of values as her own definition. She described values as "things we get from a system of beliefs" as well as "fundamental beliefs."

Even though she did not have a definition for herself she talked at length about the development of her values. Her values were developed through her parents and family while growing up, as well as her church beliefs. She seemed very concerned to place values into two distinct categories, those defining or judging others to hurt and those helping or benefiting others.

When describing perceived values ultimately hurting others, she spoke at length about judging others based upon assumption and the impact this causes in schools. She described how the concept of judging others based upon their status in a school could be harmful if people in power use it to demean or degrade others.

I try to really not judge people based on own perception of things because I don't believe I have the right to judge anybody except when it comes to things like . . . well even when you don't know the whole backstory. Um . . . so I don't believe in hierarchy. It really bothers me that um . . . people based on your position for example like often times in schools the principal is like up here and the teachers are here and the classified are here and the custodial staff is here. I really work hard to not have that hierarchy even though technically I am their supervisor. I have to have difficult conversations with people. We have principals for example that might talk differently to a classified person or a teacher or something like that as a different than they would to another principal or teachers that talk down to a custodian. I just don't believe in any of that. I think everybody is equal in terms of um, due respect and all of that. You know whether you are scrubbing a floor or whether you are teaching calculus it doesn't matter. You know?

During her interview, the use of the role of principal as a source of judgment through the hierarchy it traditionally has on the other members of the school community was an area she believed to be morally wrong. Even though she showed disdain for hierarchy, she discussed her respect for people with a hierarchal role, as she believed it has a place in school settings and in the world, as she knew it. What was particularly

striking was her belief that while all people are basically equal it is their use of their hierarchal power, which could ultimately be used negatively toward people, especially those who do not share the same power.

I mean I have respect for it (hierarchy), it's not that I don't like, for example . . . since this isn't going anywhere . . . (name of supervisor) walks into my building and automatically I am like oh my gosh that is my boss . . . Do I get that? But on a person to person level, he has more authority than I do in this job but in a person to person sort of thing there's no difference there. You know what I mean? Even the President of the United States, of course I respect that person and put him on a pedestal to some degree of whatever but he still puts his pants on one leg at a time you know. He still farts at night.

Even as M2 believed hierarchy, power and judging others as values, she worked hard to avoid them in her role as principal as she strives to work toward values, which ultimately in her eyes helps all members of her community.

M2 described the values of compassion and respect as core pieces of her beliefs as a principal. She related how her own experiences as a mother have affected her compassion to help members of her school community. A striking piece to her discussion of having a value of compassion tied to her role as a mother was, equally her admission of her role as mother of a student who struggled in school. She believed this is a connection she can make with other parents who attend her school as both of them can connect on a level of need.

Having been a parent and a parent of children who struggled in school I feel like I have a real connection with families because those are the families I generally see. And um . . . and so I really have a strong sense of wanting to help parents and students anyway I can.

She saw her strong belief in compassion and respect as part of who she is as both a principal and a person. She described herself as “passionate” and at times believed

people perceive her negatively due to her passion to help others. M2 saw her passion toward helping others as a means to give voice to those who come to her school voiceless. She knows there are groups, such as her teaching staff who at times can be louder than those who need help and are without a strong voice in her school. She offered no apology for this and while she hopes there are those who understand she is not being disrespectful, she will continue to be as she described, “being an ear and hopefully trying to help kids.” M2’s morals and values of respect, compassion, and creating a voice for those who are otherwise voiceless in her school are evident in her ethical decisions.

### **Ethical Paradigms: Justice, Care, Critique, Community, Profession**

**Justice and critique.** As our interview progressed, the concept of hierarchy and power affecting the voice of others was strong. Throughout our interview, I wondered how the concept of hierarchy would be portrayed when we reached the questions on the ethical paradigms. I assumed she would have a strong ethic of critique and shy away from an ethic of justice regarding hierarchy and power. I was surprised when M2 explained the need for laws, regulations and policies directly aligned to both power and hierarchy.

M2 believed law, regulation, and policy gave equitable access to those without voice, as she believed without them those who have a “squawking parent” might get more services than those whose parents are without a voice. She also believed however, laws, regulations and policy also provide a “checks and balances” system for principals, as she believed each principal “has their own morals and values and belief

systems about education.” She saw law, policy, and regulation as tools for equity for her students however, while others have seen them as barriers for equitable access for students.

**Care.** Initially when asked about meeting the needs of an individual over the needs of a larger group, M2 could not think of an answer. For me, I found this particularly perplexing as I often found myself in this situation as a principal almost daily. I decided this question could not rest with a non-answer. At the end of our interview I returned to the question as I felt she had been giving me information related to an ethic of care throughout her interview process.

Frick (2011) described an ethic of care as “unconditional love of another especially those different than from ourselves” (p. 530). From the beginning of our interview, M2 had stated repeatedly she would make choices for individuals without a voice in her school community unconditionally. What finally came to light in our interview was the risk involved in making a decision within an ethic of care. She knows the role of principal can be a lonely occupation at times as she described, she “pays a price” for making decisions for individuals over those in a larger group as it can discredit her and her abilities with members of her school community. As she described, “So you definitely pay a price for that but ultimately it is about the kid.”

**Community.** M2 viewed many of the programs in her school benefiting targeted groups of students as programs (special education, English language learners, Talented and Gifted) ultimately benefiting all students. As principal she felt, she hears “constantly from so many people that we are focusing on those kids, why don’t we

focus on the other kids, when I truly believe that it benefits everyone.” Her own sense of making sure students who are voiceless have access to critical programs is part of her reflection of her role as principal.

**Profession.** As is evident in her interview, M2 did not follow a prescribed role of principal of her school. Like many of her colleagues, she viewed herself, as having multiple roles ultimately helping all students be successful. In her mind, the role of the principal has changed dramatically in the past 5 years. She saw its evolution from “manager and supervisor to an instructional leader.” She had not yet defined who she is in this role and as she described, she believed she is “just trying to make sure that my students are successful, my teachers are happy and the building is running smoothly.” M2 did not see herself as one type of principal but rather will continue to define herself and her role based upon the needs of her students and school community.

### **Case 6: H1**

H1’s role as principal is most likely the most unique of the eight principals interviewed. She is principal of an online school in her school district. Students attending her school reside all over the school district and are selected through a transfer process. Many of her students had at one point in their educational careers attended a traditional “brick and mortar” school, proving to be unsuccessful, and prompting them to find an alternative. Students attending the online school can start as early as second grade and complete high school with a diploma from her school without ever stepping into a traditional school setting. H1 designed, created and is the

founding principal of her online school. H2 is a White, mid to late 50s woman, who has been a teacher, school counselor and assistant principal prior to her role as principal. She has been in her school district for most of her career. Her interview was the shortest of the eight interviews. She was direct, honest and comfortable with the interview process.

### **Role**

H1 described her role as principal in a variety of terms. What was abundantly clear was her belief of the principal as a role of many forms. H1 was very cognizant of how she saw herself as principal and the role she plays. She described herself foremost as the “ultimate leader” of her school. When asked what this meant, she described this as, “being in charge of everything that has to deal with your school.” Her answers were very forthright and at times I had to follow up with questions to dig a little deeper to explain her answers. She was able to describe in greater detail what she believes the role of the school principal is for her and, also, what is expected by the school district.

We are instructional leaders within the community of a school district. We are also managerial leaders because we have to make sure we don't spend too much money and all that kind of stuff. We're uh . . . counselors, because we have to meet with families. We are community liaisons. We are marketers um . . . We are considered to be people of respect in the community. When people . . . one when they say, oh you're a teacher . . . yeah. Oh you're a principal . . . oh you've a hard job.

Unlike many of the principals interviewed, H1 made it clear her role was diverse but, in addition, wanted me to understand her role was not an easy one. Interestingly, H1 and I have known each other in different capacities within her school district for a

number of years and she was aware of my former role as a school principal. During our interview she remembered this and became more open to discuss herself and her background.

### **Morals**

Shapiro (2006) described moral leadership as demanding “a deep investment of the genuine or authentic self of the educational leader” (p. 4). After our discussion of her role as principal and she began to feel more comfortable talking with me, her beliefs in morality and the history of her morals became clear. She spoke openly of her background giving her a richness of who she was in an authentic or genuine way. Before examining her moral belief system it is important to describe her history and background growing up in the Pacific Northwest.

**History of moral development.** Before there can be a description and definition of H1’s morals it is necessary to first explore her background and moral development as it has a direct impact on her beliefs and actions taken from her moral compass.

In our interview, H1 described her childhood almost from the beginning as if she wanted me to know who she was before she could begin to answer questions on her morals. H1 described both her morals and values coming from her faith. She grew up as she described in a “Christian family” which she also described as both “conservative” and “old school.” H1 described her family as “traditional” when she spoke of her moral development. Her traditional morals and values were the result of

her limited exposure to outside cultures and ethnicities she readily acknowledged to me.

I just didn't know much. When I was growing up we had two Hispanic families in town. We didn't even have an African-American in my school. My first exposure was going to outdoor school as a sixth grader. We didn't even . . . you know . . . we didn't know about being in a place with students who were not the little White person I was . . . so . . . It's a big world.

Her experiences in a mono-cultural small town in the Pacific Northwest gave her the limited ability to acknowledge her own morals and how they might apply to others in the future. She later acknowledged and explained how her own recognition of what she believed in did not occur until an event in college which forced her not only to face her own belief system but to also make a decision based on it.

I was pretty loose but you realize as you grow up what you really believe. Like for instance, I think this is a value, moral or whatever it is . . . When I went to college my freshmen year, someone from my same high school. I hadn't given much thought to abortion at all, and then my roommate got pregnant and then she asked me for money for an abortion. I realized how strongly I felt about that and I could not give money for an abortion.

This description gave me insight into the deep reflection H1 has toward her own moral development. While her interview was concise and to the point, she was willing to discuss not only what she believed but more importantly why and the impact they have on her students.

**Moral blurring.** H1 described her morals as a deep part of her core system of beliefs. They are beliefs she believed she is born with, but also can be developed as she grows as a person. In her view, to some degree, morals can readily be defined in black and white worlds with little grey. She gave examples of moral right and wrong

as: honest, dishonest, lying, not lying, stealing and not stealing. But what was most intriguing and exceptionally revealing was her belief that morals can be blurred. In her work as a principal, she was willing to cross a moral boundary and blur lines of right and wrong if it will get her needed results to help students. She has the belief this blurring is a solution to fixing unique and individual situations rather than creating a new situation without resolution.

There's a middle ground sometimes and as long as you are not crossing the ultimate line of, hey I am lying for this kid but I feel like it's let's look at it a different way. Let's help out the situation, let's those kinds of things. Someone might call it being dishonest . . . maybe someone would call it being dishonest but I don't think it is. I think it is looking at the ultimate goal is and seeing what you can do to fix something that is broken.

While many of the principals interviewed hinted or came close to stating they would blur the lines of morality, H1 was the first to acknowledge this was an acceptable way to help students in schools.

### **Values**

While morals may be blurred for H1, her values are those things more tangible for her. She described her values as empathy and care rooted in her need to help the students who struggle the most. She called these students, “underdogs” and felt compelled under professional obligation to address their needs.

Professional values that no matter what you keep what is important to the child foremost in your brain. And there is a lot of factors that nip at you um . . . I was always an advocate for the underdog anyway.

She believed however, as did M2 did in her interview, there can be risk involved with having passion and desire to help those students whom many have given up on. In our

interview, she showed anger and some emotion regarding her willingness to fight for students at the risk of her job even if it meant going up against district hierarchy.

And as a principal now it is my professional duty and it gets me in trouble to stick up for when I believe what is best for my school and for my students. And I say that it gets me in trouble because it has.

Her willingness to open up to me in our interview and share how she experiences risks when advocating for her students, spoke strongly of her beliefs. She was passionate for her students, and her school community as a whole. As she stated succinctly,

That's a core value. People . . . caring for people is just absolutely . . . everybody who walks through my door is here for a reason. And it's very important that we sit down and talk what their needs are both the student and the family.

### **Ethical Paradigms: Justice, Care, Community, Critique, Profession**

**Justice and critique.** H1 described in her interview she believed standardized testing as morally wrong and related how laws pushing for teaching and learning around standardized testing as taking away the “love and passion for learning” which she believed was “not allowed anymore.” When asked later about laws, regulations, and policies contrasting with student need, she brought up the concept of standardized testing. She believed this was the best example of how student needs can clash with law, policy and regulation. She believed these types of testing do not represent student ability and need and often can be used negatively toward students. She was willing to take a risk due to this law but at the same time understands she was compelled to have her students take this assessment. This is a source of great concern for her as her

morals, values and ethical decision making are not reflected in the compulsory decision she must make as principal.

Everybody has to take that bloomin' test. We should have an alternate pathway. And we shouldn't be dinged because they can't. I got dinged because parents refused to bring their kids in. I had kids not graduate. All of these statistics, yes I know why they are there but it's especially . . . it's especially the SpEd kids when I watch them feel so dejected when they come in. They know they're going to bomb that test again. They have to take it anyway. When it is so important that they have to do that. I don't know . . . that's a policy. When we really need some different things.

**Care and community.** Due to the nature of her school setting with its small size, type of school population and unique instructional design, H1 did not believe she had been placed in situations benefiting one group over another or an individual over another. Her school is designed for the individual and works with families and students to meet their needs.

**Profession.** H1 saw her role as unique and because of this she did not see herself in a traditional role or a defined role as principal. She described herself as “more of a counseling principal rather than the head person.” Her leadership style was based upon a democracy and “group-think” rather than, as she as described it, as “have to lay down the heavy as much” or “pull the authority card.” When asked if this was because of her school or just the way she operates, she said with a smile, “Both. Both and then a third one: that is the nature of the beast. That we are an option program and everybody comes through the door with their thing.” H1 recognized all students have their “thing” is willing to fight for them, take a risk, and be an advocate for her students' needs.

### **Case 7: H2**

H2 has had the most experience in his role as principal than any of the eight participants. He is currently a principal of a large comprehensive high school and has been at this school since it opened 14 years ago. He has seen a dramatic shift in his school district during this time and states this change has had an effect on his school and his leadership. H2 is a White male in his late 40s to early 50s. He has been a teacher, sports coach, assistant principal and finally principal. He also is an instructor at a local college for educators seeking to become administrators in the future.

Most of the participant interviews for this research, started off with each principal wanting to talk. While there may have been some initial apprehension or questioning before the interview started, once started most let their inhibitions fall aside and this comfort lets them be open. H2 was the opposite and from the beginning when I entered his office for the interview it was clear he wanted to get done as quickly as possible. I assumed our session would be short and his answers succinct. H2 gave one of the lengthiest interviews with much description. However, it did take a number of follow up questions initially to build up trust and a working relationship.

#### **Role**

When initially asked about his role in his school, H2 answered with a very short answer of high school principal. What was unique about his answer and it would also be reflected in H2's answer, he stated not only was he a principal, but also a principal based upon a school type. Because this was different, I followed up immediately by having him define what this type of principal does. Most of the

participants at this point had launched into their primary role as instructional leader but H2 was different. The instructional leader came second after his primary role of keeping his students safe. I understood why he had spoken of safety so quickly as this is of paramount concern with principals, especially in high schools. Just days before there had been a school shooting in a neighboring state, and this was foremost on his mind. I did, however, want to approach the role of instructional leader. His focus for defining instructional leadership was ensuring the needs of his students once they had finished high school. His definition was the most detailed description from any of the principals interviewed.

So I focus on . . . when I do instructional leader is like are we providing the curriculum that will meet the students' needs. Are we looking at best teaching practices that meet the needs of the students, um . . . and are we providing beyond the regular transcripts? Can I ensure that when a student walks out the door that they have met all the state requirements and hopefully pursue a future that will meet the needs that they are looking for whether that be um in a college, a career, a trade, the military? That we are going to be able to provide opportunities for those students beyond . . . once they walk out the door. That's how I interpret that.

H2's description aligns with other secondary principals about best instructional practice but also the need to provide opportunities in their school setting beyond just a typical school experience.

For many school principals, the role is not just based upon the words used to describe it but the actions each one takes daily in their decision making. Equally important is how members of the school community perceive each of these actions. H2 explained how his values as a principal are viewed through his daily interactions

with members of his school. While he described his values, he also described his role as principal as the person who sets the vision and tone.

By how I act. Um, if I see students acting inappropriately I can change or um . . . if I have conversations with kids . . . no matter what ethnicity they are, no matter how they dress. I value the kids, listen to their perspectives. If staff members bring issues up that no matter what is said, we can have a discussion about those openly.

H2 wanted his school community to see himself as a role model for others through his actions based upon his morals, values, and ethics in his decision-making.

### **Work Ethic**

After examining the transcripts of our interview, a striking pattern quickly developed regarding the perception of H2's role as principal and he made it clear he sets the tone and culture of his school. Direction of his school and his leadership are directed through his morals and values. H2 believed this was attained through what he described as a strong "work ethic" which he described as a habit of mind he emulates for his staff. H2 stated, "Was work ethic . . . they see me here late at night. They see me working all the time." This work ethic is a matter of pride for him. He related to his parents, who were both educators, created this ethic and their experiences were a model for him.

My mom was a kindergarten and second grade teacher. My dad was a counselor, and then became an administrator. He was a principal at an alternative school that used job corp in the summer then became an elementary principal then retired as an assistant principal of an alternative school in (name of northwest city). Back in those days, the Superintendent moved principals at the elementary every 5 years.

H2's parents, as educators, had significant impact on his belief systems and helped shape his work ethic.

His experiences growing up as a working youth also gave him a strong sense of work ethic specifically his experiences working with members of the Hispanic community. This was a new experience for him as he had not been exposed to many different cultures or backgrounds growing up and it stretched his thinking toward cultures and experiences beyond his White, middle class life.

Well I think I was pretty naïve as a kid. So I think um . . . part of the things that I have learned through experience has changed some of my values. Um . . . you know I lived in a White, middle class society. But my summer experience was working with uh . . . since it was an apple orchard, we had Hispanic, we had a lot of Hispanic adults that we worked with all the time.

This insight would later give him greater knowledge when he became a principal, as he believes his views of the needs of students changed. His perspectives were myopic as a teacher and through his experiences as an administrator he saw the need for greater advocacy for his students and believes he can instill this with his staff through his work ethic.

So for me still work ethic. It's still trying to help uh . . . well it is different than when I was a teacher. The principalship has changed perspectives for me than it was when a teacher because I was focused on the kids in my classroom and trying to help them understand mathematics and now it is helping to impact more students, a variety of students.

### **Morals**

As much as H2 was aware of his work ethic and how it affects his decisions as a principal, he equally struggled with a definition of morals explaining who he was and wanted to be viewed. H2 revealed in our interview he had looked up the definition

of morals and values. He settled upon and accepted the definition of morals to be a “system of beliefs.” He later went on to describe morals from his perspective as the “big picture” which meant his system of beliefs guiding each of his actions.

In his description of morals, he described them as “right and wrong.” H2 stated, “society decides what is right and wrong and what we interpret as we group up through life.” Essentially, he was determining his own moral compass based upon the morals defined by others in society. He described his life growing up around a White, middle class background. His background had affected his beliefs in his type of leadership. He described himself as a somewhat of a rule follower based upon his belief in what is considered morally right and wrong, and even though he does not agree with all rules and laws of society, he believed they must be followed until they are changed.

H2’s goal within his moral belief system as the principal of his school was to educate all students regardless of need. However at times his own moral compass had been challenged by the societal moral norms he believed are detrimental to his school and school culture. Often these resulted in a moral conundrum as he believed society’s moral compass can be opposite of his own beliefs. As such, H2 shared an incident regarding teen pregnancy at his school he felt was a direct example of this conflict between his morals and those of society.

In our discussion, he expressed anger and disbelief over his school community and their regard toward teen pregnancy. As a parent he did not understand how this could be considered a moral norm. His moral views as a parent and principal were in

conflict as he believed it is morally wrong not only for teens to have children and forego their education but also how the community in his eyes glorifies teen pregnancy as if it were a benefit rather than a tremendous hurdle for students to access their education.

I guess what I would say on that where I struggle with in our society . . . when I talk to parents, we have teen parent program in our school. Where we have kids who have babies and they are in our school. And some parents think that this is a way to show other kids that it is glorifying kids having babies. And I am sitting here going . . . these kids need an education to help the children be successful. And so there is this battle that I am . . . I don't know if it is a battle but a conversation with a family that their morals of teenagers having kids is wrong for religious reasons or whatever that I don't want to get around have a conversation about. I want to talk; I move away from that I hear our purpose is to get students an education to help their future. I can't imagine my own self . . . I struggle my own self, having three kids with the resources I have financially. I can't imagine what a 16 year old does single having a baby can do. So I don't know if that is a morally right or wrong issue. It is for some people.

Moral situations regarding the teen pregnancy issue forced H2 to examine his beliefs, his role and his decisions as the leader of his school. For H2 this could be risky as he was not sure his morals and values were always aligned to his school community.

### **Values**

For many of the participants in this study, morals create values in turn creating actions translated into ethical decision-making. H2 discussed values as “fundamental beliefs” as directly aligned with his background. At the core of his beliefs is the value of compassion attributing directly to the work ethic and beliefs his parents shared with him as a child through their roles as educators. His compassion toward students is most evident he believed through the programs he brought into his school which are

translated as his actions. Compassion is measured through student success and H2 believed this is most evident for students who traditionally did not have access to success. “I am compassionate, that is why we have AVID, trying to help kids no matter what their backgrounds are. We want to help them be successful um...I am also trying to uh . . . I mean some compassion.” Programs cultivated at his school such as AVID (Achievement Via Individual Determination) were his indicators he uses to meet the needs of all students, especially those students who are not able to reach success without help from the systems in the school. H2 viewed his value of compassion as an evolving piece of his belief system. From his perspective as teacher, and coach, to principal of his school, the value of compassion has become less myopic through his experiences in his current role. He explained he has greater understanding of student need while also realizing the system designed to help them is equally failing.

I think I am more compassionate than I was as a coach and a teacher . . . I am trying to figure out how our system can help kids who are not able to do as much outside of the system. So how can internally our system help all kids be successful because we don't control what happens when they walk out the door.

H2's values of compassion drove his desire to help all students to meet their needs and be successful. He knew this was difficult and as he stated, “How do I help all kids here? You know that's the battle in my head constantly.” H2's value of compassion and moral development helped him create an ethical belief focused on student need.

**Ethical Paradigms: Justice, Care, Critique, Community, Profession**

**Justice and critique.** H2's role of school principal often places him in positions facing obstacles to meet student need. At times in our interview, H2 had described himself as a rule follower and it would seem from some of his answers he follows an ethic of justice. He is obligated as school principal to follow specific laws, policies and regulations. Yet, as much as his decisions may appear to be in an ethic of justice, H2 was comfortable critiquing laws, policies, and regulation because as he strongly believed there were many obstacles actually standing in the way for student success. When confronted with little resources in his own school and policies preventing students from being successful, H2 was willing to not only critique policies but will bend them in order to get what he needed for students. He talked at length about a situation where student need, policies and lack of resources clashed. He was willing to analyze, use and break the system in order to get what he needed for the student. However, this is disturbing to him as he believes the system is failing to help all students.

That's what I struggle with based upon the recommendations and the parents are looking for guidance. Looking for help and we don't have the resources in this system . . . Now that is where I struggle. We are not meeting that students needs here in a large system.

**Care and community.** Throughout our interview, it was clear H2 did not follow one ethical paradigm but many, and at times would demonstrate more than one in order to get what he needed for students to be successful at his school. He described two situations either benefiting an individual student and members of the school

community. The situation regarding this individual clearly showed H2 was willing to meet the needs over an individual over the needs of a larger group in this situation were the adults in his school. He described the needs of a student accepted on a transfer to his school who later had behavioral challenges prompting his staff to pressure him to send the student back to their original school. His actions directly spoke to the value of compassion of helping this student. He described the situation with his staff regarding this student.

Why don't we just send them back to (name of another high school in the district)? Well we can at the end of the year but we are sticking with it. We accepted this student, we are going to work with this student the rest of the year and it's causing a lot of work for us. But let's see how it's going to work throughout the year and if it's not going to work the student may be better off going back to (name of another high school in the district) or whatever school. But we made the commitment for this family and this student for the year.

H2 is equally willing to work with members of his community to ensure groups who do not have a voice have equitable opportunities by listening to their needs and making changes to ensure success. He described a situation with his freshmen classes in Language Arts in which students were being denied because of their ethnicity rather than actual ability. He rectified this situation by meeting with students and listened to their needs. He was able to make these classes available through changes in the process to enroll in them through a lens of equity rather than a blanket policy. It is this action of listening and creating equitable outcomes for students in need allowing H2 to function in both an ethic of care and an ethic of community.

**Profession.** H2 was aware he is not a traditional principal and struggled with a singular definition of what a principal is, what it should be and who determines the role. As with other principals, he knew his role is different today than it was many years ago when principals were more manager than instruction based. He knew his school district wants him to be in classrooms more and not attend to the side of school requiring him to make sure systems, such as the cleanliness of the school are maintained. He recalled the principals he grew up watching and was aware of their role as being more manger based than instruction. As he stated, a key difference between himself and his counter parts of the past is his immediate focus on instruction. “So when I look at the old role of the principal. They weren’t in classrooms as much as the new role at least at the high school level . . . I mean look at my principal when I was a kid. I never saw the principal.” H2’s role was defined by his ability to switch multiple paradigms when meeting the needs of student success. He was not afraid to break or bend the rules in order to get the tools to students. His morals based upon his strong work ethic and his values of compassion drove him to use multiple paradigms to identify who he is as principal of his school and how this will be seen within his actions.

### **Case 8: H3**

H3 is a principal of a large comprehensive high school in his school district. He has been in this position for the past 4 years and was an elementary teacher, football coach, middle school principal and high school principal in a small rural town

in the Pacific Northwest. He is White male in his late 50s to early 60s. Our interview was held in his office after school at his choosing.

While I was setting up for our interview, H3 stepped out to attend to some school business and I was able to look around his office. I have been in H3's office a number of times prior to our interview, but never had an opportunity to notice the items he had displayed. All over his office were quotes with Christian biblical scripture references. They were self-affirming quotes such as, "Losing and attaining your goal, that's successful. Winning and not attaining your goal is not successful," "Potential doesn't mean much if you don't put in the mental and physical work that is required to fill it." These quotes could be described as a preview to my interview with H3. Of all the principals interviewed he was the most confident in his discussion of who he was as a person, a principal and how they are connected.

### **A Defined and Confident Role**

From the beginning of our interview, H3 exhibited a level of confidence I had not seen in the other principals. When asked about his role, H3 described himself as "Principal of (name of high school) and uh . . . that's a leadership role." By stating his role was leader, he clearly let me know he was in charge of his school. I asked him to define his role from his perspective at which H3 explained his definition within three distinct roles he believed were essential to a principal: managerial, instructional, tone and culture. His explanation of these was thorough and gave me the impression he followed exactly what he said they were.

Well I think there is three main parts to being principal. One, there is the management, which is operations and the normal management, the legal things that you have to do to keep school going. Then there's instructional leadership, where the school looks to me to lead the um . . . instructional end of the school, whether it's designating other people, including but also an instructional leader. And then also I think would be the other all leader that sets the tone and culture of the building. Management, leadership and instructional leadership.

Within his definition of his role there was indication H2 was not entirely comfortable with one of the roles he sees for the principal. The role of instructional leader was the only designation he stated he is willing to delegate. I followed up with a question specifically to see what he believed the role of the instructional leader might be. From the beginning of his answer he stated he was a collaborative leader with his school. H3 believed his role was to identify those with instructional leadership strength and promote this leadership. "And so really it is my role I think to put the best in front of what we do. We collaborate as far as what our plan is but who decides instructional leadership comes down to the talent of the team." While H3 was willing to delegate leadership in areas which are not his strength, as our interview continued it was clear and apparent he was the leader, setting the tone and culture, and managing through his personal morals, values and ethical decisions.

### **Morals**

Moral development, as defined from H3 is very black and white. He saw decisions made within morals as part of his "moral compass." As I sat and listened to his definition of morals, I looked at the "sayings" scattered around his office and could see how he viewed morals. H3 saw all morals as a standard for defining the difference

between right and wrong which was also a determinate to set a standard of how people should act.

It stands for the morality of an issue for me is the difference for me between right and wrong and what's best for people . . . Being morally correct doesn't mean you have high values. It just means you understand the difference between . . . that's how I would define it. The difference between right and wrong, the moral compass.

H3 stood strong on his belief that morals are the very essence of right and wrong and a standard for who people should act in society. This response made me wonder who ultimately defines right and wrong in his eyes. If he defines it, does his definition of right and wrong define his role as principal? I followed up by questioning him on who defines moral right and wrong.

When asked to define right and wrong, H3 firmly believed society plays a strong role in defining how and why society should act. Interestingly, as H3 explained why society defined morally right and wrong, he began to talk about his own sense of morality. This took an interesting turn as not only did he believe he had a good sense of morality but used the word "heightened" indicating he had greater awareness of what was morally right and wrong over society.

Well I think each individual does but first of all society does. We have . . . we can all agree on a lot of things to guide us. The legal issues, then how we treat each other. Very little disagreement in that but I think in as far as in the morals then . . . uh my . . . I might have a heightened sense of morality in certain issues such as . . . this is where I get outraged . . . um . . . people who can't defend themselves or there's even a heightened sense of morality or right and wrong with those who are less fortunate or need more help. So I think that society decides really or just our common law goes all the way back to Hammurabi's code to the Magna Carta to um . . . our Constitution. We define morality . . . right or wrong there and then our individual morality also supports that or heightens it.

H3's belief to steer himself down a morally right path required him to look at himself and define himself. He explained when he does something right or wrong he can feel it as he has had enough experiences to guide him rather than wait for somebody else to guide him.

I think by now at this age . . . that I have clearly defined what is right and wrong for me. It's biblical. It's societal. So I know when I am out of aligned. I know when I can feel it in my chest. I mean I can just um . . . If I feel I am stepping outside of some boundaries or lines I just you know . . . I guess your radar just goes off. But I don't really struggle as much as just knowing yourself. Knowing what's right and wrong.

As we discussed his morals, I anticipated H3 would have a strong belief system based upon his values. My assumption was proven correct as H3 had a strong belief system from his morals, leading to his values and ethical decision making process.

### **Values**

In H3's eyes, morals create values, in turn, helping create actions in his role as principal. His values are his guide, as he believed they were what each person believed intrinsically. "Values are the intrinsic core of who we are and what we believe in what actually guides us." H3 stated his values came from his upbringing with a large family. H3 grew up in a family of seven brothers and sisters plus his parents. However, while H3 made a point of telling me he "had good parents" he also made a clear point to explain his father left his family when he was 15 years old. This event in his life forced him to change his role in his family dynamic, as he was the oldest of his siblings. He felt obligated to assume the role of father figure throughout his high school years to help his siblings and mother. His mother ultimately became his role

model as she assumed the other half of leadership for his family. His expectation to help his family and his mother's new role as head of family developed his value of servant leadership, which he believed he later incorporated into his role as principal. His mother had a significant role into his learning to develop a value of servant leadership. Her belief in helping others was a significant development.

But I think sticking up for those who are less fortunate was a value for me. Serving other people seeking to help others as opposed to what's in it for you. That was my mom; she was a servant leader by example. She also taught us that you know, those who have been given much, much is expected. She always wanted us to give back to others, to community, to put others ahead of ourselves.

The role of servant leader has been a theme within the interviews of the principals and for H3 had become a value he had developed over time. This value was not one he had been able to understand when younger but gradually became clearer for him as he became older and had more experiences.

I think I still have the same values are still with me but I think that looking at servant leadership. What's . . . that's been a bigger one for me then even at a younger age. I didn't quite understand that until I was older. But putting other's before you and representing people that don't get a chance to represent themselves. So I think servant leadership would be a big one.

H3's values of servant leadership also assisted him to develop values to help his teachers, parents, and students of his school community gain greater capacity to meet student needs.

Servant leadership through H3's lens of values helped him with the ability to develop skills to give his staff greater capacity to help meet student need. H3 saw the value of giving others in his school community the ability to have voice and a place to

be heard in times of need. Through this process, H3 believed he was building capacity in his staff to help them have greater ability to think through problems and develop the skills to address needs on their own. Through open discussion facilitated by giving his staff the ability to speak plainly and truthfully about concerns he believed he built capacity in each of them. He welcomed debate as he saw this as a way for others to work through issues put before them.

I think that there is much more openness if we just openly say what was on our mind. Not judging the other person but just getting good academic discussions and debates. But I think sometimes if you have a contrary view you're seen not on board or a part of the group or you're you know . . . not against the mission of the school when I think those are the most important discussions we can have.

H3 believed this value of openness and discussion lead to building trust within his teachers. This openness while important to help build trust also allowed those members of his community who may not agree with him the ability to show their disagreement in a respectful and meaningful way. This value is a key part of his beliefs. It allowed him to present as respectful, truthful, and as he described, "I want to be a genuine person as a principal."

### **Ethical Paradigms: Justice, Care, Critique, Community, Profession**

Through his strong and confident moral development of right and wrong creating his values of servant leadership, listening and openness, H3 has developed ethical decision making within the paradigms of Justice/Critique, Care, Community and Profession.

**Justice and critique.** As with many of the principals interviewed, H3 did not make decisions within one ethical paradigm. He was able to make decisions using skills he has learned within each. Within the ethic of justice, principals often are faced with laws, regulations and policies conflicting with actual student need (Gross & Shapiro, 2004). H3 believed he confronted this daily. He described a situation in which a policy requiring a specific course and curriculum to be taught was expected but he was not given the amount of necessary teaching staff to ensure his school could comply as well as meet student need for students who are struggling. H3 was able to manipulate the policy to gain greater control of his staffing to help students.

And so I agree with the project, it's value and what it is doing but we . . . we don't have enough teachers right now, so it's um . . . I have this policy that I have to follow so . . . But I was able to get six periods of language arts and reduce class sizes which helped children. But um . . . I agree with the project but it really went with a whole philosophy that I really feel is hard to do right now.

**Care.** As H3's interview progressed it was clear, H3 was comfortable making decisions from an ethic of care. As he described his core value of servant leadership, it was clear he would be able to make decisions from the ethical paradigm of care. H3 described an example of a decision he made for two students over the needs of his staff. The students as he described were a behavioral concern for staff feeling threatened by their acts of defiance and presence at school. H3 listened to his staff concerns but as he found out the students history and trauma they were going through he decided to act in their behalf rather than the needs of his staff. The risk involved from this decision was based upon how his staff would view his decision. He was able

to help them and help his staff understand the student need. This was particularly evident when H3 described the student situation.

But um . . . I think that those two kids had been beat up so much in life that this was just another . . . you know they really weren't too far out of bounds and for them they weren't doing anything really bad. And all of a sudden it escalated really quickly. Well I brought them in and brought in the parents in but I didn't suspend them which created are you going to back up the staff?

**Community.** H3's example to the question regarding an ethic of community was a strong indication of leading within an ethic of community. His leading statements prior to his example gave strong indication he understood the ethic of community and equally was able to make decisions within this paradigm. H3 believed he was placed in this position when in his role he made decisions with the master schedule for student classes. "Every time we do a master schedule we have to make value decisions. Where you put your FTE becomes a value decision that benefits one over the other." He later explained he made decisions as a principal giving students who were struggling in their core content classes the ability to make up classes and course work rather than give staffing toward advanced placement classes. He described a parent coming to him and asking for explanation as to why the "best and brightest" were not given more staffing.

We had a parent just yesterday and this is extreme it was like are you kidding me. Arguing that we need to get kids out of these AP classes that don't belong there. That it should be for the brightest and best and we should have smaller classes because these are the kids who are going to run the country. We need to start investing in them more. Well that's that would be one very extreme view but it just happened yesterday and we were just choking on . . . choking it down a little bit. We actually said we should teach all the children. But those are value decisions.

**Profession.** H3 saw himself as a confident leader with morals and values developed through his own experiences personally and professionally. His values of servant leadership were the core of who he is and how he defined his role. He did not see himself as a traditional principal. The traditional principal in his eyes are the roles presented in university course work toward administrative licensure. This role is not what he believes he was as principal of his school. Rather he saw himself growing into a greater role as societal rules change. The example he gave related to this belief was his interaction with parents and a transgender student. This was a new experience for him, as he has not worked with students of this nature. He also described his direct intervention to help students get on a lunch plan to ensure they were getting food in their day. While traditionally he felt these were not a principal's role, through his value of servant leadership, he felt not only it was part of his role; however, he made sure he was an active participant in it. These situations were, as he believed, now a part of the principal's role.

I just think those are the things that have taken more resources and time than what was traditionally years ago the role of the principal. I think they are the role of the principal now. I mean, traditional role would be . . . when I went to college they didn't teach any of this.

### **Conclusion**

Each principal who walks through the door of a school brings with them a set of morals and values contributing to ethical decisions affecting their school. Each of the eight principals interviewed, even though having similar training and education, showed different beliefs in their morals and values. It is clear in these eight cases, the

unique backgrounds and experiences principals have in their moral and value development directly impacted their leadership style, decisions and culture of their schools. Individual experiences such as work ethic, newly acknowledged sexual identity, and adoption to name a few have shaped each of these people. I am very grateful to hear their stories and show how they are uniquely different in many ways.

In the next chapter, I address some commonalities and themes between the principals within their morals, values and ethics within a cross-case analysis. In addition, I present final conclusions on my research questions, final thoughts and give recommendations for future work in this area.

CHAPTER V  
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSION

**Introduction**

In the proceeding chapter, eight individual cases from school principals were presented regarding their personal views, definitions and identification of their individual morals, values and ethics. Chapter 5 consists of a summary of the study, discussion of the findings including a cross-case analysis, recommendations for future study, final thoughts, and conclusion. This chapter begins with a summary of the purpose and design of the study and continues with a discussion of the findings of the study as related to morals, values and ethics within their decision-making presented through Grounded Theory. Conclusions from the findings are created through analysis of the data from the eight interviews and themes pulled from existing literature on morals, values and ethics. Finally, implications and recommendations for future study are presented and discussed. The purpose of the discussion section is to provide a continued analysis of the eight individual cases through a cross-case analysis to identify themes and patterns of similarity in their morals, values and ethics as well as gain further understanding of the individual eight school principals. I present recommendations for future study focusing on the reflection practices on the decision-making of different types of principals and their role within their schools as well as the hiring practices of school principals and the use of morals, values and ethics in the

hiring process. Finally, I provide final thoughts and conclusions regarding the study of morals, values and ethics and the school principal.

### **Summary of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine how principals define their ethical philosophies through their definition of their role as principal. This study also explored the effect their morals and values had on their role by examining that relationship utilizing themes from current research literature. The study also examined the differences in personal morals and values each principal brought with them into their role as principal ultimately affecting their decision-making within the ethical paradigms of justice, care, critique, community, and profession.

Initially nine principals were interviewed for the study with eight choosing to participate. One principal initially interviewed but later chose to decline participation due to a professional conflict. Principals were interviewed using 16 questions pulled from research literature on morals, values and ethics (Eyal et al., 2011; Frick, 2011; Furman, 2012; Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012; Langlois & Lapointe, 2007; Shapiro, 2006; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011; Vokey, 2005). Principals were asked to define the role of principal from both a professional and personal definition to identify their ethical philosophy as well identify if the role of principal has evolved. Each interview question was designed to gather information on how principals perceive their own morals and values personally and professionally as well as identify their origin. Each interview was recorded, transcribed and coded by the

researcher. Coding was done in three stages: Initial (open), Focused, and Theoretical (Charmaz, 2012).

Participants were interviewed individually over a 3-month period. Each interview was held at a location of their choice and recorded. Participant principals answered the original 16 questions including follow up questions orally with interviews lasting from 30 minutes to over an hour. The study included eight participants (three elementary principals, two middle school principals, and three high school principals). All eight participants are current school principals and work within the same school district. A demographic break down was taken into consideration by gender, ethnicity, approximate age and number of years of experience in the role as a school principal.

The study included three research questions:

1. How do principals in a suburban Northwest school district in the United States define their ethical philosophies within the role of the school principal?
2. What role, if any, do their personal morals and values affect their ethical philosophies and how are these morals and values reflected in their decision-making process?
3. How are the ethical paradigms of Care, Justice, Community, Critique, and Profession as defined by Vokey (2005), Shapiro (2006), Langlois and Lapointe (2007), Eyal et al. (2011), Frick (2011), Furman (2012), Garrett-Staib and Maninger (2012), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), and Shapiro and Gross (2013), reflected, if at all, within their decision-making process?

Question one was answered from questions regarding how principals define their role as well as from data gathered from their answers to their own morals, values and ethics. Question two was answered from data gathered from their answers to how

principals define their own morals personally and professionally, values personally and professionally as well as follow up questions regarding how they would define morally right and wrong. Answers to questions regarding decisions within the five ethical paradigms answered question three.

In the next section, I discuss the outcomes of the interviews as linked to literature on morals, values, and ethics as well present a cross-case analysis of the eight participants to show themes and similarities.

### **Discussion**

As discussed in chapter 2, there has been copious research done on morals, values and ethics (Eyal et al., 2011; Frick, 2011; Furman, 2012; Garrett-Staib & Maninger, 2012; Langlois & Lapointe, 2007; Shapiro, 2006; Shapiro & Gross, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011; Vokey, 2005). The research presented in this study is designed to expand upon the current research and show how each principal has an individual belief system of morals, values and ethics affecting their decisions in their schools, ultimately defining their ethical philosophies. This section discusses the findings as related to the three research questions.

#### **Research Question One**

How do principals in a suburban Northwest school district in the United States define their ethical philosophies within the role of the school principal?

Garrett-Staib and Maninger (2012) described the ethical virtue of school leadership as, “the way we see ourselves as well as the way we see others-culminating in our relation to others” (p. 25). Frick (2011) stated principals “possess a great deal of

power in determining students best interests and that is incumbent upon school leaders to make ethical decisions that reflect the needs of the student and not their own” (p. 530). Ethical philosophies of principals are defined by their role, beliefs, decisions and ultimately their course of action. While each principal had a different view of their ethical philosophy, many of the principals shared similar traits on how they identify their role resulting in their ethical philosophy of their role as principal.

**Cross-case analysis of the role of the school principal.** Each participant principal was asked to identify and define their role as school principal with the intent to see how principals viewed themselves and their immediate beliefs within their role. Many of the principals overwhelmingly defined their philosophies through their role identity in two categories: Supervisor/Manager and Instructional Leader.

**Supervisor/manager.** The role of manager, for many of the principals, was more aligned to their core beliefs of themselves and in education. Each one in some capacity either started their identification with this role or felt greater comfort discussing it than any other role definition. Each of the principals except M1 and H2, used the terms “supervisor or manager” in some capacity to describe their role and ethical philosophy. E1, for example, defined the role of principal as, “A supervisor. I would say is more of a technicality for teacher performance.” E1 believed his role as maintaining teacher performance effectiveness as a supervisor. M2 clearly identified herself as a supervisor, as she saw herself as not only in this role but also as the role of manager. M2 stated, “I am also a supervisor, definitely a manager.” H3 goes further than a managerial role, and defined his role as “Management, which is operations and

the normal management, the legal things that you have to do to keep school going.”

These examples demonstrate how each principal believed their role constitutes a need to maintain a managerial or supervisory role in their school.

While M1 and H2 may not have used the terms supervisor or manager, they often described situations in which they defined their role as such. M1 defined himself through the lens of his school parents, who want him to make sure “their children are you know . . . safe.” He views safety, a significant part of a managerial role, as a primary component of his role as principal. H2 is similar in his definition of his role as needing to provide safety and goes as far as prioritizing this need: “I would say we need to have a safe learning environment for our students . . .” A management or supervisory role as defined by each of the principals is a cornerstone of their philosophy. They identify with this role because of the need to maintain a sense of order in their school as they feel this is the best way to reach the needs of students.

**Instructional leader.** As stated in chapter 2, increased educational accountability in the past decade regarding teacher performance has become a greater role in how principals define themselves (Starratt, 2005). Each participant principal primarily identified themselves through their definition of the role of principal as a manager and supervisor. However, many of them also identified themselves in the role of instructional leader. This was a role they expressed a level of discomfort and often felt as if this was a role not necessarily of their choosing. Every principal leader at some point in their interview discussed themselves as an instructional leader but felt their district office rather than they defined this role. M1 described his role as a district

defined instructional leader rather than having ownership of this role. “My role in my school is to um . . . be um . . . the instructional leader. Making sure that all kids are um . . . showing growth and achieving. I think that role is probably the most often defined by the district office.” Definitions such as M2’s district defined role of instructional leader speak to the increased pressure principals feel from a greater push in accountability toward student achievement and teacher performance. There is increased pressure for principals to define themselves from an accountability lens rather than a more traditional managerial or supervisory lens (Shapiro, 2006).

**Reflection on decision-making.** The data collected from the interviews in this study pointed clearly to principals defining their ethical role as more managerial and supervisory. This was also confirmed when principal were asked on their process of reflection and willingness to change a decision they had made. Overwhelmingly, many of the participant principals explained they reflected on their decisions, especially in difficult situations. Some principals were willing to reflect on their decisions, but would not change them, because doing so would require the principal to violate a rule or a policy. E2 for example talked about a mandated reading program in his district. Even though he knew it was having a detrimental effect on his students, he did not make changes to his decision to continue with the implementation.

It was the first time I had experienced that . . . of kids decoding . . . but not really reading. So I was really worried about that piece. I thought we were spending too much time doing that. But that’s the time I was a rule follower and I didn’t think we had a lot of flexibility at that time in the district.

Some principals were willing to make changes after they reflected on their decision, but only due to the hastiness in which they made the original decision and also upon reflecting whom it benefited. Principals reported they would reverse their decision after they reflected and got feedback from those whom it affected negatively, which in the case of H2 were members of the school staff. H2 talked about making decisions quickly and later reversing them when staff either pressured him or brought him additional information.

I've done that in the past but it's always something that I either didn't have all the information or I made it too quickly. Um . . . because I was thinking it was a gut decision and I come back and I talk to a few people. I had to go back and say you were right or not necessarily you were right.

As Barnett (1990) explained, reflection gives leaders the ability to determine appropriate decisions for their students. While principals are aware of the greater pressure to have student performance accountability, teacher instructional accountability, and school performance reporting, each of principals had a distinct underpinning of an ethical philosophy of managing their schools and roles rather than focusing directly on student needs. Branson (2007) explained, principals who look at their personal beliefs through deep reflection, have greater awareness to effect ethical decision-making for students. Their philosophical role definition and their lack of deep reflection on decisions and ask themselves why a change in decision-making would be necessary, suggests these participants may not have yet developed a definitive ethical philosophy of their role to address the needs of all students.

## **Research Question Two**

What role, if any, do their personal morals and values affect their ethical philosophies and how are these morals and values reflected in their decision-making process?

As stated in chapter 4, this research study is not about determining the collective morals and values of school principals and explaining their similarities and differences within the role of school principal. Instead, it is about the individuals and each of the individual values and morals they bring to their school daily when making decisions for their school community. While I anticipated there would be crossover in morals and values, I was not sure how many communal and/or individual values and morals would be communicated during our interviews. Each principal described a vast array of morals and values during our interviews with very little similarity. In this section I compare and contrast their responses through a cross-case analysis of their morals and values and the impact on their decision-making process.

**Morals.** During the eight interviews, each principal described a plethora of morals developed over the course of their lifetime. While there are some moral similarities, there is very little common moral language between each of the participants. Vokey (2005) described moral language, “as the language that members of a pluralistic society with different moralities agree to use to discuss public issues” (p. 127). Principals had moral language similarities in the following areas: morals as right and wrong, reflections on decisions and the impact of others is morally right, hurting others as morally wrong.

**Right and wrong.** Many of the principals defined morality as the concept of right and wrong, however each had a different version of what this meant. E3 defined morals as right and wrong, but this definition is based upon the reaction and feelings of others. E3 believed morality as a blurred line based upon how others perceive her morals.

There are a lot of considerations when deciding what is morally right and wrong personally. Um . . . definitely having to consider the persons feelings, response, how the message is perceived. I think anything that hurts someone physically or emotionally is wrong. Anything that provides a step to success is right. But I also think it is the end result that is . . . that defines morally right and wrong because you might take . . . the process maybe hard, you may take some wrong steps in the process but in the end, results could be much different than your original step.

M1 also showed a level of blurring when defining morals as right and wrong. He was not able to define what it meant to be right. His blunt statement was a clear example of how each principal's knowledge on morally right and wrong is not only blurred but also different depending on the individual. "I guess morality you know means that you are acting in a way where you are going to um . . . do what's right . . . um . . . whatever that means." H3 also believed morals are the definition of right and wrong, but his view is not as blurred as he believed morals give direction to people through a common moral ground. "I think morals for me would be right and wrong. It stands for the morality of an issue. For me it is the difference for me between right and wrong and what's best for people." While many of the principals believe morals are the definition of right and wrong, only a small number considered the impact on the decisions each of them make daily toward members of the school community.

**Reflections on decisions and the impact on others.** A common theme between principals was the reflection of the impact on decisions. For some principals, there was a moral imperative to reflect upon their decision-making to address the impact they had on members of their school community. E3 had a strong opinion regarding the impact of her decisions within her school community. “I believe it’s morally wrong making a decision to not consider the impact that it has on the parties involved.” M2 mirrored the moral definition of the impact of E3. M2’s answer was more specific, as she focused on children rather than on her whole school community. “I mean it has to come, we are here for kids and  
Um . . . I think sometimes we forget the impact that we have on the people, the children that we serve.” E2 believed his reflection of his decisions is not only to prevent hurting others, but also to make sure his decisions can be made to be helpful as well.

If you have an opportunity to affect a situation and you can either do something that would be helpful to someone or something that would be hurtful to someone, than it’s the morally right course would be to do something that is helpful to them.

An interesting position was formulated within the analysis of this data. While a few principals stated they considered the impact of their decisions and considered it morally wrong to not do so, when asked about reflecting on their decisions and making changes due to the impact on them, many were reluctant to do so.

**Morally wrong to hurt others.** Five out of the eight principals interviewed believed it was morally wrong to hurt others. This was a common theme between

many of the principals. E2 believed knowing actions could hurt others and not anticipating the impact was morally wrong. “But something that you know something that deliberately hurts somebody else . . . um . . . is morally wrong and you can sort of anticipate what is going to happen um . . . something that is very simple.” M2 believed morally wrong was very a “black and white” situation. She gave examples of what she believes are examples of hurting others.

So if you are hurting someone you know what I mean? Or something? Things like, I think of about um . . . you hear about people who are . . . that are . . . hurting animals or domestic violence or you know whatever it is or like that guy that left his little kid in the backseat of the care and let him die. Those things are just black and White. You are hurting somebody else.

H3 believed it is morally wrong to hurt others closest to him. He believed this is a strong point of his moral compass to be aware of the morality of doing harm.

And wrong personally, it comes . . . I don’t know . . . down to people you can harm, the people that trust you the most. Your children and your wife . . . uh . . . I think I value those relationships so much I wouldn’t make a move or do something that would jeopardize those relationships.

Each Principal had a different development of morals. It was clear they were not universal and while there were some similarities between each of them, it was also clear they had different morals they brought to their role as principal.

**Differences in morals.** Table 2 represents the 36 different morals principals talked about during our interviews and who specifically discussed them.

Table 2

*Identified Morals*

Type of Morals:	Discussed by:
Standard of Behavior	E1, M1, H2
Acceptable vs. Not Acceptable	E1
Morality as defined by church	E1, M2, H1, H3
Midwestern morals	E1
Sexual Orientation	E1
Family Determined	E1
Morally Right to be Kind	E1
Morally Right to be Respectful	E1
Morally Right to be Professional	E1
Morals Aligned to School	E1
Morally wrong to Lie	E1, H1
Right vs. Wrong	E2, E3, M1, H2, H3
People Defined	E2
Common Morals in Society	E2, H2, H3
Reflection on Decisions and Impact on Others	E2, E3, M2, H3
Support Those Who Can't Support Themselves	E2, H3
Common Good Over Individual	E2
Morally Wrong to Hurt Others	E2, E3, M1, M2, H3
Defines Self Morals	E3, H3
Morals Evolve	E3, H1
Morals Shaped by Others Reaction	E3
Morally Right Creates Step to Success	E3
Morals May be Blurred	E3, H1
Different Approaches to Morally Right	E3
Morally Right can be Uncomfortable	E3
Inappropriate vs. Appropriate	E3
Morals Defined by Experiences	E3
Definition of Morals from a Source Other than the Individual	M1, M2, H2
Discrimination is Morally Wrong	M1, M2, H2
Towing the Company Line is Morally Wrong	M1, M2
Lack of Resources is Morally Wrong	M1,
Morals Defined By Growing Up	M2, H1
Personal Bias Comes From Morals	M2
Morals Create Values	M2
Morals Are What You Are Born With	M2, H1
Family Values	H1

Shapiro (2006) stated, “Moral leadership, therefore, is broader than traditional school management. It demands a deep investment of the genuine or authentic self of

the educational leader” (p. 4). Each principal brings into their school an individual sense of morality and moral development. While there are similar themes, it is distinctively clear principals do not share common moral language within themselves as a group. As each has a different set of morals, values for principals were equally as diverse with little commonality.

**Values.** Begley and Johansson (2008) stated, “values are concepts that motivate individuals to act in particular ways” (p. 421). Begley and Johansson did not state the individuality of each of the morals principals use and enter their school with daily. Similar to morals, I was anticipating a certain level of individuality of the values. What surprised me the most were the amount of individuality and the lack of commonality between the eight principals. Frick (2011) stated the school leader “manages multiple value claims while simultaneously providing value-based, strategic leadership” (p. 533). While I agree with Frick to some degree, I wondered how each principal could bring “value-based, strategic leadership” to their school when not having a common value-based language amongst them or possibly with their school or school district.

Principals in the eight interviews showed a similar pattern of diversity regarding their values as they did with their morals. In fact, with values, there was greater diversity because values, as Gill (2003) stated “are principles held dear in peoples hearts by which they live (and sometimes die)” (p. 312). During the course of our interviews, principals expressed 38 distinct value sets with little similarity as a group. In the next section, I show the similarities between values amongst the

principals in a cross-case analysis, focusing on three key value sets showing some similarity between them. The three values sets are: value of helping and caring, value of transparency, and value of seeing different perspectives.

**Value of helping and caring.** Most of the principals interviewed discussed the value of helping and caring of others in either an explicit or implicit way. Each believed at some level helping others was a core tenet of what they were supposed to do as principals. Some principals discussed this openly as a major component of their beliefs and value system, while others were more subtle about this value using a descriptions of programs brought into their school as an example of caring. Principals used the words, “caring for others,” “making it better,” “helping others,” “compassion,” to describe their value systems of helping and caring.

Yet, while there were similarities to their values of helping and caring each had a different version of this value. E3 believed helping students came from her need to help teachers understand their students in order to help them with greater clarity.

Um . . . I still you know in my personal life, I’ve always valued helping other people. I’ve always thought that was important and so in my professional life um . . . I try to do that as much as possible helping to connect teachers to resources, helping teachers connect to each other, um . . . getting them the things that they need to do their job.

From a different perspective, H1 believed her value of helping and caring is to directly answer and care for all students and families who come to her school. This value is part of her core belief system.

Uh-huh . . . That’s a core value. People . . . caring for people is just absolutely . . . everybody who walks through my door is here for a reason. And it’s very

important that we sit down and talk about what their needs are both the student and the family.

Not all the principals were explicit in their explanations of a value of helping and caring. H2 saw this value as compassion. He also believed this was evident through programming he brought into his schools to help all students. “I am compassionate, that is why we have AVID, trying to help kids no matter what their backgrounds are. We want to help them be successful um . . . I am also trying to . . . uh . . . I mean some compassion.” The value of helping and caring was a commonality within many of the principals. This value was visible in our interviews. It leads to a greater understanding of the value of transparency, which was also a strong belief of many of the principals.

**Value of transparency.** While many of the principals discussed a value of transparency none used the term explicitly. Instead, principals discussed this value in different forms and meanings to define transparency as a value set. For example, E1 discussed the value of transparency within a value of responsibility. He believed it was necessary for him to be “open” in order to demonstrate his value of responsibility. “I would say one of the biggest for me is responsibility. Um responsibility is a big one . . . to family. Um and to others. Kind of always being open and um . . . I guess I’ve been . . . I like to think of myself as a helper.”

E2 had a different perspective regarding a value of transparency. He believed this value was demonstrated through his actions with his teachers and students.

It really hit me hard was that I think I am really consistent with my belief how to treat children and how to treat adults. Um . . . I think there are people, the adults who believe there are two different systems in operation. Some of the adults, some of the teachers that I work with for instance, they . . . some of

them are consistent too and they're not all that kind in the ways they talk with other adults, and they certainly aren't with kids but some people feel that there's one set of principles operating when you teach, when you work with adults and your colleagues and another set operating when you deal with children. It just occurred to me this year that I don't have that difference in designation. I feel the same way whether I am dealing with adults or kids.

This value of transparency was demonstrated within his need to make sure he did not differentiate between how he would treat adults and children. H3 had a dissimilar value of transparency as demonstrated through the value of honest conversation. H3 believed in a dialogue resulting in honest and truthful conversation. He spoke of his disdain for politics and would rather have open conversations leading to transparency of thought.

I would rather sit down and just have the truth spoken at the table. I respect that. Um I think the politics of school is . . . I just really have no patience for . . . it's like the art of moving in and out, making sure you are politically correct in your answers and things. I think that there is much more openness if we just openly say what was on our mind.

For many of the principals, the value of transparency was a key component to their decision-making process as demonstrated through their willingness to have open dialogue, similar treatment of all members of the school community and a declaration of openness.

**Value of seeing different perspectives.** Hughes and Jones (2010) stated, “ideally values reflect the attitudes and beliefs of the school community” (p. 53). However, as is often the case in schools, members of the school community may not share the same level of values of each other and other members of their community. A strong value many of the principals in this study shared was an understanding of the

difference many members of their school community had regarding values. Many of the principals expressed a value of understanding of the differences of perspective and learning members of the school community may have toward differing ideas, beliefs and values.

As with the value of transparency, each of the principals had a different viewpoint of the value of seeing different perspectives, as each principal had different personal backgrounds, experiences and school communities. For example, E2 believed his value of seeing different perspectives was based on acceptance of where individuals in his teaching staff were, in relation to their understanding of long held beliefs detrimental to students in his school. Through this understanding, E2 also believed it provided a way for him to help his staff understand counter-perspectives when he tried to disrupt their beliefs. "It's more accepting people where they are, then you know helping them see the counter stories or other options where they then reflect on it, and come to the conclusions themselves rather than being imposed by me." While E2 saw the value of seeing different perspectives as a learning tool for his staff and members of his school community, E3 had a different perspective. She saw this value as an opportunity to expand her own growth in her leadership. She believed this value to help her understand her teachers better, by seeing and accepting her teachers' position on issues, E3 believed would be bring change to her school. She believed this gives her confidence and understanding allowing her to grow as a principal by allowing herself to understand the perspectives of others.

So professionally I . . . you know . . . developed that as well. If I am asking teachers to take on initiatives, I wouldn't ask them to do more than I could handle and it's not always the best because I feel like I can handle a lot and others can't. But I have learned to see it from other perspectives. Um . . . I've learned you know to try things um . . . and I've learned to value just um . . . having uh . . . confidence in what you do.

E2 and E3 both focused this value on either members of their staff or themselves in a professional capacity. H1 understood this value to assist in the needs of her diverse study body enrolled in her school. "Depending on the audience. For the clients who walk in the door from the community, the relationship skills, the empathy I have is highly valued." Principals demonstrated this value understanding of different perspectives was important in how they make their decisions. Yet each principal like their values, held a different perspective of the meaning of it in context to their school community.

As with morals, the eight principals in this study demonstrated more diversity and individuality in their explanation of their values as related to themselves and their role in their school. There was very little commonality within their values, resulting in very little communal voice of values between each principal. As displayed in Table 3, principals expressed 38 distinct value sets.

While there is some value similarity between one or two principals, there is not a strong commonality between them, resulting in individual value sets demonstrated by each principal in their schools. It was very apparent during the interview with the eight principals what Vitton and Wasonga (2009) stated, "personal values reflect underlying human motivations, and shape subsequent attitudes, speech and actions" (p. 93).

Table 3

*Identified Values*

Type of Values:	Discussed By:
Internal Belief	E1
Value of Responsibility	E1, E2, E3, H3
Value of Helping Others	E2, E2, E3
Social Justice	E1, M1
Value of Acceptance	E1
Societal Norms Shaped Values	E1, H3
College/Friends Shaped Values	E1
Sexual Orientation Shaped Values	E1
Values of Accountability	E1
Work Ethic/Hard Work	E2, H2, H3
Values from Coach	E2
Values of Knowing People are in Different Places with Beliefs	E2
Value of Listening	E2, H3
Caring/Compassion	E2, H1, H2
Value of Consistency	E2
Values of Things of Importance	E3, M2, H1
Value of Messaging	E3, M1, H2,
Value of Persistence	E3
Value of Seeing Different Perspectives	E3, M1, H1, H2
Value of Multiple Approaches to Learning	E3
Values Defined by Individuals	M1
Values from Upbringing	M1, M2
Value of Respect	M1, M2
Value of Tolerance	M1
Value of Being Present	M1
Value of Team	M1
Values from Experiences as an Educator	M1, M2
Value of Visibility	M1
Values Based Upon Religion	M1, M2
Value of Integrity	M2
Value of Seeing Everyone as Important	M2
Value of Being the Voice of Others	M2, H1
Value of Decisions Being Student Centered	M2, H1
Values of Professional Duty	H1
Value of Empathy	H1
Personal Values vs. District Values	H2
Value of Perseverance	H2
Values Guide Actions	H3

### **Research Question Three**

How are the ethical paradigms of Care, Justice, Community, Critique, and Profession as defined by Vokey (2005), Shapiro (2006), Langlois and Lapointe (2007), Eyal et al. (2011), Frick (2011), Furman (2012), Garrett-Staib and Maninger (2012), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011), and Shapiro and Gross (2013), reflected, if at all, within their decision-making process?

Each participant principal demonstrated individual morals and values resulting in little commonality between them. However when asked to demonstrate examples of decisions within the five ethical paradigms of justice, care, critique, community, and profession, there was striking similarity between them. Frick (2011) explained this similarity as a “construction of practice rather than an injunction connected to a richly conceptualized ethical system” (p. 553). While I agree principals do demonstrate a construction of practice, there is some evidence they are using multiple ethical paradigms in their decision-making process. For many of the principals, they were able to use two paradigms to explain their decision making rather than just one, as I believed they might do within their role. In the following section, I use a cross-case analysis of the five ethical paradigms and the similarities exhibited by the participant principals.

**Ethics of justice and critique.** The ethic of Justice, as Furman (2003) stated, “requires that we treat each other accordingly to some standard of justice which is uniformly applied to all our relationships” (p. 3). While many of the principals believed in a basic uniform standard of justice, many of them opted to analyze rules,

laws, policies, and regulation standing between them and meeting the needs of students. They would often utilize an ethic of critique in discussing many of the regulatory practices they were faced with daily. Furman explained the ethic of critique, as, “looking toward barriers to fairness” (p. 3). This was evidenced by many of the principals during our interviews when describing their decision-making process.

As with morals and values, each principal demonstrated their connection to the ethic of justice and critique differently. E1 stated in his interview, he would be hard pressed to change longstanding practices, which had become a common practice in his school. However, he believed he could begin the process of disrupting them through critiquing them.

I don't believe I will change their beliefs or their morals around some of these things but I can interrupt it and have an impact in that capacity and I can give them different scenarios and data around best practices for students that I think are in the best interests of them.

His belief in changing systems of thinking was a paramount part of his role. A strong level of confidence in his ability to make disruption to long-standing harmful practices for students was evident. M1 conversely was less optimistic toward effective change, even though he recognized change needed to be made to an ethic of justice based practices. He was able to critique policy but felt little change was made or could be made in education. “I mean big things that never seem really to change you are like you know . . . like why don't we look at doing this differently.” H2, as with M1, shared a similar view using an ethic of critique and had a similar pessimistic viewpoint of change within policies created by an ethic of justice. “Looking for help and we

don't have the resources in this system . . . now that is where I struggle. We are not meeting that students needs here in a large system." All of the principals to some degree were able to recognize rules, regulations, laws, and polices which gave a uniformed system of justice. Equally, each recognized a need to analyze and identify changes needing to be made to assist student needs.

**Ethics of care and community.** Furman (2003) described the ethic of care as, "absolute regard for the dignity and intrinsic need of each person is based in relationships and desires to see that person enjoy a fully human life" (p. 3). The ethic of community as described by Eyal et al. (2011), "takes into consideration the values, beliefs, and desires of the community" (p. 398).

During the interviews, H2 discussed how daily, he addressed the needs of individuals over a greater community. From his viewpoint, he protected students as a group who struggle over the larger school community. He understood by taking a stand for an individual or a smaller group he took a risk against alienating his staff or the greater school community.

Sometimes we are dealing with a student that either the teachers or other students don't understand what is going on with that student that we have to say, ok this student's blow a few chances, but we have to say that we are going to make sure this student needs are being met and that may impact how that staff is going to feel. Because the staff may feel . . . they may need to go somewhere else. I can't work with this kid. Um . . . then you as a leader take a risk because people are looking at you like what in the hell are you thinking about.

E3 is less direct, as she saw her decisions as necessary, to promote an ethic of care, assisting her Latino community, who are traditionally, without a powerful voice in the

White, English speaking dominated school system. She understood this has risks with the traditionally more vocal White school community members.

This is a very big thing at our school with our dual language program. One group that benefits the most with our dual language program is the Hispanic population because they . . . the students feel that their language or language are assets. The kids feel proud that Spanish is important as well learning new things as well as from each other as well as learning about other cultures. And I've had parents who . . . White parents . . . who say in the grades where there is no dual language option say, "what about us? Why don't we get this advantage?" Logistically it is hard to meet the needs of everybody.

M2 viewed the ethic of care as the bridge to the ethic of community. She understood programs she has in her school as necessary to meet the needs of all students even though they are designed to meet the needs of individuals. This is a core belief of her role as principal to make sure these programs are continued so as to assure the needs of all.

What's going through my mind is ELL, Dual Language, and TAG and those kind of things and special ed. I think that um . . . I think that some people think when we serve on of those groups we deny another and I don't believe that so . . . that when we focus on ELL or Special Education students we talk about differentiation of instruction, we talk about providing scaffolding, we talk about you know language targets and um . . . English language proficiency standards. I think when we talk about all those things we benefit everybody. So the reason I am thinking about that is I hear that from so many people that we are always focusing on those kids. Why don't we focus on the others kids? When I truly think it benefits everybody.

As a whole, principals were able to identify decisions, which fell into both an ethic of care and an ethic community. Often they would utilize decisions to give greater need to both individuals and members of the school community who were often not of the majority. Principals often took a non-traditional path and defined themselves when developing an ethic of care and community.

**Ethic of profession.** Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011) explained the ethic of profession focuses on both the personal codes of the role of the school leader as well as the professional codes of the role of principal developed by others. Each of the principals interviewed, spoke candidly about how they viewed the role in comparison or contrast with a traditional role of the principal. Every principal viewed their role, as unique and different from others. They did not compare themselves to other principals, or give a definition of the role they had learned from either their training or from their district office. For example, E1, who originally held a position at his district office and had recently acknowledged his sexual orientation, felt these two factors made him less than traditional.

You know for me, I would end, when I think of the traditional role of the principal there are days when I wake up and think, what the fuck am I doing in this role? Like sometimes, I feel like am the least traditional principal out there.

M1 saw his role as evolved from what it was more than a decade ago. He saw his role developing by the needs in his community rather than other groups or even himself.

I feel like I probably have more duress and more pressure to balance what the instructional needs are within um . . . within the school than what a traditional principal might have . . . might have had to do. Um . . . You know I also think um . . . with um . . . within this community I work in um . . . you know we have had to change the way we talk about serving our kids, change the mentality of how we tried to serve our kids because of the diversity that has happened here especially the second language learners and things like that. Um . . . so I feel like the principalship in 2014 is a huge . . . its' like a different world compared to 2004 . . . like just 10 years ago.

H3 echoed the changes M1 expresses of the principalship. He was aware it had evolved and he had written his own definition of his role. He knew what he learned in

his administrative preparation programs was not what his role is in his school today, as the experiences he has now as a principal, are different than what he was trained to do. As he stated, “I mean, traditional role would be . . . when I went to college they didn’t teach any of this.”

Sagnak (2010) stated, “In the absence of the ethical leader, organizations lose their effectiveness and become soulless structures” (p. 1139). Even though there were individual applications of the five ethical paradigms, it was clear in each interview that ethical decision-making was a part of their daily role to help ensure the needs of students. Each principal was clearly influenced by their own morals and values to make ethical decisions, and at times did so without regard to their own district office or even other schools.

### **Conclusion**

The data and findings in this research expanded upon the studies of morals, values, and ethics within school principals. This study provided information gathered from data over the course of eight interviews with questions from current literature. It revealed how each of the principals defined their role within a similar philosophical framework through either a managerial/supervisory model with a secondary focus on instructional leadership. However, as much as principals were similar on their role definition when deeper examination was given, each principal brought in a unique set of individual morals and values as evidenced within their personal stories.

This study showed distinct individual morals and values of school principals and how there was little commonality between each of them as they had unique

upbringings and lives prior and during their principalship. These unique moral and value sets gave principals individual application to ethical decisions they made for their students.

While their decisions within individual and combined ethical paradigms could be viewed as similar, there were distinct differences between them. This is a strong indication of how each of the principals' individual morals and values played a strong role in developing their use of ethical paradigms in their role as principal. Eyal et al. (2011) stated, "The adoption of the multiple ethical paradigms approach to dilemmas faced by principals contrasts with earlier approaches that assume that ethical dilemmas should be solved by adopting a single ethical posture" (p. 397). Through their own experiences and upbringing, which ultimately created their decision-making processes, all the principals showed the ability to use multiple ethical paradigms rather than focus on just one in their leadership role.

### **Recommendations for Future Study and Implication of Practice**

The point of this research study was not only to add to the study of morals, values, and ethics but in a practical sense assist school principals in their ability to reflect upon themselves within their role and apply this deep reflection to their decision making. The next section speaks to a few examples of future study and implications of practice, which could be conducted as a follow up to this research.

### **Study of Deep Reflection in Leadership of the School Principal**

One of the areas covered in this research, which I found compelling was the level of reflective practice principals took when making decisions for their schools. It

appeared at times, principals who were more experienced showed greater reflection on their decision-making process than their new counterpart colleagues. Was this due to their level of experience? Was this due to the training principals received? Was this due to the type of principal? A study focusing on the reflection practices of principals, concentrating how they reflect and why there is a need to deeply reflect on their decisions would be an interesting and useful follow up to this study. I believe a study focusing on reflection could give principals greater insight into how they use their morals, values, and ethics in their own decision-making.

### **Study of Hiring Practices as Related to Morals, Values, and Ethics**

While I was in the process of interviewing, I wondered about the hiring process each of these principals participated in to reach their position. Each principal had a unique school community with equally unique needs, with many of the principals not reflecting their school communities, and at times had stated morals and values contrary to their district office and even some parts of their school community. A study specifically related on the hiring practices of school principals, focusing on the understanding of how potential candidates' morals, values, and ethics prior to the final hiring of a school principal could be beneficial or detrimental to schools would be another addition to this study. Do school districts ask questions or present principal candidates scenarios regarding morals, values, and ethics and if so are the answers principals give aligned to the needs, morals, and values of the school district? As Garrett-Staib and Maninger (2012) stated, "School administrators are duty-bound to ensure that the child's best interests are served by the school" (p. 25).

### **Professional Development on Deep Reflection and Professional Courageous Conversations on Personal Morals, Values, and Ethics**

During each of my interviews it became apparent principals felt a need to talk about the subject of morals, values and ethics and conflicts they have felt within their decisions. Many of the principals stated this was the first time anyone had approached them on this topic and many found it refreshing and necessary to approach this subject. In subsequent conversations with many of the principals after their interviews they have wanted to continue this conversation. Professional development for school principals on the importance of deep reflection of who they are as principals focusing on their own morals, values and ethics would be beneficial to their schools and their role as leader. Within this professional development could be an opportunity for principals to develop protocols to have courageous conversations with their colleagues regarding their role as principal.

### **A Focus of Morals, Values, and Ethics Within School Administration Licensure Programs**

During my licensure program as a school administrator, there was little to no opportunity to have a discussion on the role of morals, values and ethics. Programs focused heavily on law and implication of law within school organizations. It was not until I started working on my doctoral program in which I had my first conversation regarding my own morals, values and ethics. I believe this is an area of great need within a licensure program. Future work might include including pieces of this study and applying it toward licensure programs in order for upcoming school administrators to focus on their own morals, values and ethics prior to their first assignment as

principal. Ideally, a program base on morals, values and ethics may give principals a better understanding of how they shape their role as principal and ultimately affect their school communities.

### **Final Thoughts**

As stated in the beginning of chapter 4, this study was never intended to be about the role of the principal and the commonality of morals, values, and ethics within this leadership role. It was intended to give a generalized view of the person who is within the role of the school principal, and the uniqueness they bring to this important position. By no means are the viewpoints of the participant principals in this study deemed to be wrong or incorrect as each person brought their unique viewpoints to the interviews. I am eternally grateful for their forthright conversations and their willingness to trust me to be a steward of their thoughts and voice as the principal of their school.

As a former principal, I can attest there were days when I reflected on and wondered about my own morality and values when making decisions affecting all members of my school community. This study gave me greater reason to reflect on these past decisions I made as a principal, and now learn from them to better help me in my current role in education.

I certainly hope studies of this nature will continue as I believe it will only make education stronger, give school leaders greater tools to assist students, and most importantly give every student the ability to be successful in education.

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APPENDIX A  
PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTION LETTER

July 2014

Dear Principal \_\_\_\_\_,

I am a doctoral candidate pursuing my doctoral degree from Lewis and Clark College. My dissertation focus is on the effect of morals, values and ethics on the decisions of the school principal.

I found my way toward this topic of study through my work as a principal both here and in California. I often wondered how much of myself personally translated into my decisions as a principal. This study is designed to focus on the personal lens each principal brings into the role of principal and how much their personal beliefs effect their decisions.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study as I believe your insight, experience, and background will be extremely valuable in the research of the area of morals, values and ethics within the decisions of the school principal.

Your participation will consist of a 90 minute interview with possible follow up questions if necessary. My goal is to not take away from your valuable time but to enhance it with our conversation. Each interview will be audio recorded by me for my study but will follow a very strict confidentiality agreement as set forth by Lewis and Clark College. All participants will be coded using a letter and number to keep strict confidentiality and all information will be securely stored by me and destroyed after the completion of the study.

If you agree to participate in an interview as part of this research study and/or have any questions, please call me on my personal cell phone at xxx-xxx-xxxx or email me back on this email (my Lewis and Clark email address at xxxx@lclark.edu). After we make contact I will contact you via my Lewis and Clark email to arrange a date and time for our interview. I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

Jon Pede  
Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX B  
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

## Participant Consent Form

Please acknowledge you have read and agree to each paragraph by checking each box.

I consent to participate in this interview concerning the connection between morals, values and ethics in the role of the school principal. I understand that the interviews may touch on sensitive issues and that I am allowed to not answer the question if I so choose. Interviews will not exceed 90 minutes and may occur more than once.

I understand the interview will be audio recorded by the researcher and a copy of the transcript of the interview as well as a copy of the final analysis will be provided to me.

I understand that I may not answer a question that I feel uncomfortable with and that I may terminate the interview process at any time for any reason without penalty.

I understand that the researcher is willing to answer any questions I might have before, during or after the interview process. The researcher reserves the right to answer questions regarding the findings of the study until after the project has been completed. The researcher reserves the right to not tell you about other interviews that he may have conducted.

I understand that the data from the interview may be used and quoted in the researcher's final doctoral dissertation research study. I understand that he will maintain confidentiality as well as change my name in his research. Subject codes will be used to maintain confidentiality. I permit publication of the results of the interview with the agreement that participant confidentiality is ensured.

I understand that matters relating to this research can be directed to xxx xxxx at xxx-xxx-xxxx or xxxx@lclark.edu, or the faculty advisor, Dr. xxx xxxxx at xxxx@lclark.edu. If I have additional questions or concerns about this study I can contact the Lewis & Clark College Human Subjects Research Committee at xxx-xxx-xxxx or xxx@lclark.edu

Again, I understand that my participation in this interview is voluntary and that I have the ability to withdraw at any point without penalty.

I acknowledge that I am eighteen years of age or older and that I have read and understand the above explanations.

---

Participant's Name

Participants Signature

Date

I have presented this information to the participant and obtained his/her voluntary consent.

---

Researcher's Name

Researcher's Signature

Date

APPENDIX C  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions  
Research Study for Jon Pede

1. What your role is in your school?
2. How do you define the role of the school principal?
3. How do you define morals and values and how are they different?
4. What values did you grow up with which you still connect with today and what lead to the creation of these values?
5. What values have you developed as an adult, which are different than you what you grew up with?
6. What values have you developed professionally in your career?
7. How are the values you have developed seen in your personal life and in your role as principal?
8. How would you define and what is morally right and wrong personally? Please give an example.
9. How would you define what is morally right and wrong professionally? Please give an example.
10. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong personally and decisions you had to make in the role of principal? Can you give an example? (How did you resolve this conflict if at all?)
11. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong professionally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal? Can you give an example? (How did you resolve this conflict it at all?)
12. Describe decisions in your role as principal requiring you to follow a policy, regulation or law you felt was in conflict with a student need? If so, describe the situation.
13. Describe a situation in which you had to make a decision addressing the needs of an individual over the needs of a larger group. What risks if any were involved?

14. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal benefiting one part of your school community and denied another? If so, describe the situation?
15. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal which caused you later to reflect on those decisions and reverse them? If so, describe the situation?
16. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal you felt was in contrast to the traditional role of the principal? If so, describe the situation?

APPENDIX D  
PARTICIPANT FOLLOW-UP LETTER

Dear Principal \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for participating in my doctoral dissertation research study on morals, values and ethics within the role of the decision making of the school principal. As agreed upon within the consent form originally signed by you, the transcript of your interview as well as the final analysis tables of morals and values.

Please review your transcripts. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding your interview transcript or the data analysis. You can contact me on my personal cell phone at xxx-xxx-xxxx or my Lewis and Clark email at [xxxx@lclark.edu](mailto:xxxx@lclark.edu). I would be happy to set up an appointment to go over each document with you.

Each interviewed conducted provided insight into the role morals, values and ethics plays within the decision making of the school principal. The study results included \_\_\_\_\_.

Your contribution helped provide this insight. Though this research, future work might include \_\_\_\_\_.

Again thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Jon Pede  
Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX E  
TRANSCRIPT OF PRINCIPAL E1

Interview of Principal E1  
August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Interviewer: What is your role, what is the role in your school? What is your role?

E1: Elementary principal and I think within that I would say uh . . . would be instructional leader, supervisor, a guide, support for staff and students.

Interviewer: Ok, so tell me is the instructional leader and the supervisor, is there a difference between the two?

E1: Uh . . . yeah. A supervisor I would say more is a technicality for teacher performance. The instructional leader knowing where our students are performing and what their needs are, and making sure my staff are as prepared as possible to meet those students needs with growth being the ultimate goal . . . academic.

Interviewer: Alright, so you talked about this a little about how you define the role, maybe you could go into a little more depth, how would you define the role of the school principal?

E1: Define the role . . . well when I think of the role, I would say instructional leader but certainly multi-faceted and so I think when I . . . I see two different groups, I see staff as one and they have a different set of needs around their professional growth and learning to be prepared to instruct students where they are at. With students would be um . . . I would be kind of a coach and role model and um . . . I take great pride in that part with students that I want to be seen as you know a fair, honest individual with them and recognizing where they are coming from with diverse backgrounds they have as I support them. Going back to staff briefly I will also say a role that I need to serve with them is empowering them to adjust to the students we currently have. We are about five years behind where they are thinking and where they are performing with the students they think we have but we are about five years ahead or maybe they are five years behind where they should be. Um . . . and that's mainly due to our changing demographics within my school.

Interviewer: Ok, so what values did you grow up with that you still connect with today, and what lead to the creation of those values?

E1: Um . . . values . . . I would say . . . a couple that come to mind . . .

Interviewer: You know what . . . I am going to back up. I skipped a question. Sorry. Stop that question there. I got thinking about something you said. Question number three, how do you define morals and values and how are they different?

E1: I would say to me morals is like my standard of behavior. So for me personally what is acceptable and what is not. That's for me. Values I tend to see as uh . . . I guess an internal belief. So I think that they um . . . there is definitely some connection there between the two. How are they different?

Interviewer: Uh huh.

E1: I think that one going back to morals being again my behavior, actions of what I am willing to do or say is acceptable and not acceptable behavior for me. Where the . . . uh . . . the value would be something um . . . an internal belief. That I may ultimately act on which would tie into the moral. But again, I see the values as definitely something of a core internal belief.

Interviewer: So let me follow up with a question, you said something that was very interesting. You said something about uh . . . what is acceptable . . . who defines what is acceptable?

E1: Interesting . . .

Interviewer: . . . For you . . . .

E1: Interesting. So . . . who defines that? So I guess ultimately that would be me. However, I will weave in part of my background was a strong religious based in Catholic religion. So I went to Kindergarten through eighth grade Catholic school. And so for me when I think of acceptance I think initially it was there was this huge religious presence that's uh . . . kind of shaped and molded me and as I got older I learned to . . . I learned to . . . how do I say this? Um . . . reevaluate what may or may not be right in like the church's eyes versus mine. And so I had to . . . I had to redefine some of what was acceptable for me and what was not. And some of that came into plays and you know, now with my sexual orientation. I mean there was this big though shall not and you know, especially when I had to deal with that. I had to really reevaluate some of those core early beliefs that I held for a long, long time about basically what is right and wrong and why I believe that so . . . I had to do a lot of thinking and adjusting and that kind of thing. So . . . but ultimately it is me now but earlier in my life it was heavily the religious and family component that determined what is acceptable and what is not uh . . . coupled with societal norms.

Interviewer: Ok, now let's go to number 4. So what values did you grow up with that you still connect with today and what lead to the creation of these values?

E1: I would say one of the biggest for me is responsibility. Um . . . responsibility is a big one . . . to family. Um . . . and to others. Kind of always being open and um . . . I guess I've been . . . I like to think of myself as a helper. And so if someone needs

something . . . I'm that type of person who will um . . . just be available. There's a fine line you know . . . doing that too much. Other ones that came up would be dedication and/or respect. Those are some biggies just treating people kind. A social justice lens if you will. Have been things that have stayed with me through childhood and into adult phase of life.

Interviewer: What about responsibility to yourself? Is that . . . ?

E1: That's usually a backburner.

Interviewer: Why is that?

E1: And why is it a responsibility? Um . . . I lost my dad to suicide when I was 15 and I think at that point I grew up pretty quickly and so for me I felt I had a responsibility to my family specifically my mother. I was the youngest but it was just her and I after that so making sure that the house was running, bills were paid, mortgage was paid. She was going to work, I was going to school but um . . . you know I think from that point I was a responsible kiddo but I also then . . . I just . . . it increased significantly following that event so . . . um . . . yeah.

Interviewer: Ok. Thank you. Number 5. What values have you developed as an adult which are different than what you grew up with?

E1: Acceptance. It's a biggie for me. Uh . . . acceptance in that as I stated earlier I was somebody who could go or would role with the societal norm or role with the pack of you know boys date girls and they get married and they have kids and they are not supposed to like, they are supposed to like football, and basketball and like those things and so falling into those pieces and I think religious aspect coupled with you know being raised in the mid-west in a small town and these you know . . . mid-western values. It was . . . just what I was supposed to do. And you weren't necessarily supposed to question that. That just the way it was and so for me as I got older into high school and into college I really started things differently and made it a point to be friends with people within every circle in school because that is just who I was. I wanted to be social and then have friends in all these little niches and I did that and continued that through college into my professional life has served me well because . . . where we are at . . . where I am at right now in (name of city). There is just a lot more diversity I am surrounding myself with and personally going back to my changing sexual orientation. I think that I ultimately that was the greatest gift I could give myself because I had to accept myself and it took me 35 years to get there and maybe not all of those 35 but a good chunk of them to finally come to terms with that and accept that so . . . yeah. That's my biggie.

Interviewer: I am going to do a follow up question here about something you just said about acceptance. So you talked about you had a large circle of friends when you were in school and correct me if I am wrong . . . Was that because you were looking to avoid the acceptance of yourself or what was that for? Clarify that a little for me.

E1: I think for me um . . . you know I really didn't know then. I honestly don't know if I knew. I try and think back and look and did I know back when I was 4. I would say that for me I enjoy the social piece and just connecting with people supporting people and being kind of that accountable and dedicated to helping and supporting others regardless of what they needed and what there background is. So for me what I found is friends in different groups where other groups might be at odds with or have a negative opinion about . . . I try to look at people as individuals and respect who they were and not by appearance of somebody who is into Goth and somebody who knows what...whatever it was. Um . . . so for me it was fulfilling a need for me just to connect with people who were different and maybe that some place for me to having my own acceptance for myself down the road . . . yeah. So . . .

Interviewer: I might come back to that because I have a thought running through my head. But we'll see. We'll see where it goes. Alright, so what values have you developed professionally in your career?

E1: I would say professionally would be accountability and collaboration. Professionally you know we live in a world of data or growth is expected and I have been in public ed. now 14 years so I think that has increased over the last 14 years and so um . . . you know that's to my students, to my staff, the community and ultimately to myself for the district that I work for. I take great pride being in education and currently an administrator so for me when I am at a cocktail party or at a social event and I want and you know . . . I want to . . . you know . . . somewhat brag about what I do. A. I love it and B. I also know that it is hard work, the accountability piece is very important especially the rigor of our assessments is fast evolving and knowing that our teachers need to have some . . . I don't want to say radical . . . but ultimately radical changes to get to where they need to be . . . to educate our students. So . . .

Interviewer: Ok, alrighty here. So how are the values you have developed in your personal life how are they being translated into your role as principal? The values that you saw as a kid . . .

E1: Yeah, if I look at like acceptance and respect and how they are they being translated to professional world?

Interviewer: Yeah, the role of the principal.

E1: You know I think for me acceptance . . . I have a wide lens especially now I am super sensitive about in the last 2 years especially being in a minority group which is something that I didn't even anticipate but you know being a gay male school administrator in an elementary there doesn't seem to be a lot of us or at least there isn't a little group per se and so I have to figure out how to function and be true to myself and do my job well and how do my worlds collide? And that is something that I am working on because I want to be authentic and I want to be authentic myself, for my own children, and for my students at school. I worry about being labeled or kind of just categorized negatively by people and maybe that's just my own anxiety over that but I don't want to lose the credibility and the reputation that I have professionally. I don't want that to ever be jeopardized because of my sexual orientation, which should be irrelevant to that. It has been to date so um . . . so it's how do those worlds collide. So when I think of acceptance and respect I just those are lenses I can have in both worlds and do that with students and staff and just make sure that if I hear some negative language that is harassing or bullying whether you know it's race or weight or skin color or whatever or sexual orientation which is you know not frequent at the elementary level but I just keep that lens that everybody is accepted here, everybody has a place here. You know we are um . . . we are all here to learn and so . . .

Interviewer: Have you run across that as a principal yet?

E1: What's that?

Interviewer: That there is a negativity? A clash between who you are personally and the clash between the role you have . . . the . . . title of principal? You know by students, staff or families?

E1: Um . . . you know I think that when we get to that question . . . .

Interviewer: maybe another question?

E1: when we get to number 11, I have an example of a scenario that we brought in a professional group or a nationally recognized group to help us with something at my school that I fundamentally disagree with . . .

Interviewer: Ok.

E1: . . . and I to think about what to do with that because a personal preference and my personal belief around this agency um . . . doesn't match at all and but yet professionally everything aligned for this group to be a match to do what we needed them to do. So that was my issue that I had to deal with. So . . .

Interviewer: Interesting. I can hardly wait to get to number 11. I want to skip ahead. You mentioned this already. You said the words right and wrong in a couple of questions ago. So how would you define what is morally right and wrong personally and give an example of each.

E1: Eek. This one might be hard for me to answer. So . . . ok. Morally right would be something that would be again going back to my standards of behavior that I treat people kind and respectful. Being well intended so my actions would align to that. Uh . . . I think um . . . when I think of something not morally ok, would be something like lying, cheating, stealing, again I am going back to my basic upbringing of this religious component which you know, it is what it is. That's part of me and um . . . I don't want to change that because there are pieces of that that I still hold on to as an adult. But those would be things that are some basic human ways of life you know. Just being a kind helpful person and not hurtful, cheating, lying, manipulative way. Those are I see as just morally ok not good things for any individual to do. So . . .

Interviewer: Ok. I want to type this one word to get that on here. So . . . Number 9, how would you define what is morally right and wrong professionally?

E1: I would say . . .

Interviewer: And give an example.

E1: it would be very similar to personally I just . . . I think those carry over for me. Again those are my behaviors um . . . if I think of a student or staff member. Lying, cheating, stealing those are things that are not ok to do. Those are not appropriate behaviors that we that we accept or want to see. And we um . . . would work and so do some repair on those. I think um . . . those two are personally aligned for me. Um . . . personally, and professionally.

Interviewer: Ok.

E1: But I think I expect staff, students and myself to be kind, helpful, you know non-judgmental, accepting. So I think people will . . . people will have to . . . people will come to . . . there is a range of where they are at morally. I think generally we are all on a pretty solid pool or dish together but there is a mixture I think.

Interviewer: Do you feel that those two worlds, the morally right and wrong personally . . . this is a follow up question . . . and the morally right and wrong professionally . . . those lines blur at all?

E1: Do they blur? Is there like?

Interviewer: So . . . something that you may feel is morally right and wrong personally . . . is it possible that there . . . they are right and wrong personally . . . they might flip?

E1: In my professional world?

Interviewer: Correct.

E1: I would say . . . um . . . that would be morally rare for me . . .

Interviewer: Ok. I love doing an interview with people just chatting away (voices of people heard from surrounding area). Alright. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong personally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. And can you give an example. I am going to move the recorder closer to you because I can't hear you.

E1: Ummmm . . . You know that one would be hard for me to answer. I did find an example for the professionally one . . . for the next one.

Interviewer: Ok.

E1: if I could go to that one.

Interviewer: Sure. So you want to skip this one?

E1: Yeah. If I think of something . . .

Interviewer: Ok, we can come back to it.

E1: Sorry.

Interviewer: No problem.

E1: But 11. Same question . . . morally wrong professionally and decisions I had to make? And maybe this example fits in both. So um . . . uh . . . we need flower beds built at my school for our STEM learning garden. It was a pretty hefty project and we had um . . . looked at ways in the community to get this done as an inexpensive as possible. And the idea was brought forth about a young man who was about to earn his eagle scout in the Boy Scouts of America. And so . . . um . . . this was about a year ago . . . so this isn't necessarily resolved. But there has been some movement since but initially there was . . . there is this big negative connotation around homosexual men being scout leaders as well as Boy Scouts . . . you know being openly gay and Boys Scouts of America. My staff however, came to . . . one in particular took the lead on this . . . and he is very aligned because I think he was part of the organization himself,

his two sons went through it, he's ex-military and so . . . great individual . . . but we have never had that level of intimate conversation about the beliefs of that organization so there were . . . I remember 2 days in particular. The first when it came across my desk just thinking there "Fuck . . . really." Like everything about me personally is in conflict with this organization, and yet it does serve a need that does benefit my school for years to come students, and staff, and my community for that matter. And so, it wasn't like the work wasn't going to get done but I have this decision to make. A couple of them, questions that pop up. Do I say anything? Do I just let this go? If I say no, what will be my reason and what is my back up? And do I have money to pay somebody for this. This is a completely service oriented project. So . . . I ultimately allowed the work to be done. It was this project and it worked beautifully um . . . the rights and beliefs um . . . I chose professionally not to raise that. I just felt it wasn't the time for me personally to bring my . . . I don't want to say baggage but my personal beliefs into play professionally and the reason was the negative impact it would have on students, staff and my school community. Kind of weighing a single individual versus a group here. I went with quantity and they are kind of the mass. I um . . . You know I am not openly out to my staff, school or community and so I think that so it would not have been the scenario to um . . . or the venue. That wouldn't have been time or platform to broach that topic. And maybe I wouldn't have had to. I could have said simply said I disagree with them personally but I think it would have raised red flags. So I did a lot of thinking about that one, weighing scenarios, running decisions both ways and um . . . I don't feel um . . . I don't regret the decision. I wouldn't go back to change the decision that I am confident of because the outcome is what I needed it to be. And um . . . yeah so.

Interviewer: Ok. So I have two follow up questions. And yes I think it answered number 10 also.

E1: Yeah.

Interviewer: I think that they kind of blur a little bit. So did you ever talk to that person? The lead person? The staff member? And if you had to go back and do this again, staying with your original decision, would you change anything that you did?

E1: Um . . . would I change anything if I had to do it over again?

Interviewer: Uh huh. Knowing that you were going to keep the same decision. Would you change anything?

E1: Would I change anything? Um . . . the only thing . . . you I don't think I would. If you ask me in 3-5 years I don't know. But right now . . . I um . . . not unless I was openly out and had a partner who was a part of my life and wanted to include them in some school functions and I think I would have to broach it as a natural consequence,

that conversation could come up at that point around my um . . . around my opinion on the Boys Scouts of America. But again, I risk being kind of um . . . cast as this “oh . . . his personal bullshit is coming in and impacting his professional decisions and um . . .” I think that is something that I will always um . . . reflect heavily on. As I make decisions that have uh . . . potential conflict between personal and professional um . . . values and morals.

Interviewer: So it sounds like your acceptance of yourself as a gay man as a gay principal is weighing heavily on your mind.

E1: Yeah. It is increasing for sure. Um . . . and I think for me, what I am noticing having little signs or little hints and talking more with staff I think I am going to be just who I am. And I think through the course of conversations and time that some will already have an idea and probably wonder or figure it out. Which is fine. And so . . . I think for me at the age of 35 you know having flipped up a couple of lives. My children, my ex-wife, my own, I think owe it to myself when I think of that acceptance piece but I think also just living authentically for my children and I think about how that impacts my students and staff because if I go back to what I believe my role is role model and coach and guide more academically if you will. I also have things that I need to do. I have to live authentically because that will also be something students will look back on be like wow that was a big decision he had to make and a big you know um . . . change he went through. To live authentically and when I think about role model for students as well as my own children so.

Interviewer: Ok . . .

E1: And that is important for me. To be honest with you, the support of my ex-wife, when we stood up in January, I don't know if I shared that with you, I debriefed that with her that next day I think and um . . . her response was . . . She would have been pissed if I hadn't done that. Because after all of this not to live authentically and be who I am and be ok with that and ultimately accept myself and become confident in that capacity. Yeah . . . so . . .

Interviewer: Great. Number 12. Zipping along. Describe decisions in your role as principal requiring you to follow a policy, a regulation or law you felt was in conflict with a student need. If so, describe the situation.

E1: Huh. I don't know on that one. Policy eh?

Interviewer: Policy . . . it could be a regulation, a law, maybe even a practice . . . a common practice.

E1: Yeah. You the only thing that comes to mind is our practice . . . this is . . . when I think of students and kind of our reading tiers of program. When I got to (name of

school), this could apply district but I will apply it to my school. Like tiers of intervention and uh the practice of removing kids. Um . . . when I think about what's in the best interest of students, it has taken me 2 years to shift . . . I am not going to change their beliefs but I am changing their thinking and their thoughts and models about best practices for students when I think of reading specifically and the removal of our lowest performing typically native um . . . Spanish speaking students to the least qualified instructor. I do not believe that is in the best interest of kids and um . . . that practice is . . . um . . . changing and has changed in my school. But they looked at me like I had three heads initially. Especially out there like "what? Like I need my 22 Caucasian boys and girls with blond hair and blue eyes." I kid you not and so um again I won't necessarily . . . I don't believe I will change their beliefs or their morals around some of these things but I can interrupt it and have an impact in that capacity and I can give them different scenarios and data around best practices for students that I think are in the best interest of them. So . . .

Interviewer: Ok. So describe a situation in which you had to make a decision addressing the needs of an individual over the needs of a larger group. What risks were involved?

E1: So . . . I would say one that comes to mind. We had a student who joined us from (name of another district) this year. African-American female who was all dialed in to be ED (emotionally disturbed). The only thing missing was the medical statement. And so when she arrived she came like a fucking shit storm in the door. Bless her little heart and um . . . took her under my wing with my new special ed. Teacher and um . . . made the decisions that we would file the paperwork and would not make her eligible in special ed. And we did not. Um . . . you know ultimately things got a little worse before they got better but this is a girl who for a number of years had seen her behavior be negatively impacted or rewarded uh . . . negatively because that is the cycle she kept getting in. "I will sabotage friendships, I will sabotage entire relationships with staff. Then I will seek out just adult relationships because they will kind of maybe get me." Um . . . and we just invested time in her to get to know her. And I think a couple of my staff thought, "what the fuck is he doing? Like this girl needs to have an aide or be in a program." I know she does not and so we made it a point to stop or interrupt the statistic of she was not . . . you know . . . a male but she was a female of an African-American labeled ED. I thought, "no, I don't think she is." And she did well. She has the academics that are in place which is great. It is the social stuff and so spent some time with the counselor, me, the teacher, um . . . is something we chose to do for her um . . . when I think of the larger group it would be classmates, peers, there were times when 4-5 girls would come and just say that you know, she was harassing them. Um . . . they um . . . one of my students. Caucasian students female was downright mean and vicious to her and said um . . . I wish people like you or people of your color would go right back to wherever you came from. And so when I think of going back to morals and values, acceptance was a biggie. You

know I, that was one I was very firm with that student and had a talk with her parents to say that that language won't be tolerated in my school.

Interviewer: Did you get push back from the parents?

E1: No. I wonder . . . there was a possibility. But um . . . I talked with dad and he responded very well . . . and maybe it was he listened and at home I don't know what happened but nonetheless he was responsive to the conversation that we had so . . . yeah.

Interviewer: Ok. Alright. Next question. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal benefiting one part of your school community and denied another? And if so, describe the situation.

E1: Um . . . Let's see here. So I can think of two examples but they really um . . . they are good examples that was maybe denying more of that White privilege. Two examples, one would be . . . and students with disabilities. The first example was 2 years ago looking at the roster of Lego Robotics, all White kids, all high performing. The list of kids that wanted in but didn't get in which is the list I more wanted were 3 students with disabilities, behavior, ASD and 2 were ESL. So there was a language piece and so why aren't these people or boys in . . . all boys. Well we never heard back from the two parents. Did anyone call the family because they are Spanish speakers or send the form home in Spanish. No they never thought to do that. And then the other three with disabilities, or it was more like they needed help, or "sure if we get an aide or something." I'm like . . . which is insane. So I think then again, that is a good example, for years the practice was nobody interrupted that. Um . . . another one would be translations. I have an interpreter with me at all times. I have two. I have an ASL interpreter and a Spanish interpreter for all events. So that's new. And initially that frustrated my white families because it just takes longer and I got two interpreters alongside me for any kind of assembly and this whole I just . . . Initially I am like the wave of like learn English was seeping out of the crowd at me. That's changed but when I think of the White privilege at my school in particular that they just didn't care. They didn't address it so to have a Spanish interpreter for example was a natural common thing which brings in all families. Um . . . so . . . yeah.

Interviewer: Ok.

E1: Risks there? I don't know I think they think I am crazy. I don't know.

Interviewer: Do you think that the community that they were denied that they White community was denied?

E1: I mean someone of them might perceive that but they weren't.

Interviewer: But that's what they think?

E1: Some might have that perception.

Interviewer: Ok.

E1: Just sort of comments. The other thing is you know another positive example we had a spaghetti feed that has happened for crimany for like 30 some years out there and I changed it. I know I was hot topic conversation at the White women's (name of area) club. About what the hell is that principal doing. Because I created a fiesta night which was Mexican themed this past spring. Very successful, raised twice as much as the annual spaghetti feed for record and um . . . was very inclusive of families that we never get in and so again didn't deny them anything other than this history piece which is always something that comes up. Um . . . a little world history. So I am pushing back on it with a smile, being polite and stand my ground. Luckily the community is likes me and is supportive um . . . yeah. First gay principal I think. Somehow I want that on the books out there before I leave. Oh yeah you did have a gay principal.

Interviewer: A plaque.

E1: It was me.

Interviewer: That's great. I love that. Works for me. Alright.

E1: To broaden their perspective on things . . .

Interviewer: Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal which caused you later to reflect on those decisions and reverse them and if so describe the situation.

E1: Um . . . In the last 2 years . . . I will say no. When I make a decision I am thorough and thoughtful up front and look at um . . . 2 paths of making a decision. Um . . . and weight pros and cons. Typically that tends to be you know . . . um . . . minority/majority kind of thing. That is the lens I typically use. I do not reverse decisions rather what I do is if I feel after reflecting and something has played out. If I reflect and feel I made a poor decision I would go back to the group or groups and have a conversation with them about if I had to do this over again or next year or in the future. Using future language to early on plant a seed um . . . of the outcome wasn't what I had planned or hoped or intended.

Interviewer: Hmm. Ok. Lastly, have you had to make a decision in role as the principal you felt was in contrast to the traditional role of the principal? And if so, describe the situation.

E1: Hmmm . . . Um . . . I think if I use the example earlier about the young woman coming from out of district without a special ed. eligibility I think a traditional principal, no disrespect, would easily grabbed the paperwork and sought the medical statement which we tried but we didn't get but the after we realized we don't need it because we are not going to proceed. We have what we need, should we need to. Um . . . that example is on the top of my mind.

You know for me I would end when I think of the traditional role of the principal there are days I wake up and think, "what the fuck am I doing in this role, like . . ." I sometimes feel like I am the least traditional principal out there but then when I think about my daily work, um . . . when you enter the building. You just fall into that role. And you fall into the norms within your little school community and in mine in particular I think it is very traditional so I think for me I am always thinking, you know, how can I keep an equity lens out there and an acceptance lens and values, so kids with difference when I hear derogatory language whether it be race or sexual orientation . . . The little bit I had to address this year. Um . . . and so you know, where are those ways I can be a nontraditional principal. And I don't know . . . I'm . . . that's where I've been the last 6-8 months this past year. That's been more so as I think I am more comfortable being a gay male who happens to be a principal. So when I think of semantics: Am I a gay principal or am I a principal who happens to be gay? So I am going back and forth on that one.

Interviewer: Interesting.

E1: Yeah, right now I do lean more towards a principal who happens to be gay. Um . . . that may evolve over the course of the next 15 to 20 years as a gay principal. I don't know.

Interviewer: Interesting.

E1: Hmmm . . .

Interviewer: Interesting dynamic. Because is there a difference?

E1: Yeah I don't know. For me I would think that uh . . . if there is a difference that I'm . . . you know I think for my next gig my hope is that, because I won't be at this school forever, is that when I enter that school I can enter as a gay principal to be honest with you. I've thought about that if and when I am ready to leave. That will probably be in the cards soon. Wherever I go if it's out of district I can enter truly authentic as a gay principal and have confidence around that. That would be a hope. So . . .

Interviewer: Alright. That is the end of our questions. Thank you for doing that.

E1: You're welcome.

APPENDIX F  
TRANSCRIPT OF PRINCIPAL E2

Interview E2  
August 14, 2014

Interviewer: What is your role in your school?

E2: Uh . . . Principal

Interviewer: Principal. How would you define that role of principal?

E2: Well I think of um . . . the person who provides direction for the school. Um . . . the responsibility for um . . . helping people with their needs uh . . . who are helping students to learn and develop. And I think mainly it is to lead and to help and be I guess the role of servant leader fits the classification that I believe in.

Interviewer: Ok. So . . . tell me . . . I am going to do a follow up question. See right off the bat . . . a follow up question. Tell me what it means to be a servant leader. What does that mean?

E2: I think it means that you um . . . really need to consider the needs of others before you consider your own needs. Um . . . I don't know . . . I am sure I don't do that in every situation but it does seem to be um . . . a central part of how I operate working with people. I want to make sure they have what they need um . . . that could take on a lot of different roles. There are things that I um . . . I mean there are times when I've stacked chairs because the custodian was really um . . . didn't have enough time to finish everything he had to do to get ready for an assembly for instance. Um . . . I've gone into classrooms when the teacher needed support and the counselor or someone else we didn't have somebody for that to work with a kid who need one on one. Um . . . um . . . I think in just providing information and help to where ever it is in the school, wherever there is a need. I mean I try to keep everybody focused on their responsibilities and I try not to have things distract them from doing what they need to do. So if the counselor for instance is doing an anti-bullying lesson in a classroom, which is something we have identified that we want to do in our school and something comes up that is a counselor responsibility but I can step in and deal with it. Then I will step in and deal with it. So I just try to keep people focused on what they do and I try to, to not let things get in the way of the things they need to do. Of course, just by definition will get in the way of times of me doing what I need to do. But the way I see it that's what I need to be doing . . . Is to be helping other people. So...

Interviewer: Ok. Let's jump into number three then.

E2: Ok.

Interviewer: How do you define morals and values? And then, How are they different?

E2: Well I think um . . . values I think um . . . for me are more of what you believe what your preferences are . . . um . . . how you think about things. And I think morals tend to get into . . . there are some that crosses over but I think it gets into more of what is right and wrong in your mind. Um . . . where I think values are more of what your preferences are. How you like to do things, what you think is important and morals I think has an added component of how you define right and wrong.

Interviewer: So um . . . morals then . . . a follow up to that of right and wrong are . . . Who defines right and wrong?

E2: I think the person themselves defines it. I think the reality for people is within the individual. I think there are some what most people would consider some common beliefs of morals that society has said this is right, this is wrong. Um . . . but in the final analysis I think each of us has to answer that question. I think about that when I'm . . . particularly in the area of values it comes up more than I think than morals. But when a teacher feels a certain way about something has a certain value I accept that as their reality even though I may not agree but that is where we start from that is where we work from and then I try have us do what we need to do knowing that their value is different than my value is.

Interviewer: So you find that commonality between or a bridge between the two? Or agree this is where we are starting from?

E2: Yeah.

Interviewer: Ok. Interesting. Ok. So what values did you grow up with that you still connect with today and what lead to the creation of these values?

E2: Um . . . I think um . . . doing a job really well. Um . . . not cutting it short um . . . I think it comes my mom and my dad. Um . . . I know that I used to actually work with my mom when I was . . . uh . . . in college. As I worked as a custodian, they called us porters in a state hospital when she was a housekeeper. And I used to work with her with the heavier cleaning. And uh . . . even at home I had to, the chores I had was always did you get that corner? Don't miss that corner. You know, so I think that I grew up with that belief that you just, it's your responsibility to do things really, really well. And my dad, I remember him saying you know, I played a lot of sports when I was a kid and he was a really good athlete and he always said to me, just do the best you can. Don't worry about what happens just be doing the best you can do. And uh . . . they said that about school. You know, we just . . . we just want you to do the best you can do. Whatever you got, what your grade is, of course we want you to do well but we just want you to do your best work and give your best effort to the teachers. I think that has stayed with me. From the basic things. Treat people well, that kind of thing was always a part of it. I think I had a lot of I mean I don't, I know my folks

didn't think about this back in the day when I was really young. But there was a lot of the equity beliefs we are working with in the district now um . . . I think was . . . I got from my parents in terms of treat everybody with respect, value what other people bring.

Interviewer: That is going to lead me to a follow up question. Because I am thinking about your . . . maybe we might answer this later in the questions but we will see. I am thinking about the servant leader piece. Is the servant leader um . . . part of your role of your principalship? Is that reflected in what you learned as a child? Do you think?

E2: I don't know. I don't know. I have never made that connection. Um . . . I think it developed. To me it developed more as I was going through um . . . my training, my experience in education, my undergraduate work and the early graduate work that I did. It really was instrumental in helping me to form some values about um . . . working with people, with adults and kids. An example is, um . . . this past year we had the teachers did the interim assessments and then they were responsible to score them uh . . . then upload them onto a website. And I know our teachers were, they were stressed. They had just done, we had just done some other evaluations we had decided to do as a building that we felt would really help them and kids to um . . . to gain some knowledge where they were, where the kids were. What I offered to the teachers was if they would just give me the scores I would upload them for them. The uploading part was pretty simple but what happened was they did all the tests. They did all the scoring by item but they hadn't calculated the sum of each question or each section . . . each question I guess it was. When I sent them the form to record the answers on, I didn't send them a form that asked them to sum. So it took probably hours to calculate those but I didn't do it just because I wanted them to get a break, although that was certainly part of it, it gave me a really good understanding of where our kids were on the different types of questions they had on the interim. And that is something that I don't know that other people would do. I think that many people would see that as something that the teachers need to do. And I think that somewhere along the line I just kind of feel like sometimes you have to really . . . in order for people to do their best and be really sharp and motivated and skilled and have the energy to do what they need to do, you have to do something to help them get through it. I'm not sure where that comes from exactly um . . . I know that early on my belief was centered more in the . . . probably in the um . . . the behaviorist orientation where there is reward punishment and then it moved . . . I did some work in my master's program and that and also in the counseling field. Not to be a counselor but getting courses they would take and that got into more of the negotiation or collaboration part of how you work with people and it extended from that when I got out to when I got into teaching, teacher effectiveness training, which is more non-directive it's like the Rogarian um . . . orientation where it's more non-directive and it's not . . . even like the Drykers, not . . . Freud is more the one end of the spectrum it's not . . . Dryker's is like natural logical consequences. An adult still makes the decision about those things.

When you get into the Carl Rogers stuff you're not just deciding for people you're having that come from within them. So my path has been starting with very strong authoritarian beliefs about how to work with kids when I first started which was the common way to dealing with kids in the day when I first started teaching. Moving through that into the more Dryker's type things, the natural logical consequences, which we still use some of, but then moving more toward the other end of the spectrum where it is more non-directive, and its more accepting people where they are then you know helping them see the counter stories or other options where they would then reflect on it, and come to the conclusions themselves rather than being imposed by me. That's kind of where I am now.

Interviewer: Ok.

E2: One thing I was thinking about just this past year . . . it really hit me hard was that I think I am really consistent with my belief how to treat children and how to treat adults. Um . . . I think there are people, the adults who believe there are two different systems in operation. Some of the adults, some of the teachers that I work with for instance they . . . some of them are consistent too and they're not all that kind in the ways they talk with other adults and they certainly aren't with kids but some people they feel that there's one set of principles operating when you teach, when you work with adults and your colleagues and another set operating when you deal with children. I . . . it just really occurred to me this year that I don't have that difference in the designation. I feel the same way whether I am dealing with adults or kids. I even . . . I've even said to people and certainly talking to other people about it is that um . . . if I treated kids the way some teachers want me to . . . um . . . if I am treating them the same way they want me to treat the kids they would be furious and be filing grievances and be very upset. And I find that they get upset when I . . . they want me to treat really well but when I do, extend the same courtesy to the kids they feel that it is wrong because they feel I should be more powerful to the kid and I just more and more realize that just doesn't work with these kids that are really extreme.

Interviewer: Ok, so what values have you developed, this is question number 5 here, what values have you developed as an adult that are different with which you grew up with? You touched on it a little bit.

E2: I think the big thing is the issue of power. In terms of the hierarchy of . . . of um . . . not responsibilities I don't think but what your position is um . . . as an adult or a child or even as an adult in terms of other people that have a different . . . they're in a different place in the hierarchy the organizational chart. Uh . . . I think I was more . . . when I was younger those lines seemed to be really well defined and different and um . . . not so much in the social aspect of it but just in the decision making. And I think over the years I've come to believe more that it's more of a lateral structure in decision making. I think that is something that was . . . is different um . . .

Interviewer: Ok, alright. Number six, what values have you developed in your . . . and you're touching on a lot of these so . . . what values have you developed professionally in your career?

E2: Uh . . . I think um . . . support for others is one. Um . . . you know the importance of quality work. I don't know if that was developed. It was always there. When I was . . . I had taken a class . . . oh gosh it must have been . . . it must have been 15 years or more after my undergraduate preparation maybe even 20. And I had to write just a short paper on beliefs . . . philosophy. And um . . . I wrote the paper and it was a short time after that that I was cleaning out some files and I saw a paper I had written as a sophomore in college on philosophy of education and it was, it was after I had done my master program that I had done the second paper but it was a pretty good time frame in there. And uh . . . I guess it was probably wasn't 15 or 20 but maybe 10 or 12 years um . . . and it was remarkable to me how . . . how compatible that my new beliefs which I thought were new beliefs were the same that I said when I was a sophomore in college. It was very unexpected. I thought I had learned all this new stuff but when I looked at some of the philosophers that I had quoted and uh . . . this stuff was not in my wheelhouse. I am not valedictorian. I'm just a hard working guy but when I looked at that stuff I said "geez, you know, I still believe that." I just do it a little different. That's about the time I started to switch over from the . . . and it took sort of a while to get there . . . but to switch over from the power based interactions from managing kids and . . . I mean I was never abusive but I was certainly directive as a teacher. "Let's go do that." Some of those statements still come out but it's just completely different now. Um . . . that is how it developed. Um . . . I think it . . . the foundational pieces that I wrote about as a sophomore were probably in place when I was a kid growing up that I got from my parents and my coaches. I mean I had some really good coaches in college. I mean one guy threw two no-hitters for Duke and he was a roommate of one of the guys who eventually went on to um . . . major league to pitch. Really quality coaches. One of the other guys who was a . . . had been a student at the graduate school I went to was really highly respected for um . . . for turning out physical education teachers . . . very professional school. Um . . . when we went to class we had to . . . certain ways we had to dress for class . . . you had to shower between each class when you go to labs and things . . . and they always said go first class or don't go at all . . . was one of their mottos. And I think my high school coaches did that and my parents were the same, so I think those early experiences got me to where I was as a sophomore and it was surprising as I wrote later in my career that those foundational pieces stayed. That's what kind of forms I think the actions that I take and what I have done with my career and how I managed it. And um . . . how I treat people. I think that's . . .

Interviewer: Ok.

E2: I think one of the things too is that the principal you are kind of forced into . . . I mean if you are going to be successful at it . . . you are kind of forced into looking into other people's needs. I mean if you think you are going to walk in which I think some people do and say you are going to do this and do this and do that. They may get compliance but they are not going to get the deep uh . . . effort by people, that people make to do a really good job. And I think that really . . . I mean I was an association President when I was in my fourth year of teaching. I had negotiated for, during my second and third year of teaching on the negotiating team and I think those . . . and I had worked for (name of teachers association). I had been a rep. a county rep not just a building rep but also a county rep. and went to the RA, the representative assembly and those sort of things. Uh . . . I am friends with the guy who used to be executive secretary for (name of teachers association) um . . . his wife taught with my best friend and I got to know him and I invited him down to our small local down in (name of town) and he came and made a presentation. So I got to know him over the years and we talk leadership with him and uh . . . so I think that that . . . the experience of being in a position where you are responsible to make the call . . . everybody has an idea and most people see it in simplistic black and white terms that fits within their narrow perspective. You got to accept that piece and know that's where it is coming from but I think how we interact with teachers particularly with the stress they are under and all the things they are responsible for I think is really important and I think that sort of pushed me more toward listen first, accept people where they are, don't fly off the handle when things don't seem to go well. You just got to try to hang in there a little bit. And I find that what usually happens is that people come back and say, "you know I was just off base. I am sorry I talked to you that way." They would never do that if I attacked them. When they came at me, they would just look for a way to justify and defend what they are doing. And I understand that people, that happens because people are stressed, they're unhappy and they're worried about something. And that comes from the TET training, the teacher effectiveness training that I had and I was an instructor for teacher effectiveness training. So . . .

Interviewer: Ok. Alright, number 7. We are just zipping along here.

E2: This is a tough one.

Interviewer: How are the values you have developed seen in your personal life and your role as principal? So what are the things that are cross overs?

E2: Have we done seven?

Interviewer: We have not done seven.

E2: Ok. I mean eight rather. Seven.

Interviewer: We are on seven.

E2: I was down one.

Interviewer: Values developed and seen in your personal life and seen in your professional world as a principal. So . . . what crosses over? As (name of E2) person to (name of E2) principal?

E2: Uh . . . boy . . . well let's see. I am trying to think of examples of how that plays out. Um . . . I don't know. I think when I am dealing with . . . in my personal life when I am dealing with people that um that are not family that I probably that I am very, very consistent with that . . . with dealing with those folks particularly if there is a potential for conflict. Um dealing with a store person you know they're not too friendly or they're giving you a hard time that's pretty consistent um . . . I think I am . . . I feel a little more um . . . that's a little more allowed that I am not as consistent with my personal life like . . . I think my morals and values are the same but in terms of how I interact with people I am certainly not angry. I am not an angry person. But I feel with people I can trust I can be more . . . I can vent a little more if I need to say, "oh God, this is driving me crazy." You know, with people I trust I can do that. Um . . . that is more of my wife, my brother and sister in law that just came and visited. Um . . . I think it's what always pops into my mind when I start to be impatient with people is that whether it is really . . . I discipline myself to do it my job but even in my personal life when I'm not . . . when my guard is down there's always something that pops into my mind that says, this person is stressed. Something is going on causing them to do this. People who are happy and satisfied with the way things are going do not treat people poorly by and large. Usually there is something there that's causing them to do that. And what I try to do is say when I have something that could cause me to do it, really fight that, that reaction or that possibility that you could go that way. So I think that that piece and sometimes I just say, "oh I'm done with this." I would not do that in my profession. You can't write people off in your job but I think personally if I get into that situation and I don't have an investment in someone I may not be as patient with them. But I think there is always something in my mind though that alerts me that this person has some needs that aren't being met and that's why they are doing what they are doing. They didn't wake up this morning thinking they would give me a hard time. They just have something that is not working for them. They may have had someone that came in before that really attacked them. I noticed this in places like (name of store) for instance. When we go to the pharmacy for something, to get some meds and there have been times, there is a person, we go there you know, periodically, and um . . . there is a person there who seems to have some negative demeanor and when we go up whether it's myself or my wife, I said you know just smile and be friendly. And we find . . . found that every time we have done that you can see the thing change in her and she can be more friendly and more relaxed. And I have seen that with other people who deal with the public a lot. They're

so guarded because most people who come at them are really critical, and insulting and rude. And so they stone themselves against that and they . . . it's a coping device I think or protection. I think that sometimes when you can approach people and they can all of a sudden start to read that you are not one of the ones that are going to give them a hard time. That you don't have that, you know, that agenda um . . . I think they tend to be different. So I try to do that piece when I deal with people in public to and my wife is good at that.

Interviewer: Ok, number eight.

E2: Here's the hard one.

Interviewer: Do the best you can.

E2: This is one I think . . . I mean I know what is right and wrong but how to explain it is tough.

Interviewer: That's ok. How would you define what is morally right and wrong? And give an example if you can.

E2: Ok. We're on professional.

Interviewer: This is personal. What is morally right and wrong personally?

E2: I keep going back to the question in front of it. What is morally right and wrong personally?

Interviewer: Uh huh.

E2: Ok. Um . . . I think maybe this is going to probably be a stupid example but something that you know something that deliberately hurts somebody else . . . um . . . is morally wrong and you can sort of anticipate what is going to happen um something that is very simple. This is not a very high level example. You go into a parking lot with your car and see that there is one space that is really close to the door and one space that is far away. You see somebody coming in with a car. You have the opportunity to take that space and yet you look in that car and that person looks like that person might be older. I mean I am older but I can get around. There are some people who are older that can't. But you know, do you take . . . do you run in and take that spot? Um . . . in that situation that's not, like I said, not very um . . . not a real highbrow kind of an example. I am trying to think of some others. I mean . . . I think when I generally classify it as . . . if you have an opportunity to affect a situation and you can either do something that would be helpful to someone or something that would be hurtful to someone that it's the morally right course would be to do

something that is helpful to them. I think in general, you know that example was not a great one, but um . . . but I think anything that is like that. If you are in line somewhere um . . . these are trivial examples but you 've got, you see somebody that looks like they're . . . they've got a lot of things and they have some kids with them and they're going through the super market line and even though you may have a lot of things, they have kids. It's tough. Kids are giving them a hard time, do you let them go in front of you? That kind of thing. I think maybe um . . . in some of the political questions of social support um . . . I think it . . . what we do as a society . . . how I think about what we do as a society . . . I think . . . I think basically I would . . . I view that we need to consider the common good in some cases...in many cases over the what's . . . what's good for you over the person. I think it comes in terms of voting for budgets in schools. Um . . . the big budges for schools. Or things that are going to happen in a community. If you . . . if there is something in a community a park or something and you know that you won't use that park ever but there is a large group of people who would really benefit from it having that green space. I think for me the correct, the morally correct judgment would be to vote yes for it. Even though it costs some money cause it helps somebody. So I think that's where it kind of comes into play with me personally. It's common good versus the individual good, what serves the community versus what serves you personally. And I think there are obviously times that I would chose to do something that would support me personally but I always think about does helping me personally is it causing somebody else real stress. You know? And you know what I still may say I need this one. But I always consider it. I usually . . . any types of social programs . . . I see a lot of bumper stickers support our troops and then I hear about and read about how these guys are coming back injured seriously and there is no support for them because congress isn't voting for the funds. The same people who aren't voting for the funds are the ones with bumper stickers all over their cars support our troops. And I see that, that to me is, that, that is inconsistent. Their actions are inconsistent with what they are saying. Some people could define that as hypocrisy but in their minds it may not be it may be clearly their doing the right thing because something else they've considered but I tend to fall on the side of let's support the people who need support who can't get it themselves because they need a hand. Where other people who are in positions of being able to get things for themselves you know they should be thinking about helping some folks that you are not in that position that are not as fortunate. That sounds kind of corny but that's how . . . where I landed I guess.

Interviewer: Ok, Great. How would you define, you touched on this a little bit already. How would you define what is morally right and wrong professionally?

E2: I think really the um . . . the one thing that um . . . drives what we do what we should do is what's impact on kids with the decisions that we make. And the thing where it comes into conflict is that at some point there's a, there 's a spot where you get to where by making sure that kids get what they need there's an extreme amount of

stress on teachers getting what they need. And I know we always say we make decisions based upon what's best for kids and we do and I do. Um I also know that at some point it's sort of like by going beyond that line you may be putting people under enough stress that's going to affect how they can serve kids. I am always looking to see where are we in terms of what I'm doing with the staff and how capable are they to help kids because of what I am imposing on them or asking them to do. One of the things that came up last year, one of our teachers um . . . (name of teacher), the one that left. Very outspoken, I love having (name of teacher), because she is one of those teachers, there's no bows on her or ribbons. She just comes right at you to let you have it but she's not mean. There's another teacher who would be . . . does stuff underground . . . she's mean. But (name of teacher) is not mean. I love working with her. It's interesting we didn't actually hired her at (name of school), or interviewed her. I'd forgotten that. We had lunch one day and one of the teachers from (name of school) he reminded us that we had interviewed her. But she wouldn't . . . we didn't think she would work at (name of school) because she was so . . . so honest and so forceful that we thought the parents would eat her alive. But she's done well. She did really well at (name of another school). But she was saying to me, which on one hand made me feel good but on the other hand made me worried a little bit she said, "I know you don't require that we do stuff, and we have to do all these things the district is putting out there." She said, "by asking we are going to do it. And we are going to try to do it so well that we stress ourselves out because we really push." And she said, "I think we push harder than other teachers do in some of the other schools. Just by you mentioning it we are going to try to do it. We think it is the right thing to do. And I thought, "whew . . ." That's it. It's a lot of responsibility.

Interviewer: It is a lot of responsibility. Absolutely.

E2: And I have always tried to get to that point but now that I might be there with some of the people it's a little . . . it just feels like . . . don't screw it up. Don't ask them to do too much. So um . . . but that's . . . I think that's the point, are we asking them to do too much and it's going to actually back fire. Kids won't be served as well because we get the teachers too stressed. And last year we were really close to that point. And that's why I did the interim assessment stuff and tried to say do it this way if you can't get it quite done this way here's a couple more weeks to get it done. And I know the district folks have done that with us. They've said, you there this is a tough time, if you need another week or two go ahead . . . a month. Um . . . But professionally the morally or morally wrong thing centers around how can we best serve kids. The things that serve kids but I think you have to try and also do both and serve teachers . . . I think those are the right things to do. It's clear to me I just don't know if I always get it exactly right.

Interviewer: Ok. Number 10. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong personally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. And describe an example. And did you resolve this conflict if at all.

E2: One was . . . when I first stepped in at um . . . I didn't think this would fit in her but it might. When I first stepped in at (name of current school) there was a conflict between uh . . . what looked like a lot of people and the PTO. It really boiled down to two people. One was a bio-mom of a little girl who in third grade about the time and the other was the step-mom and the bio-dad was with the step-mom in (name of another school district) and the girl was here in (name of current district) and the bio-mom was here in (name of current district). The feuding was between the step-mom who was in (name of neighboring district) and the bio-mom. And they were both in the PTO leadership and they were . . . one . . . they were both wanting to be like involved in the leadership and there was another women who was the president at the time so I walked in . . . (name of former principal) had said why don't two you who are feuding be co-vice presidents? It helped . . . well it was ok to sort of get them through you know at least past that year. His last year and the start of my first year. But they were really angry and they said, I mean somebody and I don't know who it was because it was anonymous sent an email to (name of Superintendent), (name of former district administrator), all of the teachers she could get emails for, all of her vast email list, and I think she even sent it to one of the legislators telling them what a horrible job I had done. And I had just came in right? I hadn't been there 6 weeks. Everybody in the world, I don't even (name of Superintendent), I asked him, "did you see that email" and he goes, "I don't remember it." So . . . um . . . and (name of former supervisor) said, "what a flake" I'm mean you know . . . it was that kind of reaction and it was almost comical. It was so serious with these people and what they wanted me to do was they wanted me to fire the vice-president who was the step mom. Um . . . the next year she was actually the vice president and I basically said to them it's . . . you know . . . it was so much . . . I don't know if it was a moral issue so much but um . . . it was um . . . really uh . . . they were really pushing me hard to do it and in um . . . in February the four of them came in to my office and resigned as leaders. This was the following February. I said, I'm sorry to see you go but like I said when I first came in here I told (former school name) parents the same thing. We really appreciate what you give us with your volunteers and your money that you contribute to us and what we put back into use and we would continue to do that but if you don't give us a dime we will still have a hell of a school. I said, I believe that then and I believe it now and if you ever change your mind and want to come back I just want you to know that I very well . . . very much so welcome you back and good luck to you. And uh . . . and about a month and a half later somebody stood up at one of the meetings and said I move that we fire the vice president and they all agreed and no one argued against it. Unfortunately several teachers raised their hands. They were at the meeting and it was the one who was the step-mom and the next motion was to insert another person who was on the fringe of that group and uh . . . they were moved on from there and since then that little girl is now in middle school. I think she is going to be an eighth grader

this year and uh . . . and step mom is in (name of neighboring district). They have a kid in (name of neighboring school district) so she has no connection now with our school. The other one was a boy who was the son of the bio mom of this other girl. He is going to be in fifth grade this year. She has been fine. I have had several discussions were her and her husband. I get along with them reasonably well know. I mean she was really, really nasty. She was really abusive verbally to our office staff. I worked with that a little bit. I think that the decision was . . . is it right for me to step in and make that . . . and try to do something with that? Which I thought could have easily been illegal. I mean it was definitely not morally right for me to do it. I had no question about that. I just thought I don't have a choice in this. The thing was . . . it was kind of tough . . . I just heard that I had to have an operation. I came the day after I had gotten the news I had to have an operation. So I was down in (name of local equity training) and I was seeing emails and it was just before I had gotten this information I knew that potentially I was going to have surgery and uh and I'm down at (name of local equity training) and you're by yourself at (name of local equity training) and you get your own room which I was glad about so I could sort of think and relax. Um . . . I called my wife a couple of times . . . I just need to talk to somebody . . . this is what's going on. She said, "hang in there." And so I sent some emails, I was always very respectful in the emails and tried to mediate. "I will be back in a few days and we will work on it." So that was one that was pretty high powered and now it's uh . . . the PTO is functioning very well. It's not, they don't have as many people. They lost a bunch during that time because people were fed up. One of these guys was a lawyer and um . . . he had come and asked me some questions about outdoor school and how kids are checked out and how it works out there with the teachers. And so I went through. I spent two or three days just gathering information and sent him about a seven page memo um . . . answering his 11 questions and uh . . . he came into me and he goes, "God, I didn't want you to spend this much time on this." I said, "well it was something I didn't know for sure and I know there have been other questions cause as I was exploring it they were saying other people had these kind of questions. This was going to help us for years to come." Well he came up to me and said, "what is with these women?" He said, "Gosh they are like mean girls." He said, "tell you what (name of E2)." He said, "if you need a president of the PTO call me and I will do it." I thought, I am not going to do that right now, they decided to work it out. Let's see if they can kind of work through it on their own. So that was . . . I think there was some moral issue around that certainly some values, some common sense. But that was a tough one because I had just walked in the door and bang . . . these people were furious.

Interviewer: Sounds like it. Let's look at number 11 then.

E2: How are we doing on time?

Interviewer: We are doing great on time. We are doing great. So describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong professionally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. Give an example if you can. Again, this is morally wrong professionally.

E2: Um . . . Ok here's one. It was a quick one. It wasn't a long drawn out thing. We had a little first grade kid, they discovered he had a lump on his neck and he had to have it removed and it was cancer. And he was going through chemo. And um . . . one of the first grade teachers who is a real stickler for homework, making sure kids get their homework done was ever giving him a hard time. I don't know if I ever told you this. I may have told you this story. Was really giving the kid a hard time about it. And the mother didn't say anything but she was really on this kid when he would come in. And it was during the time . . . he would have some chemo and he would have a few days off and then he would go back in again or a few weeks or whatever. And um . . . you know he was tired from it and our two counselors . . . we had (name of counselor) who was at (name another school) three quarter time and . . . 25 at (name of school) and the other . . . 75 was (name of another counselor) and one day they call me into the office. One afternoon and . . . during the day I guess it was . . . and um (name of counselor) said to me, "would you please talk to this woman before I smack her?" I mean a first grade teacher and I said, "you got a minute to talk?" So I walked in and she said, "she is badgering this little first grader about getting his homework done." (Name of counselor) works in a summer camp for cancer kids and (name of other counselor) helps her the first week and then (name of counselor) stays there. She's been doing it for years. She's over at (name of another school) full time. And so I said, "I will talk to (name of teacher)." It was the mother of the teacher at . . . that (name of another principal) at (name of another school). That's the mom. They are different in terms of the challenges they provide sounds like (name of teacher at another school) is doing much better. And (name of teacher) did better last year too. She really stepped it up. She is starting to do better. Um . . . so I went to her and talked to her and said, "um . . . I understand there's . . . you had some concerns about his homework." I can't remember his name. Um . . . and she said, "yeah he just doesn't get his homework in." I said, "well, (name of teacher), you know he's going through chemo right?" She said, "yeah but he's not tired all the time." I said, and I guess one of the few times I didn't want to engage in dialogue I said, "(name of teacher) cut him some slack. The kids' going through chemo. He has cancer. He is going to worried about stuff. And he's a first grader." And so, she did. I said, "you know can you take some stuff off his plate?" And she said, "Ok, I will." That was one that you know . . . um . . . I thought it was morally wrong . . . uh. I am not a big homework proponent anyways. I think if you work kids really hard in school homework should be used for exploring things. Trying to figure things out or practicing some things they already know how to do. And if you can get them to get that done in two or three problems don't give them 25 or 30. That's how I have always felt about it. Um . . . I want kids to have a chance to be kids and not have 4 or 5 hours of homework every night. So that one, that one was

easy. But that was one . . . I am trying to think if there was anything. So I don't think there is anything I can think of that I thought was um . . . morally wrong that came from the state or something like that. Um . . . Morally wrong professionally . . . no. I think it is more of that kind of thing. Uh . . .

I think one big thing maybe this comes into this. I have been trying to move our staff . . . I tried to do it this at (name of previous school) . . . I think we had some success. I tried to do it at (name of current school) I think may have had more success even though it is a bigger staff because of who we have in place for our special ed. Teacher (name of teacher) and our counselor with (name of counselor). Um . . . there are several teachers are key people who would be on board with this. To move away from really pressuring kids with power. And no one is using it abusively . . . just what . . . how do you get kids to do what you want them to do and what I want teachers to do with kids is what I am trying to do with them. I am trying to encourage, to um . . . provide the information and supports that they need, provide some expectations, accept them where they are. But always be moving toward an approximation of what you want. That's kind of the way I work I guess. As I try to analyze it in the last couple of years. (Name of superintendent) said one time at one of my meetings I had with those guys I had over there for a board report. He said, "it seems like you keep constant pressure, gentle pressure on people, and over time you get them to move. It looks like it maybe intentional." I said, "I guess probably that is how I work." I don't try to be . . . I think . . . I don't think it works if you honestly feel inside of you, you are being coercive. I think you have to have a honest feeling that you are trying to get people to see it a different way and change values. One of the teacher change models in teacher effectiveness training is that you tell somebody something and you give them a different thought than what they would think and you move away and let it sit. And then come back later at another time, after time has gone by and you do it again. And you let some time go by and you do it again. You give people this sort of . . . you give them a chance to get used to the idea sort of. That is what the right wing has done with their talking points for years since the 80s . . . the early 80s. That's how they have gotten a lot of people in this country to follow them. I remember (name) was the executive secretary of (name of state teachers association), he said, "what they are doing, don't take these people lightly. What they are doing is well funded. They're um . . . intelligent. They're really smart. And they are very committed to their cause." And the (name of another superintendent from a different state) at (name of east coast university) said, "the problem we have with those folks is they don't want choice for everybody. They just want you to have . . . to do their choice." And . . . it is a way of changing values I guess. In that way it's something that has hurt education over the years and maybe some of the social programs. Um . . . even the gun lobby and that kind of thing. They've influenced that. What I try to do is give that kind of . . . try to influence people rather than . . . dictate, mandate to them. And if they don't quite get there . . . I am ok with them listening to me and maybe they will next week. I don't think it is a model that is often admired or promoted in organizations but I think it is

one the books say is the way that works. And I think it works. It's not . . . I don't see it . . . like as this hidden agenda. I tell people what I think. I am honest about it. Um . . . I just . . . I always try to think is that really . . . you know . . . is this person . . . have they heard the message? And uh . . . are they ready for the message? I am really patient with things like that. I mean I've waited sometimes a year or two. Now I would think that probably people who are my supervisors would probably want me to push faster and harder. I think sometimes I do, I say guys we have to do this. So I don't want to make it sound like it is idealistic or not but it is . . . I don't always function that way. There are times I say, you know we got to do this. But here's this and this. When we got into ELD, I brought in all the test scores and said here are the sub groups and here are our scores. And showed them on a chart where we were. And two of the most influential teachers that we have who are well respected by the staff said, "we can't not do this." The other one said, "we have to get into this stuff." And uh . . . the other ones who would drag their feet who basically were nodding and saying absolutely. Cause they really want to serve kids. I know that staff was about. They want to do it right. And the other teachers who are usually the "yeah but" had no place to go. They have since made some adjustments and come on board. (Name of teacher) is one of them. You know, so I think that's the piece that over all you know . . . professionally how to deal with that stuff. How I have dealt with it.

Interviewer: Ok, let's go on to number 12 then.

E2: Ok.

Interviewer: It feeds right into that. Describe your decisions in your role as principal requiring you to follow a policy, regulation or law you felt was in conflict with a student need.

E2: Yeah, one of the stressors that I have is that there are times when I feel I have better answers than what I hearing I have to do. And um . . . I think we all probably feel that were all in that position. I certainly respect the people who are in positions above me. That comes in conflict with my basic belief that you have to follow the rules. And if somebody says this is what you have to do and they are the boss, you got to do it. Because I always keep in the back of my mind they could be right. I don't think the things we have done as a district or I have done or asked to do are way off base. I think they have been really consistent with the beliefs that I have had anyways but if there is something . . . with me it is more of a timing thing. Like I would like to do that but that's really a good thing to do but I have these other things in place I think people can handle right now and now we have to add that to it. That kind of thing happened a lot last year. Because it seemed like we were trying a lot of things out and um . . . I felt that it was too much. I think it was too much for the teachers and I felt it was too much for the principals but you know I don't know . . . sometimes you can't do just one thing, and do another thing and another thing. You have to do it all

together to make it work. I think that's where we were last year as a district. So although I felt uncomfortable with it I knew that we had to do that. What I try to do in those situations, the fact that I feel that maybe are trying to do too much at one time. And the fact that uh . . . I am a rule follower so I am going to do too much at one time. I try to figure out a way that will satisfy the requirement what we're obligated to do. What's the spirit of it? So we'll be sensitive to the needs of the teachers and the kids. I talk more about the teachers than the kids because that's who's my group that I am responsible. I am responsible for the kids but they direct the kids and I direct them. Um . . . So that is how I try to work with it . . . is try really hard to follow the rules and do what we need to do. Um . . . but try to find a way to do what's doable. And (name of supervisor) is good that way. She's really good when I work with her on stuff um . . . she has a very clear idea in her mind what is tight and loose and a good example is for example, when the teachers were freaking out with we have to do this and we have to do that, (name of supervisor) said, and I was really glad, because this was something that we needed at the time. And I was trying to go in this direction with the teachers but I wasn't sure I was on solid ground until I got a chance to talk to (name of supervisor). She said, the only thing that is tight is that you need to teach to the standards and you need to know where kids are. And you have to do the interim assessments. She said, other than that it is open. Once that really came out it took a lot of pressure off of me. So I could be a rule follower but have a lot of flexibility in how we do it. That's when I get to a point I feel like I don't have much flexibility. I try to figure out a way to get it done in a way that works for people. And I talk with them about it. This is what we got to do, what is some options that we have on how we get it done. And teachers will say, how about if we did this? Well we could do that as long as we did this. I think if we did this, this part of it, we could do it. Then we just work it back and forth until we get it done.

Interviewer: Ok. So number 13, describe a situation in which you had to make a decision addressing the needs of an individual over the needs of a larger group. What risks if any were involved?

E2: I can think of one. This one isn't really the larger group. It is really more the needs of one person over another.

Interviewer: Ok.

E2: Um . . . I can start with that and maybe something will pop into my . . . um . . . Last . . . not this year . . . but the last academic year . . . we lost (name of teacher) to cancer. He asked to come over 2 years ago from (name of another school) because he just wanted to get out of Title 1 and all the things they were doing years ago before (name of current principal) got there. Um . . . (name of former principal) came in and settled things down. I don't know if you were here at that time or not but they were really struggling with interpersonal relations between among groups on the staff.

(Name of former principal) walked in and did a nice job of pulling that together but because their scores were lower they having to do a lot of programs that were under the way were doing them um when we had DIBELS in place and the teachers were really . . . I mean their methodology was mandated. And (name of teacher) was not that kind of guy. He was more shoot from the hip but he was fantastic with kids. I saw him teach a math lesson that I thought this guy really gets it. He was one of the best I have ever seen teach a math lesson. He could really teach. And he was fantastic with writing and he had the kids who hated writing, writing every week and excited about it. He was just a fantastic guy. Well his student teacher (name of teacher) who is now one of our fourth grade teachers. And during the year (name of teacher) was here one year and in June of that year he had his operation and started chemo. That was 2 years ago. He didn't start the year, he wasn't able to start school in September so (name of another teacher) came in who was the former student teacher and subbed for him and we thought, well he was hoping to get back for Halloween, then he was hoping to get back for Thanksgiving, then Christmas, then spring break. Then it came to a point it was obvious he wasn't . . . he said he wasn't going to be able to come back. It was March or April, it was March right around spring break, and (name of teacher) took over and she was still in that room. She wasn't just his student teacher but a close friend. Well she went into that room and this year she started . . . she asked me if she could move into a room across the hall because (name of another teacher) got taken as a coach at (name of another school) so her room was open and I said yeah. We can move you over there. And she did and everything was fine. And she really . . . and they really connected with (name of another teacher) who is thought of as one of the top teachers in the district. I mean really . . . (name of supervisor) sees her as maybe one of the top five teachers or top three. I mean she is really respected. And she and (name of teacher) were partners and they collaborated like crazy this year. They were really good. And um . . . they were sort of in different places. This is room 2 and this is where (name of teacher) was in 9 and (name of teacher) is here. Well she went out of 9 over to 2 this year. And then (another principal) transferred a teacher in involuntarily to us um . . . that was in room 9. Well and next her . . . she was a fifth grade teacher . . . and next to her was fourth and a fourth grade teacher was here and a fifth grade teacher was here and another (name of teacher) was here. Was those two guys moved into sixth and with (name of teacher) leaving room 3 open which some people perceive as a bigger room . . . there is like a little vestibule as you walk in which is useless but it makes the room look a little bigger. (Name of teacher) and (name of teacher) said to me, the year before, "can I just move into that room, there is too much (name of teacher with cancer) in this room." So I said yeah we can do that no problem. When (name of teacher) came in from (name of another school) came in this year and (name of teacher) moved away from room 3 which is perceived to be a bigger room, (name of teacher) asked if she could move to that room. Then we are hiring another teacher um . . . who we . . . she wanted me to move (name of teacher) into her room . . . room 9. So then she would move to room 3 and the new fifth grade teacher would move to room 2. It would require a double move but she really wanted

the bigger room. It was more of a selfish thing. And what the thing was the thing that she said to (name of teacher) was or somebody said to the other two fifth grade teachers, well (name of teacher) (E2) moved (name of teacher) out of room 9 because she was close to (name of teacher with cancer) and all the memories and everything. (Name of teacher) comment was "it's been a year she needs to get over it." And to me that was one of the worst comments I have ever heard from a teacher. And I really think (name of teacher) is a decent teacher. I think she has some differences in philosophy. I was told she came over because she . . . they wanted bilingual teachers. Well (name of teacher) seems pretty bilingual to me. So I think there may have been other things going on. I think there was a difference in philosophy and between (name of another principal) and (name of teacher). I mean she is not a bad teacher. But I am going to kind of watch her to make sure she's doing ok. She seems to be doing fine. That comment when I heard that, that has bothered me more than anything that I have heard in a long time. Um . . . most people might say, "it has been a year, she might be ok with it." But that goes back to that thing where are people, how do they look at it individually. The fact that (name of teacher) feels that way, she owns her feelings. Whether anyone else feels that's not right, isn't what we should be worried about. We should worried about how (name of teacher) feels about it. There was never any doubt in my mind I'm not moving in the . . . I'm not moving (name of teacher). So what happens was (name of teacher) was in room 8 wanted to move over to room 3 and they could share a curtain and they collaborate like nobody I nobody else in the building and we have some people who collaborate very well. And they were above our best teams in terms of the collaboration in our school. So they get want they want if she wants to move over. But that was one there that it was a question of . . . you know . . . do I satisfy one person over another. It wasn't really the good . . . the larger group.

Trying to think I know there have been situations where this has happened. Um . . . oh gosh it probably centers with just with our curriculum and the ELD and the focused part of it. Um . . . you know we had a teacher . . . maybe a couple . . . first grade again that really wanted to put everything into integrated ELD. They didn't want to have a focused 30 minute period to teach the focused part of ELD. Um . . . that . . . no that won't fit.

Interviewer: We can go on and see if something comes up. Not a big deal. I think you pretty much answered number 13 but it's up to you. We can always come back to it.

E2: Ok.

Interviewer: Ok, so number 14, So have you had to make decisions in your role as principal, benefiting one part of your school community but denied another? If so, describe the situation.

E2: Um . . . I'm sure I have. You know I work so much in trying to create a situation in which the problem solving results in everybody's needs being met that I try to stay out of these. I treat them like . . . you know . . . it's something that I don't want to be in that situation. I'm sure there are some where I had to do that. I can't think of anything that was really a major thing. Um . . . that is where consensus comes from. The staff is you know . . . It's hard because unless you have a lot of people who really understand this concept and skillful with it . . . we get into discussions and they say ok we can do it anyway . . . you decide. And . . . I say . . . what I say is whether I decide or we take a vote, I don't like to take votes, because once the vote comes out, half the people feel like they got what they wanted and half the people feel like they didn't. I don't want that half feel like they didn't have a say or we couldn't address it. What I always say is ok, if we did this, you don't get what you want. But if we do, do that then what can we do to make it seem doable for you guys. That's consensus. I really try to resist the vote. Every once in a while I say let's take a vote but it's not going to be binding but we're just going to see where we are. Then we work on it from there but I know that there probably have been some. Um . . . I think of the one example I gave with uh . . . the room switch was one. I hate to use that for everything.

Interviewer: No that is fine.

E2: That's one where somebody got . . . that's clearly (name of teacher) didn't get what she wanted. I never really had a discussion with (name of teacher) because I made the decision and she never came to me about it. I was hearing it through other people and I thought if it's important enough for her then she will come but I'm still . . . I'm thinking somewhere along the line I try not to jump in like a bull in a China shop and deal with stuff until I really feel like I can . . . I am knowledgeable enough to be able to make a situation better rather than worse. I really feel like with that comment I need to talk to (name of teacher) about that. Um . . . I think . . . I'm getting . . . I didn't get any of this until the end of the year. And the people who brought it to me were (names of teachers). And (name of teacher) is highly professional and highly ethical. I mean you worked with her. She didn't say anything all year long. She said, you know I gave (name of teacher) some ideas on math and how to deal with the math with Bridges and she said, oh that sounds good and she never attempted to implement any of them. So um . . . you know she's alienating herself from the staff in a way that I haven't seen anybody else do. People get ticked at each other . . . I think the reason that (name of teacher) has started to improve is that I have resisted when she has wanted to "yeah but" it and I have accepted her comment but I try to move away from it and still move on. And now (name of teacher) has started to make more helpful and useful comments at staff meetings. They are more thoughtful and analytical and are not just sniping what she tends to want to do. She tries to stir the pot. But even with (name of teacher) . . . I think people really don't really . . . I think there are people who just don't buy into . . . want to tie into what she is doing. One time she told a parent that her parent she shouldn't have her kid in one of the second grade teachers

classrooms because (name of teacher) is first. The teacher is not strong on discipline and the teacher is one of our best teachers for dealing with special ed. Kids. The kids are really screwed up, who have a lot of needs. The toughest kids coming out of first grade and actually worked with not only the special ed. But the ones going through the process and having inclusion assistants there. She has been fantastic and I said. You know I can't let that comment stand, I have to talk to (name of teacher) about it. I said, please I wish you wouldn't. She said, we get along ok on the surface and I am right next door to her and she said I have to work with her. Reluctantly I let it go um . . . I always wonder about those things. My feeling is need to deal with things honestly but I don't want to make it worse but at some point I think something will come up and I will have an opportunity. Because I just learned about it in June that this stuff was happening underneath everything. Something will come up and I will have the opportunity to talk with (name of teacher) in a way that won't feel confrontational and threatening to her. And I will be able to work with it. So I am just sort of keeping that under my hat. Sometimes when I don't get the opportunity and it's been awhile I'll go and talk and make a comment. It will be tangentially related to it. And I will use that as a starter. I try to be really honest with the teachers about it. Um . . . .

Interviewer: Alright . . . number 15.

E2: Are we still doing ok time wise?

Interviewer: We are doing great. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal which caused you later to reflect on those decisions and reverse them? If so, describe the situation.

E2: Yeah let me think . . . I think yes. The big one was um . . . when we were really required to um . . . have them teach the templates for all of the kids. Um . . . and um . . . you know we had people who didn't really believe in that. Um . . . I saw the value in the sound symbol charts and that sort of thing. I think some of that was ok for all of the kids early on but I just felt that is taking up a lot of time when we could be doing other reading strategies. I was trained more classically when teaching reading where it was vocabulary strategies, comprehension strategies. We use preview questions, read, recite, review, sub skills of comprehension and vocabulary and the direct instruction because I had some training in direct instruction. Um . . . actually it was from uh . . . Marilyn Sprick who wrote the Readwell program. She was in (name of district) years ago when I was teaching. So I had that training but we used it just with kids who just couldn't word read and we quickly transitioned them into more comprehension strategies because the DISTAR program, the original program where mastery stemmed from was getting kids to word read. I asked a third grader one time, she came into our class as fourth grade and she was reading really low. She read as fluent as an adult. I asked her the first question and I saw blank in her eyes and I thought well maybe she just didn't understand. I asked her another question . . . I asked her five

questions and didn't have a clue. It was my first time I had experienced that of kids decoding but not really reading. So I was really worried about that piece. I thought we were spending too much time doing that. But that's the time I was a rule follower and I didn't think we had a lot of flexibility at that time in the district and the first opportunity that I saw that we could move away from that and I wouldn't get fired for doing that, I moved away from that. And uh . . . and so that was certainly a change and it wasn't so much a change in a belief but a change in a decision and how I approached the teachers. Even when they were doing the other I still encouraged them to throw in some other strategies to try to build some comprehension and when I asked the folks who were leading that charge. How can you justify that because it's fluency. The comment which I accepted from where they were. I really didn't quite believe it had the impact that they had said that fluency really impacts comprehension. My feeling was yes but there are a lot of other things that influence it probably more. I never really changed my belief from that. I always felt kind of bad about that. I never . . . my belief was pretty strong but I don't know if I didn't have the courage to buck what the district was doing or my belief wasn't quite strong enough to go to the mat that I might be wrong about because I had never dealt with DIBELS when I was teaching. And I was a principal before it was something that just came in on this wave. I knew that there was a Saturday workshop in the area that refuted it in the area. I knew that was out there. I knew there were other people who weren't doing it but I still hear when we interview candidates now I um . . . the guy who is the principal at um . . . (name of other principal in the district) said that they had used some of that. Not to the extent that we did but some of it which is fine. But I never really um . . . I didn't change until it became safer to change. I guess so that was certainly my own self interest. That might fall into one of the other questions. I didn't stand up and fall on my sword for the good of the common good. I guess I wasn't sure because I didn't know enough about the impact on DIBELS and I thought what if I am wrong and I lead our school and kids down the wrong path. Maybe these guys know something I haven't explored. You know I have been away from the classroom awhile and was getting my doctorate and I was out . . . my mom had gotten sick and was diagnosed Alzheimer's. I went back to Massachusetts for a while and moved away from my program. Um . . . I thought you know maybe I missed something in there. So I had some doubts and I just . . . didn't have the . . . I guess I just couldn't go into it.

Interviewer: Ok. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal, which was in contrast to the traditional role of the principal? If so describe the situation.

E2: Yeah, I think the way that I work with teachers. The things I do the tasks that I do. Um . . . might be not what everybody does all the time. I think I tend to do things that other people would say you shouldn't do that you should delegate that. You should be in the classroom more, you should be . . . you shouldn't be other people's responsibilities at times. I think I do that I think I do things that the counselor can do at times. I know at (name of former school) I did a lot of things that the custodian would

normally do. Most of them after hours. We would have a big bingo night and the people cleaned up really well all the tables were out and the chairs . . . if we had an assembly there would be 250 chairs out in the gym. It's a Friday night and it's 9:30 and I thought you know, I just want to relax a little bit. I am just going to fold a few chairs and lay them against the wall. So the custodian won't have so much to do and I was trying to get the guy to improve his schools and I thought he'll appreciate the effort. So I did a few chairs and felt pretty relaxed and did a few more chairs the next thing I know I am rolling the cart out and I'll just load a few. And I ended up loading the whole thing and it's midnight. Most principals wouldn't do that. I almost did it mostly for a relaxation kind of a thing to do something physical after all of the stress of the day and the assembly, the performance and all that. I tend to do that type of stuff. I know one time we had a kid come in from, he just left. He had that teacher, he had (name of teacher) and had (name of teacher). He was really a tough kid. He was classified as ED. The parents signed the paperwork and the next day came in and rescinded. (Name of teacher) dealt with him the whole year. When he first came in he was really, I mean it took him 45 minutes to get him into class. And I wanted to see what this kid was about. And I would give him something to look forward to. I said why don't we shoot some hoops today. Do you like to do that, yeah I like to do that. So I took 10, 15 minutes and shot some hoops with him and we had him in the office a couple times during the day just to talk and I phased that out and let somebody else take that over. In the course of the initial part of him coming to the school and making him feel welcome and safe I spent some time with him. I had a meeting with (name of supervisor) and told her this kid had just came in and what I am doing and she said ok, um . . . when she left I got an email from her car. She said she felt uncomfortable with conversation about the amount of time you're spending with that kid and um you're job is to work with the teachers on instructional improvement. That's maybe fits in with the other question. That is not my job solely. My job is to help kids and this kid had a great need that no one else at that time could serve. And so, the teachers are just going to have to wait a little bit. I didn't take that much time away from doing it. I wasn't doing it part of an intervention that I was going to be doing every day for an hour or two or even a half hour, just interspersed. So I just said to (name of supervisor) I understand I am phasing it out, someone else is working with him and that is what happened. Then we got an assistant for him and he moved on. It was only about a week, a couple of weeks until we got somebody in place and then I was trying to repair because (name of teacher) was stressing this kid out he was under his desk and he was hiding. He would go down the hallway and find a place to hide. This kid was really hurting. And um . . . so you know that's one that I don't know . . . that I think I do that kind of stuff. Um . . . I have and anybody who knows the stuff that I do, not the people that I work with, anybody who looks on, I have to be careful about what I say about what I do because I know it does take away from some of the traditional roles of the principal and its. I just have to make that call when someone has a need because in the long run if I can really help them they can serve kids better. But if I can get a kid in a better place and it only takes me a few minutes that is what I should do. I don't

promote it, I don't talk about it. Um . . . (name of supervisor) asked me um . . . when we had our, I didn't have an evaluation this year, it was more of an end of the year, I am on the cycle for next year. Um . . . she said I had gotten some comments from teachers on my evaluation, when the teachers evaluated me. Some of them had said something like, um . . . (E2) trusts us to do the job. He has high expectations for us and we know that and because of it. What did they say? We work 150% to live up to it. And (name of supervisor) said can we talk about what you do and I am a little reluctant because it is something that she is not going to want to either hear I think or believe it. I think I do things that . . . I think I do things a little bit different than a lot of principals. Probably not all but I don't think I am traditional that way. Um . . . I haven't managed my career to move when I should have. I taught too long. I stayed in the principal ranks a little longer. But this is what I want to do. Time just got away because I thought I want to do this another year to get better at it. So I think that's . . . I wouldn't say to you to just anybody.

Interviewer: I appreciate that.

E2: I know it may be helpful for your study and I trust you so. That's probably . . . I am being really, really honest about how I think I am being perceived in the district. I think (name of Superintendent), when they did that appreciate journal, kind of embarrassing, (name of Superintendent) said those kind of things were kind of good, I am not out for the glory of myself. I try to support folks and I think they really do believe that when it comes down to it most people um . . . aren't ok with doing that because it won't give them the influence on people they think they need to have. I think that you can't not do it that way. I think if you really want to influence people, that's the way you influence; you help them, you trust them, you support them. By the comments by at least a couple of people at least, they certainly said some things I feel like I connected with them. Even (name of teacher) came up to me one time and said, I thought she was really ticked at me because you know I would say some things to hear like you really can't do that, you have to do this, you have to go out and pick up the kids guys. One of you be out there at recess, that kind of stuff. She said this is where I am going to finish my career, I don't want to work for any other principal and she told her daughter you should transfer to (name of school) because (E2) will support you. I think (name of another principal) has done a fantastic job with her. She has done really well and I think she uh . . . and she didn't apply for a transfer with us. I was really glad as . . . I don't think she was even on the list. I don't know if (name of other principal) would let her apply. But you know I think that I have made those connections with people. It comes at a cost. I feel like I am pretty stressed out at times. I feel that um . . . that I put in too many hours. I feel like my health has suffered from it. I am sure it has. Um . . . my brother keeps saying don't cross all the t's and dot all the i's, just send it in. I go back to when I was a kid do it right or don't bother. You know, that's eating me up at times. I don't feel like I have enough time in my personal life. This summer I was planning on working until the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and taking off until August 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup>.

And uh . . . we had some hiring to do and I know I am not the only as I heard other principals. I mean it got down to the point I had a week and we took off 3 of those 7 days I was on the phone doing reference checks and checking with other people so . . . My actual vacation this year was probably about 4 days this summer. It's funny people come back and feel sad and people will come back and say to me how was your summer. It was pretty good, I got chance to see family and stuff and I am thinking, I didn't give my wife nearly the time she deserves this summer. I was at school the whole time. I feel like . . . I am worried that I am not rested enough to come back in this year so. I got to start working out some more and gear up. Because I felt like this was just a terrible summer. I would never say that to anybody but . . . this was a terrible summer for me. And now everybody is coming back and everybody is geared up and we are getting all this stuff already from the district. Well you know . . . there are departments all over the place sending out stuff that we got to do. So you know having that philosophy I wouldn't train other people to do it that way. I think everybody has to find their own way but it's the way I have been in my career, it's the way I was as a teacher. Um . . . so . . . .

Interviewer: Alright. That is the end of our questions. Thank you.

E2: Thank you.

APPENDIX G  
TRANSCRIPT OF PRINCIPAL E3

E3 Interview  
September 11, 2014

Interviewer: Question number 1. What is your role in your school?

E3: I have been asking students this the last few days, because I have been in classrooms reading aloud stories to kids. And um . . . this being my third year here most of the kids know me by now. So I ask them, “what’s my name?” and they tell me. I say, “well what’s my job and my role here?” and so they tell me. Um . . . because it is interesting because it has made me go home and think about what is my role here? Um . . . what I have been telling kids is my role is to ensure that teachers are teaching their best and kids are learning. Um . . . but I think beyond that there’s also an opportunity for a much bigger role in the school community. Um . . . I think my role in the school is to help a community that has not been seen in a certain light. Um . . . and I mean the role a principal is to produce successful kids so it’s a very big role combining all of those things, effective teaching, um . . . learning, community identity, just bringing all of those things together.

Interviewer: Ok, so I have a follow up question already but I am going to ask question number two first because you said something very interesting. So we will go back to that in a minute. So how do you define the role of the school principal?

E3: What do you do?

Interviewer: right. We kind of talked about this a little already.

E3: Yeah, yeah. Uh . . . I don’t think people understand the role of the school principal until they live it. I remember as a teacher I didn’t really know what my school principal did until I was offered the position and really saw all the things that happen but as a school principal you are many things in one. You are uh . . . coach, you are bossy, you are um . . . um . . . commanding, you are an investigator, you are um . . . a support person, you are um . . . I feel like I am an octopus with doing many different things all at once with each of my arms. Um . . . it’s a good role. I enjoy my role. Um . . . and I think it depends on who I am talking to when I explain what I do as a principal and one of my favorite ways to define the role is I get to see families uh . . . grow up and grow into and I get to see kids grow into themselves.

Interviewer: So I have a follow up question. So you just now defined the role of the principal. You talked about what your role is. You talked about helping a school community not seen in a particular light. Is that . . . Is there a conflict between helping that community seen in a particular light or a light that the need to be seen in different than the role of the school principal . . . maybe defined by others or you or? Do you

see where I am going with that? Do you think the traditional role of the principal and the needs of the community can be done together?

E3: I think so. Um . . . maybe not in the traditional role of principal. But I am not sure what we are using to define the traditional role. I just know that in the past principals were kind of supervisors and bosses. Um . . . and trying to empower a community and help them be seen um . . . for the good things they are just means you have to step beyond that supervisory piece and really work with people and help people understand each other.

Interviewer: Alright. Let's move on to question number three then. Even though now it is question number four. How do you define morals and values and how are they different?

E3: Morals and values. Morals and values are words that are thrown out and maybe they are interchangeable um . . . Values are things that are important to me um . . . such as . . . You know I value uh . . . I value people working together and working through things together. But I don't think that's a moral. Perhaps a moral falls under more right and wrong versus a value just being something that's important to you. Um . . . and certainly I have morals. I have an ethical code of things that help guide me and my daily life. Um . . . but I have values and things that I stick to and believe in and continue to um . . . message to other people.

Interviewer: Ok, another follow up question. So you talk about morals being right and wrong. So who defines what is right and wrong?

E3: Well if they are my morals then I define what is right and wrong but morals evolve and looking at others responses and others reactions helps me define my morals. I mean if I make a decision based on a moral and um you know others are perhaps not satisfied with that decision you know then I need to figure out what's the basis for this and how am I using my definition of right and wrong in this decision.

Interviewer: Ok. Alright. I may have another follow up question but I may come back to it as I am not quite there yet. So what values did you grow up with that you still connect with today? These are things that you . . . from a kid all the way up to an adult and what lead to the creation of these values?

E3: So if I am defining values as things that I feel are important to me. Things that I still find important to me today are observing, persisting, and um . . . choosing what I want for my own success and satisfaction. I also value helping others, and um . . . I value uh . . . the journey.

Interviewer: So where did these come from? What lead to these? These are some awfully big values.

E3: Yeah. I don't really remember my life before I was adopted so everything comes out of being adopted. Um . . . when . . . I do remember things before I was adopted but I think maybe my values started after that. It's such a . . . it was such a drastic change in life that everything I knew before then just didn't seem to make sense in a new country, with a new language, new culture, um . . . when you are faced with something that's so, so different, you have to find something that will get you through that. Um . . . and I think that persistence definitely came from that. Um . . . it also came out of the trauma in my life before I was adopted. There's . . . I've heard the quote . . . there's no way to get um . . . not exactly sure how the quote goes but the only way to get through something is just go right through it. So you know the trauma in my life before being adopted um . . . just wasn't going to be the end of me (tears and emotional response). So I persisted through it. And working together came out of my brother and I going the adoption experience together. Um . . . and uh . . . you know having to uh . . . same with helping others because my brother was younger than me there wasn't anybody for him when we were adopted in a new country, with a new language. There wasn't anybody for him except for me and I had to help him and my parents, my adopted parents didn't understand our language, didn't understand how things had been for us before and so a lot of it was learning to tell them about life in (birth country). Um . . . once I learned to speak English it was a lot of sharing and uh . . . helping them understand um . . . what we came with. I wasn't adopted with both my brothers at the same time so you know helping others meant figuring out where my older brother was helping reunite our family, our bloodline, our biological family.

Interviewer: Did you find him?

E3: I did.

Interviewer: Good.

E3: I did. Uh . . . I think the observing comes from feeling so foreign in a new place. Sometimes the best thing to do is stop talking and watch and listen. And now coming to this school in the role of principal I had to listen to what people said about their school. The good things about the school, the challenges, what needed to be done and getting to know the staff here uh . . . I had to watch how they interacted and watch their body language, listen to the things they were telling me. Just observe their interactions with each other and with me.

Interviewer: Ok. Wow . . . Ok. I was going to another question but you answered everything I was thinking. So, you talked about some values that you have as an adult then, observation especially as a principal, we talked about that and persistence

growing up. What values have developed as an adult which than are different than what you grow up with? So what are some new values that you have?

E3: Hmmm . . . I don't know if I would call them values but I would call them habits. Um . . . as an adult I've reflected a lot more . . . and asked a lot more questions and I've learned to be much more open with people about my thinking, my decision making. I'd heard all that before I got the job to be very transparent, to be a good communicator. But as an introvert it is hard to do those things. I've had to develop habits of saying what I am thinking or preferencing something with um . . . with what options there are, but I am considering. I don't know if they are values but they are certainly things I have developed as an adult particularly in this position.

Interviewer: So the role has actually, the principalship, the title of principal, the role that you are in has guided the creation of those habits or values or value habits?

E3: Yeah.

Interviewer: Ok. That's interesting. That's something I had not thought of before. Hmm . . . well that might be a future question. You talked about those habits um . . . you said that the principalship has created these habits through reflection and questioning. So what values have you developed professionally in your career in the role of educator, principal? Including principal I should say.

E3: Uh . . . well just thinking about my career starting with 16 years ago when I was a classified um . . . staff member. I've learned to value seeing things from different perspectives and trying different roles. Um . . . it's also come from my boxing days where you don't ask people to do things that you wouldn't do yourself. Though as a coach you don't ask kids to run four miles you know, you're athletes to run four miles if you wouldn't do it yourself. So professionally I you know developed that as well if I am asking teachers to take on initiatives I wouldn't ask them to do more that I could handle and it's not always the best because I feel like I can handle a lot and others can't. But I've learned to see it from other perspectives. Um . . . I've learned you know to try things um . . . and I've learned to value just um . . . having uh . . . confidence in what you do. There's always so much doubt. Am I making the right decision? Am I saying the right message? Am I saying the right thing? Am I helping in the right way? Uh . . . you just need to show that this is the right decision and this is way and have confidence in that.

Interviewer: Ok . . . so how have the values you have developed seen in your personal life and in your role of the principal? So it's kind of crossing over from personal to professional.

E3: Hmmm . . . um . . . so as a principal um . . . I value many opportunities to learn and in my personal life I have tried to develop that with my son. Um . . . just speaking in terms of behavior as an example you know I want kids at school to have every opportunity to apply their learning. So at home I have um . . . developed my own understanding of my own child and developed more patience for my own child and give him more opportunities um . . . The questioning and reflection also crosses into my personal life. Um . . . I think in my personal interactions with my husband I've learned a lot about him as a person just asking him questions we reflect on our day together. Just a couple of ways that personal and professional life cross over. Um . . . I still you know in my personal life I've always valued helping other people. I've always thought that was important and so in my professional life um . . . I try to do that as much as possible helping to connect teachers to resources, helping teachers connect to each other, um . . . getting them the things that they need to do their job.

Interviewer: Ok . . . so number eight then. You talked about right and wrong. So how would define what is morally right and wrong personally? Please give an example.

E3: There are a lot of considerations when deciding what is morally right and wrong personally. Um . . . definitely having to consider the persons feelings, response, how the message is perceived. I think anything that hurts someone physically or emotionally is wrong. Anything that provides a step to success is right. But I also think it is the end result that is . . . that defines morally right and wrong because you might take . . . the process may be hard, you may take some wrong steps in the process but the end results could be much different than your original step. And I have just as an example, I have told parents, just one parent in particular, that they were allowing their children to make decisions for them. Uh . . . professionally that was not the right thing to say. It came out of frustration and through more conversation and understanding and really getting to the parents ultimate concern was, helped me to continue the process. So this specific example is with a parent who um . . . after the first day of school wanted their child out of the dual language program. This has happened multiple times. With our dual language program here parents decide I want my child to learn English and Spanish and after the first day, they realize their child is immersed in the language and decide no I don't want my child in this program and often times it is because their child is uncomfortable and doesn't know what is going on. That's the first time their child has ever been in that difficult situation. So this has happened often and uh . . . a couple of times . . . I told the parents point blank so you are pulling your child from the dual language program because your child is confused and doesn't know what is going on. Mother said, "yes." And I said, "so if I understand correctly you are allowing the child to make the decision for you." And she was very upset, very, very upset and um . . . and I had that same situation again and learned that that was not uh . . . the appropriate thing to say but morally I wanted this family, the first time that I said that, it was to a White mother. The second time I said it was to a Hispanic father who wanted to pull his daughter from the program because um . . . she

was confused and she was afraid she would fall behind and rather than just saying you are allowing your child to make this decision for you, um . . . I had the opportunity to have a couple of conversations, actually three conversations with the father and was very honest and said, "I think this conversation needs to continue because what I am understanding is that you're worried for your daughter. You're worried that she is uncomfortable. You're worried that she is going to understand. And was able to give examples of other kids who went through that same situation and were successful in the end. Talked about the message we send our kids when we you know stick with it. Let's try it and let's learned some coping skills. So in the end after three conversations with this father uh . . . he decide to keep his daughter in the program and I felt like morally I was doing the right thing by encouraging this father to stick with it because he was Hispanic himself and his daughter was half Hispanic and he felt like Spanish was an important thing. He just didn't know what the process was. And so um . . . so that's why I say the steps aren't always right but the end results can be.

Interviewer: So then is there then a blurring of right and wrong to get to the end result of a morally right thing? I mean blurring not necessarily either or. I don't know. What do you think?

E3: Is there a manipulation of it?

Interviewer: I don't know. I don't know if that defines blurring . . . I don't know.

E3: There are different approaches to getting to the end results. Some might consider those sly tactics. Um . . .

Interviewer: Were you morally wrong to tell the White mother, which may be the case that child was doing. Was that morally wrong to tell her that? Or maybe a better question would be, is there a difference between morally wrong and appropriately right and wrong?

E3: Yeah there is a difference appropriate and inappropriate and morally right and wrong. Um . . . I don't think it was morally wrong to tell that mother you are allowing your child to make a decision for you. You're not making this decision as a parent and thinking in the child's best interest. It was inappropriate of me to tell that parent straight up you are not being a parent.

Interviewer: Ok. Interesting. Alright. People kind of touch upon each question as they go along. That's how they were designed to fold upon each other. So um . . . how then would you define what is morally right and wrong professionally? And give an example.

E3: That's a hard one. Making morally right or wrong, well . . . making morally right decisions is the ideal and in this profession there are a lot of decisions that I have to make that feel uncomfortable and I don't always feel like they're decisions I should make on my own. Uh . . . just thinking of a specific example of a teacher who says my kids don't want to learn they have no motivation to learn they just don't care. Uh . . . professionally and morally I want to have a conversation with that teacher about his perception of students. So morally, I want I want to defend the child because I know certain factors about the child. I know the child is a newcomer, has been here 4 months and after 4 months of learning another language, learning English as a second language from a teacher who has a very traditional lecture style is judged as not caring . . . doesn't sit right with me. So morally I want to defend that child, professionally I also need to help this teacher move forward in the way he works with kids. So it would be wrong of me to pass up the opportunity to talk to that teacher because I could say, well that's too hard of a conversation to have or I don't know what to say to him or it's not the right time or, um . . . to assume that he knows his students best. So that would be wrong professionally. Um . . . again morally because of valuing helping others I want to help this teacher understand his students and the fact . . . and the barriers this student is facing. Morally I need to support the teacher professionally with some skills to work with newcomers.

Interviewer: Ok. You kind of went into number 10. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong personally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. Please give an example. How did you resolve this conflict if at all?

E3: Um . . . morally wrong . . . I believe it's morally wrong making a decision to not consider the impact that it has on the parties involved. So as an example . . . um . . . here are lots of examples narrowing it down to one. Uh . . . I've got so many situations running through my mind right now. I think discipline is a pretty common area where decisions conflict morally. Uh . . . I see students in the hallway and I want them to be in classrooms learning. I want them to be heard by the teacher but I also want the teacher to feel respected when they make decisions and I want the teacher to feel empowered with strategies and tools to address discipline in such a way that they don't feel like they have to separate themselves from kids. Um . . . as a teacher if you are sending a student out into the hallway away from you and away from learning I have to consider if the teacher is at her wits end. Is she frustrated? Is she at a loss for what to do next? But I also have to consider is this, the student who has done this repeatedly? Is this a student who uh . . . a repeat offender . . . um . . . so I've talked to students in the hallway about how long they've been there, what they did, help them understand what they need to say to the teacher to apologize because it is seen as when kids are out in the hallway it's seen as a sign of disrespect. Whatever action they have taken is seen as a sign of disrespect by the teachers and they need to understand that respecting adults is important. But I think the teachers feel upset when I bring a student into have a conversation with them. Um . . . so . . . again . . . I feel like it is

morally wrong to have a student miss out on learning but I also feel like professionally teachers may not respect my decisions if it is not done in a careful way.

Interviewer: Ok.

E3: This conflict still continues. Kids being sent out in the hallway.

Interviewer: Sounds like it.

E3: Yeah. So I did not resolve that conflict.

Interviewer: I kind of figured. I thought well here is an age old conflict. If you have a solution for that please tell me. I have seen that a lot also. So describe a conflict between what you feel to be morally wrong professionally and decisions that you had to make in the role of the principal and describe an example. How did you resolve it if at all?

E3: Hmmm . . . so I think I was answering number 10 as number 11.

Interviewer: Hmmm . . . well maybe.

E3: Yeah.

Interviewer: Are they one in the same? So . . .

E3: I think they were one in the same.

Interviewer: We will move on then. If you think of something we will come back. Maybe there's something else.

E3: Ok.

Interviewer: Describe decisions in your role as principal requiring you to follow a policy, regulation or law you felt was in conflict with a student need.

E3: This happens often. I understand the need to follow policies, regulations, laws because they help guide the masses but when it means a student misses out on something they should have then the policy, regulation or law needs to be revisited. We are facing this right now with our lunch and cafeteria policies. Our district office is telling us that the guidelines state that students have to be accounted for when taking a meal. A certain person has to do it. And yet when our kids get through the line they have one minute left to eat lunch. They are not getting the food they need. Parents are calling and saying, "My child came home and told me that you said to through away

his food. He's hungry and I can't afford to send him with a lunch every day." Then that policy needs to be revisited. That's one simple, tiny example of uh . . . being asked to follow a policy which conflict with student needs. Some of the bigger ones are like who gets placed in a dual language program when we have open slots. Do I take a student who is a Spanish speaker and will benefit greatly from native language instruction as well as second language instruction? Or do I take the White student whose parents just want him to know more than other kids and have said, "Hey, I am for this program because my child is going to have every advantage possible and be super marketable as an adult in our economy." Do I take the White child whose parents are for it for maybe different reasons than me? And yet the policy says, we have an equal number of English speakers, Spanish speakers, and bilingual students. Again that policy or that rule or that system that was set up should be reviewed when making that decision. Same thing with discipline policies, same thing with little rules you put in place for parents leaving their strollers by the front office and they get really upset and "I have five kids and one of them is autistic and I have such a hard time you know getting them to school unless I bring my child in a stroller and I am not going to leave them up by the office and I can't carry five kids through the building with me. Lots of different examples of how policy, regulation and law come into conflict on a regular basis with student needs.

Interviewer: Ok. So describe a situation in which had to address the needs of an individual over the needs of a larger group. What risks if any were involved?

E3: I'm narrowing down my situations. Over the needs of the larger group . . . So there's a student in particular who says, that the teacher makes her feel uncomfortable. That she doesn't appreciate how the teacher talks to the kids. She doesn't appreciate uh . . . doesn't appreciate being part of that group. She doesn't want to part of that classroom and there are other kids in the classroom who are echoing some of the same comments. "The teacher yells at us." "The teacher tells us shut up." But this one student in particular is potentially a student of great risk of not being successful, of shutting down, of copin' an attitude and getting sent out of class or having referrals written because of her attitude. That's her coping mechanism. If the teacher yells at me in front of the class then I am going to say, "yeah whatever." Or I am going to say something to him with sass. I don't want to be in his class and I am going to show it in this way. So this student in particular because she has factors like is an ELL, factors like . . . is helping to raise the kids at home when mom and dad aren't there are things that put her at risk. So do I take this student out and move her to a homeroom with a more caring teacher, a much more conducive environment for her to be successful. But what about the other kids in the class? They should have that same environment. Um . . . the risks there are if the student stays in that class she's going to need those strategies learning to work with that teacher. If I pull the student I have to think what if the teacher thinks what if my supervisor is sending me a message I am not a good teacher. Um . . . what if the parents don't agree with my decision to keep the student in

the class and give her skills and opportunities to interact positively with this teacher. And that's a situation I have had on four different occasions that I can think of.

Interviewer: Did you move them?

E3: In those four situations, one was moved but not the others.

Interviewer: Interesting. Alright. So have you had to make decisions in your role as principal benefiting one part of your school community and denying another? And so, describe the situation.

E3: Yeah, this is a very big thing at our school with our dual language program. One group that benefits the most with our dual language program is the Hispanic population. Because they the students feel that their language or languages are assets. The kids feel proud that Spanish is important as well learning new things as well as from each other as well as learning about other cultures. And I've had parents who . . . White parents who say in the grades where there is no dual language option say "what about us? Why don't we get this advantage?" Logistically it is hard to meet the needs of everybody. We've tried through language clubs through buying Rosetta Stone licenses. Through trying to get groups together to interact. Um . . . we have also had with our PBIS system we've had White teachers saying "let's do this for an incentive." But the incentive asks kids to complete homework and not all the kids have a set place or a set structure for doing homework. And the students are not able to participate in that incentive because they haven't completed their homework because um . . . the mom is out at the bar and you know, dad is never home and there's no accountability for getting homework done. So some of the decisions we've had to make with our PBIS system is, if it doesn't allow everybody the opportunity then we don't have this incentive. And then there's the repercussion of "we don't get to do anything fun at our school." Or "you're always thinking about those kids who have you know . . . earned it anyway. You are giving them an opportunity even though they really didn't earn it." So . . . .

Interviewer: Ok, number 15. Almost there. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal which caused you to later reflect on those decisions and reverse them? And if so, describe the situation.

E3: Just in reflecting I have not reversed any decisions that I have made. But I have made adjustments to those decisions. The system . . . and I am thinking in particular some of our instructional programs and school initiatives for example the coaches, the two coaches that I have are phenomenal and they are really important in helping carry out the school initiatives and in planning with them we came to the conclusion that our staff should learn some particular strategies with working with our large ELL population. And again thinking that I wouldn't ask teachers to do what I personally

wouldn't do, I thought it was fair to ask them to do these five strategies in a year, to do them well, and to do them willingly. And the coaches agreed that the plan we put into place would allow us to do that. But teachers after demonstrating one of the strategies after well first of all after sending out the message that these sort of things we are going to do and these are the reasons why and here is how we are going to support you putting these things into effect into your classroom. After showing the first strategy teachers felt I was asking too much of them. So I didn't reverse my decision for us to continue forward with the plan but I did after talking to the coaches, and hearing from them, "ah the teachers are panicking." They feel like they don't have time, they feel like they don't have the right resources. They feel like they don't have the right support. They feel like they don't have the right encouragement from you that they are doing a good job or trying at least. We cut back and scaled back and said we still need to be able to do this because our kids are counting on us for this but maybe we don't have to do it all at once. So the strategies, we just went about the strategies differently, different ways of modeling for the teachers the strategies, different um . . . different resources we could provide for the teachers so that they saw the strategies more and more rather than expecting them to see it once. Having it modeled once and then expecting them to do it and then giving them feedback to say yay or nay. We changed our approach and tried to give them more encouragement. Tried to give them more resources. Tried to give them more planning time. Tried to give them more opportunities um . . . to learn it from each other. We still went forward with it we didn't say, "oh it's too uncomfortable or its too much ok, we won't do it" because our kids needed us to do it.

Interviewer: Ok, last one. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal you felt was in contrast to the traditional role of the principal. And if so, describe the situation.

E3: What are we defining as the traditional role of the principal?

Interviewer: You tell me. Or maybe your view of the traditional role of the principal.

E3: I think in question two I may have talked about the traditional role.

Interviewer: You did. Let me tell you what you said. You talked about boss and supervisor as traditional as the two main pieces of that. And then you personally said, coach, bossy, investigator, support person . . . octopus.

E3: I don't know if my decisions in the last 2 years as principal have been in contrast to that traditional role. And the reasons I say that is because the role of principal has changed so I am not sure what . . . I just don't think that traditional role is in effect anymore. So it feels like anything I do is just part of the job. I am expected to and willingly do a lot of things that are big. Counseling teachers, as well as kids. Well now

that I think about it in our district we have had a big push towards excellence, instructional excellence, professional excellence, collaboration, and the way we ensure that is being in classrooms, being in every aspect of the teacher's day. Maybe that wasn't expected from principals in the past. They weren't expected to be so involved with teachers in so many different ways.

Interviewer: So the principal is more of a . . . you see the principal as more connected.

E3: More involved.

Interviewer: Ok, just to the teachers?

E3: Kids and families as well. You know helping our homeless students with food, backpacks, with clothes. I don't think that's different than as before. I am sure if kids needed that before somebody stepped in and helped with that. Um . . . but we have also got mental health things happening now, that um . . . that I have had to call parents. So one example is a student who had some pretty big needs beyond the scope of what our school can serve and one of my decisions was to call parents and let them know that we were recommending outside counseling. That this parent needed to connect with our care coordinator in order for the child to return to school. So it was a suspension with a condition that the parents needed to connect with the mental health experts and let us know that they were doing something for their child's emotional needs so that we could connect with that expert as well and carry some of things into the school day for this child.

Interviewer: Alright. Those are our questions.

E3: Thank you.

Interviewer: No, thank you.

APPENDIX H  
TRANSCRIPT OF PRINCIPAL M1

M1 Interview  
October 8, 2014

Interviewer: What is your role in your school?

M1: My role in my school is to um . . . be um . . . the instructional leader. Making sure that all kids are um showing growth and achieving. I think that role is probably the most often defined by the district office. I think that um . . . parents um . . . might give a little bit broader scope to the role of principal and that is to make sure their children are you know . . . safe . . . um . . . you know working through them with issues that might arise uh . . . and being basically a conduit uh . . . to their needs of uh . . . children's educational experience.

Interviewer: Ok, so keeping that in mind because you kind of defined the role a little bit, but how do you define the role of school principal?

M1: So I define the role as trying to make everything better. I mean I feel like that is my main job. You know how do I make it better. That's why I got into education was to make a difference in my community so how do I make it better that is a huge . . . you know . . . job but I guess if I just had to simply define it I would say, you know my role is to make everything better.

Interviewer: Alright, number 3. How do you define morals and values and how are they different?

M1: Um . . . let's see morals and values. How are they different?

Interviewer: or are they?

M1: Yeah . . . I don't know. For some reason I guess the connotation and I didn't look these up to define them. So I could be way off base here but um . . . morals for some reason for me when I think of morals I think of things that um . . . might more like group defined within a culture and values are more like up to the individual and I am sure that is probably not part of their real definition. But um . . . I guess morality you know means that you are acting in a way where you are going to um . . . do what's right um . . . whatever that means. Values is a little bit more what's important to a person uh . . . so I think it is more individualistic based on based on their upbringing and what they see to themselves about how they behave.

Interviewer: A quick follow up question then. So are your morals and values your upbringing?

M1: Yeah I would say so. I think it's based upon my upbringing um . . . without a doubt a huge influence from my parents but yet at the same time I have developed some of my own values and maybe some different morals based on the culture and the experiences that I've grown up in. Even though some people would say it's similar. Um . . . I think that um . . . you know time and society and you know learning has changed some of my opinions, some of my values from when I was a child or young adult.

Interviewer: Ok, so then, number 4, what values did you grow up with specifically which you still connect with today and what lead to the creation of these values?

M1: So the values I grew up with? Well I mean treat everybody with respect . . . um . . . everybody has value . . . um . . . I think a big one is . . . is . . . uh . . . to not be . . . to be a contributor to society and to not be a burden on it. Uh . . . I know this seems silly but just being present is a big . . . is a big value like um . . . I am going to be here at my desk making things better.

Interviewer: So where did these values of respect, be a contributor, not be a burden . . . where did they come from?

M1: So where did they come from? They came from my parents. They came from um . . . church. We were always taught at church, the church that I attended was you know . . . that um . . . that you should treat . . . you know . . . everybody well regardless of their differences and things. Um . . . and I know some churches that may not be the case for everybody but the one I was raised in was very like tolerant, progressive church. So there was um . . . that was something that I think you know . . . in my formative years was really, really important. You know, as I got older, I think it was a lot of the activities I participated in um . . . specifically coaches, and sports and stuff that uh . . . that instilled the values of that you know the world is better than just the individual. That you are part of a team; that the actions you have are going to affect others and there's collateral damage or collateral goodness to all your decisions and that uh . . . just that self-awareness piece.

Interviewer: So going into the next question, what values have you developed as an adult which are different than what you grew up with?

M1: Well . . . Let's see. I am trying to think of . . . I would say that I have been probably somewhat affected as how I parent. My values as a parent might be a little bit different than my parents. Um . . . um . . . you know I grew up in a household where I you know there wasn't like corporal punishment but you know I could get the wooden spoon across the but you know once in a while or something like that. And my parents were not the type where they were not abusive. They were always talking to us about things and trying to educate us. But um . . . I think my values have changed as a parent

some from what my parents did and I think and you know our present day culture and knowledge about um . . . brain development and you know . . . teaching, educating young people has changed. Um . . . I know a big thing that changed for me with my values as an educator are is that everybody is the same. Everybody needs the same thing. Um . . . I think that's been something that has been a learning for me um . . . you know growing up uh . . . in a household that was very tolerant towards anybody that was different out of the norm for any reason. Um . . . but yet we always felt like everybody needs the same thing, everybody has the same opportunities. So grappling with you know how we serve kids in school who have different needs is something that is a newer value for me.

Interviewer: So, what values have you developed professionally in your career? Things that came from you as an educator? Or principal?

M1: Hmmm . . . I just think that um . . . you know . . . I value trying to make good relationships with other people. I feel like if you don't start with that as a foundation that you are not going to be successful in anything that you do and uh . . . and communication the way you communicate with people um . . . being a principal I think I realized that as a teacher I didn't have to work with other people that weren't like me as much because I either worked with content people that were that you know, we had that in common. Or I was a coach and we had the coaching thing in common and I could ignore other staff people that I didn't know. As principal I really have had to try to develop I think better communication skills that is something that you know continually working with and figuring out ways to make sure that I am connecting with everybody at school.

Interviewer: So how are the values you have developed seen in your personal life, so these are the ones you still have today in your personal life, how are they seen in your role as a principal?

M1: Hmmm . . . So I just uh . . . I guess some of the values I initially stated were be a contributor, be present, you know communication is obviously important. Some of just the basic, foundation, human behavior that makes successful people um . . . how are they seen you know in my role as principal? I know this . . . I try to be as visible as I possibly can at school. Um . . . I think that is incredibly important um . . . in the hallways during passing time. Um . . . I really feel like that when I am in my office that um . . . I am not making the school better. Most of the time when I am in my office. If I am having conversations with teachers over things um . . . things seem to be getting better. But when I am doing paperwork and stuff or out off site then I don't feel that I am necessarily having a big impact. Um . . . so I mean I can tell you I can count on one hand the number of school days I have missed um . . . I just try to be present you know . . . all the time. One of the other things you know I pride myself on in my role as principal is that even though sometimes it may not be . . . it's not

frowned upon but I know it's not considered important in the eyes of you know the state when it comes to test scores and stuff is that I really try to make everything better so when I think about the work that I do it's just not about test scores, it's also about how I make opportunities for kids um . . . that aren't necessarily shown in test scores. So after school clubs or for example, you know I've been working on this football . . . back football field project without any funding from the district. We got the (name of local semi-professional baseball team) put in a turf field. So you know . . . just trying to do things . . . you know . . . that are outside maybe what um what is seen on a school improvement plan. There are a lot of other aspects to making a really good school then just the test scores so.

Interviewer: Ok, so I want to do a follow up question. You have used the phrase, make everything better, you have said it quite a bit. It's clearly important to you . . . why is it so important to make it better? For you?

M1: For me. So why is it so important to make everything better? Because I feel like if we don't, if society as a whole doesn't continue to make things better then it gets worse. I don't know if there is a middle ground in that, things decay, um . . . so I feel like you are constantly having to analyze practices and you know work on getting better all of the time. Both as individuals, as systems, and then you know your services obviously to kids. And uh . . . I just feel like that over the last few years that things have not been optimal.

Interviewer: The last few years in your role as a principal? Or just in general?

M1: Well I think in general. Both as a parent and as a principal with you know. The educational services you know. I am probably not the only one who feels some frustration sometimes about what we have at our disposal when it comes down to resources and uh . . . it feels like uh . . . I mean that feels like something that we are always trying to do...how do we make it better? How do we fix something?

Interviewer: Alright, ok. Number 8. How would you define what is morally right and wrong personally? Please give an example.

M1: Hmm . . . I guess it comes down to whether it helps or hurts somebody else. What's the outcome for others? Whether it is right or wrong . . . I mean when you do things um . . . that you discriminate against a certain group of people or seclude a certain group of people that that's morally not right.

Interviewer: Ok, who determines what is morally right and wrong? Who determines for you?

M1: Depends whether it is school board policy.

Interviewer: I mean personally.

M1: Who defines?

Interviewer: Do you define it? Does someone else define it?

M1: No. I feel like you know I define it. I think that in society we all get um . . . we all get messages . . . we all get information from all these different sources and stuff. Um . . . we are in different cultures and you know. Our cultures we reside in whether, this could be your work culture, or your family culture or whatever it is, is going to impact what you do when it comes down to morals. I think that's a reality, that there is a level of impact with the culture on morality.

Interviewer: How would you define what is right and wrong professionally? So these are things that you think this is morally right and that is morally wrong. Give an example.

M1: Again I think it goes down to in education um . . . you know . . . how you are serving different groups and if you are doing something that is hurting somebody then you need to find a way to make it better or fix that. So um . . . I could give you . . . I could probably give you some examples. Do you want some examples?

Interviewer: Yes, please.

M1: So um . . . I mean some opinions of some things that have been morally right and wrong professionally. Um . . . one would be (name of specific policy for the school district) and grading at the secondary level. You know . . . I had you know I guess a moral issue over that in the way it was . . . it came out. But I had you know I had some fundamental disagreements about the policy itself and if that was the right thing for all of our kids. And um . . . um . . . so you know . . . that was something I really struggled with because I was basically told you don't have a choice, this is what you need to do. Both as a parent and as a principal knowing middle school kids I knew that there were going to be some things in there that um . . . although well intended may not um . . . be the best um . . . for . . . developmentally for some of our kids. So that's obviously an example. Um . . . you know . . . I have . . . I guess I have a whole moral conflict over special education. I really don't like special education very much. I know that there is a need for it but my experience has been as a principal that when you put a bunch of kids on IEPs that have a history of success in a classroom together that doesn't always cultivate uh . . . a great um . . . culture for learning. So I guess you know there's another example.

Interviewer: Ok.

M1: Do you want more?

Interviewer: Sure.

M1: Another one is about um . . . how we serve ELL kids and um . . . you know um . . . the thing I think is tough with that is that we pushed in our threes and fours, “pushed in” instead of having an ELA class, which I agree having the kids in there but the down side of it has been that we don’t have . . . we don’t have the resources or the person that spends all their time overseeing those kids or having the time to meet with them as a group or provide them extra support within the . . . you know . . . into the school day. Um . . . and so that has been something that I have wrestled with about . . . you know . . . is that um . . . you know . . . the best thing . . . you know . . . or those kids because they have gone from taking a bunch of classes um . . . that have been regular classes, science, social studies all that kind of stuff um . . . but they basically have dropped their support class and had the language arts in there and so. One of the things like I said I want them to have the experience of be in there, I’m just trying to figure out how we give those kids that need extra time extra support that they need um . . . so . . . that’s you know another wrestling, grappling, continuous thing that is how do we make that better for those kids.

Interviewer: Ok, anything else?

M1: I think that is good.

Interviewer: Alright, next question. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong personally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. Describe an example, and how did you resolve this conflict if at all? This is something that you had to do as a principal, either you were asked to do it or you had to do it but you were morally personally, this goes against the grain.

M1: Well . . . I think . . . yeah I mean that one was best described in the you know (name of school board policy) implementation. Um . . . you know . . . um . . . and not that I . . . I don’t know if I thought it was morally wrong um . . . I don’t know if I would go that far but um . . . it’s definitely something that I felt was, the process for it was not good and it um . . . there was some issues that um . . . I don’t know that were taken completely into consideration. You know from teachers and the people that work with kids every day. So . . . um that was a hard one. Because I felt frustration many times of . . . you know . . . tow the company line so to speak and try to push things forward that even though I was trying to see something that I had reservations about. You know . . . myself um . . . so I mean I think a lot of us worked through that with different teachers one on one um . . . I mean I know we had multiple you know . . . all staff meetings and group meetings and conversations and you know um . . .

I mean eventually it got overturned or reversed so not something that I ended up having to resolve. It ended up being resolved when it got reversed.

Interviewer: Ok. So describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong professionally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. And then how did you resolve this conflict if at all?

M1: Ok . . . so um . . . I guess uh . . . you know . . . morally wrong. I mentioned the whole sped thing. I don't feel good about um . . . I don't feel good about the amount or number of kids that are in special education classes um . . . and I don't feel good about the instruction that they get a lot of times. Um . . . and like I said I don't feel good about the culture that often times uh . . . is like the pervasive culture, kind of an under achieving, apathetic type of culture that I've seen and uh . . . in a variety of special ed classrooms with kids. And so . . . um . . . you know . . . I mean . . . a conflict there is that I feel that if I . . . I don't know . . . if I could um . . . have more resources that how we would serve the sped kids um . . . would look a little bit different and um . . . I don't know. I feel like that is still an area that is um . . . is nobody's fault but I feel like that is one where with the budget cuts over the years and over the time. Uh . . . our caseload has gotten bigger. Our overall number of FTE has decreased by a little bit. Um . . . so I mean that is one that um . . . trying to find an answer to um . . . in the current state feels like it's a challenging one and its one of those that um . . . you know I just . . . I don't know. I don't think it is good to have . . . I don't think it's good um . . . for kids unless they really, you know really, um . . . aren't going to benefit from being in an inclusive classroom with gen ed peers to be in um . . . in those classrooms. So hopefully I answered the question there.

Interviewer: You answered it as you needed to answer it. Describe decisions in your role as principal requiring you to follow a policy, regulation or law, you felt was in conflict with a student need.

M1: Hmmm . . . Hmm . . . so this isn't like a . . . .

Interviewer: or policy . . . .

M1: It could be a policy?

Interviewer: It could be a practice.

M1: I don't know. I mean nothing other than what I have talked about is kind of jumping forward here for me on this one. Um . . . .

Interviewer: Do you want to come back to it?

M1: I mean I can tell you that um . . . morally wrong?

Interviewer: No not morally wrong. This is something required you had a conflict with . . . a policy, a law, a practice, this is a conflict with a student need. This is just not working with a student.

M1: I mean there are some huge systematic things that I can talk about.

Interviewer: Ok.

M1: I mean big things that never seem really to change that you are like you know like why don't we look at doing this differently. Um . . . and it can be everything from you know how we uh . . . do the school calendar um . . . during the year . . . you know . . . get away from a traditional agrarian calendar to try to provide a more year round type of approach for kids. Uh . . . to at the middle school level um . . . you know . . . not having sixth graders . . . just having 2 years . . . having a six period schedule instead of seven period schedule um . . . for more flexibility to meet the individual needs of students. I don't want to get into a big like you know . . . list of negatives . . . but another thing is like um . . . you know . . . I feel like . . . we have for the most part very competent teachers but um . . . you know . . . sometimes I get frustrated with the amount of perceived protection um . . . bad educators can get or the amount of time that as a principal you have to go through in order to you know end up getting rid of somebody. Um . . . uh . . . so . . . I don't know if I answered the question there. I mean there is all kinds of examples.

Interviewer: Ok, let's go on to number 13. We can always jump back to that. Describe a situation in which you had to address the needs of an individual over the needs of a larger group. What risks if any were involved?

M1: Hmmm . . . the needs of individual over the needs of a larger group. Well . . . I don't know . . . as principal you are always concerned about perceptions. What's the perception from the district office, what's the perception from parents, what's the perception from teachers, what's the perception from kids? Um . . . so . . . you know you're always in a mode where you are trying to mitigate you know big . . . you know . . . disasters from occurring. Um . . . I can't think . . . I'm not having a specific case come forward where an individual over the needs of a larger group. Um . . . I don't know if I have ever had to like . . . sacrifice or been in a situation . . . I don't know where there is just one individual over the needs of a larger group. Um . . . But I think this type of thing happens every day with our educational system comes down to students in the classroom. I think the needs of individuals are often sacrificed because of the needs of a larger group. I think that's what happens in a classroom most days.

Interviewer: So it's the other way around? The bigger group gets the thing over one person?

M1: Yeah. So it's . . . in a classroom . . . you know as teachers we were always taught about how we differentiate for the levels of the kids but you know I have felt in the past some angst about how we serve our upper level kids, our TAG (Talented and Gifted) kids and how do we serve you know our lower level literacy type learners and those kids and so . . . Um . . . um . . . I don't know . . . that's.

Interviewer: Ok, we can come back to that one too. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal benefiting one part of your school community and denying another? If so describe the situation.

M1: Um . . . so . . . .

Interviewer: Keeping in mind a school community can mean any group. Anybody.

M1: Well I mean . . . I don't know . . . something that pops into my head is serving the Latino community and especially our Spanish speakers or non-English speakers. You know I think for a long, long time um . . . I unconsciously made decisions that um . . . denied Spanish speaking families from school access. Um . . . and that is still something that I am trying to get that lens of kind of what they need, where they are coming from, how you best communicate and um connect with them so that they are not denied access so . . . um . . . I mean I think there have been tremendous changes here. Everything from you know before I was principal, having no Spanish speaking front office staff now two out of three are Spanish speaking, Spanish on the front door, and bilingual Spanish nights and things like that so . . . um . . . But I don't think that was a . . . like I said I don't think that was really a benefit one part of the community purposely deny another. But if was kind of a historical, cultural thing, this is how we do it and there hasn't been a need to do it another way and so realizing that you got to change things to make access for a group.

Interviewer: Ok. Alright. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal which caused you later to reflect on those decisions and reverse them? And if so, describe the situation.

M1: Let's see. Well let's see um . . . I am sure I have. I think of . . . I mean a lot of little things. Um . . . I am trying to think last year . . . No . . . I don't think that was something I reversed. Sorry I was thinking out loud here. I was thinking about the math debacle last year. Um . . . I just know . . . I think about that uh . . . I think um . . . I think the biggest one there was um . . . the perception spreading among parents about whether math (name of curriculum) curriculum and to a greater extent the common core was right for kids and um . . . and you know . . . I didn't anticipate the amount of

um . . . people that had the concern. Um . . . you know initially um . . . I made some decisions to like not to have a community meeting and I met with some parents individually and stuff. But um . . . you know I needed to realize I need to do something a little bit larger to address that situation. Um . . . I don't know. I know that there have been tons of decisions that I have made um . . . tons of decisions that have come down to decisions that I have made affected personnel. You know and people and their jobs and their stuff. I don't really want to share individuals but just you know reflecting on some of those decisions you know that you know I have changed decisions to do with personnel and how things affect people at work and their ability to serve kids so that happens all the time with personnel decisions.

Interviewer: Ok, Alright. Last question, have you had to make decisions in your role as principal you felt was in contrast to the traditional role of the principal? And if so, describe the situation.

M1: That I felt was in contrast to the traditional role. Um . . . traditional role meaning what? 1980s? Is this an era?

Interviewer: I will let you define that.

M1: Really. Ok. I don't know. The biggest thing that just sticks out to me is just um . . . as a teacher my experience with the five principals that I worked for is um . . . I never, I never went to staff meeting with the or I should say rarely went to staff meetings with the intent to be working on bettering my instruction as a teacher. So when I think of traditional roles of the principal I think of someone who is in charge of the books, boiler and that kind of stuff. Not really trying to be an instructional leader. So um . . . I feel like I probably have more duress and more pressure to balance what the instructional needs are within um . . . within the school than what a traditional principal might have . . . might have had to have to do. Um . . . You know I also think um . . . with um . . . within this community I work in um . . . you know we have had to we have had to change the way we talk about serving our kids, change the mentality of we tried to serve our kids because of the diversity that has happened here especially the second language learners and things like that. Um . . . so I feel like the principalship at (name of school) in 2014 is a huge . . . it's like a different world compared to 2004 . . . like just 10 years ago. Um . . .

Interviewer: Thank you.

M1: Thank you.

APPENDIX I  
TRANSCRIPT OF PRINCIPAL M2

M2 Interview  
September 26, 2014

Interviewer: What is your role in your school?

M2: So my official title would be principal. I am not sure that defines my role necessarily but I guess that goes into question 2.

Interviewer: Ok. Let's talk about that. How do you define the role of the school principal?

M2: Um . . . That's a very interesting question and I am glad you are not sharing this with anybody. Um . . . I am . . . I feel like I am still transitioning between being a vice-principal and a principal. I feel that for a variety of reasons. Um . . . currently I am without a VP so it's very tricky. So I see my role in many different ways. I feel like I am a counselor both to students and staff. Um . . . I . . . uh . . . my official role I think is instructional leader as seen by the school district. Um . . . I am also supervisor, definitely a manager, and uh, the thing that comes to mind is jack of all trades which really is more of a VP description to be honest with you and I feel like I still have that. And I am working to narrow the focus a little bit in my role in my job and um . . . that is really challenging because I don't have the right people around me yet.

Interviewer: Ok, I have a follow up question then. So you talked about . . . you said that you are an instructional leader and that this was in the districts or I guess in the districts view . . .

M2: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you think that the role should be solely instructional leader?

M2: It can't be. Because we have other roles but I feel like um . . . the district that is our primary role and I understand why they want that to be our primary role and yet that is really challenging because you have so many other things you have to take care of. So you know, we need to have people around us to help us with that so I love having coaches. They have been fabulous this first year with our coaches and of course Saturdays because you don't do that except for being in classrooms and working with staff but in terms of really diving into things and you know the data stuff and the reading and the learning there is no time to do any of that during your work day. Or planning for PD or those kind of things. That doesn't happen during the school day. So hard for that to be your primary role when you've got other things that you have to do.

Interviewer: Ok, alright. So how do you define morals and values and how are they different?

M2: Um . . . I actually looked this up when I printed this out because um . . . you think of the moral of a story right when I think of that word. And when I looked it up it said, morals are values we get from a system of beliefs. So things that we learned growing up, things that we learned perhaps from our church, things like that. As opposed to values being fundamental beliefs and um . . . so it said, often used to judge others which I think is interesting because we place a value on things, or we put a . . . so we judge others based on our own values where morals are more um . . . maybe a belief system.

Interviewer: So do you think we use values to judge others?

M2: I do. Oh yeah I think we do. I think we use morals to judge others to but . . . for example if I value being fit for example, as we were talking about running, um . . . I might judge someone who isn't because of my value on that. I might put them down for example or put them up. You know what I mean? Based on that.

Interviewer: Where did you pull that? Just out of curiosity.

M2: Oh I just Googled it. There was a couple of different web sites that I looked at.

Interviewer: Curious.

M2: They had ethics too, which . . . you know it really made sense to me. The ethics are the actions and decisions, which we make based upon our morals and values. So . . .

Interviewer: So which values did you grow up with which you still connect with today? So these are things that you learned as a child, which you are like, yep these are still part of me. And then what lead to the creation of these values?

M2: Um . . . well I guess what lead to the creation of the values was my parents and my family structure and um . . . some of it from my church background although my parents weren't strong church goers. But I felt that was definitely influential for me. Um . . . I am currently very active . . . well not very active but active in my church. So um . . . I mean that list could be endless but certain things could be family being super important, um . . . just the whole you know things like you don't . . . I believe in integrity. So you do the right thing even though somebody is not watching you for example if um . . . you walk out of the store with something in your cart that you didn't pay for on accident you go back and pay for it. Those kind of things. Being respectful of people and um . . . I try to really not judge people based on own

perception of things because I don't believe I have the right to judge anybody except when it comes to things like . . . well even then you don't know the whole story so I don't really even have the right to judge anybody um . . . because we don't know the whole back story. Um . . . so I don't believe in hierarchy. It really bothers me that um . . . people based on your position for example like often times in schools the principal is like up here and the teachers are here and the classified are here and the custodial staff is here. I really work hard to not have that hierarchy even though technically I am there supervisor I have to have difficult conversations with people. We have principals for example that might talk differently to a classified person or a teacher or something like that as different than they would to another principal or teachers that talk down to a custodian I just don't believe in any of that. I think everybody is equal in terms of um . . . due respect and all of that. You know whether you are scrubbing a floor or whether you are teaching calculus it doesn't matter. You know? Um . . . I don't know what else you want me to talk about in terms of that.

Interviewer: No, that's fine if you want to stop there or add more. So um . . . I may come back to another question. Sometimes I form an idea and it may happen and it may not.

M2: Yeah, there is so many things when you talk about values because you talk about that for 3 hours. What people believe in, what you find important. There's so many things that you could talk about so . . . .

Interviewer: Did you have . . . so hierarchy then . . . was that an issue for you growing up? Or is that something that you developed later on?

M2: I think that is something I developed later on. I mean I have respect for it, it's not that I don't like, for example . . . since this isn't going anywhere (name of supervisor) walks into my building and automatically I am like oh my gosh that is my boss . . . Do I get that? But on a person to person level, he has more authority than I do in this job but in a person to person sort of thing there's no difference there. You know what I mean? Even the President of the United States, of course I respect that person and put him on a pedestal to some degree of whatever but he still puts his pants on one leg at a time you know. He still farts at night.

Interviewer: Oh, I hope I get to put that in my dissertation.

M2: We are all human. We all deserve to be treated with respect.

Interviewer: So what values have you developed as an adult then that are different than what you grew up with?

M2: I thought about that one. I don't that I have anything different maybe more stronger and of course things specific. I don't know if they are values necessarily though like things specific to working in schools. I have always valued education but things specific to education like the whole clique about all students can learn and all students can graduate and totally really believing that I never thought about necessarily when I was younger, when I was growing up. I think my fundamental beliefs are exactly the same as they were when I was young. Because honestly I think that a lot of that in part . . . a lot of it is based upon your childhood I am sure but I think you are born with a lot of those things to you know. You have people who are born into a really good family that are mass murderers whatever. It's not always environmental. Although I think some of that stuff is God given.

Interviewer: Ok, We are zipping along. How are the values seen in your personal life seen in your role as principal? So something that is you personally, that you can say, yep that is me, and in my role of the principal I can see a direct relationship to who you are personally.

M2: Oh yeah. Well I will give you an example of one thing that might . . . one thing like compassion. I feel that . . . I don't if this will directly answer your question but having been a parent and a parent of children who struggled in school I feel like I have a real connection with families because those are the families I generally see. And um . . . and so I really have a strong sense of wanting to help parents and students anyway I can. And again also just that whole issue of treating people with respect. Even if I am angry with someone and it is professionally. I mean I get passionate about things sometimes and people and I know I have been thought of sometimes as too aggressive or whatever because I am passionate. But it's not ever meant at least meant to be a disrespectful way. Um . . . I'm trying to think kids you know just being really an ear and hopefully trying to help kids as opposed to you did this you are going to get suspended is not who I am . . . you know? I probably shouldn't say this but there are times where I know a parent is a Christian and I have offered to pray for them. We have not prayed together necessarily but I have brought that up in my conversations when I feel it is appropriate or they've expressed that to me. And with co-workers as well which I think is . . . for me that has been really powerful. I haven't uh . . . before coming to (name of district) hadn't been in a situation where I have been able to talk about my faith with people that I worked with and that has really been actually really great.

Interviewer: Can I ask what your faith is?

M2: Well I am Christian. I am technically Presbyterian. But I don't really . . . those lines don't matter to me. I am Christian.

Interviewer: Ok, I did skip number six but I didn't mean to skip number six. You kind of talked about it a little bit so I am going to ask it and if you want to add. If not we can kind of move forward. It's up to you.

M2: Sure.

Interviewer: So what values have you developed professionally in your career?

M2: Well I will speak to one that I'm thinking about a lot and working through and that is that every decision needs to be student centered. So what I mean by that is um . . . I have teachers that need some help instructionally and or it's hard to have difficult conversations with teachers. But I have to always remember that or staff who ever that is or decisions that need to be made and it always needs to come back to what's best for the child or the children in general no matter how difficult that is. For me that's hard because I don't do well with conflict. I shouldn't say that, I shouldn't say I don't do well with conflict because nobody wants to be . . . nobody wants conflict and so to sit down and talk to a teacher about your performance isn't up to par and you need to make these changes. I am getting better at that . . . I am really trying to do is think about how it's not fair to the students in the classroom. They deserve the opportunity to learn and be successful. So um . . . that's why I am hired in this job. That's you know . . . instructional leadership and making sure that my teachers are all not just good teachers but great teachers and so I'm . . . I wouldn't say I've developed that in this role but it's something that is becoming stronger and more . . . I am really working on. Does that make sense? So I think I have always thought about kids first like in every decision whether it's disciplinary or as a teacher assignment based you know all of those things but taking that step of you know . . . which is more important here, this persons livelihood or whatever or self-worth or whatever it is . . . because they are going to take it in a critical way or the 150 students they are impacting every day. You know it's a no-brainer. So . . .

Interviewer: Ok. So how would you define what is morally right and wrong personally and give an example?

M2: Um . . . that's a really broad question. I am not sure how to answer it. I mean . . . I think you know if you're . . . I don't know if this is what you are looking for . . . So if you are hurting someone you know what I mean? Or something? Things like, I think of about um . . . you hear about people who are . . . that are . . . hurting animals or domestic violence or you know whatever it is or like that guy that left his little kid in the backseat of the car and let him die. Those things are just black and white. You are hurting somebody else. Things like the whole ISIS terrorism thing and child soldiers and all those things. Those are extreme examples but you know I guess it goes back to that feeling that everybody deserves opportunity. Everybody deserves to be treated with respect, everybody deserves to have food on the table, everybody deserves to have a job, everybody deserves to be um . . . a contributing citizen in our world and it isn't

fair of for people to hurt others or to judge others, oppress others, based upon their own views of what's ok or not ok or you know um . . . I don't know. So for example, people saying it isn't ok for . . . there is a huge thing in my church right now. We have a lesbian couple that got married in my church last week and my church is up in arms. How dare anybody let that happen and these people, these women . . . wonderful women have been going to our church forever and they just finally decided they wanted to do this and you know. And uh . . . it's tearing our church apart and I think who are you to judge what is right or wrong there you know what I mean? It's love and isn't it what life is all about? That's what Jesus preached. It's all about love. And um . . . so those kind of things. Is that too general? It has nothing to do with a school.

Interviewer: It's ok. It's not necessarily about school. The whole point of this is about you as a person and then becoming your role as the principal. It was just what it needs to be.

M2: Ok. Well it's interesting because we haven't had . . . you and I haven't had an opportunity to really talk to each other. So it's . . . that's why I said earlier that I am sure you are really getting to know people. Kind of in an in depth way.

Interviewer: So I am going to ask a follow up question. Who determines what is morally right and wrong? Who determines that? That morally right and wrong piece.

M2: Um . . . Well I don't . . . this may not sound right or whatever but ultimately God does because I do believe that. I do believe there's a judgment day and when all is said and done it's going to come down to did we walk the walk of you know what Jesus preached. So um . . . you know I think that's really what it comes down to.

Interviewer: Ok. That works for me. Ok. How would you define what is morally right and wrong professionally? And give an example.

M2: Well I guess partly what I talked about before . . . I mean it has to come, we are here for kids and um . . . I think sometimes we forget the impact that we have on the people, the children that we serve and um . . . this is an example of not necessarily of this but an example of what I was just saying. There was this kid, his name was (name of student) at (name of school) he was doing a state test and um . . . one day I said, he was doing his state test and I uh . . . just said you know, you're doing a great job, good work I am really proud of you, that sort of thing. Well 3 years later he comes back to me as a junior and he said, "you're the first person to say you were proud of me." You know he said, "I am just doing so great in school now." He started crying and I had no idea of the impact I had made. I think it goes the other way. I know it goes the other way too. So times I have yelled at a kid or lost my temper at a kid, I am sure that that kid remembers that. I remember when my teacher yelled at me in high school. So um . . . the moral imperative that we have is to keep those personal you know outbursts or

whatever. Not let it frustrate us or at least not let it show to the students and um . . . do the best that we can for them every single day. That's the moral imperative that we have but instructionally as well as personally. You know because we have so many kids . . . one thing that I have discovered as an administrator is that I didn't realize as a teacher, you know the 150 whatever kids I see every day, probably 130 of them look like they're doing pretty well. Well what I realize as an administrator is that maybe 25 of them are really ok. If that . . . you know? They have all that stuff going on that you never would know, even the ones that are functioning fine. So . . . it's sad. I remember the first time. (name of colleague) hired me you know as an intern and uh she brought me in and she taught me how to discipline that sort of thing and remember after one of our first things she . . . the kid walked out and I just started crying and I am like, how do you do this? How do you . . . you know . . . maintain knowing all of this stuff is going on all the time?

Interviewer: It's crazy but it's the right work. So . . . describe a conflict between what you believe to morally wrong personally and a decision you had to make in the decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. Describe an example and how did you resolve the conflict if at all? Something you had to do in your role but thought man this is just going against my moral grain. Or have you?

M2: The only thing that come to mind automatically. I was going in a different direction when we first said that but you know . . . I don't know. I wish we had more alternatives for kids besides discipline stuff we have in place like suspensions we have for example. Like right now I don't have an in-school suspension person. I don't have a way to do that. You know you send a kid how and you know that there's no . . . that there's nobody there. There might not be food there. And yet they brought a knife to school or whatever. It's . . . we need to have. I have always thought that is a place we need to research more and put more money towards is other alternatives for students besides just (name of alternative school). At the high school they have more options than we do. But at the elementary and upper elementary, specifically in middle we have so few options for kids and uh . . . we need to really look at that. Not just for disciplinary stuff but just for others stuff like when I was first at (name of another middle school) we had an uh . . . would term as a in-house . . . it's an SLC for non-SLC kids and um . . . (name of teacher) who teaches here now was the teacher of that program. It was just a place for kids on the edge there. They weren't really special ed kids, they just needed a blowout place. They needed a cover, they needed an advocate you know and um . . . have that anymore that's one idea but we have so many kids who just need that person and we don't have a place for them. You know? Or a support for them except for me or the vice-principal or the counselor . . . it's . . . you can't really run that way. It makes it really, really hard. We need more options for kids. So the moral conflict is suspending a kid because you have to but you know it is not going to help the situation. So . . .

Interviewer: Describe a conflict, you kind of talk about this a little, you believe to be morally wrong professionally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. Maybe they are connected? I don't know.

M2: Um . . . oh morally wrong professionally?

Interviewer: What's something you believe to be morally wrong professionally that you believe to be wrong but you had to do it?

M2: I'm not sure I've been in a situation to do something morally wrong professionally except for the whole suspension thing because I am not sure I would do it if I felt it was truly morally wrong. There's been things I haven't agreed with. That I have done but it's not about values and morals it's more about that's just not what I think is best. But it doesn't mean it was necessarily wrong. Does that make sense? You know sometimes you have to tow that company line and put on the smiley face and say yes we are doing this but it's not really what you think your teachers need at that point in time. So if I really believed it was morally wrong I don't . . . I don't know . . . I guess I am contradicting myself I guess my hands are tied with suspensions or I just don't have anything else. I don't have anything else, I don't have any other options but you know, would I send a kid home to an abusive parent. I wouldn't do that. You know or I can't think of a situation like that.

Interviewer: Describe decisions in your role as principal requiring you to follow a policy, regulation or law that you felt was in conflict to a student need.

M2: Well I already did but um . . . the only other thing I can think of is sometimes just the . . . when you really like for example we have two kids right now who are in need of some services and to get that ball rolling fast enough to really um . . . get the ball rolling to get help that they need and sometimes we question is this the right placement for that kid and that kind of thing . . . um but policy, regulation or law, I can't really think of anything. Um . . . I don't think this applies but I think sometimes students, certain students get different things . . . you know . . . like depending on the squawking of the parent you know what I mean? That's not necessarily fair, not equitable, um . . . I will say that . . . again I don't know if totally applies to this but I think um . . . that sometimes it's uh . . . being in the role of the principal you can only so much say over so many things and so um . . . sometimes we don't have control over certain situations that we wish we did. There are reasons for that. There's checks and balances for that and people who know more than we do. I totally get that but sometimes it's frustrating. That's probably off topic. Every principal has their own morals and values and belief systems about education so you have to somebody in certain situations that are making those executive decisions outside of the principals or you would probably have 34 districts instead of one. Right? Does that make sense?

Interviewer: Describe a situation in which you had to make a decision addressing the needs of a individual over the needs of a larger group and what risks if any were involved?

M2: Um . . . Let's come back to that one I can't think of anything.

Interviewer: Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal benefiting one part of your school community and denied another? If so, describe the situation.

M2: Um . . . what's going through my mind is ELL, Dual Language, and TAG and those kind of things and special ed. I think that um . . . I think that some people think when we serve one of those groups we deny another and I don't believe that so . . . that when we focus on ELL or special education students we talk about differentiation instruction, we talk about providing scaffolding, we talk about you know language targets and um . . . English language proficiency standards. I think when we talk about all those things we benefit everybody. So the reason I am thinking about that is I hear that from so many people that we are always focusing on those kids why don't we focus on the other kids when I truly believe that it benefits everybody. So um . . . have I ever . . . I can't think of that. I think that we have groups that are worried about coming in. I think about my Hispanic families, my Spanish speaking parents that are kind of scared about the school. Some of them, I shouldn't say all, are sometimes scared about coming into the school community and I need to reach out to them more. I don't think I am making a decision denying them access necessarily. I need to really consciously figure out how to create the opportunity for access.

Interviewer: Ok. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal which caused you later to reflect on those decisions and later reverse them? And if so, describe the situation.

M2: Oh yeah, oh yeah. Ok here is a really stupid one. It has nothing to do with morals and values but sometimes, this is something else I am really working on. My custodian comes to me last fall. I don't remember exactly when it was. He says, you know we had our custodial staff cut by one he says. I know in other building they are putting brooms in the classrooms and let the teachers sweep the classrooms at the end of the day. They don't have to but whatever. Oh my goodness, did the crap hit the fan on that one. Oh I thought, that was a bad idea. I reversed decisions. You can just keep the brooms in your classrooms. Forget that. Um . . . I have altered um . . . disciplinary actions after speaking with the parent. And you do your whole investigation and they are out for 3 days, 5 days or you are going to expel, whatever it is based upon talking to the parent or based on further investigation, I've changed those kinds of things. Um . . . I am trying to think about teachers. Um . . . I wished I could change hiring decisions at times. I haven't been able to always. But you know, um . . . I am a real . . . this is a fault as well as a strength . . . I am a real action oriented person and I think

that sounds great. Let's do that. Let's . . . you know I always want to make things better. There are times I am really making sure I get the idea to others and get feedback before I jump. So . . . maybe that's too silly.

Interviewer: Alright last one unless we go back to that other one if you want to. Let's see. Have you had to make decisions in your role of principal you felt was in contrast to the traditional role of the principal and if so describe the situation?

M2: Well my problem with that question is that the traditional role of the principal has changed. So I think if you are talking about traditional role of the principal in say prior to 5 years ago, and maybe that doesn't even matter but um . . . I do think the traditional role of principal has changed from a manager and supervisor to an instructional leader. So I think that has changed. Um I also feel like there's . . . as I said in the beginning that I am transitioning into an actual role of the principal. So um . . . have I made decision in contrast? I don't think I have totally defined my role as principal is. So I would say no. Um . . . I haven't made decisions in contrast to that. Um . . . I'm just trying to make sure that my students are successful, my teachers are happy and the building is running smoothly. You know what I mean. Um . . . that doesn't always happen. So no I don't think I have.

Interviewer: Do you think people . . . do you think principals define in their career define their role as principal?

M2: I think some do. You know I haven't had this in depth of conversation, well not just in morals and values but in terms of having a conversation with another principal about what is your role. It's based upon more about what I see in meetings, what I hear in conversations those sorts of things. Um . . . I think I guess part of my . . . I am glad this isn't going anywhere . . . part of my struggle of the whole concept of we all feel like we are here and viewing myself in terms of authority is hard for me as I am still kind of dealing with that.

Interviewer: Let's go back to that other one. Describe a situation addressing the needs of an individual over the needs of a larger group and what risks if any were involved.

M2: Ok. Here's . . . I guess a very good example would be um . . . I keep going back to my role as a VP but the whole discipline thing. When you're dealing with a kid and a family and what some people would call making deals, giving them breaks or whatever like that. You have teachers or other staff viewing that as why are you doing that. Even if you explain it they don't get it because they are not in your role. So, yes there are times I have put the need of the individual student above the need of the larger group. I don't know if I would do it differently even though there is a price to be paid because they are going to think you are too soft or that's not fair. That kid called me a fucking bitch or whatever it is. So you definitely pay a price for that but

ultimately it is about the kid so um . . . so if they need to sit in my office for 3 days and do work because you know for example, I had a girl in my office for 3 days. Her brother had um . . . had been yanked out of her home and went to jail and she couldn't function in classes. Not everybody needed to know that but what they needed to know is that she was in here with me doing her work. People necessarily agree with that. Another piece of that was my son at the same time had the same thing happen to my own kid. Like literally within a week and I could totally relate to her. I could totally get it why you can't function. You know . . . (starting to cry). Thanks. So . . . you know people don't understand that. And they are never going to understand that if they are not in this seat. Do you know what I am saying? So I think it is worth the risks.

Interviewer: That's it. That's the end of our questions. Thank you.

M2: Thank you.

APPENDIX J  
TRANSCRIPT OF PRINCIPAL H1

H1 Interview  
August 22, 2014

Interviewer: Question 1. What is your role in your school?

H1: I am the principal.

Interviewer: Principal. Ok. You are the principal. How would you define the role of the school principal?

H1: I am the ultimate leader. You are responsible for everything. Some days I pull weeds, some days I deal with district office administrators. You are ultimately in charge of everything that has to deal with your school.

Interviewer: A follow up question to that, that includes . . . What parts of the community? What would that look like?

H1: What parts of the (name of town) community?

Interviewer: Or the school community.

H1: The school community we are expected to be leaders and guide student . . . we are instructional leaders within the community of a school district. We are also managerial leaders because we have to make sure we don't spend too much money and all that kind of stuff. We're uh . . . counselors, because we have to meet with families. We are community liaisons. We are marketers um . . . We are considered to be people of respect in the community. When people . . . one when they say, "oh you're a teacher . . . yeah. Oh you're a principal . . . oh you've a hard job."

Interviewer: Well that's true.

H1: Especially if you work at (name of school).

Interviewer: How do you define morals and values and how are they different?

H1: You know I sat and looked at that question and thought morals and values . . . what is the difference between what you value . . . things are what you appreciate . . . I value my time in the woods, I value my family. My morals I think are the core I built . . . sometimes I want to think you are born with morals but you developed . . . they come from deep inside you from the very beginning. It's almost part of genetic structure I kind of think.

Interviewer: Ok . . . so where did . . . are morals then developed?

H1: No I think . . . Well . . . yeah morals are developed. Yes you develop your morals definitely. I am sure my morals came from my upbringing in a conservative family born in the 50s. I was born in the 50s. They weren't. But I was.

Interviewer: Thanks . . . uh . . . boy we are having one difficulty with technology after another today. Alright . . . good times. Well you know . . . user error. So let's talk about a little about values, which values did you grow up with that you still connect with today and what lead to the creation of these values?

H1: Man . . . well values, morals all of that thing, I think is part of your faith. I grew up in a Christian family. I also grew up in a conservative family. A traditional family kind of stuff. Um . . . And then things I experienced in my own life, interacting in even an early age . . . I remember things in high school and college where all of a sudden I thought (H1) you do feel strongly about that . . . because in the 70s it was make love not war era and um . . . It was pretty loose but you realize as you grow up what you really believe. Like for instance . . . I think this is a value, moral or whatever it is . . . When I went to college my freshman year, someone from my same high school. I hadn't given much thought to abortion at all, and then my roommate got pregnant and then she asked me for money for an abortion. I realized how strongly I felt about that and I could not give money for an abortion . . .

Interviewer: Ok . . . interesting. Ok, so then you are looking at that family upbringing that you grew up with . . . so we're zipping along here.

H1: Now you're talking to a traditional conservative . . . old school. Really old school . . . I have a vintage office . . . because I am vintage.

Interviewer: I don't think of you as vintage.

H1: I can take the senior discount.

Interviewer: So what values have you developed as an adult that are different than what you grew up with?

H1: I think more openness. I think I have more open opinion than what I initially grew up with. I remember when I married my husband who was a Catholic my mother made the expression that my grandfather would roll over in his grave if he knew I had married somebody who was a Catholic. I never felt that way. It's more of . . . I think I was much more accepting and welcoming. I will use that cliché . . . diversity . . . all kinds of diversity.

Interviewer: So that has developed more as you have become an adult?

H1: Uh huh.

Interviewer: So it's different.

H1: I just didn't know much. When I was growing up we had two Hispanic families in town. We didn't even have an African-American in my school. My first exposure was going to outdoor school as a sixth grader. We didn't even . . . you know . . . we didn't know about being in a place with students who were not the little White person I was . . . so. It's a big world.

Interviewer: That's mainly been in (name of state) then?

H1: I grew up in (name of local town), eight miles down the road. Or (name of town) as some people refer to it.

Interviewer: It's too bad I can't put that in there. That would be fun to put in there. Alright . . . so what values have you developed professionally in your career? These are professional values.

H1: Um . . . professional values that no matter what you keep what is important to the child foremost in your brain. And there is a lot of factors that nip at you um . . . I was always an advocate for the underdog anyway. And as a principal now it is my professional duty and it gets me in trouble to stick up for when I believe what is best for my school and for my students. And I say that it gets me in trouble because it has.

Interviewer: Ok. Let's run with that for a second.

H1: You want me to give you an example?

Interviewer: Only if you want to.

H1: I would be happy to. I had never been brought to tears by an administrator before in my life, until I had someone come in here and say I think this is a great idea. We are moving your school to (name of another school) across (name of school) on Sixth down here by the railroad tracks. They said isn't that great. I said, No. I think that's a terrible idea. I was shaking and then I was told I was combative and argumentative and disagreeable. I had never had anybody call me combative. I mean I was miss happy sunshine so this was . . . but I told them my reasons. And I am still here.

Interviewer: So those reasons were for the kids?

H1: Yeah for the kids. They were just starting to want to start an elementary program. What elementary program . . . especially a homeschool parent is going to want their

child to go to school across from the liquor store, next to light rail, surrounded by half way houses. Bad idea . . . bad idea. That was it.

Interviewer: So you were willing to put the kids and their comfort over your own professional safety?

H1: I have to open my mouth and speak up for them . . . yes.

Interviewer: Alright. How are the values you have developed seen in your personal life and in your role as a principal? So what are those values you value personally that make you (H1) seen in your role as principal of your school?

H1: Depending on the audience. For the clients who walk down in the door from the community the relationship skills the empathy that I have is highly valued. Um . . . that . . . the mission of this school is to recapture families that have left the district. That is absolutely imperative. Some people recognize that and value those skills . . . other people I mean talk engagement and they talk relationship but the bottom line is the dollar with other people . . . so.

Interviewer: So the empathy and relationship is something that you value personally? That's a core value?

H1: Uh huh. That's a core value. People . . . caring for people is just absolutely . . . everybody who walks through my door is here for a reason. And it's very important that we sit down and talk what their needs are both the student and the family.

Interviewer: We are zipping along. Ok. Number 8. How would define what is morally right and wrong personally? Give an example if you can.

H1: What is morally right and wrong personally . . . .

Interviewer: This is you personally . . . not professionally. What is morally right and morally wrong?

H1: I don't know if you are talking about stealing and not stealing. Something as simple as that. That's very black and white.

Interviewer: Could be.

H1: Um . . . lying and not lying. Honest versus dishonest. And there's a lot of gray in there. I really think lying is one that can be defined as black and white. Um . . . morally right and morally wrong . . . .

Interviewer: Let's go with honest and dishonest and lots of gray. Why is there lots of gray?

H1: Some things become gray because you're trying . . . it's like . . . like some time . . . like (name of employee), she is a black and whiter lately. This kid is not doing this they deserve this . . . and then I have to say to her but wait. This kid yes isn't doing this but look what is going on with them. They deserve another try. I don't know if that is a moral thing but . . . it isn't always black and white. There's a middle ground sometimes and as long as your note crossing the ultimate line of, hey I am lying for this kid but I feel like it's let's look at it a different way. Let's help out the situation, let's . . . those kinds of things. Someone might call it being dishonest . . . maybe someone would call it being dishonest but I don't think it is. I think it is looking at the ultimate goal is and seeing what you can do to fix something that is broken. I don't know.

Interviewer: Ok. So then the next question would be how would define something that is right or wrong professionally? You have talked about this a little bit, it seems that there is a blurring.

H1: Yeah I kind of blended it.

Interviewer: So is there a blurring then between what is morally right and wrong?

H1: Um . . .

Interviewer: Personally and professionally? At least professionally?

H1: Yeah. I think there is. Morally or valuing. I don't know. Yeah I think there is. I think there is a situational piece in the middle. This situation that would be morally right or morally wrong but in this situation there is a little bit of blurring. And you have to ask yourself that question, what is the right thing to do here? Where . . . yeah. Where it's not black and white. Where it's stirred up a little bit.

Interviewer: Ok.

H1: You probably want an example. I can't think of one.

Interviewer: Well I have a follow up question actually. So if you want to hold off on your example actually.

H1: I don't have one anyway.

Interviewer: So, so you have to ask what is the right thing to do. Who determines the right thing?

H1: Depending on the situation . . . I mean talking personally or professionally. Sometimes you have to decide it depending on yourself. Sometimes you can seek counsel with a peer. Like I had a decision to make as far as staffing. I don't know if it was morally right or morally wrong but it was a hard decision for me to make based on how I feel about things um . . . if it's not up here I finally asked (name of supervisor) afterwards if I made the right decision so . . . At home I am asking (name of husband) what do you think about that? I don't know just make a decision. Don't ask me. I don't really care about the school district anymore. I get that now. I don't care.

Interviewer: That's great. Alright . . . number 10. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong personally, so this is your morally wrong personal decisions and decisions you had to make in the role as the principal. Describe an example and how did you resolve this conflict if at all? So a decision you had to make really was like . . . something that you just didn't believe. I don't believe that but I have to make this decision. Or have you?

H1: I haven't been a principal very long. I think so far. So far I haven't had to do something that I thought was so morally wrong. I haven't been asked to do some of those things. I haven't had to. You know a funny thing, we found a transcript the other day where a student at another school in the district had been given geometry credit for 2 years. So now as a senior they could have taken another year of math in their elective category but anyway. I know if that has to do . . . on one hand morally we could have chosen to ignore it because it was already there and we didn't make the mistake. But that's not right so . . . we get to give the big news . . . congratulations.

Interviewer: Alright. Number 11. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong professionally, which is what you kind of just did, and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. Describe an example that you feel is morally wrong to do but it is my job.

H1: Oh gosh. Well the whole state of education I feel like we are making mistakes. We're not . . . we talk about this centering on the student and we are making them jump through these hoops and take tests they are going to fail. We cram so much at them that really the whole piece of education that was the passion and the love of learning I don't think is being allowed anymore. It's just you got to pass the test. It is morally wrong. We are making kids . . . it was morally wrong to give the message to every blooming kid in high school you got to go to a 4-year college. I had one young man . . . I don't know . . . I use this example a lot . . . He just . . . I didn't give that message . . . one day he shared with me, (H1) I really feel like a second class citizen. I

feel stupid because I don't want to go to a 4-year college. I said, it's ok. I said, do you have something you want to do? He said, yeah I want to take over my dad's plumbing business. It was a huge plumbing business in (name of town). There is nothing wrong . . . I think it is morally wrong. I am so glad now that we finally switched where oh by the way you are going to graduate with \$120,000 worth of debt and go into a job that pays \$35,000. Congratulations.

Interviewer: Alright. Describe decisions in your role as principal requiring you to follow policy, law, or a regulation or practice, you felt was in conflict of a student need.

H1: Everybody has to take that bloomin' test. We should have an alternate pathway. And we shouldn't be dinged because they can't. I got dinged because parents refused to bring their kids in. I had kids not graduate. All of these statistics, yes I know why they are there but . . . it's especially . . . it's especially the sped kids when I watch them feel so dejected when they come in. They know they're going to bomb that test again. They have to take it anyway. When it is so important that they have to do that. I don't know . . . that's a policy. When we really need some different things. I mean . . . part of me wants to encourage parents to opt their kids out. I can't. I am sharing that with you and am really glad this is confidential. I didn't this year say that to anybody but I had a lot of parents opt out and I totally get it why. I have so many kids with anxiety disorder. I feel like the parents need to speak up and say no and put their foot down. No, I am not going to do it anymore. Just like those Superintendents in Texas who said no we are not taking that test anymore and they pulled out of it. We just go along do what we are told so we get that almighty dollar.

Interviewer: Ok. Number 13. Describe a situation, which you had to make a decision addressing the needs of an individual over the needs of a larger group. What risks were involved if any?

H1: I am reading that question, meaning I chose the needs of the individual over the needs of the larger group.

Interviewer: Correct.

H1: Ok. I am thinking about my staff because I am trying to think of a situation because again I haven't been a principal very long and I have such a teeny staff. I don't think I have made one that addressed the needs of an individual over the needs of a larger group. I did one the other way.

Interviewer: Ok.

H1: That was a risk taking.

Interviewer: What was that about?

H1: Well with the staffing. We have all been . . . 5 like my four core people have all been . . . 5 and I was given . . . 75 - an increase. I could have taken that and divided it equally so that everybody got a tiny little bump. But three people had a much higher course student load than the fourth person. She had a 110 and they had in the 160s, 170s, 180s. I knew it was going to cause a ruffle. I knew she was going to be upset. But if I chose the other way I knew that would be right either and make it fair. Because their course work loads weren't fair. So that was the risk I took . . . the risk of her wrath.

Interviewer: Was their wrath?

H1: There was some upset . . . yep. But in the end thank goodness, she said, I understand.

Interviewer: But in the long run did that help more kids? By bringing those . . . so in some ways by giving . . . by benefiting one group over another you helped more.

H1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Interesting. Does that person see that? Or did it not matter?

H1: They did. They get it. When I told them the numbers I said, look you have 110 kids on your roster and they have 170. If we were in a different school and we had that many kids in a biology department with that many kids in an English department and we created another section of . . . that part. You can put it in terms of a building.

Interviewer: So number 14 is . . . sounds similar to what you just said, but I will ask it anyhow. Have you had to make a decision in your role as principal benefiting one part of your school community and denying another? If so, describe the situation.

H1: Yeah. Kind of like that one. Um . . . again we have done so much collaboration. I have as the principal have not had to lay down the heavy as much. I believe in group decisions. I really haven't been faced with having to pull the authority card out. I don't know maybe partly we only have one classroom. I gave it basically to the elementary teacher. For her prime use. We took the rest of it but that wasn't too hard.

Interviewer: This is interesting let's use this as a follow up with something you just said. You said you haven't had to be the heavy, the main authority person, because you believe in group think. Is that right? So . . . and you have a small environment here. If you were in a much larger high school situation or middle school or

elementary school, since you kind of do all three, um . . . do you feel that you could do that, that kind of group think.

H1: Uh huh. In a way I think back a little further when I was only the assistant principal I was called sometimes to do things I had to . . . that's my M.O.

Interviewer: Ok. Number 15. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal which caused you later to reflect on those decisions and reverse them? And if so, describe the situation.

H1: No. Reflected but I didn't change it.

Interviewer: Can I ask why?

H1: Well it was the staffing one . . . because it came out to basically what I think was the right way. And (name of supervisor) told me I was right. (Name of husband) told me, whoa you are really hard ass.

Interviewer: Excellent. Ok. Alright and last one . . . oops. Shoot.

H1: This is going by quick.

Interviewer: It is going by fast. Number 16. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal that was in contrast with the traditional role of the principal? If so, describe the situation.

H1: Yes. I think the traditional role of the principal . . . well yes and no. I feel like I get to be more of the counseling principal rather than the head person who makes heavy, heavy, heavy decisions.

Interviewer: Do you think that's . . . you get to be the counseling principal because it's a smaller environment or that's your M.O.?

H1: Both. Both and then the third one that is the nature of this beast. That we are an option program and everybody comes through the door with their thing.

Interviewer: That's the end of our questions. Thank you.

H1: Thank you.

APPENDIX K  
TRANSCRIPT OF PRINCIPAL H2

H2 Interview  
October 20, 2014

Interviewer: What is your role in your school?

H2: My role is the high school principal at (name of school) high school.

Interviewer: Define the role of the school principal. What does the school principal do?

H2: I would say my number one responsibility is making sure we have a safe learning environment for our students and two as the instructional leader of this school making sure that we are providing an instructional practices that will best meet, serve the needs of our students that they will be successful beyond high school.

Interviewer: So, I heard a lot in these interviews the term “instructional leader.”

H2: So I focus on . . . when I do instructional leader is like are we providing the curriculum that will meet the students’ needs. Are we looking at best teaching practices that meet the needs of the students, um . . . and are we providing beyond the regular transcripts? Can I ensure that when a student walks out the door that they have met all the state requirements and can hopefully pursue a future that will meet the needs that they are looking for whether that be um in a college, a career, a trade, the military. That we are going to be able to provide opportunities for those students beyond . . . once they walk out the door. That’s how I interpret that.

Interviewer: Ok. We might come back to that. We shall see.

H2: You can come back to that.

Interviewer: So how do you define morals and values? And how are they different?

H2: This was a challenge for me. Values and morals . . . uh . . . I think values to me is what you’re . . . when I looked it up . . . it was like your fundamental beliefs . . . what you are grounded in. Morals is like a system . . . a lot times I kept looking at them . . . morals talked about . . . more of a religion type piece. So it’s like, how do you do that in my head? I always think of values as they encompass the morals. Because to me morals are your big picture and the values are how you act day to day. As I walk through the halls, when I talk to people they can tell you what I value, what is important, what am I looking for, if I walk into a classroom what do I value what a teacher is doing. Morals is more right and wrong I guess.

Interviewer: Ok, so two questions for you then. So let's talk about, you say that when you walk down the hall they can tell you what your values are. How do they know what your values are?

H2: By how I act. Um . . . if I see students acting inappropriately I can change or um . . . if I have conversations with kids . . . no matter what ethnicity they are, no matter how they dress. I value the kids, listen to their perspectives. If staff members bring issues up that no matter what is said, we can have a discussion about those openly.

Interviewer: So through your actions then. So that is what drive . . . that's when people see your values.

H2: and yeah, like, one of the questions coming up . . . I probably have to wait to answer this . . . what values . . . number 4 . . . what values did you grow up with which you still connect with today. That's the last question I had a chance to look at today. Was work ethic . . . they see me here late at night. They see me working all the time. I put compassion, um . . . kids make mistakes, teachers make mistakes. I am compassionate, that is why we have AVID, trying to help kids no matter what their backgrounds are. We want to help them be successful um . . . I am also trying to . . . uh . . . I mean some compassion. I mean when I walk into an AVID class my back starts to chill because some of these kids wouldn't have gotten a chance based upon our system to try to be successful beyond high school. They would get their degree or high school diploma and what would be next? Here we are trying to show them, there's more to what you are getting here at high school. So I think about that compassion piece and what led to these values was from my parents they both were teachers and educators. My dad was . . . the compassion part was . . . I always talk about this story where we had, we had like black angus. We had six or seven. We raised them ourselves. Across our canal was heifers I think . . . black and white . . . so milking cows. Well one day the bull that we rented got out into the neighbors and then impacts the type of milk . . . if you have a bull impregnating some cows. So I am sitting here with my dad and I am just . . . this farmer . . . they are friends . . . he just reams my dad. My dad doesn't react to it at all. He just sits there and after a while they are best friends because he didn't react. He just had compassion because he made a mistake here. I need to let him vent then we will go from there. My dad also uh . . . a student at his high school when he was principal was shot by her dad so we became the foster parents for that kid until she graduated from high school . . . so the rest of that school year. Just kind of . . . there is more to . . . even that we were White, middle class, more to what we were doing growing up. So I think those were some things that were . . . I mean just had to work. I mean from freshman year on we were . . . couldn't work during school so we worked in the summer so . . . it was seventh grade working in an apple orchard changing sprinkler pipes, working at home, and then working in an apple warehouse every summer from ninth grade through college. Which was just an expectation and doing sports at the same time.

Interviewer: Ok. So you said something about right and wrong.

H2: So number 3.

Interviewer: Right. You basically answered number 4. So who defines what is right and wrong?

H2: I guess our society decides what is right and wrong and what we interpret as we grow up through life. What's based on our own perceptions how we, by the laws that are governed to us. Um . . . I guess an example for me on that is when I was a kid in high school we had those athletic things that we still have now. I signed them that says you can't drink, you can't smoke. My friends were doing that, my brothers were doing that, I did not. I still don't know what it is like to smoke marijuana. Because I was in athletics I believed this. My senior year in high school I was the only starter on the basketball team, the rest got kicked off the team. They were at a party so . . . to me that's based on the society . . . the laws that we have. I have always been a rule follower on that piece. Are they moral right or wrong? Some, probably some of the laws that we right are immoral and our Supreme Court doesn't change some of those things. They make it the same way.

Interviewer: You also said your dad was a principal?

H2: Elementary. My mom was a kindergarten and second grade teacher. My dad was a counselor, and then became an administrator. He was a principal at an alternative school that used job corp in the summer then became an elementary principal then retired as an assistant principal of an alternative school in (name of northwest city). Back in those days, the Superintendent moved principals at the elementary level every 5 years. He rotated around.

Interviewer: Alright. So um . . . is there anything you want to add. You answered number 4. Is there anything you want to add to number 4?

H2: Unless you need some more.

Interviewer: Unless you want to come back. Um . . . What values have you developed as an adult which are different than what you grew up with?

H2: Well I think I was pretty naïve as a kid. So I think um . . . part of the things that I have learned through experience has changed some of my values. Um . . . you know I lived in a White, middle class society. But my summer experiences was working with uh . . . since it was an apple orchard, we had Hispanic, we had a lot of Hispanic adults that we worked with all the time. You know there was the White teenagers we played basketball with the owner and you hear stories about when it came close to pay time

the immigrant . . . the . . . not the immigrants . . . whatever the federal government . . . the . . .

Interviewer: The immigration?

H2: The immigration would come and the next thing you would know they would be new people because they wouldn't have to pay them. You know I didn't notice that until later. Very conservative area that we grew up in. It was very agriculture. Central Washington. So my values are realizing that people had different backgrounds, different uh . . . different upbringing than I do. So when I talk to teachers about uh . . . you know when they say, you know some of the kids parents don't care. Just because they aren't here doesn't mean they don't care. Um . . . they all care so how do we help communicate and help the kids through this because they aren't able to do this at home because they have to help take care of family as well. So those are . . . I don't if those are compassion trying to figure out the work ethic because they think the work ethic is different but the kids' priorities are different because where they are in their life. So how do we help people through that component?

Interviewer: Ok, so what values have you developed professionally in your career, what additional values?

H2: So for me still work ethic. It's still trying to help uh . . . well it is different than when I was a teacher. The principalship has changed perspectives for me than it was when a teacher because I was focused on the kids in my classroom and trying to help them understand mathematics and now it is helping to impact more students, a variety of students. I think (name of school district) back in the 80s and early 90s were different than where they were now which then has caused me to look at now are my values still important.

Interviewer: So you reflect on those?

H2: Uh huh.

Interviewer: Have you found that they have changed?

H2: I think I am more compassionate than I was as a coach and a teacher. I think I had this understanding that not every kid can come to a practice but I still wanted them to practice. I would have kids show up early in the morning to help with their work. I can't do that as much in this role. I am trying to figure out how our system can help kids who are not able to do as much outside of the system so how can internally our system help all kids be successful because we don't control what happens when they walk out the door. So how can I establish some ways to help all kids here. You know that's the battle in my head constantly. I think AVID is a vehicle for that. It's helped

some areas for us but it is still a struggle trying to get kids to achieve at a higher level than what they think they are capable of doing. And so when we look at our system where kids drop classes because they think classes are too challenging for them or they want to do other things it's like, how do we encourage kids to stick through? That's coming from my values you know. My work ethic, perseverance. Kids are either taking . . . that's my challenge when I meet with parents. It's um . . . you know . . . you are letting your kid off by . . . they don't need this class because you only need 24 to graduate. They give them an easy year and I'm like . . . but at some point do I say as the educator, as the principal that I know more what's best for your kid than you know. And that's my constant struggle is when I look at kids signing up for classes or kids dropping classes and parents signing off. It's like you're hurting your students opportunity just because they want to take it easy their senior year. Now they are going to have to go back in college and take some remedial classes because they didn't take them here in high school. But that is a value that I struggle with when I talk to parents because I don't believe when they say well I don't believe and I say but you're the ones that sign off or you're expecting me to come in and say that but how would you feel if I said no. You know that's where I am struggling with this back and forth. When we have a 150 seniors drop out of class for release what's . . . that's 25% of the class.

Interviewer: So your values then . . . you're personally clashing your belief systems with the other person's belief system?

H2: With the parents.

Interviewer: Whether you are the principal or parent at that time.

H2: Correct, but I am backing off because I don't want to tell the parent I know what's best for your kid. I feel like I do you know.

Interviewer: Have you ever done that.

H2: No. I have not. So when you get to these things that we talk about with the parents I always say, bottom line do you want me to be the one to tell you you are wrong? And they say no, and I say, that's where I am struggling here because I think you are wrong here because, you are letting your kid dictate to you what you want them to do.

Interviewer: Ok. So how are the values you have developed seen in your personal life and in your role as the principal? So these are personally you . . . how are they seen as you as the principal? So the (name of participant) personally, so the (name of participant) principal? Is there a cross over?

H2: Uh . . . I think for me as a person. When you talk about me. What I believe in takes more of a back seat at times in my role as a principal. There are things that I feel like I can't say or do because of all the people that it impacts in a system than when I talk about myself this is what I value, this is what I believe in, yes I have this little mess I try to figure it out for my kids in my family. But here I have 1,600 students, roughly 3,000 parents, and a 140 staff members so that's quite a few people that it is impacting so . . . sometimes I feel like I have to take a back seat on what I value because I am not sure what I value is what represents the whole system. So I have to take little chunks I feel. There are things that I have to say this is where I stage . . . this is where I am going to die on. Is it really worth a battle with that. So is there some way I can give ground where I can understand the values of the other person? Is there something we can work through and get a win for both sides or am I totally going to give up my values for that. Um . . . But there are things that I have to say that in our system are that are system values that I have to fulfill as well. I don't know if that answered the question.

Interviewer: Absolutely it did. How would you define what is morally right and wrong personally and give an example?

H2: I guess what I would say on that where I struggle with in our society . . . when I talk to parents, we have teen parent program in our school. Where we have kids who have babies and they are in our school. And some parents think that this is a way to show other kids that it is glorifying kids having babies. And I am sitting here going . . . these kids need an education to help the children be successful. And so there is this battle that I am . . . I don't know if it is a battle but a conversation with a family that their morals of teenagers having kids is wrong for religion reasons or whatever that I don't want to get around have a conversation about. I want to talk; I move away from that I hear our purpose is to get students an education to help their future. I can't imagine my own self . . . I struggle my own self, having three kids with the resources I have financially. I can't imagine what a 16 year old does single having a baby can do. So I don't know if that is a morally right or wrong issue? It is for some people uh . . .

Interviewer: So do you think that affects you more because you are a parent?

H2: I . . . we . . . we have had this since we opened (name of school) high school and I have only been having kids for 8 years. So I have always believed that we need to find a way . . . to back when I was a kid . . . when the student had a baby . . . I . . . they didn't . . . they left. And they show up at graduation and all of the sudden I am sitting next to a girl in my class who I hadn't seen all year and at graduation and after the ceremony she had a baby there. And I am like, Oh that's where you went. Well society has changed in that piece. But we still have uh . . . a lot of issues that we have to face, that we have to navigate through this society, lot of it is religion based, lot of it is um . . . you know I don't know how to answer that question very well.

Interviewer: That's ok, you actually did quite nicely. The funny thing about these questions is that you . . . everybody says I don't know if I am answering these correctly. You answer them as you need to answer them. There's no right or wrong answer to these. Everybody searches for a right answer and there's not. I mean I could personally give you a different example. I mean but doesn't mean what I think is right or wrong. What I think is morally right or what you think is morally right . . .

H2: I think is that number 9? Professionally?

Interviewer: Sometimes there is a cross over. Let's talk about that. So how what would you define what is morally right or wrong professionally?

H2: I guess if we look at what we have been talking about with equity as far as our regardless race, access to those with disabilities, um . . . you know . . . an example a parent at site council, their student does not have as many scholarships available to them as a student of color because he is a White person. So as we sat and listened to this parent talk it's like are we . . . so what. You know, it's how do we . . . sometimes we have to give students . . . I am trying to figure out how to answer that . . . where I was heading with that because I want to make sure we give every student the opportunity to excel and exceed. No matter . . . we are moving beyond . . . the race piece but it is still a huge obstacle in our system. I think as a school we are doing better but when I have a conversation about a teacher who is thinking the kid doesn't care because the kid doesn't work they have to realize there is more to the story and they have to take the time to talk that student. So I have to confront that with that teacher. Do you know the student well enough? Is that a moral issue? Is that a value issue? That's why I am struggling here because . . . um . . . is it values or is it morals?

Interviewer: Let's think about it and we can come back to it. Let's um . . . there's a lot of literature that says a moral creates a value and a value creates an ethic. But others will say no a value creates a moral. What I value creates my moral belief. My moral belief creates my values. So what you described sounds more like . . . in that vein . . . it is morally wrong to say hey . . . it's this way . . . it's one way only. One way shows don't always work but who knows.

H2: That's why when I think when we talk about . . . when we do these classroom walk through and we focus on engagement . . . how do we help our teachers do more than just stand and deliver because that is just not what the student that we have now a days not only based on their upbringing but also all their interactions they have with electronic devices. Those who have them are bombarded with short snippets so you can't stand and talk for 90 minutes you have to . . . so we also have to look at in our teaching practices who do we engage a variety of students in their classrooms at their level so they understand, they have a greater understanding. I have one . . . it's been interesting . . . one teacher said if you look at our teaching evaluation system that 4.2

which we are struggling in this building about. Talks about culturally relevant teaching. And when one teacher says I don't have to do that because my subject doesn't worry about culture . . . let's say it is math but you still have the sentence frames in there that the kids don't understand. We are struggling with through this. Here at school the teachers are saying I am proficient but I am saying how can we be proficient as a school when our scores don't represent. So how can I say every teacher here is proficient when the data is showing that they're not. Why can't we say we are developing? Is that a bad thing that we are developing? We are hung up in this because we have more developing in my staff than we have proficient. We're really struggling with that. I guess that could be a morally right or wrong professionally that we are struggling with in this building right now. You need to help me because I am not in your classroom a lot but when I am there I don't see it so you explain to me. Ok you read a novel but that's one small snippet of the whole year and so and how are you getting kids to interact with all these things. So that is what I would say um . . .

Interviewer: So describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong personally and decisions you had to make in the role as the principal. Describe an example. And how did you resolve this conflict if at all?

H2: I think we are working through that right now . . . I mean there is two examples. One could be an expulsion of a student . . . it's uh the part I struggle with is how many chances do we give a student who continually does, who uses drugs at our school? I don't believe in drugs um . . . But you give them a chance. So how often do you constantly give a student a chance and say you need to get yourself fixed . . . clean so you can be a student here. Um . . . So the issue is not that we are trying to deny them an education but this is not working here right now until we get this issue resolved. Um . . . I guess that could be an example. Another example. What we are working through right now with culturally relevant teaching in our school and starting this year focusing on just that one indicator within the standards. So we can look at this through an equity team and how our practices as a profession are welcoming to students. Not only culturally, sexually. We have a variety of students with different orientations that we have to make sure that we are meeting the needs of all kids and that we are welcoming.

Interviewer: You are cruising along here.

H2: I keep seeing personally and professionally.

Interviewer: Alright, number 11. Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong professionally. So this is something that just really professionally, maybe you've talked about this, maybe you want to add to it, morally wrong professionally that yep that's just wrong, but I have to make the decision. I have to do it.

H2: Morally?

Interviewer: Yes.

H2: I don't think I have an example of a moral issue that I felt was wrong that I had to make a decision. Maybe my morals are all screwed up. I don't know of a decision I thought was wrong and had to stick by it because . . . I try to work through . . . . If I have something I think . . . I think that is where I struggle with as a profession because there are so many different . . . my morals don't make sure . . . . I guess morally I am not sure I am always correct in my value. You come to where you have your morals and it could be totally different than me. I have to sit here and say, let me understand where you are coming from. So then . . . so if we walk out of this office with a disagreement can we come to an understanding that is . . . is our decision that we are going to disagree with each other? Or are we going to be able to understand each other and be able to move forward from there. An example? I am struggling. Here is an example . . . a parent back in . . . when we first started the policy of you could not walk in graduation until you met all the graduation requirements. A parent came in here with the checkbook and said, "How much is it going to cost me for my student to walk?" All their relatives are here, graduation is tomorrow night; it's going to be embarrassing. Is that a morally wrong piece? I said, this is not a private school. We do not, I don't do this. Is that a morally wrong decision that I made? I thought the parents were morally wrong to try to pay me off.

Interviewer: So do you let all kids walk now?

H2: I do not. They still have to follow the policy. Back in the day you . . . it used to be you could be a half credit short and so what would happen then was kids would walk at graduation, then we had the dickens to get them to come back and do summer school. Now they know that if they don't get this done they have to complete it. They are more motivated. I don't know if it is more motivated but here is a carrot that says I have to get that. I have to complete but that . . . So I am trying to think what have I . . . I am sure there is decisions that I make that are morally wrong but I haven't gotten to that but I don't think of that as a wrong decision. I don't know if that makes sense.

Interviewer: It does actually. Number 12. Describe decisions in your role as principal requiring you to follow a policy, regulation, or law you felt was in conflict with a student need.

H2: Ok, I am not sure. I don't think this is a policy. Here's an example. We have some students who uh . . . aren't being successful in high school and the only way to help them be successful in a high school is to have an expulsion hearing because they are not being successful here and the alternative program is full. Parents want the kid to go to alternative programs and the student does not. So we look at their attendance.

We have a meeting here with the parents. Parents are saying let's get them to this other environment for a while. Let's get this student there. Let's try and talk this student down. So we have this meeting and we talk about it and so the only way this student is going to get to the alternative program is if we go through an expulsion hearing. Now we expel so few here. I think we do two to three at the most. I think last year we had five. A couple of them . . . like this example . . . how do we get the kid to start and doing what's best for him. He's so far behind in credits. The kid's given up, not coming to school. Or coming and just playing with their friends. So we need to help the student start over or get credits recovered and come back to school. And so, I don't know if that's what the parent wants . . . that's what our system is set up to do? So I feel like this is a conflict because we don't have . . . when you only have 70 slots at an alternative program for a . . . at a high school of 6,000 students . . . it's not working in this environment right now. We need to get them into a smaller environment to help them get caught up and then come back and finish out the semester, finish out a quarter, then come back. That's what I struggle with based upon the recommendations and the parents are looking for guidance. Looking for help and we don't have the resources in this system . . . Now that is where I struggle. We are not meeting that students needs here in a large system. I don't know if that is a good example. That is not a policy that is not a law.

Interviewer: It is though. Because an expulsion is a policy. Expulsion is a policy. You know to get him to that thing and expulsion is the policy to use.

H2: But the kid has had so many chances. So we said, we are at this point now.

Interviewer: So describe a situation in which you had to make a decision addressing the needs of an individual over the needs of the larger group. What risks were involved if any were involved?

H2: Isn't that a daily basis in our job? Sometimes we are dealing with a student that either the teachers or other students don't understand what is going on with that student that we have to say, ok this student's blown a few chances but we have to say that we are going to make sure this student needs are being met that may impact how that staff is going to feel. Because the staff may feel they may need to go somewhere else. I can't work with this kid. Um . . . then you as a leader take a risk because people are looking at you like what in the hell are you thinking about . . . excuse my language.

Interviewer: It's ok.

H2: So why are you doing this? Why is this kid's needs met over my other 25 kids in my class or 36 kids in my class. Because it is impacting their learning as well. Um . . . I remember . . . I always learned this from (name of former principal) my couple of

years as Assistant Principal, why is this kid coming back to our school? You know, he'd say, we have to give this student a chance, they want to be here and if it doesn't work out in a couple of weeks that student may go somewhere else. But we can't just give up on that kid right now so let's do what we can to keep them here. That stuck with me, my first year as Assistant Principal or all the time. I got another example, transfer requests. So we will take a student, let's say from (name of another high school in the district) and it's just not working here. Why don't we just send them back to (name of another high school in the district)? Well we can at the end of the year but we are sticking with it. We accepted this student, we are going to work with this student the rest of the year and it's causing a lot of work for us. But let's see how it going to work throughout the year and if it's not going to work the student may be better off going back to (name of another high school in district) or whatever school. But we made the commitment for this family and this student for the year. So risks, how it impacts our learning environment and our school. Now if he is going to break laws then we will send the kid back. But if it's just pain in the butt stuff we will work with them. Because to me that's what (name of high school) is known for is that we are going to work with kids and I think all school are that way. I laugh . . . (name of school) is known . . . isn't all schools known for that?

Interviewer: So have you had to make decisions in your role as principal benefiting part of your school community and denied another? Describe the situation.

H2: The thing I can think of at the top of my head as an example is our . . . one of our freshman classes. It is the advanced freshmen English block. We have students apply to it through writing work samples. So students apply, they do writing, we take names off. But you can still tell probably by race by how well it's written. Um . . . So some students don't get in there but what we have tried to do, still denying is we don't allow every kid in the class. We save spots and then we look at . . . trying to bring more kids of color in there . . . in the class by looking at test scores, other factors to make sure, but still denying other kids access to that class. That is where I am struggling with this class because when we first looked at this class proposal from the English department I called in kids. A wide range of kids, so explain to me, because we had all regular just straight freshmen English. And kids would say, we work in groups, and I felt like I was being punished because I was doing all the work for my group or if people in my group weren't doing the work, my grade would suffer because I wasn't doing that. So I needed a class to push me to a upper level but it seems to me that that class seems to be more of a White class. So I am trying to change that balance. I am constantly looking at our AP classes to see if they represent our school as far as race. Like our AP U.S. history is I think almost exactly what our school race is. While some of our . . . like our English class is not. The AP Writing class has more of a White, Asian population than our Hispanics. So trying to figure out how to get a more representation in there. So that . . . I think that is an example of that I am benefiting one part of our school and denying another. What I am trying to do is within those freshmen classes,

I'm making what we've talked about with all freshmen even though the advanced may go a little faster the content that is taught in all those classes is all the same. I wanted to make sure that just because you are in advanced class that you are not getting anything better than the other. You are just getting maybe a little faster pace. I beat myself up over that one all the time.

It's like a good example, we met . . . I've been meeting with our SPED department this morning because (name of teacher) is teaching a co-taught English and so . . . excuse me math. Do we . . . do a co-taught sophomore? Should we do a co-taught freshmen block but we already do a co-taught English and Social Studies, so what would that mean to have a third teacher in there in the classes with 65? Do you do a class of 15 special ed. Kids or do we spread them all out and make sure we have good instructional assistants and get rid of Language! Because that's the curriculum that we are doing? So we are wrestling through that piece. They are going to start having that conversation on Wednesday with Special Ed. We'll include English and Social Studies as well but work our way out of Language! Because especially the kids coming from (name of middle school) not as much in Language! anymore so how do we prepare for that? We are looking at . . . do we then take that Language! that's part of it which are beneficial. So let's say they are in . . . freshmen English then do we have those kids in every other day Language support class? And then we talked about how do you decide then which kids go into content strategies and which kids go into literacy support and how do you test that? Because now . . . do you still use a language test that tests you into Language! and use that as their scale? You know how do we track? How do we determine which kids go into what? So those are what things we are trying to figure out. What kinds of data do we use to determine which kids go into which? And which would be in the co-taught and which would not be in the co-taught? There's a lot of questions that we have to muddle through because we use a lot in the past were the (name of state assessment). Well the (name of state assessments) are on their way out. So what is the Smarter Balanced score going to be on that? We can still use their seventh grade (name of state assessment) scores still. For one more year but and . . . those are things that we are muddling through. And it goes around that 14.

Interviewer: Yep, it does indeed. So have you had to make decisions in your role as principal which caused you later to reflect on those decisions and reverse them? If so describe a situation.

H2: Gosh . . . I think any time it comes around that piece is when you make a decision fast. It's . . . uh . . . if you don't get all the information and you just sink. You go with your gut and you go eww, I made it quickly. That's the thing I try to tell my assistants is a teacher walks in your office and, Oh, that's a good idea or it's not a good idea. But you don't want them to walk out saying you made a quick decision, saying I'll . . . let me think about that . . . you know? You either have to get more information or you say you know it's not going to be a good decision and you know you are going to say no

to it but the teacher thinks that you thought through the process and you're going to get back to them in a day and they'll understand you have some reasons to say no to them in a more thoughtful manner that they can understand. So giving you an example, I am not sure I can give you one off the top of my head but I know that I do that, I've done that in the past but it's always something that I either didn't have all the information or I made it too quickly. Um . . . because I was thinking it was a gut decision and I come back and I talk to a couple of other people I had to go back and say you were right or not necessarily you were right. You're thinking was correct and we need to go with . . . it could be around a teaching assignment. I could be around how we want to deal with a situation. Um . . . but I always try to get that out before it gets out into the whole staff. You are trying to work that with that one person real quickly. There are things I didn't think about that you brought up. I don't know that doesn't give you a situation.

Interviewer: That's ok. Actually you did. It's up to you if you want to give more.

H2: It's a lot of little stuff that we deal with . . . I mean can give you a given day. I guess an example would be this one article that got in the paper. Didn't have all the data. So when . . . kids in the attendance office swearing left and right . . . all I got that day . . . I was on a vacation was one of our teachers said, you're acting like a diva. Kid's gay. Bad! I thought oh my gosh, what's going on the world's falling down. Then I come back on Monday hear a little bit of the story and call the parents and parent really wanted to hear from me. They didn't want to hear from my assistants. Sorry . . . you know, I apologize for school. We will work through this. I got more information the kid was caught saying, f... you bitch to our classified person so that the teacher's comment was, would you calm down, you don't need to be a diva over this. Or saying calm down, put your phone away. The parent and the kid made it into a big deal. Did the teacher make an inappropriate choice of words? Of course he did. Um . . . should I have gone to the point where we are saying we are not following the IEP? Because we didn't have the IEP with us. Because the IEP was based on LRC not SLC. How do you share an IEP with classified staff anyway? So that's . . . so that's . . . I reversed it by all the data was there wasn't meant as a . . . So when I talked to the parent again, it was not like . . . even when I talked to them the first time . . . it wasn't meant . . . so as a bad thing, obviously my staff needs more staff development. We will still work with that piece. But as I talked to the teacher, the teacher was like, I didn't mean it that way. I feel real bad about it. But we still need more professional development.

Interviewer: Ok, last question. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal, you felt was in contrast to the traditional role of the principal. Describe the situation.

H2: I guess I struggle with the traditional role of the principal because things have changed over the last 10 years. Um . . . the part I struggle with right now is um . . .

where I struggle my decisions are when it comes to an example is custodial staff. I think back in the old days; that was a traditional role you dealt with the custodian. I struggle with that because I am not trained on how . . . what' a good custodial expectation. I mean I have a head custodian that is super nice guy. I think he would be better off in an elementary school. And I get facilities to agree with that. But they are saying a evaluation is based on the custodians here. Super nice guy . . . but he shouldn't be here. So the job is either I get rid of him or I talk him into looking into another job. I go he's not going to go anywhere. He's not doing anything that they should get rid of him. But he needs to be in a different role. That's where I am struggling with this piece because he needs to be somewhere else. It's not that he's a bad person. He's a good cleaner. He can do the job as a cleaner. But can he lead and be a head custodian? No. And that's where I am struggling with . . . because I see my role working with students and making sure that there's a clean building and that. I don't know how to clean a toilet. I mean I know how to clean it. But not...and get this done all the time. Am I supposed to be following him around and do that when I got 60 some teachers I have to evaluate? So I when I look at the old role of the principal. They weren't in classrooms as much as the new role at least at the high school level. I am assuming at the elementary principals you're still . . . principals were still in the classrooms a lot more than they are at the high school. I mean I look at my principal when I was a kid. I never saw the principal.

Interviewer: In a classroom.

H2: In a classroom.

Interviewer: Unless you were called to the office.

H2: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yep. I was the same way. I don't ever recall my high school principal....

H2: I don't ever recall meeting with my high school counselor.

Interviewer: Yeah, I know. I think I did once. For my SAT scores.

H2: When I look at our model here with our counselor and interview with every freshman twice a year and meets and has guidance activities in the classroom. I don't recall those. I remember my career counselor doing all those things with all of us. But I don't remember my high school . . . my personal counselor. And so I am trying to think of what is the traditional role of a principal if I am in a classroom and I am observing teachers and meeting with kids. I am missing out on trying to help improve my . . . Like an example is this summer. When we were waxing floors. They were waxing at night. So when I come in and I see hair, waxed over hair, waxed over gum.

How are you going to fix that because they did the whole thing. They did their three coats in one night. I am not here to observe that. I come back. So what do they have to do. They have to scrape it up. And now my floors have scrapes in it the whole time. So how am I supposed to deal with that now? Because the facilities are not going to say let's strip the whole floor. Let's do it over again. They are not getting rid of my custodians. And so how do I fix that when I talk to my lead twice a week about . . . how do I fix that? You know what I mean? So I talk to facilities. How do I fix this? Your floors are the worst I've ever seen. I agree with you (name of facilities supervisor). I agree with you (name of facilities supervisor). But what do I do? What do we do about it? Because it is my lead's responsibility?

Interviewer: Or yours?

H2: Or mine. Because he's not here at night either. We have . . . and my night guy speaks Chinese. I can't communicate with him. Half of them are Hispanic. My late night lead is a special ed. Guy. I mean he has learning disabilities. So does my one guy. So I am struggling with and we don't move custodians because you either fire them and you deal with the same thing. That's where I struggle in this.

Interviewer: Everybody defines the traditional role a little differently. That is why I don't define it. It's a traditional role and some people go . . . oh this is the role, this is what I do differently. And some people say I don't know what that means. You are like the fourth person who said to me, what does that mean to be traditional. The funny thing is everybody has said in 10 years . . . it has changed in 10 years. Which I believe. That is when I started as an administrator was 12 years ago. It is very different than it was.

H2: Well especially here in this district. From you can do whatever you want in your school to now the district message and we are kind like the messengers. And I struggle here because this new evaluation model is so intensive about being in classrooms and observing teachers and yet we are still being called out as much if not more to be out of the building. To me there is a disconnect about what the role of the principal is at a higher level. Because they're thinking about the evaluation system as it was when they were evaluating and not thinking about all the requirements now with this waiver for the No Child Left Behind. Because I remember (name of Superintendent) sharing with me how he would do the evaluation. He would take the form in and just type right on the form. Well that's enough and you can't do that with any probationary or anything. You can't do that now. I meet 30 minutes on developing their goals, 30 minutes to do their interim, 30 minutes at the end just to do their goals, and 30 minutes more to do their formal evaluation. Three times a year. In the past, they would just write a reflection and we would just read it.

Interviewer: 18 steps now.

H2: It was 36 last year.

Interviewer: It is better this year than last year. But 36 you are right. 36.

H2: That was so funny last year when I got a late call from someone in the district office in June. Saying I was going over the evaluation with one of my probes and he goes did you know there were 36 steps? I go . . . this was in June. I have been doing this all year long. You are telling me now . . . you messed this whole system up.

Interviewer: I think that's it. Thank you.

H2: Thank you.

APPENDIX L  
TRANSCRIPT OF PRINCIPAL H3

H3 Interview  
October 30, 2014

Interviewer: What is your role in your school?

H3: My role is I am the principal of (name of high school) and uh . . . that's a leadership role.

Interviewer: How do you define the role of the school principal?

H3: Well I think there is three main parts to being principal. One, there is the management, which is operations and the normal management, the legal things that you have to do to keep school going. Then there's instructional leadership where the school looks to me to lead the um . . . instructional end of school, whether it's designating other people, including but also an instructional leader. And then also I think would be the other all leader and that sets the tone and culture of the building. management, leadership and instructional leadership.

Interviewer: I have a quick follow up question. This has come up quite a bit lately. So instructional leadership, who defines what it means to be the instructional leadership in your school? You?

H3: I think our leadership team. I am more of a collaborative leader as far as I go about like building leadership. So for example, when I first got here I would say that we had one person who was a good instructional leader of the four of us . . . the four leadership positions. And now we have two outstanding curriculum and instruction people. And so really it is my role I think to put the best in front of what we do. We collaborate as far as what our plan is but who decides instructional leadership comes down to the talent of the team. So for me I put (name of leader) and (name of leader) in front, in front and center where their strengths are because that's where their strengths are. I also do professional development with the staff but (name of leader) is curriculum and instruction, mentoring teachers, so we want to put him where his strengths are.

Interviewer: Ok, awesome! Number 3. How do you define morals and value and how are they different?

H3: Haven't spent too much time. I printed it off. I think morals for me would be right and wrong. It stands for the morality of an issue for me is the difference for me between right and wrong and what's best for people. Values are the intrinsic core of who we are and what we believe in what actually guides us so . . . being morally correct doesn't mean you actually have high values. It just means you understand the difference between . . . that's how I would define it. The difference between right and

wrong, the moral compass. And then values would be those things that guide us as far as leadership and our values, who we are. So . . .

Interviewer: So a follow up question to that is, who defines then right and wrong?

H3: Well I think each individual does but first of all society does. We have . . . we can all agree on a lot of things to guide us. The legal issues, then how we treat each other. Very little disagreement in that but I think in as far as in the morals then . . . uh my . . . I might have a heightened sense of morality in certain issues such as . . . this is where I get outraged . . . um . . . people who can't defend themselves or there's even a heightened sense of morality or right and wrong with those who are less fortunate or need more help. So I think that society decides really or just our common law goes all the way back to Hammurabi's code to the Magna Carta to um . . . our Constitution. We define morality . . . right or wrong there and then our individual morality also supports that or heightens it.

Interviewer: Ok. Alright. Number 4. What values did you grow up with which you still connect with today? So these are things that you learned as a kid, what lead to the creation of these values?

H3: Well I think parents. I had good parents. I had seven brothers and sisters. Um . . . my dad left the family when I was 15 so I became like the dad of the family. At that point, a lot of the responsibilities through high school fell on me because they were younger. But I think sticking up for those who are less fortunate was a value for me. Serving other people seeking to help others as opposed to what's in it for you. That was my mom, she was a servant leader. By example, she also taught us that you know, those who have been given much, much is expected. She always wanted us to give back to others to community, to put others ahead of ourselves. And humility, I think those were values that uh . . . I look back and were important to me growing up. The work ethic was definitely in our family. My mom after 24 years raising eight kids not working in the work field goes back to work the day 2 weeks after my dad leaves the family. And uh goes into the computer business. She never even used a computer but she all of a sudden starts as a secretary at a company and ends up being their lead salesman in semi-conductors and compacters. I am not even sure she knew exactly what they were but she did a great job so. Um . . . and then all of our family, I look at the seven other brothers and sisters and sometimes we are not the smartest but we always feel we can outwork other people. I am not saying that is always good but work ethic was that you work until the job is done. And um . . . I think that was it. And then sports, about being competitive is a value that I liked but it was perhaps uh . . . exaggerated and now it is as you get a little older in life a little more mature. Then I think that comes into balance . . . but uh . . . you want to have pride in what you do but not be boastful or um . . . over the top. So . . .

Interviewer: Ok. So what values have you developed as an adult, which are different than what you grew up with?

H3: Well I think um . . . values that I grew up with as an adult. I think I still have the same values are still with me but I think that looking at servant leadership. What's . . . that's been a bigger one for me then even at a younger age. I didn't quite understand that until I was older. But putting others before you and representing people that don't get a chance to represent themselves. So I think servant leadership would be a big one. Um . . . uh . . . let's see.

Interviewer: Did you get that from being an educator?

H3: Yeah I think that the way I got into education. I was uh . . . I got a job my football coach in junior college got me a job as an elementary playground apparatus. . . I went down and basically motor testing and uh . . . physical motor testing of the kids. And then was kept getting . . . they kept giving me more hours and it was supervising lunch and supervising. I was a math aide and things. But um . . . this one girl, Mary was doing, she always wore a long dress. She did a tumble and the dress got all discombobulated. But her legs were just black and blue. So I got pretty angry. You know 18, 19 years old and talked to her and she said. You know I took her into the teacher and I said, I think something is not right. You know being the mature person I am, I just wanted to drive over this guy's house and drop him like a three foot putt. They um . . . I think that moment um . . . it always stuck with me that teachers did the right things and got things squared away that I never knew. I worked with Mary but I never had any contact with her parents or anything. I think that, that sense of outrage and just empathy toward hers uh . . . that actually helped me understand that I wanted to be an elementary teacher. So that is actually what I became.

Interviewer: Is that what you were?

H3: Yeah, an elementary teacher.

Interviewer: What did you teach?

H3: I taught sixth grade self-contained. And then uh . . . I didn't want to coach. I never wanted to coach anything but then they asked me to coach in the first job and I said ok. Then they wanted me to be the head coach. They wanted me to move up to the high school to be the head coach, that's where I went wrong. So I did that and then I taught middle school for 14 years. So I taught high school, middle school and then elementary.

Interviewer: Wow. You and I have sort of a similar path. I also did elementary, some high school and then did middle school.

H3: Middle school I enjoyed a lot.

Interviewer: I did too.

H3: You know in 10 minutes if you were a middle school teacher or not.

Interviewer: I think I knew in 10 seconds. You either love it or hate it. I loved it. I thought it was fun. Ok, so um . . . what values have you developed professionally in your career?

H3: Professionally I think um . . . valuing listening to the other person's side. That is a value, to listen um . . . I still can improve. There's a lot of things I can improve on. But I think that um . . . not jumping to conclusions and listening to people has been a value. The fact that somebody comes in and uh . . . just had a parent come in today, they said this teacher, the daughter with her with, won't let her do a work sample and told her, you just have to do it on your own. Well that makes no sense at all. So I think that's a value that I am going to sit down with the teacher tomorrow and say can you give me insight into what's going on with this person. So I think I am a little bit more . . . I value the input from the other person. And I find that teachers mostly even if they make a mistake if you just listen they will eventually just get to the point and just tell you they made a mistake and can probably fix it. So that would be one. Hard work I think I still value that. That's very important in this business. Um . . . it's uh . . . yeah I think I will just go with that.

Interviewer: Ok. How are the values you have developed seen in your personal life seen in your role as the principal?

H3: Well I think I want to be a genuine person as a principal. So that's applied to everything that I have done. I would rather sit down and just have the truth spoken at the table. I respect that. Um . . . I think the politics of school is . . . I just really have no patience for . . . it's like the art of moving in and out, making sure you are politically correct in your answers and things. I think that there is much more openness if we just openly say what was on our mind. Not judging the other person but just getting good academic discussions and debates. But I think sometimes if you have a contrary view you're seen not on board or a part of the group or you're you know . . . not against the mission of the school when I think those are the most important discussions we can have. I think that what's missing that I have always loved in coaching is um . . . we always believed as a team, we would meet as a coaching staff, go over our stuff. We would disagree on how we'd go about what we're going to do but we always had when we leave, here's our one voice. You know? I had a staff I had together for 15 years. So we felt very comfortable doing that but we never questioned each other once we left but a lot of times we would challenge each other's thinking. They weren't arguments but they would, you know, I found those some of the most stimulating

talks. And uh . . . it was done with respect but even if we never finished . . . The same way with my staff that I do now, so I have meetings with admin and counseling or just with admin. You know we have . . . and I want that disagreement to come across, I would rather have lively meetings where we get all the things on the table but we always end by, whether it actually happens or not is like counseling and administration, we say this is where we are leaving this topic and it's fine right now but our one voice out of here is what if somebody says what are we doing with this? We are at this point and we are still discussing it, there is a lot of good points to these things. But I think that builds trust and um . . . the teachers can come in here and plop down and say, hey I didn't like this that happened last week or whatever. Here's something that's bothering me about what you're saying or trying to eliminate all the um . . . accelerated classes. That's bothering me, why are you doing that? I don't understand it. You know I think the fact that teachers will come in and sit down and feel free to talk about any subject and they might not like the answer sometimes. But there is an open dialogue and uh . . . I think they just like the dialogue so . . .

Interviewer: Alright. How would you define what is morally right and wrong personally? Give an example if you could.

H3: Uh . . . morally right and wrong, it's uh . . . I think by now at this age. I am a 172 years old, is um . . . that I have clearly defined what is right and wrong for me. It's biblical. It's societal. So I know when I am out of aligned. I know I can feel it in my chest. I mean I can just um . . . If I feel I am stepping outside of some boundaries or lines I just you know . . . I guess your radar just goes off. But I don't really struggle as much as just knowing yourself. Knowing what's right and wrong. I don't know if I can give an example of . . . how would morally define right and wrong. I think it is basically your life's work wrapped up in being conscious about your core values and what you value. And wrong personally, it comes . . . it don't know . . . down to people you can harm, the people that trust you the most. Your children and your wife uh . . . I think I value those relationships so much that I wouldn't make a move or do something that would jeopardize those relationships. So I don't know if that helps but that's how I would answer it.

Interviewer: Ok, then how would define what is morally right and wrong professionally? Give an example if you can.

H3: Morally right and wrong is . . . that's interesting because we are at a point where we are at a point where we are dealing with the morality of issues and not everybody agrees that it is a moral issue. So for example, right now I am dealing with accelerated classes in math, science, and language arts. But um . . . advanced placement classes have value. Accelerated classes are another way we sort kids. So rather than, you know, actually we can improve rigor by eliminating accelerated classes because what's happening is the kids who should be in AP, are ducking AP to save their GPA

or whatever and then also what they are doing is another way to sort kids so you don't have a homogenous group learning together. So the have not kids would be in regular English let's say. Well they are also not receiving the benefit of good minds and good discussions at those tables so where is the best example of good dialogue and debate and discussion. You start . . . you feel that you are being uh . . . uh . . . tracked. So we presented these discussions to the teachers to work out, to work through. So language arts has dropped all their accelerated classes for next year. But they decided that. There's one . . . my thing is . . . uh . . . social . . . this is a big paradigm shift . . . but it is a moral issue but I am not framing it in that. I need them . . . but we do say it is a sorting technique. That's what we are doing um . . . but I say that if we are going to have an accelerated class such as the one teacher want . . . the only accelerated class they want to keep in language . . . this teacher wants to keep in language arts is college prep English. Well there's no dual credit, there's no chance for college credit. There's nothing connected to it. It's another way to sort so . . . if . . . I told the teacher if you could make it a dual credit or a CTE class or something then there's value in it for a student. Otherwise we are not going to be doing college prep. History of that one when I looked at it was, tons of years ago, the teacher that was actually doing Writing 121. This teacher took over, wasn't qualified for Writing 121 so they just called it college prep. Well there' no value to the student in that case. We have wonderful AP classes that are available. And the same way in math, it's just another way to sort kids and that's how we differentiate math right now. We just keep sorting; keep creating new classes and you can see the ethnicity in the classes. So that is one of the reasons we want to get rid of it. So I think . . . I might have gone too . . . so I think that it's morally wrong the way we have it set up. Now another school may have accelerated classes and it's morally correct. I don't know. But I am looking at it as we have the paradigm of that's how we serve kids and that's what we are doing right now. I am leading discussions to have them filter things out and math is a little more reluctant to let go of accelerated classes right now. And uh . . . science is questioning it. Good discussions because they are good people. I think they are moral people but it's not that they thought poorly they haven't had to think about it. So anyway I see it as a moral issue.

Interviewer: Ok. So I will ask number 10 but maybe you want to add something to it Describe a conflict between what you believe to be morally wrong personally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. Describe an example. How did you resolve this conflict if at all?

H3: I think that is where we are now. I think that believing in the other people we work with. I really believe that teaching of all things is altruistic. That you are called to this profession based on the moral compass inside of you. So I think that some of this is just bringing, getting out of the regular routine of next year I am teaching this, I always teach this and then I am going to teach this. Saying well I am going to challenge your thinking on for example, we, this science teacher gave me a list of who

should be out of his class, put into a lower class and here's five kids who should be moved up into a class. Well of the 16 kids uh . . . on his list, 13 were Latino, 14 of the 16 were AVID kids. But they went back and looked at middle school math scores. Well you know, when we challenge the thinking on that um . . . credit to that person in particular, he said, you know what, thanks for bringing this up and you know I will do the best I can and . . . I think believing in them, in the goodness of the people who have become teachers is important. But we do have to challenge thinking.

Interviewer: Ok, so the next one is similar. Describe what you believe to be morally wrong professionally and decisions you had to make in the role of the principal. Describe an example.

H3: Uh yeah. I think I would go back to last year. I am not being too critical. We had a couple of kids that were dangerous. And um . . . we were not able to . . . we kept these children because it was for the wrong reasons. They should have, the one, everybody agreed should have been in a smaller residential area. He was dangerous but it became politically hot because two of their family members are special ed teachers so they wanted to fight the placement. So we left them here even though we knew they were dangerous to others. And we also had another incident where we had a dangerous kid, he's already strangled somebody in the school, punched them in the face and strangled somebody outside of class. And um . . . that was one that was really hard for me. I think it was wrong to submit, it was dangerous to submit uh . . . students and staff to some of these things but you know how things work on the other end to you know . . . I am not dealing with those things, I know that. But at the same time it was hard for me to reconcile but um anyway the kid ended up uh . . . off campus later, raping a 10 year old.

Interviewer: Oh no.

H3: He's no longer here. And the other kid went to another school and did the same thing. So . . . anyway, that was hard because I felt it was the wrong. It was dangerous to uh . . . but you know . . . again . . . there is other sides to the story and I get that.

Interviewer: Ok, next questions. This is where the questions change a little bit. Describe decisions in your role as principal requiring you to follow a policy, regulation or law you felt was in conflict to a student need.

H3: Um . . . This isn't a big one. It's just one I have had to deal with regularly, lately. Let me double check . . . (re-reading the question). I should have tons of those. Um . . . Yeah I don't think I have a good example on that. I think that if I think if I got it, I would have tons. My one that I am working with right now is that we have to have senior seminar project to graduate. Which was, it still goes back to SIM and CAM but it's part of our graduation requirement. It's a . . . 5 but we don't have the FTE to run

the way that the program was designed to run. Meaning this, back in 2006 we had more teachers. And so I agree with the project, it's value and what it is doing but we . . . we don't have enough teachers right now, so it's um . . . I have this policy that I have to follow so . . . I had a teacher who was teaching six classes of senior project and it was probably 6 weeks' worth of work crammed into 18. It ended up being just giant study halls for seniors. Well what if I could put those six credits, six periods into senior English and we could divide the project out to reduce classes. So um . . . (re-reading the question). I just think that's a minor one. I don't think it's a big thing I wanted to make sure we are doing it as an independent study and I have (name of teacher) tracking that now. But I was able to get six periods of language arts and reduce class sizes, which helped children. But um . . . I agree with the project but it really went with a whole philosophy that I really feel is hard to do right now. The focused areas of study programs because they require mentorships and people in communities and those kind of things and we are short on FTE.

Interviewer: Ok, we are just zooming along. Alright number 13. Describe a situation in which you had to make a decision addressing the needs of an individual over the needs of the larger group. And what risks if any were involved.

H3: I am stumped. It's not coming. Let me see . . . (re-reading the question). Now these seem like they happen all the time to. It shouldn't be that difficult.

Interviewer: We can come back to it if you want.

H3: Yeah I think I want to go back to it. I had a student who probably should have been suspended 3 years ago. They were using foul language with uh with our administrators. Who was telling them they needed to go to a place where they would be supervised during an assembly. But um . . . I think that those two kids had been beat up so much in life that this was just another . . . you know they really weren't too far out of bounds and for them they weren't doing anything really bad. And all of a sudden it escalated really quickly. Well I brought them in and brought in the parents in but I didn't suspend them which created are you going to back up the staff? Are you going to and so the thing was it was I said, yes I am but in this situation if you know, I didn't word it this way to the staff but if you are going to back a kid into a corner they only have one way to come out. That's right in your face and so we need to give those opportunities and um . . . the kid ended up decided later to go to (name of youth program), you know pick up 9 credits and the other one decided to finish but you know this kid is . . . it was pretty horrible. He was being raised by his great grandmother, not his grandmother.

Interviewer: wow.

H3: Yeah. That was a first for me.

Interviewer: That was a good example actually. So . . . have you had to make decisions in your role as principal benefiting one part of your school community and denied another? If so, describe the situation. Keep in mind that school community can be pieces.

H3: Right. Well every time we do a schedule. Every time we do a master schedule we have to make value decisions. Where you put your FTE becomes a value decision that benefits one over the other. So we made some decisions where our students who failed Algebra one as freshmen they are not going to graduate. We usually have 90-120 of those every year. Which alarms me and scares me to death. So we've put FTE in to assist those people. Now what we have done this year is um . . . we have an algebra/geo class. So we are taking the failed Algebra 1 student and putting them into Geometry and then they get a second class, which is Algebra/Geometry where they go back, where it basically comes back to fractions. Fractions, fractions, fractions, negative integers, positive integers. And so they are getting assist in Geometry while remediating Algebra and so by the end of their sophomore year we want every sophomore to have 2 years of math done then we can get them to the finish line, Algebra 2. Oh God. But um . . . that FTE goes to a group that isn't as talented as the others. So shouldn't the gifted kids be given the smaller classes and be given the cream of the crop? Um . . . I had a parent in here, well you were the principal of (name of school) . . . we had a parent just yesterday and this is extreme and it was like are you kidding me. Arguing that we need to get kids out of these AP classes that don't belong there. That it should be for the brightest and best and we should have smaller classes because these are the kids who are going to run the country. We need to start investing in them more. Well that's . . . that would be one very extreme view but it just happened yesterday and we were just choking on . . . choking it down a little bit. We actually said we should teach all the children. But those are value decisions. And it can . . . it does run along racial lines right now. And so we are investing in a group to get them up to par by taking resources away from the other.

Interviewer: That is a good example. You are the first person to talk about the FTE. I mean I was a middle school principal. Even though my master schedule was much smaller than yours, you still had to make a lot of decisions, like well that's going to take away from somebody. Ok. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal which caused you later to reflect on those decisions and later reverse them and if so describe the situation.

H3: Oh you mean this year? Yeah. What's today . . . Thursday. This year I had . . . uh . . . we have homecoming. I am not a fan of the homecoming court. But we have it because it is tradition. We did add a Duke and Duchess this year.

Interviewer: Love it. I saw the video.

H3: Way cool. The kids received it so well. It was the most inspiring piece. They announced them as Duke and Duchess first ever at (name of school) and the kids gave them a standing ovation. Anyway . . . I got a . . . how did this come down? It went through (name of Assistant Principal) to me. Ok we have a senior who is going to be one of the princes and eligible to be the king or whatever. So anyway we get um . . . from a parent a . . . they dropped off . . . or they emailed in of course anonymously Twitter accounts with (name of student) swearing and some girl had said on Twitter. This student here, I am never going to date a White guy again, and that Black guys are the best and you know, you can imagine Twitter. It didn't really go into any vulgar areas or anything. But this guy says, f...ing this, f...ing that, I am so tired of you, shut the f...ing up. Something about . . . he said something about we are tired of hearing about the Black guys. Ok, so didn't use the N-word or didn't any of them. But it was just vulgar and foul and it's Twitter and anybody has access to Twitter. Well you know it came in and you know this . . . bothered so much because it goes against who we are and who we should be and what we should be doing. We should be correcting this behavior. So we made . . . of course . . . this is given to at 8:30 in the morning and the assembly is at 9:00.

Interviewer: Oh no.

H3: Yeah. So I am sitting here going, I really don't want this kid representing us. We are not denying his property right to an education but I can't really have him represent us on the line up. Of course it was accusatory to the school, you know we were teaching all the wrong things, and you don't know what you are doing, is this what you want to represent. Blah, Blah, Blah. So I call (name of student) in and said, you know (name of student) I am not going to let you be in the thing. I am not going to have you announced today. And this stuff is inappropriate and I am going to eliminate you from this kind of thing. Well you know, mom came in, I know that shocks you. Mom came in, and let us have it, and stuff. Mom made some very good points. So I respect that. That's the thing is, that I have become a better listener. So I will listen to things when I don't even think they have a leg to stand on. So the question was, essentially, this is how I worded it. Am I going to be the internet police? She said, by the way, I am going home now and I am going on Facebook and social media and I am going to bring you in things that will eliminate every child from that court by Friday. And I think she could. But her, I didn't like the line of reasoning, the line of reasoning is, I don't condone this but I condone this. You know? So she wants her son back on the court even though she doesn't condone it. I am sitting there and now we have the court. We had the assembly didn't introduce him. Met with mom afterward that's when mom came in with that stuff. Anyway we are noodling on this, of course we made a call to say ok, I think I know how this is framed but I am going to ask anyway so. I had (name of supervisor), the lawyer, they said, basically you can do that. No problem, just remember you got to do that for every kid and so the thing that bothered me . . . I actually called him back in, the mom and the son and said, you know I don't

condone what you did. I don't like it um . . . He didn't really cross . . . he didn't racially degrade anybody. He was responding to this other girl and um, I just said, you know what I've . . . I am not going to be the internet police. We don't have enough people employed in the district right now if we just turned everybody to social media. I said, I don't think that, I don't like what you did. Mom said, I don't like what he did. He said, I don't like what I did either. I apologized. So I said, it's up to you. I am going to make this a family matter. It's in your family. You guys decide if you want to handle it. So basically they said he is going to be in the court and he is going to represent and so he did um . . . Friday. It bothers me because I want to be able to . . . I don't know. But at the same time, mom did bring in 2 or 3, the second time, things you know just horrible about kids. Because everybody is 7 foot tall and 300 pounds if you want to be mean on the internet or you can be the most gorgeous, vivacious girl if you want depending on how you want to be. Anyway, I reversed basically kicking him off the court. Putting him back on, not because it's right but because I can't enforce this practice that I wasn't going to be able to enforce. And the parent of the child felt, if you are not going to enforce it, we are going to be on the court. And I still don't like it. Do you have a better answer?

Interviewer: No. I don't know what the hell I would do. Shoot.

H3: When you have a better answer at three in the morning, write it down.

Interviewer: I might, I don't know. I did have a situation similar to that. It's a good lesson for kids. You are right, she probably could have kicked everybody off your homecoming court.

H3: I think so.

Interviewer: I think there is always something out there.

H3: Every teenager has done something stupid.

Interviewer: Oh my gosh. Ok, that is new for me. Have you had to make decisions in your role as principal you felt was in contrast to the traditional role of the principal and if so describe the situation.

H3: Well I think so. I mean because traditional role would mean they didn't teach you in college. I mean defining it that way . . . um . . . I had a couple of firsts this year . . . sitting with a family and their transgender son. And trying to make sure the child was safe and we had all the things in place for that person to feel good. And the parents were appreciative and saying yeah, we are trying to negotiate our way through this life right now to. Never got a training on that, however, I think in (name of school district) we do. We are all training in professional development in equity and fairness and

things that help me. But I was thinking when I went home I have been here for 30, 32 years in education, huh, that was different. And you know, nice kid and everything.

There are more social things happening all the time. Dealing with a mother and . . . a teen mother who is homeless and um . . . doesn't have academically the skills to uh . . . be successful and they are out of formula and they are out of warm clothes and so . . . I think the social needs are . . . then the . . . I mean these are just things that kind of going over the things that . . . they order on to more of the social awareness and social workers used to do or do. Is that we do more mental health groups. We do more you know what I mean. We are doing more health and wellness of the child. The Free and Reduced Lunch glitch we had here was um . . . the day ended where they cut all the kids off who didn't the forms in. Well just about 99% are Hispanic speaking families and they were bringing in their letters that show on September 9<sup>th</sup> that they received this letter that said they don't have to turn in anymore things because they are in (name of program) and so we call over. Here's the number of the student. And (name of district employee) is trying to help. Ok we missed that, ok we missed that, ok we will get him on tomorrow. This one parent couldn't come that week because she works during the day so she took the bus from work on a Friday to come in to bring in her letter to say, the letter says I don't have to do this. And we say, yeah we agree, we will take care of it. And then um . . . people have been helping . . . that wasn't uh a dart thrown at anybody. It was just . . . we've got to do a little better job and figure out where our glitches are and have people who speak Spanish who were able to communicate and help. And it is just those things that happen but between teen parents and a young baby trying to get healthy and get a future to um . . . to getting food to families in need, clothing to families, mental health to families in need. You know, you see it, that's your business. The kids that are the most needy, I think those things are . . . you know . . . Maslow's hierarchy . . . we have to take care of those things before anything else really matters. So not that Maslow is the king or anything. I just think those are the things that have taken more resources and time than what was traditionally years ago the role of the principal. I think they are the role of the principal now. I mean, traditional role would be . . . when I went to college they didn't teach any of this.

Interviewer: Nope, they certainly didn't. Well that's it.

H3: Well thank you.

Interviewer: No. Thank you.