ABSTRACT

WHITEHEAD, TRUDY SIMONE. The Relationship between Principals’ Perceptions of the Roles and Effectiveness of Ancillary Staff and the Amount of Collaboration at the School. (Under the direction of Dr. Lance D. Fusarelli).

This was a qualitative study to summarize perceptions of the role of ancillary staff in three high schools in the Forsyth County School System in Georgia. Past studies have shown principals had a favorable perception regarding the role of speech-language pathologists (SLP); however, since the implementation of new laws (i.e. IDEA), the role of SLPs and the scope of practice have evolved. For example, today there is greater emphasis place on SLPs using collaborative service delivery models as well as providing social skills treatment in elementary, middle, and high schools. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate if principals’ perceptions regarding the role of the SLP and other ancillary staff including the school counselor, school psychologist, and the school social worker remain positive or have changed in light of the new trends in speech-language pathology. The project involved questionnaires with principals from three, center-based traditional schools. The researcher summarized the information gathered from the principal and staff interviews and looked for common strands. The study of principals’ perceptions was organized around a description of the ancillary staff’s role; service delivery models including collaborative efforts; effectiveness of the ancillary’s role on student achievement; how adequately supported the ancillary staff is by the principal; and how likely it is for the principals to consider ancillary’s staff for leadership roles at their schools.

Findings indicated two primary themes. The first was that the amount of collaboration a principal has with an ancillary staff member affects how effective s/he perceives that staff member to be in their duties; principals had a more positive perception of ancillary staff’s effectiveness if the ancillary staff collaborated with him and with each other. Furthermore,
the study found that principals displayed a better understanding of the specific and varied roles and duties of the staff with whom they collaborated regularly, and in turn, tended to perceive these staff members as more important in their jobs. These findings suggested a relationship between collaboration and the principal’s overall view of his staff members.
The Relationship between Principals’ Perceptions of the Roles and Effectiveness of Ancillary Staff and the Amount of Collaboration at the School

by
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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my family and friends. A special feeling of gratitude goes to my late grandparents, Isabelle and William Lewis, Jr., who always encouraged me with unconditional love and support. I also dedicate this work to my mother, Elaine Watkins, and my late father, Reverend William S. Johnson, who were always positive forces of love and guidance in my life.

To my husband, Ricarrdo, who provided stability and strength for me and our children while completing this research. To my children, Christy, Lori, Ricky, and Ryan, for always believing in me, and to my granddaughters, Gabriella and Abigail, who called me every day to encourage me, I dedicate this work.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my church family, who has prayed continuously for my success, especially, Dr. Peggy Forbes. I will always cherish my colleagues in my cohort, Dr. Josephus Brown, as well as soon-to-be Dr. Portia Lambright and Dr. Traci Purvis for being available every time I needed a peer’s guidance. Last but not least, a special thanks to Trisch Ford for all of the time, especially after business hours, that she sacrificed to help me with this process.
BIOGRAPHY

Trudy S. Whitehead, daughter of William S. Johnson and Elaine L. Watkins, is a native Virginian. After completing high school in her hometown of Charlottesville, she continued her education at Hampton University, where she earned both a B.S and an M.A degree in Communication Disorders. She continued her education at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, achieving an M.S. in School Administration. Currently, Trudy is enrolled in the doctoral program at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina, where she is completing a doctoral program in Education Administration.

Since 1989, Mrs. Whitehead has worked in various school systems in the states of Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia. She and her husband have six children and six grandchildren.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

A study by Sanger, Hux, and Griess (1995) examined educators’ opinions of speech-language pathology services in schools. Since that time, changes have occurred in the field of speech-language pathology that warrant further research in the area of both high school and middle school educators’ opinions of speech-language pathology services in schools.

Recent legislation and research support a more inclusionary collaborative model of service delivery. Revisions to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1997 and 2004 changed the way many school-based speech-language pathologists (SLP) provided services (ASLHA, 1999). Since 2004, SLPs (SPAs) have been pressured, if not mandated, to provide services more inclusively to students with disabilities (Farber & Klein, 1999). Federal law requires the provision of services in the least restrictive environment, but changes in the IDEA Act have reinforced the notion that the general classroom is the least restrictive environment for most students (Ehren, 2000). For SLPs, this has meant changing the way they provided services, resulting in less pullout therapy (wherein the child receives services in an office elsewhere on school grounds) and more classroom-based interventions.

A change that has occurred, specifically in the Forsyth County School System, is the introduction of center-based schools. A center-based school is a centrally-located school that serves a specific population of students from a set feeder pattern of schools. This term is used in Forsyth County Public School System to describe a school that focuses on teaching students with varying degrees of disabilities. There are center-based elementary, middle, and high schools in Forsyth County.
Center-based schools offer classes for students with mild to severe learning
disabilities and other health impairments, including those with hearing, orthopedics vision,
and physical abilities. These students receive Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
based on a modified curriculum which is approved by the state’s department of education.
Center-based schools in North Forsyth County are known for serving a much larger special
education population than typical North Forsyth County Schools.

The Principal’s Role in Special Education and Service Delivery

As the educational leaders of a school, principals have been given many
responsibilities by school districts, state agencies, and the federal government. One of the
biggest responsibilities given to principals involves compliance with all the various state and
federal laws (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2000). More specifically, school principals have been
charged with ensuring that appropriate and legally defensible special education and related
services are provided to students with disabilities and that each of these students’ potential is
realized (Adelman & Taylor, 2006). In addition to providing the least restrictive
environment, at the state and federal level, school principals have been encouraged and
mandated to ensure that students with disabilities in their buildings receive instruction make
progress in the general education curriculum. In order to provide principals with the
necessary skills and training to follow these laws, state and local agencies have offered
training in special education services for students. Through their role as the representative at
individualized educational planning meetings, principals have the ultimate responsibility to
ensure that students with disabilities, including students with speech or language
impairments, make progress in the general education curriculum, learn next to their
nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate, and receive education from teachers through the use of a variety of supports and strategies.

**Speech-Language Pathology Services in the Public School Setting**

Under IDEA (2004), a speech or language impairment is considered to be a communication disorder (e.g., speech sound, language, or voice impairment and stuttering) that adversely affects the student’s educational performance. The provision of speech-language pathology services to students with communication impairments has had a long history in education. Dating as far back as 1900, American public school students received segregated services from teachers in an attempt to address speech and language impairments (Osgood, 2005). By 1948, one of the earliest national attempts was made to include students with speech or language impairments in the regular education setting and also provide these students with partial day or pullout speech-language services (Osgood, 2005). Through the creation of The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, certified SLPs (SLPs) were hired by school districts, county boards of mental retardation and developmental disabilities, and educational service centers to work directly and indirectly (e.g., consultation, counseling, and guidance to teachers and parents) with students who had speech or language impairments (Ehren, 2000; Huefner, 2000).

School districts have also been encouraged by policies from national professional associations to take part in the inclusion movement, move away from pullout-only segregated programs, and integrate speech-language pathology services into the regular education setting (Beck & Dennis, 1997; Elksnin & Capilouto, 1994; McGinty & Justice, 2006; Zions, 1997). As educational teams seek to determine the most appropriate service delivery model at
IEP team meetings, they rely on research that has pointed in the direction of integrated classroom-based speech-language pathology services as an effective and legally-defensible service delivery model for many students who required services to address a speech or language impairment (American Speech-Language Hearing Association, 2005; Ellis, Schlaudecker, & Regimbal, 1995; McGinty & Justice, 2006; Throneburg, Calvert, Sturm, Paramboukas, & Paul, 2000; Wilcox & Caswell, 1991).

The SLP plays a variety of roles depending on the learning/support needs of the students (especially those with IEPs), the classroom context, and the needs of the classroom staff. Teachers and SLPs have some skill sets that are different from each other and others that overlap, yet those overlapping skills might be applied differently by each professional. The classroom teacher has expertise about curriculum, classroom management, and group instruction while the SLP has knowledge about individual language and communication development, language/communication disabilities, and individualized intervention strategies. It is the marriage of the two sets of complimentary professional skills that can add power to an integrated services model.

Because of the increased resources allotted to special program students, a division has grown between general and special educators (Sack, 1999). The division, along with excessive paperwork to document the modifications, the fear of litigation, and the amount of effort required to produce results with special education students, encourages many special educators to leave the field. Often, teachers feel that their school administrators are turning their backs when it comes to dealing with parents, student behavior (outside of normal classroom management), and academic problems in the classrooms. Teachers are left feeling
as though it is their responsibility to solve these issues, and when they solve the issue imperfectly, they are reprimanded. Thus, teachers are more susceptible to burnout, an inability to handle the pressures of the teaching profession, which then causes them to leave the field.

**Statement of the Problem**

Since the days of the one-room schoolhouse, public schools in the United States have been at the heart of the community. The school, conventionally a center for formal learning, has increasingly become a focal point of efforts to improve and rebuild communities. By building stronger communities (and families), the hope is that students will be less at risk of academic failure and social problems. Many school reformers believe that the logical place to address the needs of at-risk children is at the place where so many of society’s problems intersect—the public school (Fusarelli, 2008). Historically, a variety of specialized private and public agencies have emerged to provide assistance to those in high-risk circumstances. Often these agencies worked in a virtual vacuum, not knowing what services other agencies were or were not providing. This resulted in three major problems: underuse of the resources available, cracks in the system through which children and families could fall, and a duplication of similar services by multiple agencies (Johnson, 2001).

Interagency collaborative programs arose to address the issue of fragmented and detached services. The desire for a coordinated approach to solve the multifaceted problems of today’s youth has led to efforts to restructure service provision; the formation of school-linked services such as speech-language pathology has become a well-accepted part of school reform efforts (Fusarelli, 2008). However, advocates for coordinated services are
increasingly facing tough questions about the effectiveness of coordinated programs and about fears that these programs may distract educators’ attention from their primary mission: effective academic instruction. Empirical data on the effects, both short and long-term, of these programs is inconclusive (Cibulka & Kritek, 1996; Crowson & Boyd, 1993; Honig, Kahne, & McLaughlin, 1999; Kahne & Bailey, 1999; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1997; Warren, 2005).

If there is any consensus among most educational researchers and policymakers, it is this simple fact: many students continue to fail at astounding rates and students’ social and emotional needs are not being met. But what role, if any, should the school play in trying to solve this crisis? Harold Howe, the former U.S. Commissioner of Education, suggests that “schools cannot do it alone. It is either naïve or irresponsible to ignore the connection between children’s performances in school and their experiences with malnutrition, homelessness, lack of medical care, inadequate housing, racial and cultural discrimination and other burdens” (as cited in Merseth, 1997, p. 7). Howe believes that schools should have a role in solving students’ nonacademic problems, but he proclaims that schools cannot do it alone. While it may be true that schools cannot do it alone, others ask the question, “Should schools be doing it at all?” (Merseth, 1997, p. 8).

Educators continue to disagree over the role and purpose of school-linked coordinated services. However, research suggests that strong leadership helps district employees accept the expanded role of the school and its staff that results from districts’ efforts to establish school/social service agency collaborations (Johnson, 2001). It may not be the mission of a school to meet the nonacademic needs of children, but if certain prerequisites from learning
are not met, it is the students and their academic performance that suffer. Research indicates that there is an underlying conflict between the push for higher student academic achievement and the need to meet students’ nonacademic needs (Johnson, 2001).

Some educators complain about what they perceive to be added duties because of the collaborative services efforts. These complaints range from mild statements of disapproval to outright hostility. Some of the resistance stems from the fact that educators are increasingly experiencing “role overload” caused by the enormous pressure they are under to increase student test scores and meet the mandates of NCLB (Fusarelli, 2008). Teachers and SLPs need to have a clear understanding of what their roles are and which agencies and programs are involved in the coordinated services effort. If coordinated services efforts are viewed by teachers as one more thing added to their workload, then they are less likely to embrace such initiatives (Fusarelli, 2008).

The manner in which leaders introduce an initiative to coordinate social services for students can have an impact on the eventual acceptance or rejection of the reform. School administrators need to take the time to build a groundswell of support for the initiative. They must sell their plan to the public and at the same time gain the acceptance of educators. The way the initiative is introduced is important; however, strong leadership appears to be associated with district employees accepting the expanded role of the school in school-linked coordinated services efforts (Johnson, 2001). Even with strong leadership, change is difficult to achieve. It is very difficult to change beliefs about the role of the school in society (Fusarelli, 2008).
The politics involved with the collaboration between school and community resources affect the working relationship between school administrators and their staff. Increased responsibilities and confusion about the staff’s roles will increase any existing misunderstanding, thus impacting student achievement. That is why it is important for principals’ perceptions to be articulated positively so that all members of the staff know their roles at the school.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine principals’ perceptions of the role of ancillary staff in three center-based high schools. Limited research has investigated the perceptions of principals, specifically their perceptions of the roles of ancillary staff. This study investigated opinions regarding the collaborative effectiveness of the ancillary staff; how adequately the principal supports the ancillary staff; and how likely a principal is to consider ancillary staff for a leadership role.

**Definition of Terms**

*Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*: IDEA was signed into law on November 29, 1975. President Ford signed Public Law 94-142 while at the same time he recognized the challenges of implementation that it presented. He stated, “Unfortunately, the bill contains more than the federal government can deliver, and its good intentions could be thwarted by the many unwise provisions it contains” (Sack, 1999, p. 15). Today, the federal funding of the law stands at 8%, far below the 40% promised by the federal government (Chinni, 1996). The bill mandates that each student identified as disabled receive an individual education program, or IEP, that is determined by the parent, a school principal, the
student’s teacher and case manager, and the student if he/she is over the age of 14. The current special education legislation identifies eleven areas of special needs students, including learning disabled, behaviorally and emotionally disabled multi-handicapped emotionally and mentally disabled, and so on.

Learning Disabled (LD): By far the largest area is Learning Disabled, or LD. Over half of the students in special education fall under this classification. The law defines LD as a “disorder in which one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations.” The legislation further states that those students who show a severe discrepancy between their achievements in one or more subject areas and their intelligence, usually measured by an IQ test, are classified as LD. These students receive extra support in a variety of ways, including increased test time, audiotapes, and extra help within the classroom.

Other Terminology: Other areas of identification include BED or behaviorally and emotionally disabled, OHI or other health impaired which includes diagnoses such as ADHD as well as hearing impaired, and other medical handicaps. Categories also include AU or autistic, MU or multiple handicaps, EMD which is educable mentally handicapped or students with IQ’s of less than 60, VI or vision-impaired or legally blind students, and MR or mental retardation. Many of these disabilities require specialized training and knowledge on the part of the teacher in order to understand how best to develop and implement an individual education program for the student. Categories of special education teachers’ licenses vary based on the needs of the students. There is a certification for each of the areas
listed above, as well as CCR or IRR, which stands for Cross-Categorical Resource, or Interrelated Resource, a license that allows a teacher to work with all students who are identified.

**Significance of the Study**

Limited studies to date have investigated principals’ perceptions related specifically to the role of school SLPs. The current study, then, sought to gain valuable insight for improving collaboration between principals and SLPs. Citing several other studies, Jansen et al. (2008) noted:

The emphasis on student achievement also has challenged the notion of principals being the sole leaders in schools. Lambert (2002) noted that this conception of leadership underutilizes the talents and aptitudes of other professionals in the school. In contrast, leadership models that empower and utilize the skills and knowledge of all professionals in schools have been promoted as a catalyst to improve student achievement (e.g. Halverson, 2003; Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2005; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). (p. 25)

In addition to potentially improving student achievement through increased collaboration, understanding school principals’ perceptions of SLPs is important because principals often have significant influence on shaping the roles and responsibilities of professionals working in the schools. Specifically, principals influence the hiring of SLPs and sometimes evaluate them. It is important for SLPs to educate principals about their role and function as well as try to shape the principals’ perceptions. This practice might improve the SLPs’ job
satisfaction while also increasing the quality of services and support for students. Undergraduate and graduate study programs in speech-language pathology tend to encourage school-based SLPs to work collaboratively with teachers; however, there tends to be less emphasis on the need for SLPs to work collaboratively with leadership teams and, more specifically, with principals.

**Research Questions**

In an attempt to better understand the relationships between principals and ancillary staff, the following research questions were examined in the current study:

1. Since the implementation of new laws (i.e., IDEA), what are principals’ perceptions of the roles and effectiveness of ancillary staff such as speech-language pathologists, school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors in positively impacting student achievement?

2. Does the amount of collaboration between a principal and an ancillary staff member affect his perception of their value to the school and students?

**Chapter Summary**

This study focuses on principals’ perceptions of the role of ancillary staff including the SLPs, school psychologist, school counselor, and school social worker. Principals have the responsibility of implementing state and federally mandated legislation and collaborating with educators to ensure that the knowledge and skills of various professionals are being utilized in schools. Principals’ perceptions of various professionals such as SLPs influence this collaboration and directly or indirectly impact student achievement in that their perceptions influence the roles and responsibilities of professionals in the schools; therefore,
the ancillary staff should be aware of the need for them to shape principals’ perceptions about the knowledge and skills they possess and role they should have as educators.

Although ancillary staff’s roles in the educational environment continue to increase, they are still responsible for providing the best services to students. With the increased of the number of students identified as special programs students, school principals are given the responsibility to provide an appropriate education for all students. These standards continue to place a high demand on professionals with regard to accountability. Given the pressure produced from working in a high-stakes accountability environment with an overriding emphasis on improving academic achievement, principals may feel they have little time to devote to fully integrating non-instructional staff into schooling. Furthermore, they may have a lack of knowledge about exactly what such staff do and how they can contribute to improving student achievement. This study seeks to flesh out these perceptions to gain a better understanding of principals’ knowledge about these professionals and what principals see as the role and contribution of SLPs in schools.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the relevant literature pertaining to the principals’ perceptions of the roles of ancillary staff including speech-language pathologists (SLP), school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors. In order to understand the role of these ancillary staff, it is helpful to examine the history of speech-language pathology, school social work, school counseling, and school psychology. Over time, the scope of practice in the roles of these ancillary staff has broadened. Principals are likely unaware of just how broad the scope of practice is for these essential staff.

Speech-Language Pathology Services in the Public School Setting

The History of Speech-Language Pathology

Many who have studied the history of speech-language pathology in the U.S. have placed its origins in the founding of the professional organization around 1925 (Malone, 1999; Paden, 1970). This abrupt rendering of the profession’s beginning the day that Edward Lee Travis called a meeting at his house in Iowa City, Iowa, about forming a new organization leaves unanswered the question of what happened prior to that day. What prompted those at the meeting to want to separate themselves from their mother organization, the American Speech Society? Where did they get their ideas, their expertise, and their sense of professional identity? What other options besides separating from their parent organization were available to them? Answers to these questions requires several trips back in time to much earlier periods when the intellectual seeds that influenced the thinking of the men and women at Travis’s meeting were planted. We will follow the historical paths to the beginning of the nineteenth century.
There were at least three trends in the nineteenth century that led to the need for the first speech-language pathology professionals. Each exerted a separate identifiable influence on the evolution of the field. As with other trends, these worked together to form a common pathway that was to eventually lead to the formation of the profession in 1925. The first pathway, *the elocution movement*, was a broad movement in America where elocutionists set up practices to work with orators, politicians, singers, preachers, actors, and non-specialists who wanted to improve their speaking, orating, or singing. Some elocutionists, such as Andrew Comstock and Alexander Graham Bell, also offered lessons for individuals with speech, language, or hearing problems.

Also operating early in the nineteenth century was a dramatic shift from a religious and philosophical view of causality to a scientific one. Charles Darwin published his influential book on the origin of different species, Paul Broca and Carl Wernicke’s studies of the brain were having their impact, and the first academic psychology programs were becoming established in Europe and the United States. All these influences created a scientific revolution, one that strongly influenced the participants at that historic meeting that led to the founding of the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) in 1925.

In nineteenth-century America, there were no “allied health professionals.” Indeed, the professions making up this group such as occupational therapists, physical therapists, and SLPs were not yet founded. Services, when they were provided in these areas, were administered by self-styled practitioners—those who had an interest, talent, or personal experience with a type of therapy. Among these pre-professionals was a group of practicing specialists who drew their expertise from having cured their own speech problems or from...
their self-perceived talents in teaching or orating. These pre-professionals increased in number in the mid- and late-nineteenth century as a result of other reforms that were taking place in the United States. The group members began to work together contributing to a general rise of professionalism that was happening throughout the United States early in the twentieth century.

In the twentieth century, it was the wounded soldiers from the First and Second World Wars that brought about significant advances in the way that rehabilitative medicine is carried out. Not only was speech pathology born, but other fields such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and physical medicine and rehabilitation arose to help those who had fought overseas return to as normal a life as was possible. The first physical therapists were called “reconstruction aides” and treated patients in military rehabilitation centers and hospitals. The vast majority of these professionals were women with an academic background in physical education. Because of the polio epidemic, physical therapy took off as a career; what drove occupational therapy was the vast number of crippling injuries with which the American “doughboys” returned from the fields of Europe.

Parallel to these fields of rehabilitation, the Academy of Speech Correction was founded in 1925, which started the history of the field of speech-language pathology. As soldiers returned in greater numbers of wounded from the Second World War, the need for continued and increased availability of rehabilitation was made obvious. This recognition “led to the institution of speech, language and hearing services in military hospitals during the war, and after, in veterans' administration medical centers” (Minifie, 1994, p. 5). Once the war wound down, those professionals who had delivered speech pathology services to
wounded soldiers began looking for ways to continue their career by delivering them to the public at large.

With the rolls of the wounded in need of speech pathology services dwindling in the years following the Second World War, the trained pathologists began looking for other clientele. At this point, those children who had spent their whole childhoods suffering ridicule and bullying because of their speech delays now had a cadre of pathologists waiting to help them. Ballew (1983) defined the burgeoning profession as an organization of nationally certified professionals with training to give language and speech therapy to those who were impaired in the area of communication. Miller and Groher (1993) described the growth of the profession in this way: “During the 1970's and 80's, the clinical setting of SLPs began to evolve from what was once almost exclusively a public school and an ambulatory care population, to a practice in acute and chronic care medical institutions” (p. 180).

Even as the role of the speech pathologist has grown beyond the military and the public school system, that role in the schools has changed as students’ needs have shifted. One example is the need for a SLP to help a patient develop the ability to swallow effectively in normal situations (Lubinski, 2003). As one speech pathologist put it:

My day is probably not at all what you might think. I rarely address 'speech' disorders anymore because my focus is so predominantly on swallowing. Yes, that's right, swallowing. Eighty percent to ninety percent of my caseload involves swallowing disorders, otherwise known as dysphagia. (Kosteva, Schaller, Brian, & Strayer, 2005)

Swallowing, of course, is not the only area in which pathologists have had to develop more expertise. In the public school system, SLPs see everything ranging from neoplasms and
vascular infections to traumatic neurological impairments, generating flaws in cognition and speech as well as in swallowing. As the number of disorders grows, it will be vital for the SLP to be able to provide a comprehensive diagnosis and recommendation for treatment within a short amount of time. It is also true that the SLP on a particular campus will need to build a stronger relationship with a student's pediatrician than may have been necessary in the past.

Several studies have shown how little medical professionals know about speech-language pathology (Lees, Stark, Baird, & Birse, 2000; Lesser & Hassip, 1986; McCauslin, Florance, & Rabidoux, 1980). In 1980, 17 family practice residents in Columbus, Ohio, took a survey. The purpose of this survey was to evaluate their comprehension of aphasia, as well as the particular function of the SLP in evaluating and treating aphasia. The results of the survey were interesting, especially given the residents' existing medical knowledge. The test showed that while the residents did know something about the sorts of patients that SLPs treat, the residents did not know a lot of things. For example, almost 50% of the residents did not know the proper procedures for referring a patient for services. A particularly interesting result from the study was the preconception among residents that SLPs only need a high school diploma, or maybe a college degree; the truth is that SLPs often have to have a master's degree to work to their full potential. Indeed, the likelihood of a resident of referring a patient to a SLP often has to do with affective factors such as knowing the pathologist or referrals from others or other sources rather than by assessing a patient's actual needs and making a decision based on those findings (McCauslin et al., 1980).
In 1985, a study was administered to doctors, teachers, and nurses about their opinions of speech therapy. Quite a few of the professionals believed that speech-language pathology was a discipline practiced only with children and predominantly within the public school system. The study showed that professionals in the medical field were less likely to know that speech pathologists help patients as they recover from stroke to recover their communicative abilities (Lesser & Hassip, 1986). A 2000 study took stock of the knowledge and attitudes that primary care physicians and nurse practitioners had toward speech dysfluency in preschool children (Lees, Stark, Baird & Birse, 2000). This study also included a Likert-type questionnaire, and over three-quarters of the professionals asked to take the survey agreed to complete it. It turned out that the professionals who had received more training on speech dysfluencies after completing their medical education were more likely to refer students to a SLP. It seems, then, that the more training professionals have about the field of speech-language pathology, the more sensitive they are toward the people they serve, and the more likely they are to believe that speech-language pathology works.

Sanger et al. (1995) reported on a survey of educators (general and special education teachers, school psychologists, and elementary professionals) asked about their particular attitudes about the performance and role of SLPs in the schools. While only 43% of the potential respondents returned a survey, those who did respond had a positive attitude toward speech-language pathology services, although they showed a lack of uniformity when it came to identifying the specific student groups who should receive speech-language pathology services. The precise role of the pathologist appeared to create some confusion as well (Sanger et al., 1995).
The Role of the Speech-Language Pathologist

Speech-language pathology is the study of disorders that affect a person's speech, language, cognition, voice, swallowing (dysphagia), and the rehabilitative or corrective treatment of physical and/or cognitive deficits/disorders resulting in difficulty with communication and/or swallowing. SLPs (SLPs) or Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) address people's speech production, vocal production, swallowing difficulties and language needs through speech therapy in a variety of different contexts including schools, hospitals, and through private practice.

Communication includes speech (articulation, intonation, rate, intensity); language (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics); both receptive and expressive language (including reading and writing); and non-verbal communication such as facial expression and gesture. Swallowing problems managed under speech therapy are problems in the oral, laryngeal, and/or pharyngeal stages of swallowing (not esophageal). Depending on the nature and severity of the disorder, common treatments may include physical strengthening exercises, instructive or repetitive practice and drilling, and the use of audio-visual aids and introduction of strategies to facilitate functional communication. Speech therapy may also include sign language and the use of picture symbols (Diehl, 2003).

According ASHA (1999), the practice of speech-language pathology involves the following:

- Providing prevention, screening, consultation, assessment and diagnosis, treatment, intervention, management, counseling, and follow-up services for disorders of:
- Speech (i.e., phonation, articulation, fluency, resonance, and voice including aeromechanical components of respiration);

- Language (i.e., phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatic/social aspects of communication) including comprehension and expression in oral, written, graphic, and manual modalities; language processing; pre-literacy and language-based literacy skills, including phonological awareness

- Swallowing or other upper aero-digestive functions such as infant feeding and aeromechanical events (evaluation of esophageal function is for the purpose of referral to medical professionals)

- Cognitive aspects of communication (e.g., attention, memory, problem solving, executive functions)

- Sensory awareness related to communication, swallowing, or other upper aerodigestive functions

- Establishing augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) techniques and strategies including developing, selecting, and prescribing of such systems and devices (e.g., speech generating devices)

- Providing services to individuals with hearing loss and their families/caregivers (e.g., auditory training; speech reading; speech and language intervention secondary to hearing loss; visual inspection and listening checks of amplification devices for the purpose of troubleshooting, including verification of appropriate battery voltage)
• Screening hearing of individuals who can participate in conventional pure-tone air conduction methods, as well as screening for middle ear pathology through screening tympanometry for the purpose of referral of individuals for further evaluation and management

• Using instrumentation (e.g., videofluoroscopy, EMG, nasendoscopy, stroboscopy, computer technology) to observe, collect data, and measure parameters of communication and swallowing, or other upper aerodigestive functions in accordance with the principles of evidence-based practice

• Selecting, fitting, and establishing effective use of prosthetic/adaptive devices for communication, swallowing, or other upper aerodigestive functions (e.g., tracheoesophageal prostheses, speaking valves, and electrolarynges). This does not include sensory devices used by individuals with hearing loss or other auditory perceptual deficits

• Collaborating in the assessment of central auditory processing disorders and providing intervention where there is evidence of speech, language, and/or other cognitive communication disorders

• Educating and counseling individuals, families, co-workers, educators, and other persons in the community regarding acceptance, adaptation, and decision making about communication, swallowing, or other upper aerodigestive concerns

• Advocating for individuals through community awareness, education, and training programs to promote and facilitate access to full participation in communication, including the elimination of societal barriers
• Collaborating with and providing referrals and information to audiologists, educators, and health professionals as individual needs dictate

• Addressing behaviors (e.g., perseverative or disruptive actions) and environments (e.g., seating, positioning for swallowing safety or attention, communication opportunities) that affect communication, swallowing, or other upper aerodigestive functions

• Providing services to modify or enhance communication performance (e.g., accent modification, transgendered voice, care and improvement of the professional voice, personal/ professional communication effectiveness)

• Recognizing the need to provide and appropriately accommodate diagnostic and treatment services to individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and adjust treatment and assessment services

SLPs also develop an individualized educational plan (IEP) tailored to students’ needs. For individuals with little or no speech capability, SLPs may select augmentative or alternative communication methods, including automated devices and sign language, and teach their use. They teach patients how to make sounds, improve their voices, or increase their oral or written language skills to communicate more effectively. They also teach individuals how to strengthen muscles or use compensatory strategies to swallow without choking or inhaling food or liquid. SLPs help patients develop or recover reliable communication and swallowing skills so patients can fulfill their educational, vocational, and social roles.
SLPs also keep records of the initial evaluation, progress, and discharge of clients. This helps them pinpoint problems, track clients’ progress, and justify the cost of treatment when applying to insurance companies for reimbursement. They counsel individuals and their families concerning communication disorders and how to cope with the stress and misunderstanding that often accompany them. They also work with family members to recognize and change behavior patterns that impede communication and treatment and show them communication-enhancing techniques to use at home.

Most SLPs provide direct clinical services to individuals with communication or swallowing disorders. In educational settings, they may perform their job in conjunction with physicians, social workers, psychologists, and other therapists. SLPs in schools collaborate with teachers, special educators, interpreters, other school staff, and parents to develop and implement individual or group programs, provide counseling, and support classroom activities.

Work Environment

SLPs usually work at a desk or table in clean, comfortable surroundings. In schools, they may work with students in an office or classroom. When an office is provided, the speech pathologist removes the students from the classroom to provide the service. Sometimes the therapist collaborates with the classroom teacher to provide speech support to the entire classroom. Some SLPs work in the client’s home. Although the work is not physically demanding, it requires attention to detail and intense concentration.
Education and Training

Most SLPs’ jobs require a Master’s degree. In 2007, more than 230 colleges and universities offered graduate programs in speech-language pathology, accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. While graduation from an accredited program is not always required to become a SLP, it may be helpful in or required in order to obtain a license in some states. Speech-language pathology courses cover anatomy, physiology, and the development of the areas of the body involved in speech, language, and swallowing; the nature of disorders; principles of acoustics; and psychological aspects of communication. Graduate students also learn to evaluate and treat speech, language, and swallowing disorders, and receive supervised clinical training in communication disorders.

Licensure and Certification

In 2007, 47 states regulated SLPs through licensure or registration. A passing score on the national examination on speech-language pathology, offered through the Praxis Series of the Educational Testing Service, is required. Other usual requirements include 300 to 375 hours of supervised clinical experience and nine months of post-graduate professional clinical experience. In the United States, 41 states have continuing education requirements for licensure renewal. Medicaid, Medicare, and private health insurers generally require a practitioner to be licensed to qualify for reimbursement.

Psychological Services in the Public School Setting

School psychologists are professionals trained to work with preschoolers, children, and adolescents, and their teachers and families. They work with all school staff to help make
education for students a positive and rewarding experience. School psychologists help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. They collaborate with educators, parents, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community for all students.

History of School Psychologists

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, social reform implemented which included compulsory schooling, juvenile courts, child labor laws, mental health, and vocational guidance. These cultural and social advances were a major force in the push for the need for school psychologists. Compulsory schooling (established in 1918) resulted in mass learning of individuals from diverse backgrounds. Some of these children showed up for school in poor general health, and some children tended to learn slower than their peers. Physical and mental examinations became necessary in the schools (Braden, DiMarino-Linnen, & Good, 2001).

By 1910, some special education services were in place in many urban and some rural communities. Due to the emergence of special education services, “experts” were needed to assist in selection and placement of children in these services. Thus the school psychologist as the “gatekeeper” for special education evolved. Early models of school psychology evolved primarily from Lightner Witmer and G. Stanley Hall. Witmer focused mostly on a more idiographic clinical model, which could provide actual services for the individual, whereas Hall’s focus, was much more research orientated, looking to develop normative characteristics for groups. Over the ensuing years, these two approaches were melded to form
the foundations of school psychology, particularly the testing movement. No individual is more recognized in the forefront of this testing movement than Alfred Binet (1857-1911). Together with Theodore Simon, the two helped spur the individual testing movement by developing the first practical intelligence test battery, which assessed higher level cognitive skills and produced substantial associations with measures of school achievement (Braden et al., 2001).

World War I (1914-1918) had a major influence on the development of group-standardized tests (Army Alpha and Army Beta), and the utility of these tests gained public attention and acceptance of tests. The development of individual ability and achievement tests helped define the primary role and function of early school psychologists. These tests were used in differentiating students with different ability and achievement levels and became the main tool used by psychologists in educational settings.

The first school psychology training program at New York University (undergraduate and graduate) was established in 1925, and the 1930’s brought the first doctoral-level training in school psychology. In the mid-1930’s, state department certification for school psychologists occurred in New York and Pennsylvania. The American Psychological Association (APA) was founded, but it excluded most practicing school psychologists because most did not have doctoral-level training, which was a requirement for membership. American Association of Applied Psychologists (AAAP) was formed, and it had less stringent membership requirements; thus, many school psychologists became members.

The year 1945 brought the establishment of Division 16 of the APA, formed explicitly for the specialty of school psychology. Finally, in 1969, the National Association
of School Psychologists was formed. NASP brought practitioners nationwide together in a more “stable and strengthened identity (Fagan & Wise, 1994).

In 1975, Congress passed the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, better known at the time as Public Law 94-142. This proved to be landmark legislation, requiring public schools to provide students with a broad range of disabilities - including physical handicaps, mental retardation, speech, vision and language problems, emotional and behavioral problems, and other learning disorders - with a "free appropriate public education."

The passage of P.L. 94-142 triggered an enormous growth in the number of school psychologist practitioners, from 5,000 in 1970 to more than 10,000 by 1980, and 20,000 by 1988. Services were now available nationwide despite continued variability in delivery systems and practitioner qualifications. With the tremendous growth in school psychologists came a corresponding increase in the number of state associations, from 17 in 1970 to 48 in 1989. Changes in role and function of school psychologists began taking place in the 1980’s, moving from “assessment and placement intensive” to “preferential assessment, interventions, and at least secondary prevention for at risk groups” (Fagan & Wise, 1994, p. 2). These changes continue to evolve in an effort to make the work of practicing school psychologists available to all students, as well as their parents, teachers, and the community.

The first person to hold the title of School Psychologist was Arnold Gesell in 1915, though the job was not well-noted (Fagan, 1987a). His job included research, consultation, individual case studies, and in-service education (Fagan, 1987b). The appointment of Gesell was significant for three reasons. First, it associated the title of School Psychologist with the
public school system. Second, it identified a school psychologist as one who provides services to children, especially children with mental disabilities. Third, it associated school psychologists as central to the placement of children in special education settings (Fagan, 1987b). This job description emphasized the treatment of individual students, and but did not focus on the general problems of education.

In 1905, Binet and Simon published the first modern intelligence assessment scale, a test that would have significant influence in the training of psychology. The Binet-Simon scale was designed to measure mental deficits based on normative developmental data of students. The scale was introduced into the United States by Henry Goddard, revised by L. Terman and H.G. Childs in 1912, and then revised more deeply by Terman and M. Merrill in 1916. The revised scale, known as the Stanford-Binet, tested hypotheses about appropriate educational placements for students (French, 1984). Sarason (1976) described the effects of the publication of the Stanford-Binet on the role of the school psychologist, writing, “From the time that the 1916 revision of the Binet test appeared – with its detailed instructions, scoring criteria, classifications, and statistical bases – the school psychologist was doomed to the role of psychometrician” (p. 585). Indeed, the field of school psychology is still moving forward to try to reduce the emphasis on testing initiated during this period of time.

*The Role of School Psychologists*

The school psychologist is uniquely qualified to help families and students figure out issues that may be affecting his/her school experience. Through a variety of methods, the student, teacher, and school psychologist can identify problems and work on strategies to help relieve them. School psychologists help teachers, parents, and students determine
personal strengths and weaknesses in learning and aptitude. They also understand, prevent, and solve problems as well as promote positive mental health and effective environments for learning.

The school psychologists participate in the Student Support Team/Comprehensive Building Team (SST/CBT) process. They help to solve conflicts and problems related to learning and adjustment. Collaborating with teachers concerning behavior management and teaching strategies is also another role. They also help school staff and parents better understand the relationships between child development, social-emotional health, learning, and motivation and behavior.

Providing information resources for parents and teachers on topics such as specific types of disorders, treatments for these disorders, and special education regulations is another task for psychologists while strengthening working relationships between educators, parents, and the community. Psychologists use a wide variety of techniques to measure academic skills, determine learning aptitudes, evaluate social and self-help skills, assess personality and emotional development, and address eligibility for special education services.

As far as intervention, psychologists share and explain evaluation results and recommendations to parents and school staff and answer related questions. They also provide educational programs to parents, school staff, and the community. Providing counseling, social skills training, behavior management and other appropriate interventions is also another role of the psychologist.

School psychologists work with students to provide counseling, instruction, and mentoring for those struggling with social, emotional, and behavioral problems; increase
achievement by assessing barriers to learning and determining the best instructional strategies to improve learning; promote wellness and resilience by reinforcing communication and social skills, problem solving, anger management, self-regulation, self-determination, and optimism; enhance understanding and acceptance of diverse cultures and backgrounds.

They work with students and their families to identify and address learning and behavior problems that interfere with school success; evaluate eligibility for special education services (within a multidisciplinary team); support students' social, emotional, and behavioral health; teach parenting skills and enhance home–school collaboration; make referrals and help coordinate community support services.

School psychologists work with teachers to identify and resolve academic barriers to learning; design and implement student progress monitoring systems; design and implement academic and behavioral interventions; support effective individualized instruction; create positive classroom environments; motivate all students to engage in learning.

School psychologists work with administrators to collect and analyze data related to school improvement, student outcomes, and accountability requirements; implement school-wide prevention programs that help maintain positive school climates conducive to learning; promote school policies and practices that ensure the safety of all students by reducing school violence, bullying, and harassment; respond to crises by providing leadership, direct services, and coordination with needed community services; design, implement, and garner support for comprehensive school mental health programming.
Finally, school psychologists work with community providers to coordinate the delivery of services to students and their families in and outside of school; help students transition to and from school and community learning environments, such as residential treatment or juvenile centers (Braden et al., 2001). Public schools in America are given the task of providing a free and appropriate education for all students, including those with special needs and deficits. Adelman and Taylor (1998) noted that, aside from special education services, some citizens feel that schools are not the “appropriate venue for mental health intervention” (p. 136). Given the limited funding provided for mental health services other than special education, it is not surprising that “most schools offer only bare essentials and all schools tend to marginalize efforts to address mental health and psychosocial concerns” (Adelman & Taylor, 1998, p. 136). As a further example of possible “marginalization” of the field, it is instructive to note that special education and school psychology are areas of neglect in the expanding arena of public charter schools (Good & Braden, 2000).

The role of school psychologists in today’s schools has been to work primarily with the segment of the general school population that is not able to benefit sufficiently from their education without additional services. Related to this responsibility, Fagan and Wise (1994) reported that the role of the modern school psychologist is roughly divided among four activities: assessment, interventions, consultation, and in-service training. Having the most emphasis placed on assessment is expected, given the lack of support of general mental health services. This role is maintained by an unfavorable school psychologist and the student ratio. Further, many school psychologists work at multiple schools as itinerant staff
who often do not have designated offices or workspaces at their assigned schools. Given these conditions, school psychologists frequently respond reactively versus proactively. In other words, the emphasis in their provision of services is on designing interventions to address existing problems, rather than using the more successful approach of providing more generalized preventative services to head-off potential difficulties (Felner, Favazza, Shim, Brand, Gu, & Noonan, 2001). Such a prescriptive approach to school psychology services, versus a more proactive, preventative approach, is not ideal for students.

The field of school psychology continues to be shaped by the historical development of cognitive testing and school-based treatment, defined primarily in terms of treating individual children. If the roles of school psychologists are ever to change, then a new vision of assessment that calls attention to both cognitive and non-cognitive results is needed, as are more forms of assessment that focus on the environmental contexts of schooling and the community.

The history of school psychology is one avenue through which to understand the current role of school psychologists, but it is equally important to understand the history of education in the United States and how changing conceptions and purposes of schooling have impacted the practice of school psychology (Nichols & Good, 2000). Since 1900, the purpose of schooling in society has changed in various ways. Early in the twentieth century, the media paid very little attention to schools; today, however, there is continuous coverage by the media about schools and education (Nichols & Good, 2000). This increased examination of schools has occurred for two reasons, because the purposes of schooling and the conceptions of how and what students should learn have changed. These transformations
have led to continuous debate about schools in America, especially among citizens, policymakers, and the business community.

In 1900, public schools sought to help students develop skills for reading, writing, and arithmetic. Since then, the goals of public schools have become progressively more varied and conflicting. In the 1950s, the role of the school evolved to include socialization, pupil allocation, learning of knowledge, and babysitting (Good, Biddle, & Brophy, 1975). This expansion of the role of schools in socializing and educating students has continued over the past 25 years (Rothstein, 2000).

The broadened purposes of schooling are changing because of the youth culture and expectations of citizens. To respond to students as learners, it is necessary to understand the social world of students as they respond to job and peer pressure, and work to meet increasing educational standards for school success. Although school psychologists often talk about impacting non-subject matter outcomes of schooling, these tasks are still seen as subordinate to the role of improving student achievement. Schools psychologists, then, must begin to adjust their roles to respond to the growing concerns of the public (Rothstein, 2000). As Roeser (1998) wrote, “Schools cannot achieve their primary mission-to educate-without addressing the “barriers that impede children’s ability to learn and teachers’ ability to teach” (p. 129). The debate regarding whether non-subject matter outcomes should be addressed in schools presupposes a false dichotomy between learning and non-subject matter outcomes. In fact, learning cannot be separated from how children think, feel, and act:

If educators continue to view students with a focus only on attainment of educational content, they will fail to address mental health needs that limit learning and fail to
encourage development in non-cognitive areas. If school psychologists continue to ignore the systemic aspects of schools and classrooms, they will fail to recognize these venues as potential sites for significant reform and will continue to perpetuate traditional school psychology roles. School psychologists need to make changes that reflect broader roles to address students’ learning and mental health needs in a more comprehensive, coordinated, and consistent manner. (Roeser, 1998, p. 129)

As Roeser (1998) maintains, recognizing that learning encompasses more than subject matter-related content will allow educators to “minimize barriers to learning and enhance the overall development of all students into competent, adjusted, and healthy citizens” (p. 129).

*Work Environment*

Psychologists employed in academic settings generally have a more predictable schedule that follows normal daytime hours. However, those teaching at the university level may also have to teach courses during evenings or weekends. Psychologists employed by colleges and universities often spend time teaching classes and conducting research, but they may also be required to perform administrative duties.

*Education and Training*

In order to qualify as a psychologist, a master’s degree or doctorate degree is required. There are a variety of degree options to choose from, and the career options available at each level can vary. In most states, those interested in becoming school psychologists must complete a specialist degree in school psychology. The Ed.S. degree in school psychology usually takes a minimum of three years to complete and consists of at least 60 graduate credit
hours. In addition to the course requirements, students must also complete a one-year internship.

*Licensure and Certification*

The National Association of School Psychologists, with the assistance of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, also is involved in the accreditation of advanced degree programs in school psychology. Specific licensing laws can vary from one state to the next as well as by the type of position held. Professional licenses and certifications requires psychologists to only practice within the scope of their expertise, which they have obtained through their education and training.

**Social Work Services in the Public School Setting**

School social work is a specialized area of practice within the broad field of the social work profession. School social workers bring unique knowledge and skills to the school system and the student services team. School social workers are instrumental in furthering the purpose of the school, as they work to provide a setting for teaching, learning, and for students’ attainment of confidence and competence. School social workers are hired by the school districts to enhance the district’s ability to meet its academic mission, especially where home, school, and community collaboration is the key to achieving that mission. (School Social Work Association of America, 2005).

The school social work services department is designed to identify, assess, and explore the barriers that interfere with student achievement. A school social worker is an integral member of a school’s staff and serves as a supportive resource to the student body, parents, staff and the surrounding community (Constable, 2008). Services of school social
workers rendered include, but are not limited to individual and group counseling; parenting enhancement training; parent support groups; crisis intervention; dropout prevention; staff development and training; home visits; DFACS/ juvenile court liaisons; referrals to community resources.

School social workers enforce the Compulsory Attendance Law and provide attendance resources to help support students and parents that include, but are not limited to providing mentors to students with attendance concerns through the Truancy Intervention Project's (TIP) Early Intervention Program; providing a parent training opportunity geared toward increasing parental awareness of the impact absences have on student achievement through the Attendance Intervention Module (AIM); implementing School-Wide Attendance Programs (SWAP) that creatively foster and award good attendance.

*The History of School Social Workers*

School Social Work Service evolved from the Visiting Teacher Program which originated in New York in the 1920's (Constable, 2008). Frances Range, a Visiting Teacher in Rochester, New York, was selected by Frank Cody, School Superintendent, to come to Detroit and work under the auspices of the Teachers College to demonstrate how visiting teachers provided service. The Commonwealth Fund was established in New York City and provided scholarships for those teachers interested in additional study of social work. Sara Kerr was the first Detroit teacher selected as a Commonwealth Fund recipient; she studied in New York for a year.

In 1927, Sara Kerr became the first Visiting Teacher for the Detroit Public Schools. The focus of the Visiting Teacher Program was to provide service to delinquent boys. The
superintendent of schools identified those students as the primary candidates most in need of intervention. Ruth Shields, a substitute teacher in the school system, became the second recipient of the Commonwealth Fund Scholarship and the second Visiting Teacher. Sara Kerr and Ruth Shields were both supervised by Frances Range until her resignation in 1929. Subsequent to the resignation of Frances Range, Alice B. Metzner, Supervisor of Special Education supervised the two visiting teachers.

The State Visiting Teacher Program was initiated in Michigan in 1944 via a special session of the State Legislature. There had been a growing recognition by school leaders and professionals in the community on the benefits of visiting teacher services in early identification and intervention with children. The Visiting Teacher Program had become a vital part of the schools’ mental health program. Upon enactment of the law, an appropriation of $185,000 was authorized for the Visiting Teacher Program in Michigan. The law provided special state aid for one half (up to $1500 per year) of visiting teachers’ salaries. Detroit Public Schools, participating in this program and Act 38 of Public Acts 1944, established the Detroit Visiting Teacher Program. Sara Kerr was the first Supervisor of Visiting Teachers. The Visiting Teacher Program impacted cases involving personality difficulties, withdrawn and unhappy behavior; failure to achieve in school commensurate with ability; behavioral difficulties; adverse home conditions. By 1944, the Visiting Teacher Program had grown to approximately 20 visiting teachers. During the 1944-45 school year, 31 visiting teachers were employed in Detroit, along with two clerical assistants. Each visiting teacher assigned to an elementary division had a group of schools. These teachers were selected from the regular teaching staff based mainly on the recommendations of their school principals.
All visiting teachers had to be approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction before employment by the Board of Education. Approval was recommended to the Department of Public Instruction by the training institutions approved for the educational preparation of visiting teachers (mainly Wayne State University and the University of Michigan). In addition, Sara Kerr and Ruth Shields provided in-service training after school hours. Minimum qualifications were set up at two levels: full approval and temporary approval (Constable, 2008).

During the late 1940’s, the focus of service shifted from delinquent boys to students who were experiencing school adjustment problems. All city schools received service, with emphasis on young students in elementary schools. Students at the junior and high school levels received minimum service. The visiting teachers provided services to the schools four days a week; one day was permitted for record keeping.

State aid was paid on the basis of one visiting teacher for every 2,500 students in the public schools. The state believed that about 2% of the school population would require assistance from the Visiting Teacher Program. Consequently, the active case load per visiting teacher averaged between 40 and 70 students per month. During the 1950’s, the Visiting Teacher Program continued to exist under the auspices of the Department of Evaluative Services. Sara Kerr continued her responsibilities as supervisor. The program grew in size from 34 to 41 visiting teachers; the number of psychological consultants also increased, from four to five. The program, as a whole, had a total staff of 59.

The program continued to grow with significant changes occurring in the 1950’s. The title of supervisor was changed to director, with Sara Kerr becoming the first Director in
1964. Upon Sara Kerr’s retirement in 1965, Ruth Shields served as Director until her retirement in 1968. In February 1968, Public Act 343, now known as P.A. 258, mandated services to private schools. This mandate required a redeployment of staff to service an additional 100,000 children in the private sector.

In 1966, a statewide change from Visiting Teacher Program to Department of School Social Work Service was implemented. There was no longer a requirement for a school social workers to be a certified teacher. However, school social workers were required to have a Master’s Degree in Social Work. The state reimbursed three-fourths of the salary. School Social Work Service became autonomous from Evaluative Services in 1968. School social workers reported to the Associate Superintendent of the Office of Child Accounting and Adjustment (subsequently known as the Office of Pupil Personnel Services).

During the 1960’s the emergence and implementation of different treatment modalities were instituted in School Social Work Service. While staff continued the traditional casework method of providing school social work services to children and their families, other treatment methods, such as group work and community organization evolved. A major staff effort was put into prevention services. Approximately 71 school social workers were responsible for providing services to a public school population of 300,000 students and a private school population of more than 100,000 students.

In the 1970’s the Detroit Public Schools became decentralized and was divided into nine regions; each region had a Department Head for School Social Work Service. The Director, Milton Weiner, who had been appointed in 1969, was directly accountable to the Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Pupil Personnel Services. Under decentralization,
the director was no longer responsible for supervising or evaluating the department heads. The School Social Work Department Heads were directly accountable to the Region Superintendents. The director provided consultation to the department heads, held regular meetings, and scheduled planning and programming for staff. Service to children of all ages continued, but a great deal of emphasis was placed on early identification and intervention.

The early 1980’s were a challenge for School Social Work Service. Loss of federal and state funds contributed to a considerable loss of staff in 1981. Student enrollment decreased to approximately 200,000, yet the types of students referred for school social work service required more intensive services. In February 1981, the special education process through Public Act 451 was implemented in the Detroit Public School System. Students suspected of a handicap were referred for evaluation to determine eligibility for special education programs and/or services. School social workers were designated by Michigan Administrative Rules/Guidelines as one of the primary evaluators for students suspected of being eligible as Emotionally Impaired. With this designation, school social workers assumed the dual responsibilities of evaluator and mental health therapist for Detroit Public Schools students. In 1987, new Michigan Special Education Laws took effect, including Autism as a disability. School social workers are mandated evaluators for Autism Spectrum Disorder, as it is currently known.

The department continued to provide vital services to the school system in spite of difficult times. The department was without a Director from January 1981 to September 1983, when Mrs. Mildred Ellis was appointed. Mrs. Ellis served as Director of School Social Work Service until her retirement in 1987. Significant changes began to occur as a result of
her outstanding leadership, and the changes were expanded by her Assistant Director, Mrs. Harriet Kirk, who later became the Director.

School Social Work Service has grown since the early 1920’s, when there were only two school social workers. In 1996, School Social Work Service had an Assistant Director, nine Supervisors, and more than 200 school social workers. In 1999 the Department of School Social Work Service became known as the Office of School Social Work Service. By 2006 the Office of School Social Work Service had increased to 259 school social workers; however, the administrative staff had been reduced to a director and five supervisors.

The problems of the 90’s: crime, child abuse, drugs, violence, unemployment, family dysfunction, and related social problems served to accentuate the critical role of the school social workers as we moved into the 21st century. Crisis and emergency intervention have placed increasing demands on school social workers as the school system responds to student and staff needs. Under the leadership of Director Arezell Brown, the following school concerns continue to be addressed by the Office of School Social Work Service: violence, sexual abuse/assault, rape, suicide, early intervention and prevention, parent education, dropout prevention, homelessness, substance abuse, autism, and other social/emotional problems that interfere with learning. The focus of the Office of School Social Work Service is to serve students and families and adhere to federal and state mandates, while complying with the laws and legislation of IDEA, 504, Title I, McKinney-Vento (Homeless Assistance Act) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

During the final three decades of the twentieth century, the comprehensive and individualizing direction of schools were expanded; this was in response to the recognition of
the right of children with disabilities to a free appropriate public education, the school reform movement, and growing concerns about violence, sexual harassment, and bullying in schools. More and more, education is becoming outcome- and evidence-based (Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2003). There is a public policy emphasis on high professional qualification that is meshing with movements toward specialization in school social work. In accordance with national legislation, states are setting standards for highly qualified school social workers and introducing post-master’s degree mentorships for more permanent certification (Constable & Alvarez, 2006).

Society places a heavy responsibility on schools and families. Schooling is not simply a process of teaching and learning, but of preparing children for the future. Schools are the moving force for aspiration, not only for students who may conform easily to external expectations, but for every child. Responsibilities are placed on the school, the parents, and the students to make the educational process work so that each child who goes to school may fulfill his or her potential for growth. Schools need to be concerned for every student whose coping capacity is not well matched with the demands and resources of the educational environment—at one time or another, any student could be vulnerable. In addition, particular groups have borne certain burdens within society. Children come to school with messages from society, and sometimes from the school itself, that can affect their performance. This may be due to certain defining characteristics, such as gender; race, disability, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, which make students feel that they cannot have the same aspirations as others. Or, it may be that they believe objective conditions, such as poverty, will prevent them from achieving their aspirations. It is the power of education, and many of the values
that drive it, which can refute these messages. Moreover, school social workers, with their
central access to teachers, children, and families in the school community, can also help to
refute these damaging messages that students receive (Herbert, 2007).

As schools broaden their mission and scope toward greater inclusion, more respect is
given to individual differences of all students. The passage of compulsory school attendance
laws, roughly from 1895 through 1918, marked a major shift in philosophies and policies
governing American education. This would eventually become a philosophy of inclusion.
Education, no longer for only the elite, was a necessary part of preparation for modern life—
for everyone. Half a century later, the U.S. Supreme Court reaffirmed education as a
constitutional right that, if it is available to any, must be available to all on an equal basis
(Siporin, 1975).

Philosophies of inclusion and respect for individual differences continue to
profoundly shape the practice of education while also providing the basis for the role of the
school social worker. The mission of education, implicit in these values, became the basis for
school social work as it emerged in the twentieth century (Allen-Meares, 2006).

The Role of the School Social Worker

A key skill, the foundation of all other areas, is assessment. Assessment is a
systematic way of understanding what is taking place in relationships in the classroom,
within the family, and between the family and the school. The social worker looks for units
of attention—places where intervention will be most effective. Needs assessment, a broader
process, provides a basis for program development and policy formation in a school. It is
often a more formal process that utilizes many of the tools of research and is geared toward the development of programs and policies that meet the needs of children in school.

Role development is the product of the interactions between what the school social worker brings to the situation, the perceptions of others, and the actual conditions of the school community. Role definitions are the joint and continuing construction of school social workers, education administrators, and others. They become reference points for practice, for policy, and for theory development, and they serve as a conceptual bridge between policy and practice. Where social workers are not the dominant profession, these conceptions interpret and validate their contributions. They regulate teamwork. General reference points for role can be found in the literature of school social work, in local education agency expectations, and state education agency standards. They can be found in standards developed by the NASW, the School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA), and other state and national associations. When these expectations are found repeatedly in practice, they set standards for professional performance (Constable, 2008).

It is important to understand the nature of education policy as it applies to school social work practice. The involvement with education and schooling creates a natural focus on research, policy, and program development as practice. From basic practice skills of assessment and consultation in the framework of ecological systems theory flow a wide range of possible interventions. These are developed with teachers, pupils, and families. They involve clinical practice, consultation and teamwork, coordinating and integrating services, developing inclusion plans, dealing with crisis and safety issues in the school, and
developing mediation and conflict resolution, each with its own sources of theory (Allen-Meares, 1999)

It is not usual for beginning school social workers to have a great deal of influence in the initial development of their roles. Indeed, the idea that they will ever influence the development of their roles in particular schools may seem foreign to their experience. Over a period of time, however, as they learn to respond in a more differentiated way to the needs of the school community, school social workers can influence the development of their roles in particular schools. People’s perceptions of a role are tested and evaluated in relation to the needs, capabilities, and social networks of a particular school and the outcome—the product that results and its influence on students’ experience of education.

Work Environment

Although most social workers work in an office, they may spend a lot of time away from the office visiting students. School social workers may be assigned to one school or multiple schools and travel around the school district to see students. Understaffing and large caseloads may make the work stressful.

Education and Training

School social workers shall have a graduate degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). An MSW degree is the recommended entry-level qualification for a school social worker position. As a distinct specialty within the social work profession, school social work requires specialized knowledge and understanding of education systems, which should be provided by social work education programs.
School social workers shall have specialized knowledge and an understanding of historical and current perspectives of public school education at the local, state, and national levels, including educational reform and legislation. School social workers shall also be knowledgeable about evidence-informed approaches to teaching and learning that promote positive academic outcomes for all students.

**School Counseling Services in the Public School Setting**

The School Counseling Program is designed based on the standards and competencies set forth by our national professional organization, The American School Counseling Association. School counseling programs are collaborative efforts benefiting students, parents, teachers, administrators and the overall community. School counseling programs are integral part of students' daily educational environment, and school counselors should be partners in student achievement (Nelson, Robles-Pina, & Nichter, 2008).

School counselors help to make learning a positive experience for every student. They are sensitive to individual differences. They know that a classroom environment that is good for one child is not necessarily good for another. Counselors facilitate communication among teachers, parents, administrators, and students to adapt the school's environment in the best interests of each individual student. They help individual students make the most of their school experiences and prepare them for the future.

Professional school counselors implement a comprehensive school counseling program in the school they work that promotes and enhances student achievement through a guidance curriculum, individual planning strategies, responsive services, and comprehensive school counseling program support and advocacy. Professional school counselors, in most
states, have earned a Master's degree in guidance and counseling with an emphasis in school counseling. They are employed in elementary, middle/junior high and high schools and in district supervisory, counselor education, and post-secondary settings. Their work is varied, with attention focused on developmental stages of student growth, including the needs, tasks, and student interests related to those stages (Hatch, Bowers, 2005).

Professional school counselors meet the needs of students in three basic domains: academic development, career development, and personal/social development. Knowledge, understanding, and skill in these domains are developed through classroom instruction, appraisal, consultation, counseling, coordination, and collaboration. For example, in appraisal, school counselors may use a variety of personality and vocational assessment methods to help students explore vocation needs and interests. Classroom guidance lessons are designed to be preventive in nature and include self-management and self-monitoring skills. The responsive services component of the school counselor's role provides individual and/or small group counseling for students. For example, if a student's behavior is interfering with his or her achievement, the counselor will observe that student in a class, provide consultation to teachers and other personnel to develop (with the student) a plan to address the behavioral issue(s), and then work together to implement the plan. They also help by providing consultation services to family members (Hatch & Bowers, 2005).

Additionally, school counselors may lead classroom guidance on a variety of topics within the three domains such as personal/social issues relative to student needs, or establish groups to address common issues among students, such as divorce. Often counselors will
coordinate outside groups that wish to help with student needs such as academics, or coordinate a state program that teach students about societal issues that affect lives.

**The Role of the School Counselor**

School counselors address the academic and developmental needs of all students, not just those in need, by collaborating with students, parents, school staff and the community. School counseling programs exhibit the following characteristics: Foundational mission and goals. School counselors design, implement, and maintain guidance programs that align with the educational mission and philosophies of their schools and school districts. These programs help every student develop competencies in academic achievement, personal and social development, and career planning (Dahir, 2004).

Like elementary school counselors, the roles of middle and high school counselors vary depending on the district and the school administrators. Counselors deal with a vast array of student problems—personal, academic, social, and career issues. Typically, these areas get blended together when working with a student on any one topic; hence, it is impossible to separate the duties of a counselor on the basis of a particular problem. Counselors in middle and high school have experience with all these areas and work with others in the school and community to find resources when a need arises. It is common for a school counselor to be the first person a student with a difficulty approaches. The school counselor then assesses the severity of the problem in order to provide appropriate support. School administrators sometimes assign counselors such responsibilities as class scheduling, discipline, and administration. These tasks can be integrated with the goals of school counseling but can also dilute the time available for helping individuals.
The history of school counseling formally started at the turn of the twentieth century, although a case can be made for tracing the foundations of counseling and guidance principles to ancient Greece and Rome with the philosophical teachings of Plato and Aristotle. There is also evidence to argue that some of the techniques and skills of modern-day guidance counselors were practiced by Catholic priests in the Middle Ages, as can be seen by the dedication to the concept of confidentiality within the confessional. Nevertheless, formal guidance programs using specialized textbooks did not start until the turn of the twentieth century.

The factors leading to the development of guidance and counseling in the United States began in the 1890’s with the social reform movement. The difficulties of people living in urban slums and the widespread use of child labor outraged many. One of the consequences was the compulsory education movement and shortly thereafter the vocational guidance movement, which, in its early days, was concerned with guiding people into the workforce to become productive members of society. The social and political reformer Frank Parsons is often credited with being the father of the vocational guidance movement. His work with the Civic Service House led to the development of the Boston Vocation Bureau. In 1909 the Boston Vocation Bureau helped outline a system of vocational guidance in the Boston public schools. The work of the bureau influenced the need for and the use of vocational guidance both in the United States and other countries. By 1918 there were documented accounts of the bureau's influence as far away as Uruguay and China. Guidance and counseling in these early years were considered to be mostly vocational in nature, but as
the profession advanced other personal concerns became part of the school counselor's agenda (Dahir, 2004).

The United States' entry into World War I brought the need for assessment of large groups of draftees, in large part to select appropriate people for leadership positions. These early psychological assessments performed on large groups of people were quickly identified as being valuable tools to be used in the educational system, thus beginning the standardized testing movement that in the early twenty-first century is still a strong aspect of U.S. public education. At the same time, vocational guidance was spreading throughout the country, so that by 1918 more than 900 high schools had some type of vocational guidance system. In 1913 the National Vocational Guidance Association was formed and helped legitimize and increase the number of guidance counselors. Early vocational guidance counselors were often teachers appointed to assume the extra duties of the position in addition to their regular teaching responsibilities.

The 1920’s and 1930’s saw an expansion of counseling roles beyond working only with vocational concerns. Social, personal, and educational aspects of a student's life also needed attention. The Great Depression of the 1930’s led to the restriction of funds for counseling programs. Not until 1938, after a recommendation from a presidential committee and the passage of the George Dean Act, which provided funds directly for the purposes of vocational guidance counseling, did guidance counselors start to see an increase in support for their work.

After World War II a strong trend away from testing appeared. One of the main persons indirectly responsible for this shift was the American psychologist Carl Rogers.
Many in the counseling field adopted his emphasis on "nondirective" (later called "client-centered") counseling. Rogers published *Counseling and Psychotherapy* in 1942 and *Client-Centered Therapy* in 1951. These two works defined a new counseling theory in complete contrast to previous theories in psychology and counseling. This new theory minimized counselor advice-giving and stressed the creation of conditions that left the client more in control of the counseling content.

In 1958, the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) was enacted, providing aid to education in the United States at all levels, public and private. Instituted primarily to stimulate the advancement of education in science, mathematics, and modern foreign languages, NDEA also provided aid in other areas, including technical education, area studies, geography, English as a second language, counseling and guidance, school libraries, and educational media centers. Further support for school counseling was spurred by the Soviet Union's launching of *Sputnik* and fears that other countries were outperforming the United States in the fields of mathematics and science. Hence, by providing appropriate funding for education, including guidance and counseling, it was thought that more students would find their way into the sciences. Additionally, in the 1950’s, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) was formed, furthering the professional identity of the school counselor.

The work of C. Gilbert Wrenn, including his 1962 book *The Counselor in a Changing World*, brought to light the need for more cultural sensitivity on the part of school counselors. The 1960’s also brought many more counseling theories to the field, including Frederick Perl's gestalt therapy, William Glasser's reality therapy, Abraham Maslow and Rollo May's
existential approach, and John Krumboltz's behavioral counseling approach. It was during this time that legislative support and an amendment to the NDEA provided funds for training and hiring school counselors with an elementary emphasis.

In the 1970’s the school counselor was beginning to be defined as part of a larger program, as opposed to being the entire program. There was an emphasis on accountability of services provided by school counselors and the benefits that could be obtained with structured evaluations. This decade also gave rise to the special education movement. The educational and counseling needs of students with disabilities were addressed with the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975.

The 1980’s saw the development of training standards and criteria for school counseling. This was also a time of more intense evaluation of education as a whole and counseling programs in particular. In order for schools to provide adequate educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities, school counselors were trained to adapt the educational environment to student needs. The duties and roles of many counselors began to change considerably. Counselors started finding themselves as gatekeepers to Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and Student Study Teams (SST) as well as consultants to special education teachers, especially after passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990.

The development of national educational standards and the school reform movement of the 1990’s ignored school counseling as an integral part of a student's educational development. The ASCA compensated partially with the development of national standards for school counseling programs. These standards clearly defined the roles and responsibilities
of school counseling programs and showed the necessity of school counseling for the overall educational development of every student.

Today, school-based counselors play many roles and perform various duties critical to the welfare of students and the operation of schools. The ASCA has provided a National Model that, when implemented, places professional school counselors in the center of the education process (Hatch & Bowers, 2005). However, it can also be reasonably argued that the role that the school counselor plays is one that is crafted.

As a school counselor, there are professional guidelines, school district job descriptions, and policy statements from the schools’ principals, all designed to guide the counselor’s performance and role. However, the work of a counselor is defined, and given form and focus, by the individual in the job (Hatch & Bowers, 2005).

**Education and Training**

The requirements for the credentialing (in some locations called certification, licensure, or endorsement) of professional school counselors vary from state to state. All states and the District of Columbia require a graduate education (i.e., completion of some graduate-level course work), with 45 states and the District of Columbia requiring a master's degree in counseling and guidance or a related field. A majority of states also require that graduate work include a certain number of practicum hours, ranging from 200 to 700, in a school setting. Additionally, a majority of states require applicants to have previous teaching experience. Some of these states allow students to gain experience through the graduate program by means of internships (Tang & Erford, 2004).
Half of the states require standardized testing as part of the credentialing process. Many of these tests simply cover basic mathematics, writing, and reading skills, while some states require more specialized tests covering the field of guidance and counseling. Nineteen states require a minimum number of course credit hours specifically related to guidance and counseling. Fourteen states require students to take courses in other subject areas, such as education of children with disabilities, multicultural issues, substance abuse, state and federal laws and constitutions, applied technology, and identification and reporting of child abuse. There are 38 states that recognize credentials from other states. Another 38 states require applicants to undergo a criminal background check (Tang & Erford, 2004).

An area that has been added to the list of training of counselors is the technology standard. School counselors are now required to create and maintain web pages that provide extensive information and announcements about the scheduling of activities. Counselors must be able to manage databases of test scores and provide leadership in conducting school-based action research. All of these tasks require that a new set of skills be added to counselors already required to develop in the training (Morrissey & Rotunda, 2006).

Critics of counselor training have pointed out that emphasis of graduate-level preparation has been on how to be an effective helper-responder. The suggestion is that school counselors should be taught to be proactive in preventing problems, and should become leaders in their schools. It has been argued that school counselors should be taught leadership and collaboration skills at an in-service level as an ongoing program for their development (Morrissey & Rotunda, 2006).
In high school, the school counselor continues to provide responsive services and fewer classroom guidance strategies. The high school counselor provides large group guidance units and lessons on post-secondary options. For example, the high school counselor helps students prepare for post-secondary education and/or training options (such as college or trade school) by engaging students in finding accurate and meaningful information on entrance requirements, financial aid, recommendation letters, test-preparation, and so forth. School counselors at the high school level spend much of their time helping students monitor their progress toward graduation to ensure they are adequately prepared for post-secondary options. While some high school counselors spend time developing the school’s class schedule, this is considered a non-guidance task that takes valuable time away from direct work with students. Some students now turn to private guidance counselors specialized in college admissions, although the fees for these services can be very high.

Chapter Summary

The roles of the ancillary staffs have evolved since the fields were formally established in the 1900’s. Where once the ancillary staff was only responsible for specific student concerns, now that the school’s role has changed as students’ challenges and difficulties have also changed, ancillary staff members working in schools are expected to possess the knowledge and skills necessary to diagnose and treat students having a variety of deficits. In addition to diagnosing and treating students, the ancillary staff also provide prevention, screening, and consultation. Studies show that principals have positive perceptions of SLPs and other ancillary staff, but some areas warrant further investigation.
such as principals’ lack of organizing helpful workshops and making suggestions for classroom management of students with various forms of disabilities.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The current study investigated three high school principals’ perceptions of the role of ancillary staff in their center-based high schools. By focusing on the principals’ perceptions, this study contributed to the research on whether or not there continues to be a positive perception of the principal’s view about his/her ancillary staff. This research endeavors to present the perceptions of three high school principals who lead a center-based school utilizing a primary interview guide (See Appendix B) and a second interview guide for the ancillary staff (See Appendix C).

Open-Ended Questionnaire Research

As with any research method, open-ended questionnaires have their pros and cons. One of the strengths of the open-ended questionnaire is the ability to offer richer and extensive material. The advantages of open-ended questions are that they are regarded by respondents as less threatening, and also allow them to give unrestrained or free responses; such questions can be very useful with articulate users (Yin, 2011). Open-ended questions are that they are regarded by respondents as less threatening, and also they allow them to give unrestrained or free responses; such questions can be very useful with articulate users. The open-ended question type definitely has its significance for obtaining candid opinions by respondents (Yin 2011).

On the other hand, the open-ended question type can require too much time for respondents to answer. Besides being time-consuming, open-ended questions have yet another disadvantage—they may yield a lot of unnecessary information. A final drawback of open-ended questions is that they can require a lot of effort by respondents (Yin, 2011).
Research Techniques

The qualitative method was used for this study because it has come to be valued as a research method of inquiry for exploring studies to “identify variables and generate hypotheses germane to populations and groups that have been previously overlooked” (Merchant & Dupuy, 1996, p. 539). The open-ended questions asked in the study center on the ancillary staff’s role and service delivery models including collaborative efforts, effectiveness of the ancillary’s role on student achievement, how adequately supported the ancillary staff is by the principal, and how likely it is for the principals to consider ancillary staff for leadership roles at their schools. The purpose is to provide a means to compare all of the principals’ answers with one another in a qualitative way.

The basic thrust of the interview questions was to determine what principals know about the role of the ancillary staff on their campuses, and to find out how they expect positive outcomes to be manifested. The first phase of the questionnaire was for principals, and the second phase was for the ancillary staff. A case study was developed to summarize the three high school principals’ perceptions of ancillary staff in their buildings. However, given the political realities that face public education today, it is important to ensure that attitudes toward ancillary staff remain open; that is, once the available funding for programs begins to tighten even further than it has to force school districts to choose programs, those areas that do not have strong internal support will fall by the wayside, putting many of the most vulnerable programs at risk. While it is true that there are federal laws guaranteeing the rights of special education and Section 504 plan students, it is also true that once the dollars begin to dry up, it will be difficult for the federal government to enforce those mandates.
because local districts and schools will be able to cut corners in ways that federal oversight might never catch; these measures are done in order to save funding for other programs that might not benefit special needs children as much.

It is vital that building principals maintain a supportive attitude toward the ancillary staff. This will ensure that those student support programs remain a priority at the campus and district levels. There might be programs that have much more public support than special needs assistance such as athletics or other extracurricular activities, and it might be tempting to sweep special needs children back into the corners in which they were kept during the era before the 1970's. This would not only violate those students' rights to a free and public education, but it also turns the notion of equality, so vital in American education, on its head in an unacceptable way. The hope is that further research along these lines will show education professionals how to help principals maintain a positive attitude toward their special needs programs staff including speech-language pathologists (SLP), school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors, so that the students that they serve receive the best education possible.

Selection of Participants

There are three center-based high schools in the northern part of Forsyth County. Each center-based high school is one location for a set feeder pattern of schools serving a specific population of students. In each of the center-based high schools, there are programs for mild to severe learning disabilities as well as other health impairments such as with hearing, orthopedics, vision, and various physical limitations. Each of the principals at these three schools was interviewed by email. Questionnaires were also sent to the SLP, counselor,
psychologist, and the school’s social worker. In total, this study included 15 subjects in the research: three principals, three SLPs, three psychologists, three school counselors, and three social workers.

Procedure

The principals and ancillary personnel (including SLPs, school psychologists, counselors, and social workers) from three center-based high schools were emailed and asked to participate in the study. Subjects were initially contacted via email solicitation (see Appendix A) to participate in a 20-minute interview to discuss their knowledge and beliefs about the role of ancillary personnel.

Each respondent who agreed to participate in the study was sent an email including the questionnaire. Prior to their completing the interview questions, participants were encouraged to email the researcher any questions about the process and the potential use of the results in order to alleviate any confusion. The questionnaire given to the principals and the ancillary staff, respectively, can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C.

Validity and Reliability

Quantitative methods have been utilized to explain the relationship between phenomenon in the world, and quantitative research has been the preferred method for conducting studies which were intended to explain social concerns. On the other hand, qualitative research methods have gained prominence in the social science realm in the recent past. However, qualitative research was not initially viewed as a recognized method for conducting studies, and its practitioners fought to prove its worthiness as a method for studying phenomenon. Furthermore, while quantitative research might hypothesize and
answer the how questions, qualitative research might answer the why questions and seek meaning from the participants being studied (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Qualitative researchers may need to eschew the terms associated with quantitative research and follow a different path to inquiry, and there is a need for qualitative researchers to unlearn the social make-up of research. In other words, the researchers must be prepared to explore the possibility “of employing a different vocabulary and way of structuring the research process” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 4).

Patton (1990) asserted that validity and reliability are linked together. Moreover, he reported that with regards to a researcher’s skills and abilities in conducting a study the reliability is a consequence of the validity in that study. Furthermore, validation is viewed as the attempt to access the accuracy of the findings in a study as jointly described by the participants and the researchers. Also, validation is described as a distinct strength of qualitative research because of the value or accuracy that is added to the study via the data derived from extensive time spent in the participants’ environment, the detailed thick description, and the close relationship the researchers may share with the participants (Creswell, 2007).

However, as has been mentioned earlier, there are several areas of concern that may have affected the current study. There is often little in common between the standards used to determine the quality of a principal and those used to decide whether that principal's contract will be renewed for another year. Oftentimes, principals will remain in place despite poor leadership skills as long as their campus ratings remain high, as those are often the only quantitative measures that apply to a school. Measuring principal quality is beyond the scope
of this research; however, using some of the objective measures of principal quality, which would include data from staff evaluations in addition to campus ratings based on standardized testing scores and other measures, may help as a measure of attitude.

Determining whether there is a parallel between principals’ quality in general and attitude toward the ancillary staff could go a long way in determining the true worth that principals of various quality levels placed on the role of the ancillary staff. Until those sorts of measures become standard practice within educational research, it remains difficult to assign as much significance to the findings as would otherwise be possible.

Subjectivity Statement

I do not have any personal experience with communication disorders. I was identified as having ADHD as a student, but my parents opted not to have me receive any services for this condition at school in the belief that it would help prepare me for life in the business world where accommodations are not provided for these types of disorders. However, I do not feel that this prejudices me in any way against the provision of services. I know that there are legitimate disorders that require intervention in elementary and secondary years so that students will be able to succeed independently in adulthood, and I believe that speech and communication are two of those areas. I do tend to turn a skeptical eye toward the claims of general education classroom teachers about the differentiation of instruction to meet the classroom and learning needs of students with varied disorders. While I do agree that there needs to be more attention paid to issues of classroom management by principals across the board, I do not believe that differentiation is as difficult as many teachers claim it to be. This is a bias that may have informed this research study. Also, it should be noted that, because I
was working as an SLP in a Virginia school during the conducting of this study, that there may have been some personal biases that affected my analysis of the current study’s findings.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Research Questions

The following research questions were examined in the study:

1. Since the implementation of new laws (i.e., IDEA), what are principals’ perceptions of the roles and effectiveness of ancillary staff such as speech-language pathologists, school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors in positively impacting student achievement?

2. Does the amount of collaboration between a principal and an ancillary staff member affect his perception of their value to the school and students?

Participants’ Work History and Working Conditions

Principals

The three participant principals all had similar years of experience in the education profession. Principal Yancy had spent 19 years in the education profession, with three years teaching college basketball and 16 years teaching at the secondary level. Principal Childress had spent 21 years in the education profession, and Principal Donaldson had the most experience of the three participants with 24 years. However, the participants had a range of experience actually working as a principal. Principal Yancy had been a principal for only one year, Principal Childress had worked three years as a principal. Principal Donaldson also had the most experience; he had served as a principal in three schools, and was beginning his 12th year as a principal.
Speech-Language Pathologists

The first speech-language pathologist (SLP) respondent, SLP Portsman, noted that he worked “out in the classroom a lot of the time…either co-teaching in the classroom or going into classrooms or out in the community with students.” He described his therapy room where he brought students as having “a round table with chairs, a couple of bookcases for materials…a table with a computer, printer, and phone on it and a filing cabinet.” This room was used for any individual students he worked with, or for students being tested or working in small groups. Thus, his resources and working environment were adequate.

SLP Prink did not fully work at the school, and was thus considered an intermittent worker. She noted that she had a “shared space” in a room located near the media center. Though the room was used for other purposes, SLP Prink stated that it was regarded as her office when she was there.

SLP Ross had a proper office to work from, and used a conference suite as his area to conduct therapy. He stated, “I am in a suite in the front office with two assistant principals and a special education director.” He did his therapy in the conference area of the suite.

School Psychologists

Psychologist Neff spoke on behalf of her experience at her primary high school (SF). She also spoke about her colleague who was on leave at another school (F). She said that at SF, she shared a space with the special education facilitator, or worked out of the social worker’s office. Psychologist Neff also noted the same limited work space at F, where her colleague shared space with the graduate coach. She added, “So all of our itinerant people,
we kind of work together using space that is available…We do not have a designated office or space per se, but both schools are good at availability if we schedule in advance.”

Psychologist Mimms had a limited supply stand. She stated, “I have to find space to work at the high school. I do not have a designated office space.”

Social Workers

Social Worker Lee served six different schools: four elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. She described her work station as “a small office in the counseling suite at the high school,” which had “a desk, file cabinet, and chairs.” She added that, at the other schools where she worked, she did not have any office space but was “always able to use a conference room or counselor office.”

Social Worker Ebson served in only three schools: one elementary, one middle, and one high school. He described his work station at the high school as hectic because the bathroom in it was used by “a lot of staff members.” He noted that this made it difficult to retain confidentiality when meeting with students.

Social Worker Gentry, like Social Worker Ebson, also served in three schools, an elementary, middle, and high school. He said that his middle school office was “amazing.” He added that he also had ample space at his high school work environment, and said, “I feel like I’m able to do what I need to do in both of my spaces.”

School Counselors

The three counselors in the study all had strong experience and resources in their field. Counselor Nash had worked in the school for the last six years. He described his office as being amply equipped with resources to support his counseling efforts, noting he had two
white boards he used to map out the school year, a desk, a conference table, and a counseling chair. He added, “I have a meeting space, not only for parents but to hold our weekly counseling meetings as well.” Counselor Nash seems to find his work environment to be adequate for his needs.

Counselor Simpson primarily focused on three areas: social and emotional counseling, college and career counseling, and academic counseling. He noted that part of his job is “helping students if they come in and want to talk about their feelings and coping skills,” as well as talking about their plans after high school, scholarships, grades, and classes. Counselor Simpson had a proper office called the “Counseling Suite” with five offices of counselors that students can see. He described a large area set up with computers for the students, as well as a friendly secretary and school registrar available in the office to assist students. His work station is well equipped with the proper information technology to help in offering services.

Counselor Barnes did not describe how long he had been working to reach his current position as head counselor. He worked from a “very big office” similar to a conference room. Counselor Barnes admitted that his work station was “disheveled” but claimed that it was “very organized” for him. Overall, he felt his resources and work environment were sufficient for delivering counseling services.

Ancillary Staff Roles, School Involvement, and Relationship with Principal

Speech-Language Pathologist Portsman

SLP Portsman said that she was not involved in any teams in the school except the IEP team for students with individualized learning needs. From the questionnaire, the SLP
indicated that her interaction with the school principal was “hard to describe” due to their limited interaction. Most contact was between her and the assistant to the principal, who she termed “great.” SLP Portsman did, however, note that she and the principal “have a very cordial relationship,” and called him “a great principal” for whom she had “a lot of respect.” She said he was “supportive,” and felt she could come to him for help if she ever needed.

When it comes to other ancillary staff, SLP Portsman commented that the principal was “very good at allowing people to do their jobs,” which resulted in him not being “overly involved.” But she believed he had the “right amount of involvement for someone in his position without micromanaging.”

Speech-Language Pathologist Prink

As the only language therapist at her school, SLP Prink noted that she worked “individually with students one-on-one and in small groups, as well as going into the class and observing and working with the teachers.” She also described running three social skills groups, “one for an MI class, one for a self-contained MO class, and one in the general population who are Asperger’s who come together once a week for a social group.”

SLP Prink worked only on students’ IEP teams, and did not participate in any other organizational teams due to her part-time status. She noted that such was not always the case when she worked full time, but stated, “now that I’m part time, I’m not invited or included in the administrative functions of the school.”

In discussing her relationship with the principal at the school, SLP Prink termed it as “good.” She did, however, add that she reports to the director of special education, so did not “have direct reporting to the principal other than social.”
SLP Prink admitted to not having “firsthand knowledge” of the principal’s relationship with ancillary staff at her school. She did state that “they are all full time and are all geographically in the same area…so I’m assuming that there’s more interaction [than I have].” The relationship between the principal and the ancillary staff was therefore inconclusive because of the part-time nature of her employment at the school.

Speech-Language Pathologist Ross

SLP Ross believed she held a “respected” role in the school, primarily working with teachers to pull kids out of class for services. She noted that, for the past year, she had been having sessions with students as well as working with teachers and parents to familiarize them to the importance of children’s needs. From the question asked, SLP Ross said that she was not involved on any teams, but noted that teachers did invite her to student meetings, as did the special education team. However, she stated, “They keep me in the loop.”

Referring to her relationship with the principal, SLP Ross noted that her school recently got a new principal. She said, “There’s been minimal communication between me and the principal—I see him in passing.” Thus, SLP Ross had an inconclusive answer. However, over the years, she noted having a good working experience with the administration.

SLP Ross admitted she had not had ample opportunity to see the principal interact with other staff members since the school has two campuses. She also commented that the itinerant teacher for the hard-of-hearing students “hasn’t had much communication with the principal either,” which SLP Ross noted was the same for another itinerant staff member at the school.
Psychologist Neff’s primary roles involved testing for students’ initial evaluation and reevaluation, consulting with teachers regarding questions about eligibility issues, and working with special education students. She also stated that she was involved in answering “any question that may come up related to testing or communications for a placement or eligibility or IT type team.” Reviewing “outside private psychs” related to student 504s was another duty she cited. She noted that she and her co-counselors had “more contact [with students] at the elementary and middle school levels and less as you go up.”

Psychologist Neff served on only the SST committee at both F and SF high schools. Because she was involved in student testing, she was part of IEP teams for student with individual learning needs. At F high school, she and the other psychologist performed consultation for other issues “typically related to RTI or interventions within the school.” However, Psychologist Neff emphasized that she and her peer “are not on a climate team.”

She noted that most interactions between the psychologists and the principal were “limited” at both SF and F, because the principal’s assistant handled most of the work. At SF, she maintained, “I have the most contact with an administrative assistant or an assistant administrator.” She stated, “I think the principal is aware of everything that’s going on in the building and has a pulse of everything going on in the building, but as far as a direct contact, it is extremely limited.” Psychologist Neff stated that, at F, her colleague had similarly minimal contact with the principal, and tended to work with an assistant principal. However, Psychologist Neff did suggest that her colleague at F high school may have had more
interaction and worked more closely with her principal, because he was “a new administrator there, and they are trying to change a few things.”

Psychologist Neff said that the relationship between the ancillary staff and the principals at F and SF high schools was “limited,” and claimed that she had more contact with an assistant principal or a different leader.

*Psychologist Mimms*

Psychologist Mimms said she did not do “a whole lot at the high school level,” indicating that her role in the school primarily involved the reevaluation of students “identified as needing special education services.” She was involved in the SST meetings at the high school level, to help as the school psychologist “with brainstorming.” Additionally, Psychologist Mimms described working as part of the Share Team, in which “counselor, social worker, and myself and any administrators that have time to meet…get together and talk about at-risk kids.”

Regarding her relationship with her building principal, Psychologist Mimms stated, “I don’t work a lot directly with the principal himself, although I do know him and he knows me, but more of the meetings I have at that school are with the administrative assistant or the assistant principal.” Psychologist Mimms termed her own working relationship with these ancillary staff as “good” with “good communication,” but claimed she did not have much of a relationship with the principal.

Psychologist Mimms claimed to have little understanding of the relationship between the principal and the ancillary staff at her school, saying, “I don’t see his interactions with those staff members.” But she did comment that the principal “occasionally” attended the
Share Team meetings, and said the principal “works with his staff to see what they need.” She therefore concluded that “there is a good working relationship [between my principal and the staff] in the interactions that I see.”

Psychologist Mimms also commented on the rapport between the principal and the students, noting, “The principal here knows his students, which I think isn’t always the case. Especially the high-risk students—he knows a lot of them. He knows who they are and what their issues are.”

*Social Worker Lee*

Social Worker Lee described her role as “the liaison between the home, the school, and the community for resources.” She said that came to the school to work on caseloads or meet with students or other counselors, but was often “out and about” doing home visits as needed. She noted that she sometimes took administrators with her to the home visits. Social Worker Lee defined her basic role as a “broker [of] services,” connecting families to resources in the community, “whether it’s counseling or basic needs food or clothes.” Through cooperation with the administration in this way, she linked families to community resources by taking note of their needs and available community services. She also handled attendance and truancy issues, which at times resulted in her attending juvenile court if necessary.

Social Worker Lee said she was “not on any teacher or administrator teams.” However, she stated, “I’m informally part of the counseling team because my office is in their suite, so I get included in some counseling type things.” She was also part of a countywide social worker team.
She said that, in all the schools, there was a proper working relationship with the administrative leaders. She added that, since her office was at the high school, she was “definitely close” to the administration there. She also said she had equally “good relationships” with all the different assistant principals and other administrative staff at the high school, stating, “I feel I can come to them when they have a concern and they come to me when they have a concern about a student that falls under the social work realm.” She noted that she had the same positive relationship with her principal at the middle and elementary schools, and that she felt “comfortable speaking with the administrators and emailing back and forth.”

Between the ancillary staff and principal, Social Worker Lee said there was a “positive relationship...a working relationship” in her county’s schools overall. She said, “I feel supported,” and believed she could speak for the other staff in saying they also felt supported. Social Worker Lee pointed to the “open communications with administrators” as the reason for the good relationship. She added that, though they may see things differently at times, “we’re able to have an open dialogue, an honest dialogue, where we can talk about how we view things. I’ve never hit a wall with an administrator where I felt I cannot support a child.”

*Social Worker Ebson*

Social Worker Ebson said her role was “different from school to school.” In general, she noted, she worked on things like student attendance and following up on attendance-related issues. Her role also included going to court if needed to deal with student attendance matters or “family and home life situations.” She also spent “a lot” of her time in meetings...
with students, parents, and other staff members, and helping those in need find information about community resources. Consultations were also a big part of her job. Regarding participation in teams, Social Worker Ebson said that she was on the crisis intervention team at each school where she worked, to assist with threat assessment of student behavior.

For all three schools she worked for, Social Worker Ebson said she had a “really great relationship” with the administration. She stated, “I have a very strong relationship, I would say, with all my school administrations.” She felt she could speak for the relationship between counselors and the principal, but not for the part-time speech pathologist she did not see often. She noted that counselors in her schools were treated like administration and served in a “leadership position.” She added that, overall, she worked with a “good group of supportive staff and good group of team members,” calling it a “very strong group.”

Social Worker Gentry

Social Worker Gentry stated that her role was “to bridge the gap between community, school, and home.” She added that she not only worked to help families get needed resources, but also acted “as an advocate for family” to “help them communicate better with the school and connect them to the school.” Helping to “eliminate barriers to students learning” was another of her key roles, which included providing food or other items that might affect student learning. She said that she was on a team of “administrators, counselors, psychologists, and school nurses” that met monthly, and worked in conjunction with her grad coach on that. Social Worker Gentry also ran “small programs” at the schools, including student outreach and mentoring programs.
Social Worker Gentry described her relationship with school administration as “really good.” She noted that it “depends on the school,” but felt she had a “fairly positive relationship” with all her administration.” She stated, “I think overall they have a lot of respect for what I do.” When asked about the relationship between the principal and the other staff at her schools, she said, “I think it varies, but I would say that I think it’s positive.” She added, “I feel like they value support staff and try to utilize them in a way that best use the students’ needs.”

Counselor Nash

Counselor Nash noted that his main position at the school was serving as the chair of the school’s counseling department; he had done this since 2009. He was responsible for his six-member counseling team and handled grades 10-12 with a caseload of approximately 375 students.

Additionally, Counselor Nash was in charge of the Leadership Team in the school, and was involved in the planning of some school activities. He also said he served on the Synergy Team, which he described as a “positive experience” and “kind of a division of our leadership team that our principal put in place a couple of years ago, and that is for the most part based on recognitions.”

From the questionnaire conducted, Counselor Nash deemed his relationship with the principal as a “positive relationship,” having worked closely with the principal for all of his term as department head.

Counselor Nash also described the relationship between the principal and other ancillary staff as positive. He pointed to “great synergy between our social worker, school
psychologist, the counselors, the principal, and the administration,” noting good collaboration between the ancillary staff and the principal when a crisis occurs.

Counselor Simpson

Counselor Simpson’s role at the school mainly focused on college and career counseling, social and emotional counseling, and academic counseling. Through counseling, talking, and self-expression, she helped students identify coping skills and inspirations. She also talked with students about career choices, plans after high school, grades and scholarships, and keeping the students’ grades up so that they may graduate.

Counselor Simpson stated she was on the Climate and Morale Team at her school. This group works to find activities that can “keep people excited about working here.” She pointed to her school’s efforts to “help teachers get together within different departments” to “really connect horizontally throughout the school.” In addition, Counselor Simpson described a school team called “Share Team” that allows the principal to meet with counselors, the social worker, and administrative staff to discuss “different ways to help make our students successful.”

The questionnaire indicated that Counselor Simpson felt she had a “positive relationship” with her building principal. She described the principal as approachable and “very excited about the success of our students, very energetic,” and felt this energy was reflected in the staff and students. She also added that her principal “does a great job building relationships,” and frequently meets with the school social worker, administrative team, and counselors to check in on their progress.
Counselor Simpson also pointed to a positive relationship between the other counselors and the principal, in his opinion. She recalled them having one-on-one discussions on issues concerning setting objectives, goals, and any hindrances that might arise. She added that the principal did a great job in relationship building between himself and the staff, where they scheduled meetings and shared ideas for the success of students, calling him “very open,” “open door,” and “very visible around the school.”

_Counselor Barnes_

Counselor Barnes stated that he was the acting head counselor, responsible for “coordinating any program that comes out of the counseling office.” He was also responsible for a small portion of the student case load, including helping them with their graduation requirements, college and career questions, and any academic or personal problems a student might have. In addition, he stated that he dealt directly with parents as well.

Counselor Barnes is part of the Leadership Team consisting of the administrative team and other department chairs. He was also part of the weekly planning team that “developed things on the calendar.” Counselor Barnes additionally served on the county student support service leadership team, where a group of middle and high school counselors from around the county met.

During the questionnaire, Counselor Barnes said his relationship with his principal is “very good.” However, he noted that he was only in his first year of working with this principal. He said, “I actually came to this school because of his leadership skills,” and regretted that the principal would be leaving at the end of the school year to go to another high school. Notably, though, Counselor Barnes described the relationship between the
principal and temporary staff as “a lot different than with the people who are permanently there at the school.”

Table 1 below includes some direct responses provided by the ancillary staff who participated in the current study, with regard to their roles, interaction with other staff, relationship with the principal, and overall collaboration.

Table 1: Ancillary Staff Responses

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<tr>
<th>STAFF MEMBER</th>
<th>ROLES</th>
<th>SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP WITH PRINCIPAL</th>
<th>COLLABORATION WITH PRINCIPAL</th>
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<tr>
<td>SLP Portsman</td>
<td>I spend most of my time either co-teaching in the classroom or going into classrooms, or out in the community with students. I am not on any teams in my school. I’m on the IEP team, of course, for every student. I don’t have a lot of interaction with the school principal—we have a very cordial relationship. I think he’s a great principal, and I have a lot of respect for him. I feel like our principal is very good at allowing people to do their jobs, so I don’t see him as being overly involved. I think it’s the right amount of involvement for someone in his position without micromanaging.</td>
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<td>SLP Prink</td>
<td>I am the only SLP, and I work individually with students one-on-one and in small groups, as well as going into the class and observing and working with the teachers. They [sic] only teams are the students’ IEP teams, but since I’m only part-time here, I don’t work on any other organizational teams. I report to the director of special aids here, then we have the hierarchy going from here, so I don’t have direct reporting to the principal other than social. Now that I’m part-time, I’m not invited or included in the administrative functions of the school.</td>
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<td>SLP Ross</td>
<td>I think all of the special education teachers and some of the teachers who teach elective classes are all familiar with me and are familiar with pulling kids out of class for services. I am not on any teams here. The special education team that has meetings with students, I am invited by the teachers. They keep me in the loop. We just got a new principal this year, so I haven’t really... there’s been minimal communication between me and the principal—I see him in passing. If I email them and need more information about how a student is performing in class, they are all good about responding back or sending me emails if they have any questions about communications or language, they send me emails. So I think it’s pretty good.</td>
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<td><strong>PSYCHOLOGISTS</strong></td>
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<td>Psychologist Neff</td>
<td>My primary role is to test for any initial evaluations that we need, reevaluations, special education students, to consult with the teachers regarding questions they may have about eligibility kinds of issues.</td>
<td>Because our role is testing, if we are testing a child, we are on an IEP team. But we are not on a climate team. At F [school], it is the same.</td>
<td>I think the principal is aware of everything that’s going on in the building and has a pulse of everything going on in the building, but as far as a direct contact, it is extremely limited.</td>
<td>We are heavily involved in SST and 504, but as far as the day-to-day teams per se, we are not directly involved but they do consult us for certain things.</td>
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<td>Psychologist Mimms</td>
<td>I work more with students who have already been identified as needing special education services, so a lot of my interaction at that school is for reevaluation purposes.</td>
<td>We do have SST meetings at the high school level, so I am part of those teams as the school psychologist just helping with brainstorming. I am also part of what’s called Share Team, where we meet with a team of individuals at the school level.</td>
<td>I don’t work a lot directly with the principal himself, although I do know him and he knows me, but more of the meetings I have at that school are with the administrative assistant or the assistant principal.</td>
<td>He works with his staff to see what they need. So I think there is a good working relationship in the interactions that I see.</td>
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<td>Social Worker Lee</td>
<td>I am the liaison between the home, the school, and the community for resources. They know that I’m out and about. Basically, I can connect our family to resources in the community. I can talk to the family, see what they need, and broker services.</td>
<td>I’m not on any teacher or administrator teams. I am on staff email, and any time an email goes out, I see that. My county has a social worker team, and I’m part of that.</td>
<td>I feel I can come to them when they have a concern and they come to me when they have a concern about a student that falls under the social work realm.</td>
<td>In our county as a whole, it’s a very positive relationship—it’s a working relationship. I think I can speak, hopefully, for the psychologists, and SLPs, and social workers that we feel supported—I feel supported. We’ve got open communications with administrators.</td>
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<td>Social Worker Elson</td>
<td>I’m a school social worker, so typically, my role is different from school to school. In general, I work in things like attendance and part of kind of following up of students who miss 10 or more unexcused absences; going to court for various reasons—some for attendance and some for family and home-life situations.</td>
<td>I am on the crisis intervention team at each of my schools.</td>
<td>I have a very strong relationship, I would say, with all my school administrations.</td>
<td>At the high school it’s different, because the lead counselor is more of the administrator and he passes information down to the other counselors. I do feel that the counselors take a leadership position. And then the psychologists are just in and out of the school building with testing, but I feel like it’s a good group of supportive staff and good group of team members, and it’s a very strong group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Worker Gentry</td>
<td>My role is to bridge the gap between community, school, and home. I really feel like part of my role is not only to get resources to families that they need, but also to act as an advocate for family and come in and help them communicate better with the school and connect them to the school really.</td>
<td>Each team that I am part of…administrators, counselors, psychologist, and school nurses meet once a month. And I’m a part of that team. I also work in conjunction with My Grad Coach on that. I also work on small programs.</td>
<td>I think overall they have a lot of respect for what I do and will utilize me as needed.</td>
<td>I think it varies, but I would say that I think it’s positive. Overall in my schools, I feel like the principals try to coordinate and use the resources at the schools. I feel like they value support staff and try to utilize them in a way that best use the students’ needs.</td>
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<th>STAFF MEMBER</th>
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<td><strong>SCHOOL COUNSELORS</strong></td>
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<td>Counselor Nash</td>
<td>I carry a caseload of approximately 375, which is a little smaller than what a typical counselor carries.</td>
<td>I am on the Leadership Team, which is comprised of all the department chairs and the administration. I’m also part of what is called the Synergy Team, which is kind of a division of our leadership team.</td>
<td>I’m fortunate to have the stability as our principal has been our principal since we opened, as well as myself and some of the department chairs have all been here since we opened the school.</td>
<td>There is a great synergy between our social worker, school psychologist, the counselors, the principal, and the administration, in which a good many of these cases, all of those players will typically collaborate.</td>
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<td>Counselor Simpson</td>
<td>I primarily focus on three areas: social and emotional counseling, college and career counseling, and academic counseling. I do everything from helping students if they come in and students come in and want talk about their feelings and coping skills.</td>
<td>I’m on what we call the Climate and Morale Team.</td>
<td>I think he is very approachable and very excited about the success of our students, very energetic, and I feel that carries over into our staff and into the students.</td>
<td>I think our principal does a great job building relationships. I know he frequently meets with our social worker to talk about different things that she is working on, and he has a lot of different meetings with our admin team.</td>
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<td>Counselor Barnes</td>
<td>Each counselor has a portion of the alphabet, so as much as I’m responsible for anything that comes out of the counseling office, I’m also responsible for a small segment of students’ graduation requirements, their career questions, college questions, academic, [and] personal.</td>
<td>I am part of the leadership team, which consists of the administrative team along with the other department chairs in the school. I am on part of the county student support services leadership team, and in the county we have a team of middle and high school counselors that we meet with as well.</td>
<td>It is very good.</td>
<td>The way our psychologists and speech therapists, they come into the school every other day, so their relationship is a lot different than with the people who are permanently there at the school. He is very open, he is ‘open-door,’ and very visible around the school.</td>
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Principal Perceptions

Principal Yancy

Principal Yancy was just completing his first year as building principal, though he had been working in education for 16 years.

**Roles of ancillary staff.** In the interview, Principal Yancy described having a “positive, collaborative relationship” with his school counselors. He identified their role as “giving social and emotional evaluation to children.” He especially valued their ability to not “get caught up in data points” and remind others that “they are people and not just test results.” With regard to the social worker at his school, he said it was “very much the same thing,” and felt that the social worker was “proactively involved” and “fantastic” in the community. However, Principal Yancy noted he did not have “nearly as much interaction” with the school psychologist, and described a “congenial” but “not as much of a collaborative” relationship with them. The same minimal relationship was said to be true between Principal Yancy and the school SLP. Thus, clearly defined roles of the psychologist and SLP were ambiguous or inconclusive because of the limited interaction between them.

**Effectiveness of ancillary staff.** Principal Yancy referred to the synergy the counseling team promoted among all stakeholders; teachers, parents, students, faculty, staff, and administration. He felt they had the best overview of how things at the school connected. This could suggest they were believed to be more effective because they had a better understanding of the school. He commented that the social workers are “not as involved” as the counselors, and that it gets “even more specialized” with psychologists and SLPs handling unique situations. Still, he maintained that all the groups were valuable.
**Importance of ancillary staff.** Principal Yancy explained that all groups of staff were important to the educational system, stating, “I don’t know that any one is more important than the other.” He said they were all “vitally important” to the day-to-day life of the students. However, he added, “I think that the counselor probably has the best overview of how everything plugs together, if you will.” He suggested the school counselors promoted synergy among all stakeholders: teachers, parents, students, faculty, staff and administration, which may imply higher value to the school.

*Principal Childress*

Principal Childress was just completing his third year as school principal, and had been working in education for 21 years.

**Roles of ancillary staff.** Principal Childress said he had a “very strong relationship” with the counseling team, calling their role “instrumental” in being “quasi administrators” that serve on the administrative team.

He noted having a “pretty limited” relationship with the school psychologist, primarily because she serves at other schools in the district. He did know that she handled 504s and the school SST process. Principal Childress said that his relationship with the social worker was “very strong,” and he commented that she did “a tremendous job of staying in the know with our at-risk students and families who are in need of additional support.” He also stated that she attended share meeting with the counseling team to “review and discuss situations that we need to be aware of, and check on the progress of those matters.”

He identified the social worker at his school as a “quasi-administrator…in consistent contact with the administrative team about student matters and issues.” The role of a social
worker was to review, discuss, and evaluate situations from at-risk students and families. Regarding the SLP in his school, Principal Childress said that he knew her especially well because she was also a parent of one of the school’s students, and did “have dialogue” with her about her child’s progress. But she was also shared by schools throughout the district, so their interaction was limited. According to him the SLP’s role in the school was to monitor speech and behavioral changes in students that may be considered to have special needs.

**Effectiveness of ancillary staff.** Principal Childress noted that the school social worker had more interaction with staff in the building than the SLP or psychologist, who were “not on campus as often because their work moves them to other sites quite a bit.” He admitted that, due to the higher interaction with the social worker, the relationship was “strongest” with her. He added, “But I certainly value each one of them for what they do here at the school.”

**Importance of ancillary staff.** The principal stated that it was “safe to assume and say that all play a major role in our school, and if they’re not treated with high regard and value, then that will be a disservice to our students overall.” He said, “So we do our very best to treat them with equal importance.”

*Principal Donaldson*

Principal Donaldson had worked in education for 24 years, serving as a principal at three schools. He was in his 12th year as building principal.

**Roles of ancillary staff.** Principal Donaldson stated that he worked “very much in a collaborative fashion” with his school counselors, meeting with and working with each of them “almost daily, either individually or collectively as a group.” From the principal’s
perspective, the role of the school counselor was to offer student support instead of behavior altercation. They did this by taking away counselors from “all disciplines and testing areas” to “maximize their role in terms of student support instead of behavior or anything like that.”

He said that his relationship with the psychologist at his school was “intermittent at best,” mostly because the psychologist works at other schools as well. Principal Donaldson stated that the role of the psychologist focused on “either reading standardized tests or a part of the IEP.” The psychologist’s task was to “interpret tests that they have given or data that has been provided.”

The SLP, in Principal Donaldson’s opinion, was often the person to look to for “feedback on the students and how they’re doing” with their language deficit. He said, “I deal with her as much as I deal with any teacher on the staff.” Principal Donaldson noted that although the social worker worked “intermittently” at his school, he worked with her “most closely” and “several times a week.” Specifically, he pointed to her role as working on issues at a “higher level of concern,” such as “legal ramifications or other things” related to a student’s health and success.

**Effectiveness of ancillary staff.** Principal Donaldson did not provide much perspective on the effectiveness of the ancillary staff, specifically, focusing instead on their “importance” to the school and the students’ success. From his responses, though, he seemed to feel the school counselors were effective in providing “student support,” and he believed the SLP was effective in giving him “feedback on the student[s] and how they’re doing.” The school social worker was also effective in helping Principal Donaldson deal with
issues of “concern.” On the other hand, he seemed to suggest the psychologist’s role at his school was primarily that of a testing proctor.

**Importance of ancillary staff.** When asked if he thought any of the ancillary staff were more important than the other, Principal Donaldson answered, “It’s an interesting question.” In his opinion, none of the groups was more important than the other. He added that it depended on the task at hand, stating, “I can’t really say that one is more important than the other as an overall quantifiable number, but I can say that they all have different levels and kinds of importance depending on what area they’re working in.” He did note that he spent more time with the social worker as she typically dealt “with more students and students who are at the level of having greater concern.” But he clarified by stating, “I don’t know if they’re most important for the overall organization” even though counselors “deal with more people than others do.”

Table 2 below includes the responses provided by the three principals in the current study with regard to their relationship and collaboration with ancillary staff members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>SAMPLE PRINCIPALS’ PERCEPTIONS</th>
<th>SAMPLE ANCILLARY STAFF RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counselors</td>
<td>“They do a good job of reminding us that they are people and not just test results.”</td>
<td>“We are not involved in testing or discipline—we are kept from that so we can function in our roles as counselors and I’ve always felt supported.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“We feel it’s imperative that he’s completely in the know about the initiatives, the school improvement goals, and particularly performance and ultimately student success.”</td>
<td>“I think our principal does a great job building relationships.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“We work very much in a collaborative fashion.”</td>
<td>“I primarily focus on three areas: social and emotional counseling, college and career counseling, and academic counseling. I do everything from helping students if they come in and students come in and want talk about their feelings and coping skills.”</td>
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Table 2 Continued

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>SAMPLE PRINCIPALS’ PERCEPTIONS</th>
<th>SAMPLE ANCILLARY STAFF RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Workers</td>
<td>“I work with [the social worker] most closely as a lot of the issues relative to that are usually at a higher level of concern when they get the school social worker.”</td>
<td>“We’re not always going to agree on everything, but we’re able to have an open dialogue, an honest dialogue where we can talk about how we view things. I’ve never hit a wall with an administrator where I felt I cannot support a child.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“My relationship with the social worker is very strong. She does a tremendous job of staying in-the-know with our at-risk students and families who are in need of additional support.”</td>
<td>“Basically, I can connect our family to resources in the community. I can talk to the family, see what they need, and broker services.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“We are very blessed in that the social worker we have here, she is very proactively involved in our community.”</td>
<td>“Overall in my schools, I feel like the principals try to coordinate and use the resources at the schools. I feel like they value support staff and try to utilize them in a way that best use the students’ needs.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychologists</td>
<td>“I certainly have congenial relationships with them, but not as much of a collaborative relationship with them directly.”</td>
<td>“I think the principal is aware of everything that’s going on in the building and has a pulse of everything going on in the building, but as far as a direct contact, it is extremely limited.”</td>
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<td>“This is someone who services a number of schools and is in our building pretty infrequently, and is usually centered around either reading standardized tests or a part of the IEP or other placement meetings for which they interpret tests that they have given or data that has been provided.”</td>
<td>“I don’t work a lot directly with the principal himself although I do know him and he knows me, but more of the meetings I have at that school are with the administrative assistant or the assistant principal.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speech Language Pathologists</td>
<td>“That is more of a shared position in the district, so my experience with that is not as direct with our special education or exceptional children department or our counseling team, but particularly exceptional children.”</td>
<td>“I think as a speech pathologist I am respected, and my role is respected around here.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“I certainly have congenial relationships with them, but not as much of a collaborative relationship with them directly.”</td>
<td>“I am the only SLP and I work individually with students one-on-one and in small groups as well as going into the class and observing and working with the teachers.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“We do have a full-time SP here, and I deal with her as much as I deal with any teacher on the staff.”</td>
<td>“I feel like our principal is very good at allowing people to do their jobs, so I don’t see him as being overly involved.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most Valuable Ancillary Staff Role</td>
<td>“I will say the one I spend the most time with is the school social worker…but I don’t know if they’re most important for the overall organization.”</td>
<td>“There is a great synergy between our social worker, school psychologist, the counselors, the principal, and the administration in which a good many of these cases, all of those players will typically collaborate.”</td>
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<td>“There are times when each of them will take the element of being most important at any given moment depending on what we’re dealing with.”</td>
<td>“The way our psychologists and speech therapists, they come into the school every other day, so their relationship is a lot different than with the people who are permanently there at the school.”</td>
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Themes

This qualitative study revealed two common themes in principals’ perceptions of ancillary staff’s roles and effectiveness in positively impacting student achievement. The first was that the principals seemed to feel ancillary staff were more effective in their role if they collaborated with him and with each other. This included mutual involvement in decision-making and process internalization, and worked to boost the effectiveness of the system and create a better flow channel for information and communication. Each of the principals interviewed spoke most highly of the ancillary staff with whom they worked closely for the purpose of aiding student success. The second theme that emerged from the study was that principals saw clear differences in the roles of ancillary staff, and their importance in student achievement was perceived as relative to their role.

Collaboration with Ancillary Staff Affects Perceived Effectiveness

Effective collaboration between the principals and ancillary staff can be said to enhance the staff’s ability to support individual students as perceived through the eyes of the building principal. This theme was suggested by the fact that the principals tended to feel the ancillary staff who collaborated with them were more effective. For example, Principal Yancy said he collaborated with his school counselors most of all, and that the counseling team promoted “synergy” among the staff at the school. He then went on to point to the counselors’ strength and effectiveness in their duties as a result of better understanding of the school and how things connected there. He also noted working closely with the school social worker, but described a minimal relationship with the psychologist and SLP at his school. When later asked about their relative importance, he did state that all staff were “vital” to
student’s daily success and attempted to not put any above the others; however, he again made a special point to note the counselors’ value in being “plugged in” to the school, notably the staff member with whom he most collaborated.

Like Principal Yancy, Principal Childress spoke of having “very strong” collaboration with both his school counselors and social worker. The importance of this collaboration seemed to make them more effective in their positions, in the principal’s view. For instance, Principal Childress referred to how vital the counseling team was to the school, even praising their role as in aiding administrative efforts. He also noted the “tremendous job” that the social worker did and, in doing so, pointed to the collaboration between the social worker and the counseling team as a reason for the effectiveness. Principal Childress spoke very little in specifics about the psychologist or the SLPs with whom he interacted the least and described a minimally collaborative relationship.

Principal Donaldson’s responses were also in line with those of Principals 1 and 2. He noted working most collaboratively with the counselors and the social worker at his school, and spoke of minimal interaction with the psychologist or SLP. When asked about the relative importance of ancillary staff to the school and students, Principal Donaldson emphasized the value in each of their roles and maintained that none of them were more important than another; he specified that their relative importance was based on their specific area of focus at any time. Still, he did single out the value of the counselors for the numbers of people they serve, and he explicitly suggested the high value of the social worker’s role in student’s health and success. On the other hand, Principal Donaldson did not make any points
about the effectiveness of the psychologist or SLPs, which may correlate with the fact that he
did not collaborate much with these staff.

Overall, the interviews in the current study suggested that principals’ views of the
effectiveness of ancillary staff in supporting student success correlate with how much
interaction and collaboration he has with them. It should also be noted that, specifically, all
three principals in this study worked most closely with their school counselors and social
worker, and spoke more highly of their effectiveness as well, though this was notably more
suggested than explicitly stated.

*Variance in Ancillary Staff Roles Affects Perceived Importance*

The second theme revealed in the study was that ancillary staff have varied roles in
the educational process. In addition, principals tended to perceive ancillary staff’s importance
was in part relative to their specific roles and duties in their jobs.

Principal Yancy was more detailed in describing the role of his school counselor with
whom he had a “positive, collaborative relationship.” Moreover, he spoke highly of the
counselor’s importance and value to students’ “social and emotional” health, and claimed the
counselor had the best view of the school as a whole, suggesting their importance in the
system. He also spoke with praise of the social worker at his school, whom he termed
“fantastic” with proactive involvement in student affairs. By comparison, Principal Yancy
was unable to provide clearly defined roles of the psychologist and SLP at his school, making
their perceived roles ambiguous or inconclusive; this is arguably because of the limited
interaction between these ancillary staff and the principal. Despite the implications of his
statements, though, Principal Yancy did emphasize that all staff members were important.
When asked about the importance of different ancillary staff, Principal Childress made clear his view that all deserved equal credit. He noted they all “play a major role in our school,” and spoke to the need to treat them all with “high regard and value” and “equal importance,” in the students’ best interests; he noted the administration’s efforts “to treat them with equal importance.” However, when discussing their roles in answering an earlier interview question, Principal Childress noted strong relationships with the counseling team and social worker. Both are staff with whom Principal Childress worked closely, and he described their roles as more important than the psychologist and SLP that he worked with intermittently. He called the counseling team’s role “instrumental” in assisting on the administrative team, and he spoke in detail about the “additional support” provided to students by the social worker. These comments suggest these staff have a more important role in the principal’s view.

Much like Principals Yancy and Childress, Principal Donaldson addressed the roles of the counselors, who he said he worked with regularly, in detail. He suggested their importance to the school in noting his efforts “maximize their role in terms of student support. However, unlike the other two principals, Principal Donaldson also had a close working relationship with the SLP, and sought their feedback on student progress regularly. Accordingly, Principal Donaldson said the counselors, social worker, and the SLP were each effective and valuable to student success, each working on important matters. By comparison, Principal Donaldson described an “intermittent at best” relationship with the school psychologist; in line with the theme of the variance of roles affecting principals’ perceptions, Principal Donaldson somewhat understated the value of the psychologist’s role
in focusing on testing matters. The importance of the roles of the counselors and the social worker were also considerably factors in Principal Donaldson’s bringing up these roles again when asked about the relative importance of ancillary staff.

From the interviews, there seemed to be a slight disconnect in priorities between administration heads in suggesting which services offered by the ancillary staff were more important than others. This is because of their “effective” position in their system. Referring to this, little support was offered for services that might be outsourced or if the staff might be intermittent, putting more resources to permanent staff instead.

Notably, of all ancillary staff that participated in the current study, only the school counselors were evaluated by their respective principal. If the principals in this study were not required to formally evaluate a staff member’s work performance, it may have resulted in them being less familiar with that member’s respective roles and responsibilities, as the evaluation process itself arguably makes principals more familiar with the roles and responsibilities of school counselors in comparison to the other ancillary staff members.

In addition, it was noteworthy to examine if staff working in multiple schools affected principals’ perceptions of those staff members. With the exception of the school counselors, all of the ancillary staff worked in multiple schools (i.e., SLP, school psychologist, and social workers). One would assume that principals would perceive full-time ancillary staff members more favorably than staff members with itinerant schedules. Even more, principals having more opportunities to collaborate would arguably be more familiar with full-time ancillary staff’s roles and responsibilities. However, the current study revealed no definitive
relationship between the part- or full-time status of a staff member and the principal’s perception of their roles and value.

**Conclusion**

This study indicated that the collaboration of ancillary staff and the administration enables more effective education to be implemented in the various schools. Moreover, the value of ancillary staff seems correlated to their specific roles. The principals and ancillary staff of three center-based high schools appeared to demonstrate the ability to integrate professional skills and competency in placing a high regard on educational goals for students.

The perspective of the ancillary staff, at each level, has been acknowledged and included by the administration in education reform. The greater the understanding into students’ educational services through active interaction with students and school personnel and ancillary groups of staff, at different levels, the better the understanding and increased support to aid student performance. What’s more, the more interaction that the school principal has with his ancillary staff, the more informed he is about their roles, and the more he seems to highly regard their effectiveness and value to the team.

The different roles of the staff offer various strategies to identify and resolve inconsistencies in the education and performance systems. The findings of the study show that changes in education and the coordination of staff and services have addressed the importance of the relationships between the ancillary staff. This was accomplished through well-defined roles and responsibilities of each group and their methods of implementation as they all work together with the administration to support students. The programs implemented in the school system utilize the ancillary groups to positively impact the
educational system. This leads to the planning and monitoring of learning programs to meet the needs of students—and the more that the ancillary staff is involved with the principal in handling their duties, the higher the principals tended to perceive their importance. The staff’s understanding to come together and utilize resources to contribute to the inclusion or exclusion of standards within a school for the improvement of students’ performance has led to a great success.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The primary goal of the study was to examine principals’ perceptions of ancillary personnel roles and effectiveness in positively impacting student achievement since the implementation of new laws (i.e., IDEA) using three, center-based high schools in Georgia. The questionnaires used for the principals and the ancillary personnel in this study contained five open-ended questions. Principals were asked two additional questions to determine the length of time as a principal and as an educator. Responses from the three principals and 11 ancillary personnel were transcribed.

Emerging Themes

Themes Related to Ancillary Staff

Two common themes surfaced in this qualitative study of principals’ perceptions of ancillary staff’s roles and effectiveness in positively impacting student achievement: the amount of collaboration a principal has with ancillary staff affects that staff member’s perceived effectiveness, and variance in the roles of ancillary staff affects how important the principal perceives their role.

Collaboration with ancillary staff affects perceived effectiveness. The first theme emphasized a positive perception of ancillary staff’s effectiveness by principals if the ancillary staff collaborated with him and with each other. This included shared involvement when making decisions to boost effectiveness of the overall learning environment as well as to create a better flow of communication in the school. All three principals interviewed in the current study worked most closely with their school counselors and social workers. Likewise, the three principals spoke more highly of the effectiveness of these staff members, though
this was notably more suggested than explicitly stated. Thus, the importance of this collaboration seemed to make these staff members more effective in their positions, in the principals’ view. Such a positive finding of the current study reinforces many of the earlier findings of Tomes and Sanger (1986).

**Variance in ancillary staff roles affects perceived importance.** The second theme revealed in the study was that principals tended to perceive ancillary staff’s importance was in part based on their specific and varied roles and duties in their jobs—and the principals displayed a better understanding of the roles of the staff with whom they collaborated regularly. For instance, all three principals interviewed noted having strong collaboration with the counselors and social workers at their schools, and also seemed to have a good understanding of these staff’s roles. Likewise, all three principals spoke of these staff’s roles as highly important to the school.

Both Principal Yancy and Principal Childress stated that all staff were important to the school and to students’ success. However, though they made these statements, other responses they provided indicated that the principals knew less about the roles of staff that they seemed to view as less important. Principal Yancy and Principal Childress both pointed to strong collaborative relationships with their school counselors and social workers, and the principals were able to provide more detailed descriptions of the roles of these staff members. Neither Principal Yancy nor Principal Childress could offer much insight as to the value of the roles of the psychologist or speech-language pathologist (SLP) at their schools, which can be seen as directly related to the limited interaction the principals had with these staff.
Principal Donaldson’s responses served to further emphasize this emergent theme. Like the other two principals, he worked with the counselors regularly, and made clear their importance to the students. Yet, while Principals 1 and 2 had similarly limited interactions with their school psychologist or SLP, Principal Donaldson had a close working relationship and regularly collaborated with the SLP at his school. As would be expected by the emergent theme in this study, he therefore noted that the counselors, social worker, and SLP were equally effective and valuable to student success. However, when discussing the psychologist at his school, with whom he had a limited relationship, Principal Donaldson seemed to devalue the psychologist’s role by using language that described it as similar to a simple testing proctor. The importance of the roles of the counselors and the social worker were also considerable factors in Principal Donaldson’s bringing up these roles again when asked about the relative importance of ancillary staff.

From the interviews, there seemed to be a slight disconnect in priorities between administration heads in suggesting which services offered by the ancillary staff were more important than others. This is because of their “effective” position in their system.

**Relationship between principal-staff collaboration and student achievement.**

Previous researchers who have examined effective leadership models claim that principals who resist acting as the sole leader in the school create an environment which improves student achievement by better utilizing the talents and aptitudes of all the school’s professionals (Lambert, 2002). That is, principals who rely on the talents of their staff to assist them in their administrative role cultivate a collaborative relationship that promotes
greater student achievement (Halverson, 2003; Janson, Militello, & Kosine, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2005; Marzano et al., 2005; Spillane et al., 2001).

Despite these assertions, though, it must be noted that no specific conclusions can be drawn about the students’ achievement at these schools based on solely the findings of the current study. However, based on the findings of the current study indicating that the principals interviewed work collaboratively with at least some of their staff, some suppositions can be drawn about the potential for higher achievement of the students at the schools examined.

The current study found a good amount of collaboration between the interviewed principals and their staff. Though which staff members a principal most interacts with may vary, this suggests that students may have a better chance at high performance at this sample of schools is greater as a result. All three principals in the study claimed to have strong collaboration with their staff overall, some more than others, and each noted at least one staff member had particularly great value to them and to the school. These principals aptly leveraged the varied abilities and knowledge of their staff to help them fulfill their own duties, and in doing so arguably improve the possible performance of their respective students.

Themes Related to Speech-Language Pathologists

With regard to SLPs, two themes emerged in the current study. The first suggested that principals’ perceptions of SLPs correlate with the amount of collaboration s/he has with the SLP. The second theme that emerged from this study indicated that principals’ perceptions of SLPs may, in turn, affect the SLP’s ability to be effective in their role.
Principals’ perceptions correlate with amount of collaboration. Undergraduate and graduate study programs in speech-language pathology tend to poorly emphasize the importance of SLPs working collaboratively with principals or leadership teams. Examination of the results of the current study revealed several issues about the role of school-based SLPs (SLPs) and the services they provide that warrant discussion with respect to recent trends, an outcome that was not expected given the findings of previous studies of administrators showing that SLPs are viewed as effective (Sanger et al., 1995). Previous research has indicated that educators are generally satisfied with the performance of SLPs (Tomes & Sanger, 1986). However, at the onset of the current study, the investigator expected the school administrators to hold less than satisfactory attitudes toward the SLPs due to the relatively limited time spent with them compared to other staff. Findings were partially consistent with the investigator’s expectations.

Both Principal Yancy and Principal Childress reported having limited interaction with their school’s SLP. Principal Yancy was unable to clearly define the role of the SLP at his school, making his perception of the SLP’s role and effectiveness inconclusive. Principal Childress did not explicitly state that the SLP’s role was ineffective, but did describe the role of the counselors and social workers as more important than the SLP, with whom he worked much less frequently. Thus, these two principals’ views seemed to suggest that having a less collaborative relationship with their SLPs resulted in a less positive perception of their value to the school.

The outlier in this view of SLPs was Principal Donaldson. He claimed that his school’s SLP was as effective as the counselors and social workers, and noted they all had
important roles. However, Principal Donaldson did describe a very limited relationship with his school psychologist before later understating the value of the psychologist’s role. Hence, though Principal Donaldson varied from the others in his view of the SLP, it should be noted that he had more interaction with the SLP at his school than Principal Yancy or 2. For Principal Donaldson, it was the psychologist that he rarely engaged with in student matters, and it was therefore the psychologist’s role that he seemed to view the least positively. This finding, however, still remains in line with the theme of principals’ perceptions of staff’s roles and effectiveness being related to the amount of collaborative interaction they have with the staff member in question, regardless of the role that staff member has.

**Principals’ perceptions may affect speech-language pathologist effectiveness.**

Undergraduate and graduate study programs in speech-language pathology tend to encourage school-based SLPs to work collaboratively with teachers, but there is less emphasis on them working collaboratively with leadership teams and principals. Moreover, there have been few studies to date that have investigated principals’ perceptions of the role of school SLPs. However, because they have significant influence in shaping the roles and responsibilities of professionals working in their schools, principals’ perceptions of SLPs and their effectiveness in their roles is important. Not only does a principal’s positive perception and strong collaborative relationship with SLPs serve to potentially improve student performance, but it also has notable implications for the SLPs themselves. More specifically, principals influence the hiring of SLPs and often perform evaluations of their work, making it vital that principals are educated about the role that SLPs play in furthering student achievement so that they are open to assisting SLPs as needed for student success. A
principal who has a firm respect for and understanding of an SLP’s role is also more likely to allocate resources and time to the SLP, and may therefore improve the SLP’s job satisfaction while also increasing the quality of services and support the SLP is able to provide for students.

Sanger et al. (1995) found that educators generally have positive opinions about SLP services; however, responses suggested some uncertainty regarding the specific role of SLPs in serving students in need, which brings up questions regarding how effective SLPs can be in their duties. That is, although Sanger et al. (1995) found perceptions of SLPs to be positive overall, they did identify a lack of understanding of the SLP’s precise role in aiding student success. Notably, the findings of the current study were in line with these results. In the current study, both Principals 1 and 2 seemed to have little understanding of the roles or effectiveness of the SLP at their respective schools, primarily because they had limited interaction with them. On the other hand, Principal Donaldson described a close, collaborative working relationship with the SLP at his school, and thus viewed the SLP as a valuable resource with a role that supported student success.

Based on previous research suggesting that principals who cultivate a collaborative relationship with staff help to improve student achievement (Halverson, 2003; Janson et al., 2008; Leithwood et al., 2005; Marzano et al., 2005; Spillane et al., 2001), along with the findings of this study, then, it could be concluded that the students using the speech-language pathology services at Principal Donaldson’s school have a better chance at success and high performance than those at Principal Yancy or Principal Childress’ schools, because of his collaboration with the SLP. Likewise, the fact that Principal Yancy and Principal Childress
held less than positive perceptions of their school’s SLP, reported having limited interaction with them, and were unable to aptly define the SLPs’ roles or effectiveness in those roles, suggests that the students and even the SLP at these schools may not be reaching their potential without the support of the leadership.

**Limitations of the Study**

This study relied a great deal on the subjective attitudes of the principals and the ancillary staff who answer the questionnaires. The point of the research was to assess the attitudes of those principals throughout the public education system. It may be difficult to make absolute conclusions between attitudes on a campus and educational quality on that campus without knowing the particular campus’ state rating or performance on standardized assessments. Also, since there was no control in place to ensure that the principal had, indeed, undergone a mentoring or training session with the ancillary staff, this variable was not considered. In an ideal world, these variables would be included as they may reflect the principal's attitude toward the ancillary staff’s role; however, such delimitations are part of educational research. Nevertheless, the questionnaire (Appendix A) covers a variety of areas that were believed would still reveal salient results.

Three years on a campus is also a fairly vague control to set as well. A principal could have 30 years of experience as a building principal, but only have two years on the current campus and so fail to qualify for the study, while a principal who only has been in his or her current job for three years would qualify. The imposed restriction limits the validity of the sample size. It would also be interesting to know how many SLPs have worked on that
campus during that principal's tenure, as turnover would reflect (and perhaps influence) the principal's attitude, but that was not addressed in the current study.

Also, as mentioned earlier, this study did not analyze the specific differences between principals’ attitudes toward ancillary staff’s attitudes. Knowing what principals’ attitudes are concerning the ancillary staff is helpful, but not as much so without comparison to the attitudes of their staff. The expectations that teachers may have for ancillary staff may not be realistic given the demands on their schedule. Also, while roles of ancillary staff can certainly represent a challenge for the classroom teacher, they just represent one of the many elements that go into classroom management. Research indicating the amount of time that the ancillary staff spends on various tasks were expected to indicate the amount of time available for items such as classroom management; research examining causes for the differences between teachers’ and principals’ attitudes toward ancillary staff’s expectations were hoped to be illuminating for this issue.

Finally, the current study may have been affected by the limitations in the amount of collaboration that is actually feasible between ancillary staff and principals at the schools. The Forsyth County school district where the study was conducted serves 42,000 students, and is the seventh largest school system of Georgia’s 180 school districts. Forsyth County has 35 schools: 20 elementary schools, nine middle schools, and six high schools. Each high school receives student support services from an SLP, a psychologist, a social worker, and a counselor. Even though each high school receives student support services from these specialists, some high schools may share these specialists; specialists may travel between schools to serve students, and can have as many as three or more schools to service. This
sharing of specialists can negatively impact the collaboration that takes place with the principal. By sharing schools, the specialists are restricted to how much time is spent collaborating with the principal. This may have affected the results in the current study.
Implications for Practice

The question that guided this research was designed to produce findings that would allow school administrators and staff, such as principals, SLPs, school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors, to gain a better understanding of the relationships between principals and ancillary staff. Moreover, this study was conducted to gain insight that would aid the improved collaboration between principals and SLPs in public schools. Findings of the study strongly emphasized the importance of collaboration and the impact it has on principals’ perception of staff’s roles and effectiveness in positively impacting student achievement. Thus, there are clear implications for practice that principals and staff might employ to assist in the improvement of practice.

First, results of the current study could be used in designing tools that help school administrators such as principals evaluate ancillary staff/personnel. In most cases, ancillary staff are usually evaluated by their department’s supervisors or coordinators. Yet, according to Flower (1984), the use of performance appraisals allows the profession to improve regulation of professional practices of its members, and this would be especially so if principals were to conduct staff evaluations. Not only would it allow them more interaction with staff, thus potentially improving the principals’ perception of their effectiveness, but such field-related administrative support could enhance quality programs in public schools.

The findings of this study could also be applied to the curriculum of colleges and universities to help improve ancillary staff training. Coursework focused on the importance of collaboration and teamwork between school staff and administrative leadership, as well as among staff themselves, would be a worthwhile addition to the curriculum. It could, for
example, include strategies for interaction and more effective communication. Even more, it would be beneficial if staff were trained to better understand the roles and value of each member of the school staff, which may help promote a culture of teamwork and supportiveness.

Since most administrator participants in the current study indicated a positive relationship with ancillary staff overall, this study could be used to promote greater involvement of staff in school and district programs such as response to intervention, leadership, and collaborative decision-making teams. Since principals and other administrative leadership attend these events, it would be beneficial to ancillary staff to have this additional interaction with the leadership. Moreover, it could increase the mutual understanding and respect between ancillary staff and the principals as they work together more toward a common goal of improving learning.

Finally, in order to provide school ancillary staff members with the professional respect and acknowledgment they deserve for the valuable services they practice, there needs to be a shift in how those in the education field think and speak of them. Specifically, we must change the language of how we describe staff members like school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and SLPs, because terming them “ancillary” staff, as they often are called, undervalues their role. A term like “student services specialist,” for example, would be much more appropriate in describing the role they play in helping to facilitate student success.
Implications for Future Research

The current study addressed principals’ perceptions of ancillary staff’s roles and effectiveness. This resulted in the conclusion that principals’ perceptions are distinctly affected by the amount of interaction they have with each staff member, and that principals in part determine staff’s effectiveness by the role they play in the school and in the student’s academic and personal development.

Thus, future research in this field could examine the alternate perspective, to determine how ancillary staff perceive administrators’ support in the educational setting. That is, are they supportive of the staff or of the students? Are they present and actively engaged when they are needed to support the staff? Questions such as these may help to reveal the full picture of the working dynamic among staff and leadership in a public school.

Additionally, to validate and expand on the findings of the current study, a qualitative study of the same structure could be conducted with a larger number of principal participants. It could also include more questions to provide further information for analysis. This would work to verify the current study’s findings, refute them, and/or provide additional emergent themes for consideration.

Conclusion

The results of this study provide insight as to how three high school administrators perceive the ancillary staff from three center-based, public high schools. Specifically, the findings of this study are important considering the recent emphasis on the value of collaboration in the education profession (O’Connor, 2008), particularly with the growing caseload and workload demands that those in the field of education handle. Overall, the
responses indicated that administrators perceived their ancillary staff had a positive impact on student achievement. In addition, the study’s finding suggested that the administrators understand and value the roles of the ancillary stuff, holding similar attitudes to one another. Each of the principals was notably hesitant to explicitly claim one staff member to be more important than another, though the investigator made inferences based on other responses the principals provided that suggested which staff’s roles they perceived as more valuable.

It should be further noted that the results of this study do not permit conclusive statements to be drawn about how school administrators might support ancillary staff in responding to challenges. Such challenges might include personnel shortages, workload/caseload issues, recruitment and retention, and reimbursement. Because these issues are important to ancillary staff, the investigator hopes that the results of the current study may facilitate further conversation among policymakers and educational leaders that would assist in the resolution of these issues.
REFERENCES


Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 2004.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 2008.


APPENDICES
Appendix A: Study Recruitment Email Text

Dear ______________,

My name is Trudy Whitehead, and I am a Speech-Language Pathologist in Fulton County Schools. I am also a doctoral student at North Carolina State University working on my dissertation, and I could use your support.

My purpose is to investigate the behaviors and beliefs about ancillary personnel’s roles in our school, including principals’ perceptions. I would like to invite you to participate in my study by allowing me to interview you on the phone or in person regarding your role and perceptions about the relationships among and between ancillary staff and principals.

I can ensure you that your identity will be protected at all phases of data collection, analysis, and dissemination. In addition, I will not refer to my findings in conversation or in writing while we at work. The state and the school district will be also anonymized in any published articles resulting from these findings. Without hearing from the key personnel such as yourself, research in this area cannot advance to continue supporting our developing roles to make our students’ futures as successful as they can be.

Please keep in mind that your participation is completely voluntary, and your refusal to participate will not result in any further requests or action from me. If you do decide to participate, you may refuse to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable answering. Also, after interviews are transcribed, you will be invited to a secured, shared document in order to validate or amend your answers.

I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact me at 678-763-3116 or whitehead@fultonschools.org if you have study related questions or concerns. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Office of Research and Program Evaluation at North Carolina State University. If you would like to participate, would you please let me know by email within 2 weeks of receipt of this request so that we may schedule a mutually convenient time either on the phone or outside of work to discuss this topic with me?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Trudy Whitehead
Appendix B: Study Questionnaire for Principals

Open-ended questions:

1. How long have you been in education?
2. How many years have you been a building principal?

Attitudinal Survey Questions for Principal:

1. Describe your relationship with your school’s counselor.
2. Describe your relationship with your school’s social worker.
3. Describe your relationship with your school’s psychologist.
4. Describe your relationship with your school’s speech pathologist.
5. Do you feel any of these groups (SLP, psychologist, social worker, and counselor) are more important than the other? If so, which ones and why?
Appendix C: Study Questionnaire for Ancillary Staff

Attitudinal Survey Questions for Ancillary Staff:

1. Describe your relationship with your school’s principal/administration.
2. Describe your work station.
3. Are you on any teams at your school? Describe your position.
4. Describe the relationship between the principal’s relationship and other ancillary staff at your school.
5. Describe your role at the school.