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Mission Driven Educational Leadership--Does It Matter? Examining The Correlations Between District Mission and Student Achievement

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Mission Driven Educational Leadership—Does It Matter?
Examining the Correlations Between District Mission and Student Achievement

A Dissertation Presented

by

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MISSION DRIVEN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP—DOES IT MATTER? EXAMINING THE CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DISTRICT MISSION AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

MISSION DRIVEN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP—DOES IT MATTER? EXAMINING THE CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DISTRICT MISSION AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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The purpose of this study was to look at mission driven school district leadership in Massachusetts public schools and attempt to identify any relationship, or lack thereof, between district mission statements and student achievement. In this study, 288 Massachusetts public school districts are ranked according to their 2011 high school graduation rate and their 2011 tenth grade Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results. From the 288 districts, a sample of the top thirty and the bottom thirty were selected. All district wide mission statements were obtained from the websites of the top 30 and bottom 30 school districts with a 100% return rate. The mission statements were then coded using Bebell and Stemler's 2011 coding rubric. Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric contains 11 themes with 42 subcategories. The 11 themes are: academic/cognitive, social development, emotional development, civic development, physical development, vocational preparation, integrate into local community, integrate into global community, integrate into spiritual community, safe nurturing environment, and challenging environment. The 42 subcategories are indicators

composed of key words and phrases for each of the eleven themes in Bebell and Stemler's 2011 coding rubric.

Results from the present study found the academic/cognitive theme occurred more than any other theme in both the top and bottom public school districts in Massachusetts. Statistical differences did appear for two of Bebell and Stemler's themes: civic development and vocational preparation. The civic development theme was correlated with the top 30 school districts, while the vocational theme was correlated with the bottom 30 school districts. Subcategories of the civic theme include productive, responsible, contributing members of society involved in public service and character education, while vocational subcategories include competition in the workforce and marketable skills. This study is limited in size and scope and more research is suggested. This study is unique because it is the first time that mission driven leadership in Massachusetts school districts is being analyzed to see if there is a connection with student achievement. The present study would be of interest to policy makers and practitioners who are interested in mission driven leadership and student achievement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Introduction

My first experience with the crafting of a mission statement was as a first year Assistant Principal at Douglas High School in 2000. At age 27, my experience in educational leadership was limited; I previously taught science for a mere five years. The Douglas High School Principal and I were preparing the staff to participate in a self-study as part of a decennial visit from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) for accreditation. At the time, NEASC had seven standards for accreditation. One of the standards in which the high school would be judged was titled: Mission and Expectations for Student Learning. Unfortunately, our high school did not have a mission statement. We were operating on limited resources and could not afford a consultant or an outside party to lead us through the process of crafting a mission. The Principal and I thought that we could lead the staff through a succinct process, craft a few words, vote, and then we would have a mission statement after one brief meeting. Nothing could have been further from the truth and I quickly learned the power of the process of creating a mission statement. I can remember that our staff devoted countless hours in meetings and conducting numerous surveys in an attempt to create a mission statement in which people agree. Staff members would fight with one another, cry, argue, and display emotions that left me scratching my head wondering why people would get so upset over just a few words. It was after one meeting in particular when the Principal stormed out and the staff was divided that I realized the importance of a mission; it is the underlying reason why schools exist and it drives all fundamental decisions. The power of a mission piqued my

curiosity and I decided that I needed to delve deeper into the literature and look at the research about leadership, education reform and mission. Moreover, I wanted to learn how mission is connected to student achievement.

It is well established in the literature that mission is a major part of organizational leadership (Abrahams, 1999; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Dlott, 2007; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Kotter, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 2010; Kurtzman, 2010; McTighe & Wiggins, 2007; Meier, 2002; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000; Wheatly, 2006). Leaders are the ones responsible for deciding the direction of an organization and this work of prioritizing what is important is embodied through the process of drafting a mission statement. Schools, churches, for-profit businesses, non-profit organizations, teams, and many others have mission statements. In fact, some people even define their own personal mission in life. For example, my personal mission statement is: family, fitness, finances, friends, faith, and fun. I list the most important things in my life in order of importance to me. I also begin every word with the letter "f" so it is short, concise, and easy to remember. This short statement helps met to quickly remember the most important aspects of my life. I often reflect on my own personal mission statement when I am confronted with a major decision. A personal mission statement has helped me organize my thoughts and prioritize everything that I do.

Regardless of whether you are looking at an individual or an organization, mission matters. Senge (2006) defines mission:

> Mission comes from the Latin word mittere meaning to throw, let go, or send. Also derived from the Latin word purpose (originally proponere) meant to declare. Whether you call is a mission or a purpose, it represents the fundamental reason for the organization's existence. (p. 303)

Mission defines the purpose of an organization, but communication of the mission is vital. How frequently, purposefully, and accessible the mission is communicated to others matters. Sometimes mission statements are easily communicated in writing and accessible through a wide variety of media, while, other times, it takes more work to uncover the mission. An organization can become easily confused if the mission is not clear (Kurtzman, 2010). In my experience as a former assistant principal, a lack of clear direction can even lead to a hostile environment and dissention in the ranks. People have a fundamental need to want to know what direction an organization or an individual is heading. As Kurtzman describes,

> Study after study has shown that making the big bucks, which is important to a small set of individuals, particularly those on Wall Street, is not usually the top of the list for most people. What is at the top of the list? Being part of a winning team in a winning organization that has a mission. (p. 9)

In other words, people want to be part of something bigger than themselves.

Besides setting direction for an organization, a mission statement serves as a direct reflection on the leader or leaders of an organization. I will go into more detail about this in my review of literature, but I wanted to make this statement prior to writing my theory of action. My theory of action for this dissertation is if a school district has content rich, accessible, mission statement then all members of the organization will understand the direction of the organization which is correlated to elevated levels of student engagement resulting in higher test scores. This study examines if a relationship does exist between district level mission and student achievement. More specifically, this study will analyze the mission statements from a sample of high achieving school districts in Massachusetts and compare them with lower achieving school districts to better understand if a relationship exists.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to look at district wide mission statements in Massachusetts' public schools and attempt to identify any relationship, or lack of, between the mission and student achievement. Throughout history people have been trying to reform efforts in an attempt to increase student achievement. The past 50 years has seen a tremendous amount of reform efforts and this will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. Philosophers, scientists, politicians, government organizations, private corporations and the general public all have perspectives on the purposes of formal schooling. Sometimes these views are similar, but often times they are very different. The purpose of this study is to closely examine school reform, leadership, and student achievement through a quantitative analysis of mission statements from K-12 public school districts in Massachusetts.

This study is significant because there is little empirical work examining the content, prevalence, and accessibility of district wide mission statements in K-12 public school districts in Massachusetts. This study seeks to change that through quantitative analysis of archival MCAS data, graduation rate data, and school district mission statement data in an attempt to answer what, if any, relationships exist between student achievement and mission. It is my intention to contribute to existing body of research surrounding the importance of mission and to provide recommendations for practitioners concerning the communication of their district wide mission statements. This study would be of high interest to educational policy makers, superintendents, principals and anyone who is interested in student achievement for K-12 public school districts.

A school district's web site will play a key role in this study. It is my intention to gather district mission statements in an attempt to answer the following questions:

1 What is the relationship between the content and frequency of themes that are present using Bebell and Stemler's (2012) rubric in district wide mission statements of high and low achieving school districts in Massachusetts?

a) Which of Bebell and Stemler's 11 themes are present in high and low achieving school districts?

b) What is the frequency of themes in high and low achieving school districts?

c) To what extent is there a relationship between the theme of academic achievement and academic performance?

2. To what extent are the content of district mission statements of high and low performing school districts in alignment with the Massachusetts' policy frameworks?

a) What are the implications for Massachusetts' policy?
b). What are the implications for Massachusetts' district level practice?

Chapter 1 provides an introduction and the purpose of this study. Chapter 1 also includes background information, research questions, the significance of the study, and the organization of the dissertation. In the second chapter, I provide a limited review of literature focusing on education reform, leadership, leadership theory, educational leadership, mission statements, and related empirical research. In Chapter 3 I describe the methods and research design. I restate the research questions, provide hypothesis, discuss methodology, variables, limitations, delimitations, and conclude with a summary. Chapter 4 focuses on the results of my study and include an introduction and summary of the results for each question. Chapter 5 will conclude this dissertation summarizing and discussing the results. Chapter 5 will include implications for further research,

implications for practice and recommendations, relationship of results to theory, and a final conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Brief History on Education Reform

This literature review is meant to offer a brief overview of school reform, leadership, leadership theory, educational leadership and mission in relationship to student achievement. My intention is to explain these areas to better understand current research ultimately setting the stage for an empirical study. My study examines the mission of high and low achieving school districts in Massachusetts in relationship to student achievement. In other words, I will examine mission statements from several high and low performing school districts in Massachusetts, code them by themes, and attempt to uncover how mission is correlated to student achievement.

In an effort to better understand the past, this partial review of literature will begin in 1957 and succinctly take us through our current context of the education reform efforts in the United States. More specifically, and in an attempt to set the context for my study, I will focus on Massachusetts school reform and how it relates to the changes in how student achievement are measured. Following a brief history of school reform efforts, this review of literature will delve deeper into leadership, leadership theory, educational leadership and the role of mission statements. The review of literature will conclude with a summary of empirical studies surrounding mission and school leadership. This review of literature only scratches the surface of education reform efforts, leadership theory, and mission. As such, this review of literature is limited in breadth and it is not intended to cover every detail of education reform efforts from the past 50 years.

First, it is necessary to study the past in an attempt to better understand the present, as well as forecast into the future. The future is not always clear and studying the past provides us with a greater body of knowledge to make informed decisions. As Cuban and Tyack (1995) explicate, "Many educational problems have deep roots in the past, and many solutions have been tried before" (p. 6). Moreover, researching the past and delving in to empirical research and studies can often change or sway opinions. Some might argue that swaying or changing opinions is the basis of scientific study. Renowned author and research professor Diane Ravitch provides an example of a person whose outlook on education changed in terms of reform efforts. In the early 1990's, Dr. Ravitch was the United States Assistant Secretary of Education and Counselor to Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander in the administration of President George H.W. Bush. Once a proponent of standardized testing and increased governmental control, Dr. Ravitch has had a change of heart. Ravitch (2000) preaches:

> History helps us understand educational issues. We cannot understand where we are heading without knowing where we have been. We live now with decisions and policies that were made long ago. Before we attempt to reform present practices, we must try to learn why those decisions were made and to understand the consequences of past policies. History does not tell us the answers to our questions, but it help to inform us so that we might make better decisions in the future. (p. 14)

The example of Dr. Ravitch's changing views over time illustrate the importance of studying the past to make more informed decisions for the future.

The Launch of Sputnik

In 1957, the Russians began the space race by launching the first satellite into space, Sputnik I. This historic event changed history and had a tremendous impact on the

system of education in the United States. Sputnik I was the size of a beach ball weighing 189 pounds, and it lasted only three months in orbit before burning up in the atmosphere upon reentry; it was not very impressive by today's standards (Urban, 2010). However, at the time, the launch of Sputnik caused concern and spread fear throughout the United States. Russia had taken the lead in the space race and there was a perception that the American education system, especially in the areas of math and science, was inadequate. Ravitch (2000) explains, "Sputnik became an instant metaphor for the poor quality of the U.S. schools" (p. 361). The launch of Sputnik spurred half a century of education reform in which policy makers, law makers, and educators have debated what is best for our country and its education system. The launch of Sputnik also infused funding into the American education system. Ravitch talks about the U.S. response to Sputnik, "Congress responded to the perceived crisis by passing the 1958 National Defense Act, which provided fellowships, grants, and loans for students in higher education to study mathematics, science, and foreign languages, as well as funding school construction" (p. 362). Clearly, there was an emphasis on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and resources were made available for educators from Kindergarten through higher education. With increased funding came increased accountability and there was an effort to understand how to measure the effectiveness of our education system.

One might argue from a macro level that the launch of Sputnik altered the mission of public education and caused educators to focus heavily on math, science and engineering. This is important to this study because it laid the ground work to start measuring student achievement. It is also important because fear was used to promote change. As we will continue to see throughout this review of literature, the use of fear has

played a significant role throughout history to get educators, policy makers, politicians, parents, and the general public to re-examine how we educate our society.

Civil Rights Act

At the same time that Sputnik was being launched, the Civil Rights Act was signed into Congress. Nine African American students (Little Rock 9) made history by breaking down racial barriers and entering Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas. Civil Rights became a salient educational issue and changed the way students were educated. In fact, some might argue that the Civil Rights Act altered the mission of public education by highlighting societal issues forcing all public schools to promote equity for all students. The Civil Rights Act of 1957 was a precursor to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which, for the first time ever, made it illegal to discriminate based on race, color, sex, religion or national origin. The Civil Rights Act spurred discussion among educators and lawmakers over equity in education. McDermott (2011) describes,

> Intergovernmental relations and equity have often been linked. Federal laws such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 empower federal authorities to impose nondiscrimination conditions on state and local (or private) actors and to determine whether changes to state and local elecions procedures are acceptable. (p. 24)

The Civil Rights Act and the launch of Sputnik started a trend of the federal government telling states and local municipalities how things should be done which encompassed education.

Increasing Role of Federal Policy

The increasing role of federal policy had a tremendous effect on the American education system. Civil Rights was not the only issue of the time, but the National

Defense Act of 1958 and the Voting Rights Act played a role in policy making. The National Defense Act of 1958 increased federal funding for education, particularly in the areas of math and science. Fear of Sputnik and losing ground to other counties was on the minds of policy makers. This fear of losing ground to other counties remains alive today and history is repeating itself. The Voting Rights Act a few years later also changed the landscape for the United States, not only politically, but in the classrooms across the country. Schooling affects virtually every sector of society and reforming education became not only a societal issue, but a major political issue. Education remains a top political issue today. Educators, lawmakers, businesses, corporations, foundations, and politicians are constantly debating how we can make our education system stronger and achieve the best results for all of our nation's students. As society debated what was best for our students, the issue of how to hold schools and educators accountable was at the top of the list. Moreover, different groups of people all had different views on the overarching purpose of education. I will describe later in this paper that the purpose of education is often communicated through mission. History has long dictated what policy makers have judged as important.

A Nation at Risk and Standardized Testing

If we fast forward to 1983, the use of fear was, once again, at the heart of education reform. If people are afraid of something it usually does not take them very long to try new things in an attempt to get away from the cause of the fear. Like Sputnik, *A Nation at Risk* evoked fear across America and set politicians, policymakers, and

educators scrambling to find a better way to educate our children. *A Nation at Risk* was published by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983). It began,

> Our Nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world. This report is concerned with only one of the many causes and dimensions of the problem, but it is the one that undergirds American prosperity, security, and civility. We report to the American people that while we can take justifiable pride in what our schools and colleges have historically accomplished and contributed to the United States and the well-being of its people, the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur--others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments. (p. 1)

Many state and national task forces were assembled in response to a fear that American students are lacking in essential areas of math and science (Dufour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008). As a result of *A Nation at Risk,* many politicians and educators questioned the direction and the mission of the American education system. *A Nation at Risk* furthered discussions about accountability, standardizing curriculum, and using standardized test data to assess the effectiveness of schools.

In 1983, there were many critics of the U.S. education system, but everyone did not agree with the claim of the National Commission on Education that the American education system and our nation is at risk. Yong Zhao, who was born and educated in China, ardently opposes standardization of curriculum and measuring school and students by test scores. In talking about *A Nation at Risk,* Zhao (2009) explains:

> If American education has been at risk for more than 25 years- some say 40 years- and continues to deteriorate, and if education is said to determine a nation's and its citizens' success, how can we explain that America continues to be competitive? We can come up with a number of propositions. The first is that education is not related to a countries success. This proposition can be easily refuted because it is generally established that the educational attainment of a country's citizens has a direct effect on its prosperity and other indicators of success. The second proposition is that American education has not been in crisis- at least not in the

> way reformers have suggested. The crisis, as others suggest, was manufactured for political reasons. A large portion of the evidence used to support the crisis assessment has been intentionally selected or misinterpreted, or is the result of deep social and cultural issues outside the schools. Keith Baker's study of the relationship (or lack thereof) between performance international test and indicators of nations' success suggests a third possibility. Because test scores do not predict a nation's success and that persistent poor performance of American students on international tests since the 1960's has not resulted in its demise, it is useful to consider what really helped the United States to maintain its global lead. (p. 44)

Zhao concluded that standardized testing is not the be-all and end-all of education.

There are many different viewpoints on the effectiveness of standardized testing. In fact, many argue that standardized testing is riddled with problems and it is not good for the American school system (Buese, Chambliss, Croninger, Graeber, & Valli, 2008; Henningfeld, 2007; Kohn, 2000; National Research Council, Committee on Incentives and Test-Based Accountability in Public Education, 2011; Sacks, 2001). As this study ranks high and low performing schools by standardized test results it is important to call attention to varying viewpoints of standardized tests. The next paragraph will highlight proponents of standardized tests.

Many proponents argue that standardized tests are objective, reliable and hold educators accountable for results. There are those who believe that with increased accountability through standardized testing our nation's schools could provide a more equitable education and eliminate achievement gaps (Barber, Chijooke, & Mourshed, 2010; Dillon, 2010; Phelps, 2011; Rhee, 2011; United States Department of Education, 2004). In addition to the accountability argument for standardized testing, there is also the national argument that the educational systems of all countries are ranked according to test results. In fact, ranking schools by test score is a key component to this paper; I define high achieving districts by standardized test results and graduation rate.

Massachusetts School Reform

While education reform was at the heart of the national agenda in 1983, Massachusetts sought to pass their own version of education reform. In 1993, Massachusetts passed Chapter 71, An Act Establishing the Education Reform Act of 1993. The Massachusetts Education Reform Act had a very aggressive agenda and sought to increase accountability for schools and educators. One could argue that Massachusetts School Reform altered the mission for public schools in the Commonwealth forcing school districts to focus on standardized tests.

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act set new standards for all students by requiring high school students to pass a comprehensive exam as a prerequisite prior to receiving a high school diploma. The Act read,

> The competency determination shall be based on the academic standards and curriculum frameworks for tenth graders in the areas of mathematics, science and technology, history and social science, and English. (M.G.L. Ch. 69 Section 1D)

Even though the Massachusetts Education Reform Act was passed in 1993, the states assessment system (MCAS) did not become a mandatory high school graduation requirement until 2000. In addition, and as you will read in the next paragraph, subject area tests were phased in over time.

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System was a major component of the Education Reform Act, but it took years to implement. The English and math exams were the first to be required in 2000. Science became a requirement for the class of 2010. At the time that this paper is being written, high school students in

Massachusetts need to successfully pass the MCAS in the areas of English, math, and science. MCAS has a scale of 200 to 280. The Massachusetts Department of Education (n.d.-b) defines the graduation requirement for math and English,

> Students must either earn a scaled score of at least 240 on the grade 10 MCAS ELA and mathematics tests, or earn a scaled score between 220 and 238 on these tests and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan. (para. 2)

An Educational Proficiency Plan is a plan created by the school outlining a student's course of study, grades attained, and attendance rate. Educational Proficiency Plans are governed solely by the school. This information on standardized testing in Massachusetts is significant because I rank high and low performing schools based on their performance on the MCAS. As such, my rankings of school districts are based on percentage of students who score advanced and proficient (scaled score above 240) on the 10th grade English/language arts, math, and science MCAS exams.

The MCAS was controversial at first and the lack of funding was one of the biggest arguments against implementing the new MCAS system. However, to counter this argument and in return for an increase in accountability, schools and administrators were promised an increase in state funding, also known in Massachusetts as Chapter 70. Outgoing Massachusetts Secretary of Education, Paul Reville, refers to the increase in state funding as "The Great Promise" (McDermott, 2011). Many Massachusetts state education leaders would argue that this promise was never fulfilled. Many widely held the notion that Chapter 70 was a good start to reforming education, but it quickly underfunded the effort. According to Tom Scott, the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents for the past 15 years, underfunding reform efforts was not very popular with the school superintendents across the

Commonwealth (T. Scott, personal communication, April 4, 2012). The President of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, and current superintendent of the Blackstone Valley Regional High School agrees explaining, "Massachusetts School reform was a catalyst for updating school systems primarily driven by private companies to increase accountability; there is no doubt that reform initiatives have been underfunded" (M. Fitzpatrick, personal communication, April 9, 2012). Financial resources are always a source of debate in education and unfunded mandates remain a hot-button issue today.

Financial issues, while important, were not the only issues impeding MCAS causing educators and policy makers to debate the mission of public school. There was a concern that implementing a high stakes test in high schools may cause graduation rates to decrease and dropout rates to increase. Educators, teachers, administrators, policy makers, legislators, parents and students were concerned about the varying degree of acceptance of all stakeholders and for good reason. Research has shown that if education policies are not widely accepted or controversial then the policies or initiatives are difficult to implement (Ball & Bowe, 1992; Cuban, 1990; Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988; Ravitch, 2000). One such group who opposed MCAS was The Massachusetts Coalition for Authentic Reform in Education (n.d.). This was a Massachusetts based organization composed of educators, parents, and students, who refer to the MCAS as the, "dumbing down of the curriculum" (para. 4). The Massachusetts Coalition for Authentic Reform (n.d.) is concerned about the narrowing of the curriculum and the overemphasis on areas tested. In Massachusetts music, art, physical education, family and consumer science are not measured by standardized tests.

In summary, MCAS was, and still is considered by many, to be a controversial component of Massachusetts Education Reform. Arguments about the effectiveness of standardized tests and level, or lack thereof, of funding are ongoing, but one thing is for sure; MCAS has altered the mission of public schools. Unlike any other time in the history of Massachusetts, public schools must adhere to the requirements set forth in Massachusetts Education Reform. However, Massachusetts is not alone. The transition to increased accountability in education through standardized testing which was occurring in Massachusetts was also being talked about across the nation and Massachusetts set the stage for the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

No Child Left Behind Act

At the turn of the century, the No Child Left Behind Act was about to significantly alter the American education system and change the mission for every public school across the nation. In November of 2000, George Walker Bush was elected the 43rd President of the United States. Early in his presidency he advocated for and eventually signed into law the NCLB. There were many initiatives of NCLB, perhaps the biggest being the requirement of testing. NCLB mandated standardized testing across the country and held schools accountable like no other time in American history. While many have argued that NCLB is the most ambitious initiative of reforming education in the United States, NCLB has received mixed reviews. DuFour et al. (2008) argue four reasons why NCLB has not been effective: First, it relies on a single test at one point in time. Second, a school could be failing because one subgroup (fewer than 30 students) may not meet the benchmark. Third, states have discretion in defining proficiency (huge

disparity). Finally, it was underfunded by over 31 billion dollars. More specifically, "Congress authorized more than 91.25 billion dollars over 5 years to help public education finance the new and demanding mandates of NCLB. Only 59.8 billion was actually approved; underfunded by 31 billion dollars" (p. 41). As a result, public support for NCLB has waned over time.

One reason that public support for NCLB has waned over time is because it set unrealistic and unobtainable goals. NCLB called for all students to be proficient by the year 2014 and it punishes schools for not meeting adequate yearly progress. According to the United States Department of Education (2002), the definition of adequate yearly progress is for states to decide, but, "based on expectations for growth in student achievement that is continuous and substantial, such that all students are proficient in reading and math no later than 2013-2014" (para. 1). As many predicted, the number of schools who have not met adequate yearly progress has increased. The Center on Education Policy (2011) reports, "The national percentage of public schools failing to make AYP rose from 29% in 2006 to an estimated 38% in 2010" (p. 1). In terms of long range planning, many suggest that having goals too far in advance is not realistic. In fact, Fullen (2010) specifically cites the ineffectiveness of NCLB when he advises educators to not have targets too far in to the future when planning for school and district improvement. This review of literature is not meant to provide an in depth analysis of all of the arguments for or against NCLB, rather it is meant to provide an overview of education reform and the changes that have led up to our current system. Our current education system is heavily dependent on the results of standardized tests and one can

argue that NCLB forced the mission of public schools in the United States to focus on standardized test or face public sanctions.

The unrealistic expectations and new federal approach of accountability of NCLB led to confusion and uncertainty amongst educators, students, and parents. This sense of uncertainty has a direct impact on the mission of public schooling and my theory of action. My theory of action for this dissertation is if a school district has content rich, accessible, mission statement then all members of the organization will understand the direction of the organization which is correlated to elevated levels of student engagement resulting in higher test scores. The direction of education as defined by NCLB and set by the Federal Department of Education was not easily understood by educators. The lack of direction and a clear mission from NCLB has a direct relationship with this study and my theory of action because this lack of a clear purpose from NCLB leads to school districts not understanding the direction of public education which is not correlated to higher levels of student engagement resulting in lower test scores.

Obama Blueprint

President Barrack Obama was elected in November 2008 and sworn in to office in January 2009. The Obama administration released in March 2010 an outline "blueprint" for their proposal to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Act (Barnett et al., 2010). The U.S. Department of Education followed with a set of six documents to support the blueprint (Barnett et al., 2010). The six reports were: College and Career Ready Students; Great Teachers and Leaders; Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners and Other Diverse Learners; A Complete Education; Successful, Safe and Healthy Schools;

Fostering Innovation and Excellence. Nine researchers reviewed the reports and found them to have: a missing accountability system, the reports focused on problems and were not research based solutions, extensive use of non-research and biased sources, and an over reliance on test scores (Barnett et al., 2010). More specifically, in the area of the College and Career Ready Student report, Mathis and Ravitch assert, "The research summary is rife with inaccuracies, misrepresentations, and misunderstandings of cited sources, as well as superficial treatment of the topics" (p. 18). While reviewing the Great Teachers and Great Leaders research summary, Shaker notes, "Since *A Nation at Risk*, we have become accustomed to the federal government repeating the errors propagated by advocacy think tanks and publishing reports that present themselves as science but which lack the essential characteristics of research or scholarship" (p. 30). The Obama Blueprint has been criticized for being a political text written to support a partisan agenda. Warren, in her review of A Complete Education, reports, "Overall the report's research support for the policy initiatives in the blueprint is overly selective and superficial; it is more of an experiment than a proven model" (p. 41). Klingner's conclusion on the usefulness of the report for Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners and Other Diverse Learners, "It is not a blueprint for change so much as a summary of the need for it; The usefulness of the report for guiding policy and practice is therefore limited" (p. 57). On the topic of Successful, Safe and Healthy Schools, Barnett, Glass and Welner report

> The research summary proposes laudable ideals by viewing schools as integral parts of the community and by advocating increasing family involvement with schools, extending learning time, and promoting health and safety. Few would disagree with those ideals, and the summary does an adequate job of raising concerns in these areas. Unfortunately, the research presented by the administration in support of its proposals generally stops far short of offering

> meaningful findings or illustrating useful policy directions. The evidence cited to support the administration's proposals does not in fact always support them, and unfavorable evidence tends to be omitted. (p. 71)

Finally, Belfield, in his review of Fostering Innovation and Excellence, deduce, "The reports policy recommendations seem disconnected from the research offered to support them" (p. 86). As the literature reveals, there are many who find problems with the Obama Education Blueprint. Once again, the lack of direction, trustworthiness, and confusion from our federal government leads to uncertainty for educators, parents/guardians, and students. This lack of a clear mission of public education is not positively correlated with elevated levels of student engagement resulting in higher student achievement. In fact, the lack of a clear vision is the exact opposite of my theory of action in regard to this study.

Reauthorizing No Child Left Behind

NCLB contains many sanctions for schools who do not meet adequate yearly progress including: loss of funding, transferring staff, mandatory school choice, providing tutors and extra services for high need students (also called supplemental education services), unfair labeling/designations, and others. Most educators and policy makers agree that NCLB needs to be reauthorized, but to date, there has been little action from Congress. In the current political environment, few politicians want to attempt to reauthorize NCLB. However, realizing that NCLB is flawed the United States Department of Education invited state departments of education to apply for waivers to protect schools from NCLB accountability sanctions. On February 9, 2012, Massachusetts was granted a waiver from NCLB (MA DESE, 2012-a). The

Massachusetts waiver granted more flexibility from the sanctions of NCLB. According to the MA DESE (2012-a), "Massachusetts's waiver will help move away from a 'one size fits all' approach" under NCLB, and allow for differentiated supports and interventions to schools and districts" (para. 1). Even though Massachusetts received a waiver from NCLB, MCAS and graduation rates remain a priority within the Commonwealth and schools are ranked on a list of 1-5 based on improvement in MCAS scores. Level 1 is defined as on track to college and career readiness, level 2 is not meeting gap closing goals, level 3 are the lowest performing 20% of schools (including schools with the largest gaps), level 4 are the lowest performing schools, and level 5 are chronically underperforming schools (MA DESE, 2012-b). For purposes of my study, all high ranked schools are in level 1, while lower performing schools are ranked in categories 3, 4, or 5. Currently, there is only one level 5 district in MA, Lawrence. As such, the Lawrence Public School District was placed in receivership by the MA DESE in January 2012. As the lowest ranked school district in my study, and the only school district in Massachusetts in receivership, I will more closely examine the Lawrence Public School District mission statement later in this paper.

Race To The Top (RTTT)

President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in 2009 and RTTT was included in ARRA. President Obama is quoted, "It's time to stop just talking about education reform and start actually doing it; it's time to make education America's national mission" (US DOE, 2009, para. 2). According to the United States Department of Education (US DOE) (2011), "RTTT is intended to encourage and reward

states that are implementing significant reforms" More specifically, the reforms are broken down into four categories: enhancing standards and assessments, improving the collection and use of data, increasing teacher effectiveness and achieving equity in teacher distribution, and turning around struggling schools (US DOE, 2011). Over four billion dollars was earmarked for RTTT and there have been three phases to date. Two states were awarded resources in phase one: Tennessee and Delaware, while 10 states were awarded resources in phase two Washington DC, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, and Rhode Island (US DOE, 2011). As my study focuses on schools in Massachusetts, it is worth noting that the Commonwealth has received a significant amount of money through RTTT. I argue that this money is a driving force to get school districts to adapt their mission to focus on significant reform efforts such as standardized tests, common curriculum, and new ways to evaluate teachers. Once again, the federal government is influencing the mission of public education.

Summary of 50 Years of Education Reform

In the last 50 years education reform has instituted many changes at both the state and national level. History has impacted how policy makers write and implement reform. The launch of Sputnik, the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act and the National Defense Act were early indicators of how federal policy impacted education. It can be argued that these changes have altered the purpose, or mission, of public schools. Sputnik and the National Defense Act caused schools to focus on the academic areas of math and science by using fear. The use of fear has spurred action and this fear of losing ground to

other countries is alive and well today. It can also be argued that the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act shifted the focus, or mission, of public education to address social issues. With the passage of Civil Rights and Voting Rights, public educators now had to deal with the issues of equity and equality for all students.

Perhaps the most significant aspect that has been changed in education in the past 50 years is the use of standardized tests for increasing accountability. Massachusetts was one of the first states in the nation to require standardized testing at various levels by passing Massachusetts School Reform Act of 1993. The country quickly followed Massachusetts and passed the No Child Left Behind Act a few years later. Standardized tests and school accountability have significantly changed the way that schools operate in Massachusetts and across the country. The increased emphasis on standardized tests are controversial and there are varying opinions as to whether they are effective. Opponents disagree with the narrowing of the curriculum and the focus on specific cognitive areas. Proponents like the increased accountability for both schools and teachers and stress that the United States needs to be competitive in the National standardized testing landscape in order to remain competitive in the future. Standardized tests have altered the purpose and mission of public education by measuring only certain academic areas. By narrowing the focus of curriculum to certain academic areas, reform efforts are ignoring other important aspects of education such as: social development, emotional development, and civic development. Coincidently, social development, emotional development, and civic development are all part of a coding rubric in which mission statements will be coded and analyzed further in this paper. I will discuss these themes in much greater detail in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

In addition to affecting the mission of public schools across the country, standardized test results play a significant role in this paper. Standardized tests are pertinent to this study because I rank Massachusetts school districts as high and low performing based on MCAS scores and graduation rate. The reliability of my ranking of schools in Massachusetts according to high and low achieving school districts relies significantly on the results of the MCAS.

Today, educators, policy makers, and politicians face important decisions that will continue to effect the operation of the American public school system. As more and more schools face the increased demands of No Child Left Behind, decisions about how to raise standards and hold schools accountable need to be answered. This issue is more and more pressing with each passing day. As schools, school districts, and even states fail to meet the rigorous requirements of No Child Left Behind, something has to give or we will find our public schools rated as failing or in need of improvement. Many states, Massachusetts included, have applied for and received waivers from No Child Left Behind. Therefore, there is a sense of urgency to better understand how schools, school districts, and states can be held accountable, but with realistic expectations for all students, schools, and school districts. As we proceed, and in order to provide perspective for the role of mission as a proxy variable for leadership and mission statements, it is necessary to have a fundamental understanding of leadership and leadership theory. The next part of this review of literature will shift focus to leadership, great leaders, mission, and vision.

Leadership

The next section of this literature review focuses on leadership. I provide examples of great leadership and begin to discuss mission, vision and creative tension in subsequent paragraphs. Leadership is a key component of this study because leaders are the ones responsible for moving organizations forward and communicating what is most important to all members of an organization. One way to communicate essential messages to an organization is through a mission statement. This study uses mission as a proxy variable for leadership to examine if correlations exist between school district's mission and student achievement.

Great Leaders

Leadership is essential for all organizations to thrive and leaders communicate their purpose and ideas through a mission and a vision. I will further define these two proxy variables of leadership (mission and vision) in subsequent paragraphs, but I will provide some examples first. Throughout the history of the world we have seen mission driven and visionary leaders accomplish the extraordinary. George Washington, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Theresa, Thomas Jefferson, Martin Luther King, Jr., Margaret Thatcher, and John F. Kennedy all come to mind when you think of great leaders. The aforementioned group had a gift for communicating a vision to a large group of people and they will be forever remembered for their incredible contributions to society. John F. Kennedy, our 35th President and Massachusetts native, laid the groundwork for his vision in his inaugural address in 1961 when he uttered his famous words, "Ask not what you country can do for you; Ask what you can do for your country."These words will forever

be remembered by all Americans in every generation. He inspired countless Americans to give something back to society and he had the overwhelming support of the public. Additionally, Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech will also live on as a reminder of a great leader who had a gift for inspiring others to see his vision. These are two examples of incredible leaders whose words have inspired others. It is rare to encounter such incredible leaders, but leadership happens every day in every school and organization across the world. The examples above illustrate the importance of communicating a vision to a wide audience. Great leaders recognize and possess vision.

Vision

Visionary leaders always seem to be a step ahead of others as they look toward the future. Visionary leaders have a knack for predicting what is going to happen and they position the organization, school, or group to get ready for the future. Forecasting the future is incredibly difficult and forecasts may not always be looked upon favorably. As leaders predict the future and decide on the best time to push salient issues, timing is vital. Sometimes it is best to act quickly and decisively, while other times it is better to move slowly, or let the issues ripen (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). Either way vision is important for leaders to recognize. Senge (2006) defines vision, "A vision is a picture of the future you wish to create, described in the present tense, as if it were happening now" (p. 302). For example, Martin Luther King, Jr. described a day on the red hills in Georgia when the sons and daughters of former slaves and slave owners sit together. His personal vision was also a call to action that inspired millions of people and changed history. This is an extreme example of how powerful a vision can be. Equally as powerful is a mission.

Mission

Mission is the underlying reason why a person, a school, or an organization exists and it is often referred to as purpose. Mission can motivate people to do extraordinary things and think in ways one never thought possible. John F. Kennedy's words in 1961, "Ask not what you country can do for you; Ask what you can do for your country" can be viewed as laying the mission or purpose for the people of the United States of America. Millions of people volunteered, served in the Peace Corps and helped others because of his powerful words. John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. were two larger than life leaders who have inspired the masses through their words, vision, and mission. It is worth pointing out that all visions and missions are not created equal and a negative vision can have a devastating effect on society. For example, Adolf Hitler had a vision that, at the time, had the support of many of the people around him. His vision spurred devastation and calamity. For good or bad, leadership makes a difference and visions and missions are proxy variables of leadership.

In schools, mission is the purpose of education. The mission is the reason why schools exist and the mission statement should reflect the purpose of schooling. The mission needs to be the cornerstone of every aspect of decision making. It is primarily the leaders who are responsible for communicating the mission, but mission permeates through successful schools from the highest administrator to the ground level worker. McTighe and Wiggins (2007) argue that every aspect of curriculum, instruction, and assessment should be linked to the school's mission statement describing schools without mission as, "a home for freelance tutors of subjects" (p. 25). If a school does not have a mission, it will lack direction and purpose.

Mission and vision are clearly different. Mission has come to represent the present state of an organization's purpose, the here and now or why the organization presently exists, while vision signifies the future of where an organization is going. The mission is present tense, while a vision looks to the future. Dufour et al. (2008) define the difference between mission and vision, "Whereas mission addresses the question of why an organization exists by clarifying its essential purpose, vision asks, what must we become to fulfill our purpose, what future do we hope to create for this organization" (p. 119). McTighe and Wiggins (2007) also define vision, "A vision is what we would see if our goals were achieved. A vision in this sense is an essential component in turning an inherently abstract mission statement into concrete policy and practice" (p. 23). In other words, a vision is what you have when you accomplish the mission. For example, many schools incorporate cognitive development or the acquisition of knowledge into their mission statement. While acquiring knowledge is stated in the mission, a district's vision looks further into the future describing the end result of acquiring knowledge, such as applying learned knowledge to improve society. As Covey (1989) coined, "begin with the end in mind" (p. 20).

Creative Tension

Building upon the difference between mission and vision leads to a discussion on how organizations move forward in an attempt to achieve the vision of the organization, school, or group. The importance of communication from leaders has been established, but there is a name for the difference between the current state of the organization and the vision. Creative tension is a phrase coined by Peter Senge (2006) to identify that

difference. He calls the difference between a vision and the current state of the organization creative tension. Senge explains, "Tension, by its nature, seeks resolution and the most natural resolution of this tension is for our reality to move closer to what we want" (p. 195). Senge believes that having a shared vision is vital to move an organization forward. According to Senge, the energy to promote change of the current reality comes from a "natural tension" of the future vision or where an organization is heading. When you juxtapose the mission and the vision, it provides the leader with a road map of where an organization needs to go. It is then the leader's responsibility to employ various leadership techniques to drive an organization toward that vision. Applying transformational leadership to a strong vision can motivate people to higher levels of effort and performance (Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kouzes & Posner, 2010; Kurtzman, 2010; Senge, 2006). Sometimes when people are so enthused and captivated with the vision and motivated by leadership it is referred to as being a part of something that is bigger than yourself. When an organization, school or group reaches this point, extraordinary results can happen.

Summary of Leadership

Leadership is important to all aspects of society. History allows us to review great leaders and examine why they were strong leaders who were effective in communicating their message to others. Two ways for leaders to communicate important messages to a wide audience are through a vision or through a mission. Visionary leaders look to the future to create or imagine a vision of what could be. On the other hand, mission is the fundamental reason why an organization, school, or group exists. Mission is the purpose

that drives the day to day operations of an organization, school, or group. The difference between mission and vision was coined creative tension by Senge (2006). Leaders can move an organization, school or group forward by analyzing, responding to, and facilitating creative tension. Great leaders employ a multitude of leadership techniques and effectively use both vision and mission often represented through statements.

Leadership Theory

There have been countless studies about leadership in virtually every sector of society and the literature is filled with many leadership theories. This section on leadership theory is not meant to be an exhaustive review. Rather, this section is limited in breadth and depth and will serve as a brief introduction of a few theories. Leadership theory is salient to this dissertation because mission driven leaders must have a solid understanding of the various theories surrounding leadership in order to be most effective and constantly communicate the fundamental purpose of the organization. As I previously mentioned, Senge (2006) identifies the difference between an organization's current state and a vision of where the organization needs to go as creative tension. Once a leader understands creative tension he/she must employ different leadership techniques or theories to move the organization forward.

It is helpful to first define leadership before discussing leadership theory. Therefore, I will now explore several definitions of leadership through the literature. Kouzes and Posner (2010) discuss leadership, "While there are several hundred definitions of leadership in the academic literature, the simplest way to know is to look and see if the leader has followers" (p. 62). Similarly, Maccoby (2007) defines leaders as

someone who people follow. Kurtzman (2010) concurs, "Leaders have followers, or, at least, leaders have people who join them in pursuit of a goal" (p. 143). Maxwell (1993) defines leadership as influence. Burns (1978) posits leadership is followership and followership is leadership. Bennis and Nanus (1985) state, "Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality" (p. 2). Covey (2004) defines, "Leadership is communicating to people their worth and potential so clearly that they come to see it in themselves" (p. 98). It is indisputable that leaders have followers and they find a way to get others to achieve common goals.

Great Man Theory

While there are many definitions of leadership, there are also many theories associated with leadership. I will now attempt to provide a brief overview of some theories surrounding leadership in this partial review of the literature. I will begin with one of the oldest theories surrounding leadership, the Great Man Theory. Leadership was once thought to be a birth rite and only certain individuals had the aptitude and ability to lead others. As one can deduce from the title, it was assumed that only men made great leaders. Bennis and Nanus (1985) describe the Great Man Theory:

> Leaders were born, not made, summoned to their calling through some unfathomable process. This might be called the "Great Man" theory of leadership. It saw power as being vested in a very limited number of people whose inheritance and destiny made them great leaders. Those of the right breed could lead; all others must be led. Either you had it or you didn't. No amount of learning or yearning could change your fate. (p. 5)

The Great Man Theory also believes that great leaders will emerge when there is a great need. For example, several great leaders (Ben Franklin, Thomas Jefferson) emerged in 1776 when the colonies were declaring their independence from England. While a case

can be made that there will always be times of great need and thus a need for great leaders, the belief that leadership is a birth rite is waning. Currently, there is no shortage of books about leadership all describing ways to learn to become a better leader, essentially negating the argument that leadership cannot be learned. It is now widely accepted that leadership skills can be taught, learned and improved upon (Abrahams, 1999; Anderson, Leithwood, Louis, & Wahlstrom, 2010; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Hallinger & Heck, 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Kotter, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 2010; Kurtzman, 2010; Meier, 2002; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000; Reeves, 2009; Senge, 2006). Every year, schools, private companies, and other organizations devote resources to training and retaining leaders. In conclusion, great mission driven leaders are not born, great mission driven leaders understand leadership theory and employ a variety of leadership techniques.

Trait Theory

Trait theories for leadership are similar to the Great Man Theory in that personal characteristics, or traits, that you have matter more than skill, hard work and knowledge. The number and variety of traits is daunting. The way a person behaves, thinks, and acts are all examples of traits. Introverts, people who prefer to work in small settings or alone, and extraverts, people who work in groups, are two examples of how behavior can be quantified. Some scholars disagree with trait theories because traits can be difficult to measure. For example, Elmore (2000) argues that trait theories romanticize educational leadership and schools would be better off focusing on instructional improvement. In fact, Elmore contends that instructional improvement should be the core of the work for

leaders and everything else should be defined around it. Another argument against trait theories surfaces when you have people who have a particular trait that is defined as being a good leader, yet they are not a good leader. This argument does not favor trait theories. There is also the argument that the number of desirable traits are limited and difficult to find. If an organization is looking for a particular leader with a focused trait, they may be overlooking leaders who have the skill and knowledge for the position. Kouzes and Posner (2010) contend

> Myth and legend treat leadership as if it were the private reserve of a very few charismatic men and women. Nothing is further from the truth. Leadership is much more broadly distributed in the population, and its accessible to anyone who has passion and purpose to change the way things are (p. 5).

It is worth noting that some people still subscribe to the great man theory and trait theory. Sherman and Yaverbaum (2008) suggest that specific leadership traits lend themselves to leadership. Kouzes and Posner (2010) interviewed over 7500 people to identify top character traits of admired leaders and the top four characteristics were honesty, forward thinking, inspiring, and competent. Great mission driven leaders cannot be classified by traits, rather effective mission driven leaders come in many different forms. What effective mission driven leaders have in common is they are determined to succeed not because of a particular trait, but because they are driven by the mission of the organization.

Behavior Theory

Behavior theories are rooted in the science of behaviorism and focus on the "behavior" of an individual; in other words, what the person does or acts like. Behavioral theories of leadership were the first to contend that leaders were made and not born.

Accordingly, behavioral theories assert that leadership can be learned and differ from the inherent Great Man Theory. A critical aspect of behavioral theories is that behavior is shaped and learned over time and experience and there is no best one style of leadership. Dr. Robert Blake and Dr. Jane Mouton worked together in 1964 to create the Managerial Grid Model which identified managerial behavior. This model is commonly referred to the leadership model that balanced a concern for production, people, and motivation. Blake and Mouton argued that an exclusive concern for production at the expense of the needs of those engaged in production leads to dissatisfaction which adversely affects performance (Blake, McCanse, & Mouton, 1989). However, an excessive concern to avoid conflict and maintain good relationships is also detrimental to the achievement of goals and objectives (Blake et al., 1989). Blake and Mouton are not the only ones with a behavioral leadership model. Author and MIT professor, Douglas McGregor has had a tremendous impact on behavioral leadership theory. He contends that leadership strategies are influenced by a leader's assumptions about human nature. He classified managers into two categories: theory X and theory Y. To summarize, Cutcher-Gershenfeld and McGregor (2006) define theory X managers as believing average human beings have an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if possible. Thereby further believing that most people must be coerced, controlled, directed, or threatened with punishment to get them to put forth adequate effort to achieve organizational objectives. On the other hand, theory Y managers believe human beings will exercise self-direction and self-control to achieve objectives to which they are committed. As a result of these two theories, leaders enact different management styles.

Effective mission driven leaders understand behavior leadership theory and how and why behaviors change over time. Mission driven leaders shape behavior over time by utilizing many forms of leadership techniques and balancing concern for production (production equals student achievement in education) with concern for staff. Mission driven leaders use behavior theory to better understand subordinates and how to best communicate the mission and vision for the organization.

Contingency Theory

Moving away from behavior theory, I will now focus on contingency theories. Rather than focusing on behavior, contingency theories focus on variables in the environment that determine which style of leadership is best for each situation. According to this theory, there is no best leadership style for every situation; rather, success depends on environmental variables, qualities of the followers, and leadership style. I will briefly discuss two contingency theories; situational theory and path-goal theory.

Situational Theory is One Type of Contingency Theory

Situational theory is based on that fact that the "situation" or circumstances surrounding a particular issue call for different kinds of leadership. The leader, or person in charge, must tailor the leadership style to the abilities of the followers as well as the situation. Once again, the underlying theme of situational leadership is that there is no best leadership style for every situation. Rather, each situation is unique and leaders need to take into consideration the commitment and competence level of employees before

using a particular leadership style. According to the theory, the best leaders are able to adapt each situation and employ a number of different styles. Ken Blanchard and Paul Hersey are widely known for their situational leadership model. Their model helps leaders diagnose individual needs and level of maturity to help leaders modify their management style: delegating, supporting, coaching and directing (Blanchard, Hersey, & Johnson, 2007). Hersey (1985) defines maturity as their readiness to perform in a given situation, where readiness is based on ability and confidence. By identifying needs through intervention, performance of employees can be improved more rapidly. According to Hersey, if change does not occur with an employee, he/she may not be the right fit and it is best to take immediate action.

The Path-Goal Theory is Another Example of Contingency Theory

The path-goal theory of leader effectiveness is another popular contingency theory that was originally written by Robert House in 1971 (House, 1971). The theory was revised and further tested in 1996 by the same author (House, 1996). House posits, "All theories, no matter how good at explaining a set of phenomena, are ultimately incorrect and consequently will undergo modification over time" (p. 348). The path-goal theory of leader describes the way leaders encourage and support their followers in relationship to goals. Once again, this theory does not favor a particular leadership style for every situation. In this theory, leaders employ different leadership skills depending on environmental factors and subordinate's motivation. More specifically, leaders use supportive, directive, participative, and achievement oriented leadership to clarify goals, remove barriers, and provide rewards for subordinates (House, 1996). Similar to the

situational theory described above, the variation of leadership tactics employed under the path-goal theory depend on other environmental factors and the employee's motivation. As this review is limited in scope, this summary is not meant to be an exhaustive review on all leadership theories; it is meant to be a brief overview.

Mission driven leaders have a firm grasp on contingency theories and they use this knowledge to effectively communicate the mission. Situational theory and the path-goal theory are two types of contingency theories previously discussed. Mission drive leaders use situational leadership to effectively communicate the mission and adapt to each situation. Each situation is different and the environment also plays a role. Mission driven leaders employ path goal theory into their leadership style depending on environmental factors and employee motivation. Mission driven leaders adapt their leadership and management style to align with the needs of the employee. Next, I will review management theory.

Transactional Theory

Transactional theory, also known as management leadership, is a theory based on the "transactions" or interactions between the leader and the subordinate. It is a simple theory based on the ideas that subordinates are not self-motivated, rather subordinates respond to orders from their superiors and, as a result, employees are ultimately praised or positively reinforced for doing a good job or punished or negatively reinforced for not meeting expectations. Often times the rewards can be financial, but the rewards and punishments can take other forms. Transactional leadership is most often found in traditional hierarchical organizations who delineate power through formal roles which no

reciprocal accountability. Avolio and Bass (2002) characterize the interactions between the leader and the follower by contingent rewards (mutually agreed upon goals), active management by exception (leaders actively monitor), passive management by exception (leaders only intervene for mistakes) or Laissez-faire (leader abdicates responsibility and does little). Transactional leadership can be criticized because leadership is viewed as responsive, rather than proactive and there is little room for subordinates exercise creativity (Bush, 2003).

Management leadership and mission driven leadership are not closely related for several reasons. First, management leaders rely on top down leadership where the leaders orders are to be followed and subordinates rewarded based upon their performance in alignment with the management's plan. Mission driven leadership relies on a balance of top down and bottom up leadership. Mission driven leaders understand that they need others to buy in to a mutually agreed upon mission. Mission driven leaders value the opinions of others and seek to incorporate a wide variety of perspectives in the development of the mission. Second, there is no reciprocal accountability with management leadership, while mission driven leaders encourage reciprocal accountability. Finally, management leaders rely on contingent rewards to motivate employees, whereas, mission driven leaders employ other methods more closely related to transformational leadership theory which will be described next.

Transformational Theory

Transformational leadership is also known as relationship leadership because it relies heavily on the relationships between the leader and the followers. Transformational

leadership is closely associated with mission driven leadership. Key components of this type of leadership include building trust, motivating people, inspiring others, distributing leadership, modeling, and helping others achieve their goals. Therefore, this type of leadership is most pertinent to this study of mission driven leadership, and a portion that I will devote to greater depth in this review of literature. James MacGregor Burns is credited with the origin of transformational leadership in the 1970's, while Bernard Bass expanded on his theory in the 1980s (Bass, 1998). According to Avolio and Bass (2002), there are four elements of transformational theory: intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. These four elements are essential components of mission driven leadership and will now be described in greater detail.

Intellectual Stimulation is the First Element of Transformational Theory

Intellectual stimulation is a means by which leaders encourage employees to "stimulate" new learning by challenging the status quo and allowing creativity. For example, the Ansari X Prize was a competition to award ten million dollars to a non-governmental organization to launch a reusable manned spacecraft into space twice within two weeks. *The Economist* (2010) reports that the Ansari X Prize was won in 2004 by a team led by Burt Rutan, a pioneering aerospace engineer, and Paul Allen, a co-founder of Microsoft who built and launched a craft called SpaceShipOne. It is further reported by DiJusto (2006), “The Ansari X Prize was a $10-million prize, but a little over $60 million of research was spent by everybody, 25 million by the winning team” (para. 1). The team that built SpaceShipOne was so intellectually stimulated that they spent

more building the craft than they received in prize money. If leaders can bring an organization to this point of intellectual stimulation, the sky, or space, is no limit. Intellectual stimulation was not the only leadership element employed in this example. The Ansari X Prize could also be classified as a classic example of transactional leadership, where the external reward was the ten million dollars. However, the ten million dollars was not the main source of motivation and if it was the only source of motivation the people working on it would have stopped when their expenses outweighed the monetary prize. The scientists and engineers working on the project have stated that the intellectual challenge was the primary motivator (*Economist*, 2010). The workers reported being so engrossed in the project that they lost track of everything else. Long days and countless hours were the norm and no one complained. This example also fits into the categories of individual consideration and inspirational motivation which will be subsequent paragraphs.

Intellectual stimulation is a key component of mission driven leadership. Mission driven leaders constantly look for ways to intellectually stimulate members of an organization. Mission driven leaders strive to create conditions in which people are so devoted to the mission that they will do just about anything. Intellectually stimulating employees and providing academic challenges motivate individuals towards common goals. The next component of transformational theory is individual consideration.

Individualized Consideration is the Second Component of Transformational Theory

Individual consideration is a leadership strategy meant to open lines of communication between leaders and followers, recognize individual employees, and

establish a free flow of ideas. In this strategy, the leader recognizes the individual and wants to help him/her as much as achieving the goal at hand. It is a mutually beneficial relationship; the leader tends to the followers' needs and they celebrate accomplishments together. As described in the previous paragraph, the winning team of the Ansari X Prize constantly communicated, challenged the status quo, valued creativity, and each member was rewarded financially for winning the prize. The Ansari X Prize winning team is a true example of leaders implementing individual consideration. Another example of individual consideration is the leadership technique employed at Wynn Resorts (2012). Chief executive officer, Steve Wynn, is quoted on the Wynn Resorts homepage, "My signature may top our resort, but it is every individual Wynn Resorts employee's signature that makes up the experience" (para. 4). Steve's comments speak to his commitment as CEO to honor the individual's position regardless of hierarchy in the organization. Wynn Resorts detail a storytelling program where all employees are encouraged to submit on-line stories about how they helped guests, thus honoring the individual. Leaders then review these stories and will often provide rewards and publish the stories for others to see. The communication lines remain open because all employees are able to view all stories to see what their peers are doing. Kurtzman (2010) further describes, "These heroics become exploits that other employees model, which builds the culture by emphasizing that everyone working at the hotel is a leader, even if they are paid only minimum wage plus tips" (p. 38). In fact, As a result of intellectual stimulation and individual consideration, employees feel valued and are intrinsically motivated.

Individual consideration is another key component to successful mission driven leadership. The establishment of a free flow of ideas is essential in developing a widely

accepted mission. In fact, a key first step in creating a mission is to gather opinions and solicit feedback from all stakeholders. I will discuss the formation of a mission through the creation of a mission statement later in this paper, but involving as many stakeholders as possible in the creation of the mission allows everyone to be heard and creates ownership. Also, mission driven leaders incorporate individual consideration when the celebrate achievements together and recognize individual accomplishments. Mission driven leaders want employees to experience success and they understand that the success of the organization is directly related to the success of the individual. For these reasons individual consideration is a key component of mission driven leadership.

Inspirational Motivation is the Third Element of Transformational Theory

According to Bass (1998), inspirational motivation is the ability of the leader to articulate a vision that permeates throughout an organization. In other words, the positive vision of the leader becomes contagious in an organization because followers are inspired and motivated by the leader. A vision, or mission, is one way of motivating others and gaining loyalty. Bennis and Nanus (1985) expand,

> If vision is the idea, then positioning is the niche the leader establishes. For this niche to be achieved, the leader must be the epitome not only of clarity, but of constancy, of reliability. Through establishing the position- and, more important, staying the course- leadership establishes trust. (p. 46)

It is important to point out that building trust and inspiring others is not always easy. As Dlott (2007) posits, vision, by its very nature, implies a change in the status quo, and this will cause discomfort. Change, especially in the field of education, is very difficult and I am reminded of one of my favorite quotes from Maxwell (2010), "The only person who likes change is a wet baby" (p. 93). As strong leaders must develop powerful visions,

they must also be aware of all of the facts surrounding the vision. In particular, a leader must confront the brutal facts, let the truth be heard, and not get blinded when things are not going well (Collins, 2001). Collins provides an example,

> Roy Ash, CEO of Addressograph, became so wedded to his bold vision of dominating IBM, Xerox and Kodak that he refused to confront the mounting evidence that his plan was doomed to fail. Ash was fired and the company bankrupt. Lesson: confront the brutal facts. (p. 70)

As the evidence demonstrates, visions can help, or hurt, an organization. Ultimately, it is incumbent on the leader who must decide the direction of an organization.

Inspirational motivation is synonymous with mission driven leadership. Mission driven leaders strive to create the conditions of inspirational motivation and gain loyalty from subordinates. When leaders are reliable, transparent, and positive they create trust in the organization. Building trust takes time and this task cannot be underestimated. Leaders must be determined, honest, consistent, and visionary to employ inspirational motivation. There is no better way to motivate individuals than through inspiration and successful mission driven leaders know this.

Idealized Influence is the Fourth Element of Transformational Leadership

According to Bass (1998), this is the ability of the leader to build trust with followers and model behavior for others. Every action of a leader is examined by followers and there is no substitute for honesty and a sense of being a trustworthy leader. Kurtzman (2010) validates, “People within organizations tend to model of the people at the top” (p. 59). Kurtzman provides an example

> As strange as it may seem, in some organizations, people model the personality styles of the individuals at the top. When Bill Gates still worked at Microsoft on a day-to-day basis as founder, chairman, and CEO, I saw many people adopt his

> rather idiosyncratic mannerism of rocking back and forth in his seat as he listened to others speak. Some people at Microsoft even adopted Gates's way of talking, elongating their vowels and taking on a Seattle accent even if they were born in London or Mumbai. (p. 59)

Transformational leaders realize that building trust in organization is omnipotent. Followers of transformational leaders feel trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect toward leaders and are motivated to perform extra-role behaviors (Bass, 1985; Katz & Kahn, 1978). In all organizations people are attuned to their leaders and this can be a positive or negative experience for an organization. Kurtzman (2010) goes as far to say that leaders are viewed in microscopic detail. Therefore, every action of a leader can have an effect on the organization. Heifetz and Linsky (2002) refer to Bill Clinton's extramarital affair during his reign as the 42nd president of the United States as an example of a character flaw which caused mistrust ultimately hurting his chances to advance his agenda. It is well documented that mistrust of leaders is rampant in organizations (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kouzes & Posner, 2010; Kurtzman, 2010; Meier, 2002; Senge, 2006). In order to be effective, leaders need to dedicate time, listen to others, show empathy, model, empower others, and establish relationships with the goal of building trust. Once trust is established, then and only then can a leader get others to see his/her vision.

Mission driven leaders understand that every member of the organization pays a great deal of attention to the leader. Therefore, successful mission driven leaders serve as role models for everyone in an organization. Every detail, every action, and every move of the leader matters a great deal to the organization. Idealized influence is essential for mission driven leaders.

Summary of Leadership Theory

There are many theories about leadership and this partial review of the literature highlights some of the most popular. Today's mission driven leaders must have a solid understanding of leadership theory because the literature tells us that different leadership techniques work best with different people and every situation is unique. Senge (2006) posits creative tension is the difference between where an organization is and where an organization needs to go. Great leaders understand that they need to identify creative tension, adapt to each individual circumstance, and adjust their leadership style based on theory as appropriate. Moreover, if a leader is to effectively communicate a mission, he/she better understand what leadership techniques work best in various conditions and situations. As I have already established, mission is critical to leadership and mission is one of most important topics of this paper.

Three theories that were briefly discussed were the Great Man Theory, the Trait Theory, and Behavior Theory. The Great Man Theory was one of the earliest leadership theories and it views leadership as a birthright. Trait Theory examines the traits of leaders. This theory has been criticized because traits are difficult to measure and quantify. However, researchers have found ways to identify some traits and this theory remains popular today. Behavior Theory subscribes to the belief that behaviors change over time and there is no one best style to leadership. Also, effective leadership can be learned over time. Blake and Moulton are credited with creating the managerial grid which essentially has leaders adjust their management style to the situation.

Two contingency theories were discussed: Situational Theory and Path-Goal Theory. Contingency theories focus on variables in the environment to determine the best

leadership technique. Situational leadership essentially says that there is no one best style of leadership and that each situation is different, thus leaders must adapt to the situation. The path goal theory is similar, but a leader employs techniques depending on environmental factors and an employee's motivation. Contingency theories are used in many different forms.

Transactional Theory and Transformational Theory concluded the review on leadership theories. Transactional theory is a simpler theory based on interactions between the leader and the subordinate, while transformational theory is more complex. More time was spent on transformational theory because it is the theory most associated with dynamic visionary leaders. The four components to transformational theory are: intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. These four elements are the cornerstone of transformational leadership and essential for mission driven leaders. To conclude, these four elements are necessary for mission driven leadership. Mission driven leaders must: stimulate employees to a challenging academic level and keep them engaged, seek to help the individual employee as much as the organization, inspire others through vision or mission, and establish trust and model high ethical standards. When mission driven leaders use these four components of transformational leadership, organizations, schools, or groups are poised to perform at high levels.

Educational Leadership

Thus far, I have discussed education reform, leadership and leadership theory. I will now switch my focus to leadership in education. As previously stated, this study

examines the correlations between district mission and student achievement. The mission of a school district is defined, in part, by the leaders of a school district: principals, superintendent, and other individuals who assume leadership roles. The superintendent and principals are not only responsible for setting the direction, but they are responsible for the day to day operations and guiding the school district over time. In this chapter, I will examine the role of the superintendent and the principals, as well as the concept of distributed leadership. This partial review will focus on school leadership, creative tension and the various roles of superintendents, principals and teacher leaders. This limited review on school leadership is important to this study because it is the school leader and leaders who set the mission and direction of the school. My purpose is to research the mission of various districts to see if a connection exists between high and low performing public school districts in Massachusetts. Once again, this review of school leadership literature is limited in size and scope and it is not meant to be exhaustive overview of all school leadership literature.

It is rooted in the literature that leadership in schools make a difference (Anderson et al., 2010; Brayboy, Cozart, Jennings, & Noblit, 2007; City, Elmore, Fiarman, & Teitel, 2009; Dlott, 2007; DuFour et al., 2008; Fullen, 2010; Hallinger & Heck, 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Meier, 2002; Reeves, 2009; Schmoker, 2011; Wheatly, 2006). From superintendents, principals, and teachers, leadership in schools come from a variety of people and appear in a variety of forms. The expectations put on school leaders, especially central office personnel (i.e., superintendents) are enormous. School leaders are responsible for setting the direction of the school or school district, adhering to state and national laws, developing staff,

ensuring accountability, promoting equity, improving learning, preparing students for life during and after compulsory education, mentoring staff and students, producing productive citizens, ensuring a safe environment and providing appropriate professional development for all staff members. Stakeholders set lofty expectations for school officials and they want positive results.

Role of the Superintendent

School superintendents are responsible for all students, teachers, and staff within a school system. A superintendent is for all intents and purposes the chief executive officer for a school district. A superintendent's role and responsibility depends of the location of the school district and all school districts are unique. Some superintendents are responsible for hundreds of thousands of students in a region or large city, while others have fewer students. The role of the superintendent is crucial to this study because the superintendent sets the direction for the school district. The superintendent is responsible for identifying creative tension and moving the school community towards the established vision. A firm grasp of mission driven leadership is essential to survive and thrive as a superintendent. Superintendent’s often employ statements to communicate the vision and the mission of the district. This study analyzes the district-wide mission statements from high and low achieving school districts.

School superintendents are, according to the hierarchal organization of most public school districts, the chief executive officers bearing all responsibility for a school district. Superintendents are usually involved or leading the creation, evaluation, or revision of a school district's mission. Therefore, the type of leadership demonstrated by

the superintendent is vitally important. Research tells us that leadership from superintendents makes a difference (Anderson et al., 2004). Dufour et al. (2008) explain, "Leadership from the central office matters- both in terms of raising student achievement and in terms of creating conditions for adult learning that lead to higher levels of student achievement" (p. 45). However, as we have learned from the literature review on leadership theory, there is little credence to the Great Man Theory. Spillane (2005) notes, "School leaders do not single-handedly lead schools to greatness; leadership involves an array of individuals with various tools and structures" (p. 143). Regardless, the expectations for school superintendents in Massachusetts are vast and one person cannot do it alone. According to the MA DESE's superintendent's checklist (2012-c), which outlines a superintendent's responsibilities with the DESE, there are 108 distinct items. From ensuring accountability for all staff to maintaining school facilities, superintendents are responsible for every aspect of schooling. Lashway (2002) posits, "Next to 'crisis,' the word most commonly attached to school leadership in recent years has been 'impossible'" (p. 3). Today's ambitious agenda and lofty expectations make it impossible for one person to do everything, but the superintendent is responsible and accountable for everything that happens in a school district. Therefore, in order to be highly effective, savvy superintendents must be well grounded in leadership theory and employ numerous leadership and management techniques in various situations. Distributing leadership is essential for superintendents, but before, I go into more depth about distributing leadership, I will briefly discuss the role of the principal.

Role of the Principal

While superintendents are responsible for school districts, a principal's responsibility resides with a smaller group of constituents usually categorized as an elementary school, a middle school, or a high school. The role of the principal has increased significantly through state and federal reform. Sorenson (2005) describes the ever-changing role of the principal as a leader who: must know the law and legal requirements, understand instructional leadership, discern and set direction for curriculum issues, and manage relationships with superintendents, parents, students, and staff. In Massachusetts, the Education Reform Act of 1993 and the national NCLB Act have changed the role of the principal and, as was stated earlier, increased accountability in the areas of standardized testing and high school graduation rates. Standardized tests results and graduation rates are the criteria that I use to define high and low achieving schools. Principals must provide leadership and vision to ensure that schools are achieving positive results in these areas.

The literature supports that a highly effective principal has a positive effect of student achievement (Fullen, 2010; Marzano et al., 2005; Reeves, 2009). Principals are the featured leaders in each school building. Principals lead the day to day operations and they must also communicate the mission and the vision. Anderson et al. (2009) report that a principal is the second most influential person in a school; a teacher is the first. A principal has an indirect influence on student learning. Dufour et al. (2008) explain

> The actions and behaviors of the principal do not directly affect student learning because principals do not provide direct instruction to students. It is the actions and behaviors of the teachers that directly affect student achievement since teachers provide direct instruction. In other words, principals affects teachers who in turn have a direct influence on student achievement. (p. 49)

A principal's importance to a school cannot be understated. They are the on-site leaders who communicate expectations to the school community. Principals are also responsible for school accountability through standardized tests and other measurable statistics.

Distributed Leadership

As the literature states principals and superintendents do not have a direct influence on student learning. However, school and district administrators are instrumental in setting the mission and the vision and communicating expectations to all staff. Successful school and school district leaders are mission driven who employ leadership theory to motivate and inspire others towards a common vision. Principals and superintendents cannot fulfill a school or a district's vision all by themselves; they need to motivate and inspire all staff towards the common vision. It is even more important to employ mission driven leadership and to build leadership teams in struggling schools. In February 2011, at the National Conference on Joint Labor Management Collaboration in Denver, Colorado, sponsored by the US Department of Education and the Ford Foundation, there were many speakers who discussed turnaround leadership; one commonality surfaced, the research supports that there are no schools that have been turned around without strong mission driven leadership. Strong mission driven leaders must work collaboratively with all members of the school community to distribute leadership and formulate a plan to make the shared vision a reality. Moreover, Anderson et al. (2004) define the basics of leadership in three steps: setting directions, developing people, and redesigning an organization. The most powerful way to set direction is to establish a common and shared mission and vision. With increased demands on

accountability, adhering to legal requirements, curriculum matters, and managing relationships with superintendents, staff, students and parents, it is increasingly important that school leaders empower others and distribute leadership.

Distributed leadership is widely discussed in the literature and it is also referred to as shared leadership, team leadership, and democratic leadership. Anderson et al. (2004) describe why distributed leadership is important to education, "Neither superintendents or principals can do the whole leadership task by themselves. Successful leaders develop and count on contributions from many others in their organizations" (p. 7). As described in the previous pages, the role of the superintendent and principal is becoming increasingly sophisticated; they can't do it all. Spillane (2005) supports the idea that educational leaders need to share leadership with others, but he contends that involving others in the decisions is not new. He refers to distributed leadership as leadership practice, rather than defined roles. He clarifies,

> Rather than viewing leadership practice as a product of a leader's knowledge and skill, the distributed perspective defines it as the interactions between people and their situation. These interactions, rather than any particular action, are critical in understanding leadership practice. (p. 144)

In other words, the situation defines the changing roles of the leadership practice. Spillane classifies 3 elements: collaborative distribution, collective distribution and coordinated distribution. First, collaborative distribution is when the actions of the leader become the basis for the actions of another leader. Second, collective distribution is when leaders act separately and independently for a shared goal. Finally, coordinated distribution is defined as sequential tasks led by different individuals. At the 2009 Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) Summer Institute, Richard and Rebecca Dufour discussed the implementation of Professional Learning

Communities into schools and school districts. They talked about the importance of leadership and the difficulty of getting people on board with a new initiative. They argued that top down leadership doesn't work because it doesn't give everyone a voice. In addition, bottom up leadership is plagued with problems because people need direction on where they are going and what they are doing. Rather, they made the case for a mixture of both and to distribute leadership to key people. In fact, distributed leadership is a key concept for moving schools forward. Hallinger and Heck (2009) recently completed a study to examine how distributed leadership affects student achievement. They looked at 195 elementary schools over four years and found that schools who had collaborative decision making and distributed leadership achieved significant gains in math achievement over time. Simply put, to get the most out of distributed leadership, leaders must strike a balance between the top down and the bottom up approach. Distributed leadership is a good concept, but in order to effectively share leadership with others, it is important to have the right team which will be discussed next.

In order to distribute leadership, principals and superintendents must surround themselves with people they can trust: the right team. Collins (2001) considers this an essential part of leadership. Collins elucidates, "Leaders must first ask who and then what... Great vision without great people is irrelevant" (p. 42). Collins also believes that it is equally important to make sure that the wrong people are dealt with accordingly .The right team is essential toward making progress. Reeves (2009) agrees, "Of all the variables that influence student achievement, the two that have the most profound influence are teacher quality and leadership quality" (p. 67). Having the right team and support for a leader is essential, but it is important that leaders discern truth from fiction

and being told what they want to hear for purposes of getting along. Our 16th President, Abraham Lincoln, was noted for choosing a team of people around him who had varying viewpoints. Goodwin (2005) refers to Lincoln's political genius and ability to assemble "A Team of Rivals" as one of his strongest accomplishments as a leader. It is not only important to assemble the right team, but the leader needs to be attuned to the organization and subordinates. Not listening to honest feedback is another pitfall that leaders need to be aware of. Kurtzman (2010) describes one of the largest business scandals in American history, "Had Ken Lay (Enron CEO) listened to the insights and warnings of an underling, he could have prevented what became the world's largest bankruptcy up to that time" (p. 3). To conclude on distributed leadership, it is not only important to assemble the right team, the leader must open the lines of communication and listen to other perspectives, especially when those perspectives do not align with the leaders.

Summary of Educational Leadership

Superintendents and principals are the primary leaders of school districts who communicate and set the mission and the vision for the school and the district. Both superintendents and principals are responsible for finding the creative tension in a school or district and moving the stakeholders towards a common vision. Superintendents as central office leaders are usually responsible for more than one school, but superintendent responsibilities vary widely depending on the location of the school district, the total number of students and the total number of staff. Principals are building based instructional leaders responsible for the day to day operation of the school and a myriad

of other responsibilities. Usually, superintendents are charged with developing district-wide goals and initiatives, while principals generally focus on the school level. The role of the superintendent and the principal are important to this study because they are ultimately responsible for the performance, high or low, of the district and because they are responsible for setting the mission and the vision for the school and/or district. The role of the superintendent is especially important in this study because I am looking at district-wide mission statements. A district's mission statement is one way for a superintendent to communicate the essential elements of a mission. Mission driven superintendents understand the importance of communicating the mission to all stakeholders. My theory of action for this dissertation is if a school district has a content rich, accessible, mission statement then all members will understand the direction of the organization which will bring about elevated levels of student engagement and result in higher test scores. A review of the literature indicates that school level mission statements have been researched before, but, to my knowledge, this study is the first research study to analyze district-wide mission statements in relation to student achievement.

Distributed leadership was also discussed in the previous section. Distributed leadership is another name for sharing the leadership or distributing the leadership responsibility to others. Distributed leadership is important to this study because in today's education environment successful leaders cannot do it alone. No one person or "great man" can outperform a strong team. High achieving school districts are getting positive results because of a collective effort. As such, good test scores, positive school culture, and everything positive in a school is a credit to the teachers and staff on the front lines.

Mission Driven Leadership

To date, this review of literature has discussed a brief history of state and national education reform including: the launch of Sputnik, the Civil Rights Act, the increasing role of federal policy, *A Nation at Risk*, No Child Left Behind, the Obama Blueprint, and Race To The Top. These topics demonstrate how education changed over time and how the federal government has played an increasing role in the mission public education in the United States. In fact, some might argue that the mission of public education has shifted to a culture of accountability measured solely by achievement on standardized tests. The present study ranks school districts as high and low performing based on test results and graduation rate. The next section was titled leadership and focused on: great leaders, vision, mission, and creative tension. This section provided examples of great leaders and how a vision was communicated to others to inspire major change. Mission, creative tension, and vision were defined and we learned that leaders are responsible for moving the organization forward. Following that, I summarized leadership theory including: Great Man Theory, Trait Theory, Behavior Theory, Contingency Theory, Transactional Theory and Transformational Theory. These theories provided a theoretical framework for mission driven leadership. The previous section was devoted to educational leadership and the role of the superintendent, the role of the principal, and distributed leadership. I discussed the roles of superintendents and principals in mission driven leadership in term of this study. Next, I discuss mission driven leadership, mission driven leadership in Massachusetts, developing mission statements, mission statements change over time, and the importance of communicating the mission.

The literature has established that mission driven leadership is important to schools, organizations, or groups. Usually, the mission of an organization is crafted in a mission statement. Mission statements are incredibly powerful and elicit strong responses from stakeholders. Sometimes mission statements are widely known and other times they are not. How well a mission statement is communicated to a school, organization, or group is usually a reflection on the leader(s). Leadership literature confirms the importance of mission. In fact, Hallinger's (2004) leadership dimension model lists defining a school's mission as a top priority. Moreover, mission driven leadership is cited in many accrediting agency's criteria and has been listed in the Massachusetts Conditions for School Effectiveness (MA DESE, 2011, para. 2). In describing what instructional leaders should pay most attention to in school districts, Anderson et al. (2004) say,

> Evidence is quite strong in identifying, for example, school mission and goals, culture, teacher's participation in decision making, and relationships with parents and the wider community as potential powerful determinants of student learning. (p. 13)

Organization theories teach us that without a mission and vision an organization does not have a clear and unified direction. In explaining the importance of seeing the big picture and thinking in terms of a vision, Heifetz and Linsky (2002) relate leadership to dancing: "Get off the dance floor and see yourself from the balcony- step back from the midst of action and ask what is going on here" (p. 50). In other words, leaders must be able to see the big picture and avoid getting bogged down in the daily routine. The view from the balcony is much different than the view from the dance floor. By stepping back and looking from afar, one will often see patterns and other distinguishing details that cannot be seen otherwise. Mission driven leaders must be aware of the big picture and take the time to reflect on an organization from many different perspectives.

Mission Driven Leadership in Massachusetts

Mission statements are important to schools and school districts across the nation and Massachusetts is leading the way. As I previously mentioned, mission driven leadership is an essential component for the Massachusetts Conditions for School Effectiveness (MA DESE, 2011). Moreover, all Massachusetts school superintendents will soon be assessed through a new evaluation system including criteria judging the leader's ability to promote a mission driven culture. Creating a mission driven culture is considered standard practice throughout the Commonwealth and the new standards emphasize mission more than ever. The accrediting body of high schools in the northeast, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) requires schools wishing to receive accreditation to have a mission statement and/or core values. NEASC has seven standards of accreditation with the first standard being mission and expectations for student learning. NEASC (2011) reports "The school's mission statement describes the essence of what the school as a community of learners is seeking to achieve" (p. 2). In addition to the NEASC requirement for a school to have a mission statement, many grant applications, both federal and local, ask schools about their mission and how their application relates to the mission. In fact, the first question from the MA DESE in their innovation school request for proposal asks the school district to state the mission and vision of their proposal. I am the superintendent of the first school district in the Commonwealth to have all schools in one district receive innovation status. Mission and vision are sacred in my school district. Moldenhauer-Salazar (2000) support the notion that mission statements help organize top educational priorities, guide change, and maintain support for change. In conclusion, mission driven leadership is important to

schools for setting direction, instituting change, accrediting schools, and organizing priorities. All school superintendents in Massachusetts will soon be evaluated on how well they promote a mission driven culture. In the next paragraph I will briefly review how mission statements are formed.

Developing a Mission Statement

As illustrated in the previous review of leadership and leadership theory, distributing leadership and opening the lines of communication is essential to institute positive change. Leaders need to be sure that they look at the organization as a whole to ensure stakeholders' voices are being heard. Dufour et al. (2008) explains

> Leaders who are the most skillful in building consensus need not resort to saying, "Listen to me, I have decided what we must become," but will instead be able to say, "I have listened to you, and this is what I heard you say you want for yourselves and for our students." (p. 121)

The same hold true when crafting a mission statement. There is no substitute for opening the lines of communication and involving stakeholders in an effort to build consensus when writing a mission statement. Everyone in an organization may have an opinion as to where they believe the organization is heading and they will want to be heard. The responsibility of crafting a mission statement cannot be underestimated. As Hara (2005) reports, "Each word in a mission statement is important and exhibits immense weight and responsibility" (p. 4). An organization may have difficulty reaching consensus and savvy leaders prepare for a myriad of emotions during this process. In addition to dealing with the emotions of crafting a mission statement, leaders need to also understand that mission statements are not crafted overnight. Ireland and Hitt (1992) agree, "Preparing an effective mission statement is not accomplished easily or quickly" (p. 38). Therefore, it

behooves the leader to think of these issues before starting the process of writing a mission statement.

It has been well established that mission statements take time to create and it is best to involve as many stakeholders in the process as possible. Involving stakeholders and distributing leadership is a relatively new skill for some. Covey (2004) provides his perspective in the paradigm shift

> Myth: Mission statements and strategic priorities are developed by those who know best- the people at the top. Reality: Mission statements and strategic priorities that are developed in a rush by those at the top and then announced are forgotten. Without involvement and strong identification, there will be no commitment. (p. 216)

Once again, as Covey argues, it is essential to garner input from all stakeholders in an effort to bring others on board. Effective mission driven leaders understand the importance of soliciting input from many stakeholders. Effective mission driven also recognize that context, people, and values sometimes change over time.

Mission Statements Change Over Time

As leaders change and outside forces fluctuate, mission statements are subject to modification over time. Sometimes an incoming leader has a different philosophy from their predecessor, or there could be other outside forces at play causing an organization to change or re-evaluate their mission. Whatever the circumstance, mission statements are fluid and apt to adjustment over time. For example, the United States Military Academy's (USMA) mission statement has changed over the years. Garner (1992) reports, "Throughout the Military Academy’s 190 year history, its mission has been influenced~ to one degree or another~ by four factors: wars, national military policy, changing

national environment, and the personality of West Point's leaders" (p. 16). Change is not unusual and Richardson further notes that the mission statement for the USMA at West Point was changed from its original statement to a new statement and then changed back to its original statement (Richardson, 2006). Even if an organization's mission statement hasn't changed, there is usually some type of review system in place to avoid losing relevance. Sometimes mission statements lose effectiveness when they are handed down over time. Effective mission driven leaders adapt to change when it is necessary and they also recognize the importance of communicating the mission to others.

Communicating the Mission

Now that we have established the importance of mission driven leadership and mission statements in schools, I will review some ways that the mission can be communicated to stakeholders. In order for a mission statement to be effective, it must be well known and permeate throughout an organization (Covey, 2004; DuFour et al., 2008; Fullen, 2010; Hallinger & Heck, 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Marzano et al., 2005; Meier, 2002; Reeves, 2009). There are many ways for mission driven leaders to communicate a mission: using the mission in written and oral communications, posting the mission throughout the organization, putting the mission statement on letterhead, listing the mission statement on newsletters, and posting the mission statement on the school district's website. For purposes of this study, I will focus on schools who post their mission statement on their website.

It is well established in the literature that websites are an effective way to communicate information about an organization or school (Center for the Study of

Education Policy, 2004; Monahan & Tomko, 1996; PTA, 2009; US DOE, 2010). Many consider websites one of the best ways to share information with stakeholders. Azzopardi (2006) posits,

> Your web site is your shop window and it is open 24/7. It needs to be eye catching and transmit your message in a few seconds. It needs to have enough content that explains your message and what you do. It needs to load fast, be reliable and look professional. The impression your web site should give is that of a company or professional who knows what they want to sell, or the message they want to send. (para. 2)

A website never closes, unless there are technical problems, and it is a simple, yet effective way, to communicate information to the outside world. Eschenfelder et al. (n.d.) note the importance of the school's website, "The webpage is the gateway to all other forms of communication" (p. 7). A school's website is the connection to all stakeholders and, if monitored and updated over time, it can serve a source to foster shared understanding of a school's mission. Shared understanding, as we have learned about in the discussion on leadership theory, can lead to greater commitment from stakeholders to help the school move forward.

While it has been established that websites are useful tools for schools to communicate the mission and other information, it is important to note that all schools' websites are not equal. School districts are responsible for creating, monitoring, and updating websites and often resources can inhibit progress. While evaluating common components of school based websites, Adsit, Miller, and Miller (2005) found financial resources and willingness of the web developer as the two main factors that hinder school websites. As a result, schools in affluent communities may have more prominent and sophisticated websites because they have greater resources. This study is limited as

school finance and resources are not part of my results. Future researchers may want to incorporate school finance and resources into future studies.

Summary of Mission Statements

In summary, the importance of mission driven leadership, in both business and education, are well documented in the literature. One of the most effective ways to communicate mission is through a mission statement. Mission driven school leaders provide direction for all staff and all members of the school community. Mission statements guide the day to day decisions and serve as the fundamental purpose of a school. In Massachusetts, mission statements are taking on an increasing role in school leadership. Mission is listed in the Conditions for School Effectiveness (2011) and superintendents will soon be evaluated on their role in creating a mission driven culture.

The development of a mission statement should not be taken lightly. Schools are far better off involving stakeholders and surveying the community when developing a mission. Empirical research highlights the importance of involving stakeholders in the development of a mission statement. In addition to the importance of involving others, effective mission driven leaders recognize that mission statements may not last forever and some are apt to change over time. When leaders change or outside forces are in sending mixed messages, it may be an indication that it is time to change or adjust the mission statement. Even if the mission statement does not change, effective mission driven leaders understand the importance of reviewing the mission statement periodically.

A mission driven culture is fostered by the widespread communication of the mission statement. Effective mission driven leaders use the mission verbally and in writing. Posting the mission statement throughout an organization also reminds stakeholders what is important. In the 21st Century, a school's website is a terrific tool for schools to communicate with the community. Websites never shut down, barring technical problems, and websites are often the first form of communication that schools have with the world. Using the website to communicate the mission statement is an effective use of technology and a key component of this study.

Leaders are accountable to stakeholders for the performance of an organization. In public education, state and national school reform efforts have altered the landscape for school leaders. No Child Left Behind mandated, in part, a new type of accountability system for schools, school districts, principals, superintendents, and teachers. Standardized tests and high school graduation rates are two ways in which schools the effectiveness of schools are measured to. Superintendents in Massachusetts will soon be evaluated as to how well they promote a mission driven culture. A mission driven culture is also listed in the Massachusetts Conditions of School Effectiveness. This study explores the relationship between mission driven leadership and academic achievement as defined by graduation rates, and standardized test scores. Therefore, this review of literature supports this study.

Empirical Studies Examining Mission Statements

While searching for empirical studies connected to mission statements, I discovered that there are not many studies readily available. In fact, there were only a handful of researchers who have examined this topic. The earliest empirical study that I

could find on the topic of analyzing school mission statements was authored by Bebell and Stemler (1999) titled, "An empirical approach to understanding and analyzing the mission statements of selected educational institutions" (para. 1). Fortunately, Damian Bebell, an assistant professor at Boston College, and Steven Stemler, an assistant professor at Wesleyan University, are geographically located close by and they were willing to discuss their research on mission statements with me. Bebell and Stemler's research on mission statements started in the 1990s and continues today. Recently, they published *The School Mission Statement: Values, Goals, and Identities In American Education* (2012). Bebell and Stemler's work has been helpful for research and my study is based on a mission statement coding rubric that they developed.

Bebell and Stemler (1999)

In 1999, Bebell and Stemler presented their first study on mission statements at the annual meeting of the New England Educational Research Organization. This study, "An Empirical Approach to Understanding and Analyzing the Mission Statements of Selected Educational Institutions" examined the mission statements of 267 elementary, middle, high, and postsecondary schools. The sample was large and included schools from all fifty states. As the researchers obtained mission statements from websites, they needed to be sure that the schools had a website. Websites were not as common in the 1990's as they are now. They selected schools that were linked to one of two websites: the Gleason-Sackman page (also known as the K-12 American School Directory) or the University of Florida's (1999) Index of American Universities (Abbey, Craig, Lombardi, & Phillips, 2011). Both sites acted as a directory listing schools who had websites.

Obtaining the mission statements from the websites did not yield a high rate of return. First, a search of 254 elementary school websites yielded 59 mission statements or 23% (1999). Next, a search of 254 middle school websites yielded 49 mission statements, 19% (1999). Then, a search of 267 secondary school websites yielded 59 mission statements , 22% (University of Florida, 1999). Finally, a search of 187 post-secondary school sites yielded 100 mission statements, 53%. In total, 962 websites were searched which yielded 267 mission statements, 28%. The researchers noted that post-secondary schools had a higher, almost double, yield rate. Once the mission statements were collected, Bebell and Stemler created a coding rubric with 10 themes: cognitive, social, emotional, vocational/citizenship, school environment, spiritual community, local community, global community, physical, and faculty/staff. The rubric proved reliable and 267 mission statements were coded according to the rubric.

Bebell and Stemler's (1999) analysis of the coded mission statements found a great deal of variability of the number of themes incorporated into the mission statements of all the schools. Bebell and Stemler concluded several major findings. First, they concluded that mission statements can be effectively coded. They developed a coding rubric for mission statements and it was proven to be reliable. Second, they concluded that the majority of mission statements focused specifically on three themes: cognitive development, emotional development, and fostering effective citizenship/vocational. Even though these three themes appeared the most, each school had a different number of themes resulting in unique character. They concluded different schools have different combinations of purpose that was reflective of the community. Third, the researchers concluded that the purpose of school shifts from emotional development to cognitive

development as students' progress through school. Emotional development was emphasized 81% in elementary schools and 62% in postsecondary schools. Conversely, cognitive development was emphasized 69% in elementary schools and 83% in postsecondary schools. Bebell and Stemler continued their research on mission statements and I will reference another more recent study to conclude this chapter, but first I will discuss other research. See Appendix A for a summary of Bebell and Stemler's research.

Di Vincenzo (2008)

In 2008, Di Vincenzo examined school leadership and its relation to school performance. This quantitative, descriptive correlational research study sought to determine if a relationship existed between public high school principals, private school principals/headmasters, and student achievement. This study involved a random sample of principals from 125 public high schools and 87 private schools in New Jersey. To measure school performance, he used scores from the New Jersey High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT). It is important to note that private schools are not required to take the HSPA. To assess leadership attributes, Di Vincenzo used the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI) questionnaire developed by Kouzes and Posner. Di Vincenzo's two research questions were

> 1. What is the extent of the correlational relationship between administrative leadership attributes as determined by Kouzes and Posner's LPI Self (Kouzes, 2003) survey instrument and the resultant student achievement as determined by standardized test results?

> 2. What is the extent of the difference in the demonstrated leadership attributes as determined from Kouzes and Posner's LPI Self (Kouzes, 2003) survey instrument respective to the private or independent and public school environments? (p. 52)

Schools were ranked by the results of the two assessments described above and the top and bottom 50 public schools were used, while all 87 private schools were used. Principal survey responses were separated into two major categories and two sub categories: private or public school and top or bottom performing respectively.

In regard to the first research question, Di Vincenzo believed, based upon the literature, that a correlational relationship would exist between principals private school principals/headmasters, and student achievement. However, in his study, no relationship between leadership and performance was found. In other words, Di Vincenzo believed that transformational and transactional leadership style would be associated with higher performing schools, but, as stated earlier, no relationship was found. In regard to the second research question, Di Vincenzo believed, based upon the literature, that a difference existed between public and private school leaders. The results surprised Di Vincenzo by revealing a difference between public and private school leadership. The results indicated that private school leaders had lower frequencies of attributes associated with transformational and transactional leadership. Di Vincenzo thought that the opposite would occur based on the literature review revealing better performance of private schools in respect to student achievement. The analysis revealed differences, but the differences were contrary to what the literature suggested.

Implications from this study are that current emphasis on transactional and transformational leadership models for improving school leadership and student outcomes may be misdirected. Di Vincenzo concluded that there is a difference between

public and private school leadership, but more research is suggested. His results are salient to my study because he did not find a relationship between leadership and performance. It would be interesting to combine his methods with my research methods for a future study. In other words, a future study could examine school mission statements and compare the results to a principal or superintendent survey to see if a relationship exists between leadership style and student achievement. A summary of Vincenzo's study can be viewed in Appendix B.

Perfetto (2010)

In 2010, Perfetto compared mission statements of National Blue Ribbon Schools and unacceptable high schools in Texas. The Blue Ribbon School designation is awarded primarily for dramatic improvement in standardized test scores or superior academic achievement signifying a high performing school. On the other hand, unacceptable schools were designated such through the state of Texas accountability system. Both categories, high and low performing, are heavily dependent on standardized test scores. In addition, Perfetto further separated high schools into three categories: small, medium, and large. Perfetto lists five research questions

1. What themes were present in the context of mission statements that were examined?
2. How often did the identified themes occur in the mission statements of high and low performing high schools?
3. How often did the identified themes occur in the mission statements of small, medium, and large size high schools?
4. Were there significant differences in the expected and observed frequency for each identified theme present in the mission statements among the group of high and low performing high schools?
5. Were there any significant differences in the expected and observed frequency for each identified theme present in the mission statements among the group of small, medium, and large size high schools?

Perfetto's study identified 31 dominant themes: Academics, Achievement, All, Challenge, Citizen, Committed, Community, Developing, Diversity, Education, Environment, Excellence, Future, Individual, Knowledge, Learning, Lifelong Learning, Nurture, Partnership, Potential, Preparing, Productive, Promotes, Providing, Quality, Responsibility, Safe, Skills, Society, Students, and Success. Out of the 31 themes, six were found to be statistically significant: Academics, Excellence, Learning, Challenge, Nurture, and Lifelong Learning. Further analysis of mission statements grouped by size yielded a statistically significant difference for the theme of Knowledge for large size high schools as compared to small and medium size high schools.

Perfetto (2010) concluded that there were 31 common themes identified in the context of the mission statements of both high and low performing high schools, six of which were statistically significant. According to Perfetto, this suggested,

> High performing schools focused their energy on academics, emphasized student learning, challenged students as they learned, provided a nurturing/caring environment for learning, expected excellence in what students were learning, and communicated that learning continued well beyond high school and was a lifelong process; whereas, low performing high schools had a variety of themes that were similar to those of high performing high schools, but failed to include the ones that contributed most to the difference between that of high and low performing institutions. (p. 81)

Based upon Perfetto's study, the wording of mission statements matter. He recommends that schools take his data into consideration when crafting a mission statement. A summary of Perfetto's research can be seen in Appendix C.

Hertz-Lazarowitz, Kurland, and Peretz (2010)

The next study that I will discuss examined the influence of principals' leadership style and vision on school learning as an organization. More specifically, Hertz-Lazarowitz, Kurland, and Peretz (2010) performed a mediating regression analysis to determine the relationship between three different principal leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and school organizational learning using school vision as the mediator. The study takes place in northern Israel and involves data collected from 1,474 teachers at 104 elementary schools. The researchers listed three hypotheses

> H1. Principals' transformational leadership style will be more positively related to school organizational learning than transactional leadership; in contrast, laissez-faire leadership will be negatively related to school organizational learning.
>
> H2. Principals' transformational leadership style will be more positively related to school vision than will transactional leadership; in contrast, laissez-faire leadership will be negatively related to school vision.
>
> H3. School vision will mediate the relationship between principals' transformational leadership style and school organizational learning.

The authors dove into an extensive literature review between transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. They argued that transformational leadership is increasingly important in education because of increased accountability through multiple reform efforts including NCLB, ever increasing technology, globalization, and the need for students to be better educated and provided with 21st century skills.

The results backed up their literature review and the importance of transformational leadership and vision. Hertz-Lazarowitz et al. (2010) report

> Overall, the results demonstrate that school vision is significantly predicted by principals' transformational leadership style and is also a significant predictor of school organizational learning. Moreover, vision was found to partially mediate the relationship between principals' transformational leadership and school organizational learning, with principals' transformational leadership predicting organizational learning. (p. 19)

In addition, the researchers concluded that principals' transactional and laissez-faire leadership has little to no effect on school vision and organizational learning. The implications of this study reinforce the need for principals to be visionary transformational leaders. The communication from the principal and the staff's' perception of their leader is incredibly important for a learning educational organization. A summary of this study can be viewed in Appendix D.

Bebell, Sonnabend, and Stemler (2010)

In 2010, Bebell, Sonnabend, and Stemler published a paper about using mission statements for reflection and research based on two additional studies they conducted. The first study quantified and coded 421 mission statements from 500 randomly selected schools from 10 states: Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington. Bebell et al.'s (2010) research questions were

1. How much variability is there in the number and types of themes articulated across school mission statements? In a sample of public high school mission statements from 10 distinct states, is there agreement on the primary purposes of school?

2. Do high school mission statements systematically differ in their content depending on (a) contextual variables such as the geographic location of the school, (b) input variables such as the urbanicity of the school, or (c) output variables such as the school's NCLB classification? (p. 392)

Researchers obtained high school mission statements primarily through the school websites, but if one could not be found on the web, they called the school district and usually received the schools mission statement via phone, email, or fax. The data set included 421 mission statements out of 500 schools for a success rate of 84%. The mission statements were then coded using a rubric developed by Bebell and Stemler (1999) according to 11 themes: foster cognitive development, foster social development, foster emotional development, foster civic development, foster physical development, foster vocational preparation, integrate into local community, integrate into global community, integrate into spiritual community, provide safe and nurturing environment, and provide challenging environment. The results indicated that civic development (58%), emotional development (55%), and cognitive development (53%) were the top three major purposes of secondary education despite the political and geographical diversity representative of the 10 states (Bebell et al., 2010). Additionally, Colorado (62% vs. 29%) scored the highest in creating a safe and nurturing environment, while California emphasized vocational development (39% vs. 15%) more than any other state. No significant results were found for a regression analysis in which the number of themes in the mission statement were regressed on urbanicity of the school, percentage minority enrollment, free and reduced lunch population and AYP status. See Appendix E for a summary of this study.

The purpose of the second study by Bebell et al. (2010) was to qualitatively determine the role of mission statements in the day-to-day functioning of the school. In this study, a random sample of high school principals were selected to answer the following questions

1. Who determines the mission of a school?
2. When and why do school missions change?
3. Is there any link between what is said and what actually goes on in the high school classroom (2010)?

In the second study, a subset of random schools from the first study was selected and 14 out of 67 principals participated providing a 21% participation rate. According to Bebell et al. (2010), "The majority of principals interviewed in our study viewed mission statements as an important, although often mandatory, document that tends to reflect the consensus beliefs of the school community regarding their primary purpose" (p. 407). A majority of principals listed three reasons why they have mission statements: accrediting bodies require it, to foster dialogue with key stakeholders surrounding the purpose of school, and to communicate to others the results of the dialogue. In response to who is involved in the creation of a mission, 93% of principals believed the crafting of a mission statement is a collaborative process with members of the school community. When asked about familiarity of their mission statements, 57% of principals rated their communities familiarity to be 4 or higher on a scale of 1-5, 1 meaning no familiarity and 5 being very familiar. All of the principals in the study, with one exception, reported that their mission statement has been revised within the past five years, with 21% reporting that they review it annually. Finally, 86% of principals reported a strong link between their mission statement and practice. The result of the second study concludes that high school principals generally agree that mission statements are an import tool for shaping practice, communicating values, and the day-to-day operations of a school. See Appendix E for a summary of this study.

Summary of Relevant Emirical Studies

In summary, Chapter 2 reviewed the literature on various topics connected to my research supporting my study. Chapter 2 began with a brief history of state and national education reform including: the launch of Sputnik, the Civil Rights Act, the increasing role of federal policy, *A Nation at Risk*, No Child Left Behind, the Obama Blueprint, and Race To The Top. The next section was titled leadership and focused on: great leaders, vision, mission, and creative tension. Following that I summarized leadership theory including: Great Man Theory, Trait Theory, Behavior Theory, Contingency Theory, Transactional Theory and Transformational Theory. From there I discussed educational leadership and the role of the superintendent, the role of the principal, and distributed leadership. After that I reviewed mission driven leadership and reviewed: mission driven leadership in Massachusetts, developing a mission statement, mission statements change over time, and the importance of communicating the mission. Finally, I provided a summary of empirical research including: Bebell and Stemler (1999), DiVincenzo (2008), Perfetto (2010), Hertz-Lazarowitz et al. (2010), and Bebell et al. (2010). The information provided contained information from business and education providing a compelling case for the importance of mission statements and setting directions. One important aspect that can be deduced from this literature review is the importance of mission driven leadership to moving an organization forward. In my study the organization of focus is a school district.

Another important aspect that can be deduced from the literature review is that research on mission statements in education is relatively scarce. A review of empirical studies shows that only a few researchers have reviewed educational mission statements.

In addition, the aforementioned studies focused on school level mission statements. I have not found any study that has examined district level mission statements. The empirical studies on mission statements that were reviewed in chapter two demonstrate the following. First, Bebell and Stemler (1999) study of 267 K-12 schools found that mission statements can be coded effectively and with reliability. This was the first time, to my knowledge, that mission statements were coded. In my study, I use the coding rubric developed (1999) and revised (2010) by Bebell et al. Second, Bebell and Stemler (1999) found that three themes appeared the most: cognitive development, emotional development, and fostering effective citizenship/vocational. However, there was a great deal of variability of themes between all schools resulting in unique character for each school. Bebell and Stemler (1999) also concluded that the purpose of school shifts from emotional development in elementary schools to academic development in post-secondary. DiVincenzo's (2008) study of a random sample of public and private high schools in New Jersey revealed no significant relationships exist between leadership and performance. Perfetto's (2010) study of 100 high schools in Texas suggests that the wording of mission statements matter. Perfetto separated schools by size (small, medium, and large) and knowledge to occur more statistically more frequently in larger schools. He identified 31 themes, six were significant: academics, learning, challenging, nurturing/caring, excellence, and lifelong learning. Hertz-Lazarowitz et al. (2010) surveyed 1,474 teachers in 104 elementary schools in northern Israel and discovered that transformational leadership and vision are extremely important for school leadership and a strong predictor of organizational learning and student achievement.

My theory of action for this dissertation is if a school district has content rich, accessible, mission statement then all members of the organization will understand the direction of the organization which will bring about elevated levels of student engagement and result in higher test scores. This study will analyze the mission statements from a sample of high achieving school districts in Massachusetts and compare them with lower achieving school districts to better understand if a relationship exists. The review of literature in Chapter 2 supports my theory of action and a study of this nature.

Thus far, I have provided an introduction in Chapter 1 that included the purpose of this study and my theory of action. In chapter two, I partially reviewed the literature on education reform, leadership, leadership theory, educational leadership, and mission driven leadership. In addition, Chapter 2 contained information on the results of several pertinent empirical studies examining mission driven leadership and student achievement. Next, chapter three will focus on the methodology and my research design.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to look at mission driven school district leadership in Massachusetts public schools and attempt to identify any relationship, or lack thereof, between district mission statements and student achievement. While Chapters 1 and 2 provided an introduction and review of the literature, Chapter 3 will focus on the methodologies employed and the research design. This chapter is divided into three main sections. First, I restate the problem. Next, I review the research questions and hypothesizes. Finally, I discuss the methods employed for the study.

Statement of the Problem

Since the inception of compulsory education in the United States, people have been working to reform our nation's public schools in a never ending pursuit to increase student achievement. Chapter 2 demonstrated how historic events and main-stream societal issues have impacted our public education system. A review of the literature in Chapter 2 revealed that mission driven leadership in education, or business, can have a dramatic effect on an organization. Mission driven leadership is at the heart of educational leadership and the main focus of my research. My theory of action for this dissertation is if a school district has a content rich, accessible, mission statement then all members of the organization will understand the direction and purpose of the organization which is correlated to elevated levels of student engagement resulting in higher test scores. This study examines if a relationship does exist between district level

mission and student achievement. More specifically, this study will analyze the mission statements from a sample of high achieving school districts in Massachusetts and compare them with lower achieving school districts in Massachusetts to better understand if a relationship exists.

Throughout our nation's history, people have debated the purpose of the public education system. If you ask 10 different people it is likely that you will get 10 different answers. Discrepancies in answers to the purpose of our public education system get even more diverse when you ask people from different generations, people from distinct locations, people whose political viewpoints differ, or people whose socioeconomic status are unequal. Businessmen, educators, scientists, engineers, politicians, philosophers, religious leaders, lawmakers, artists, journalists, salesmen, entrepreneurs, plumbers, carpenters, laborers, parents, students, and community members all have a vested interest in public education, but their views on the purpose of public education are often very different. Phi Delta Kappa International annually obtains the public's attitudes toward the public schools through a Gallup Poll. The most recent, 44th Gallup Poll, reveals conflicts over many issues including the use of student test scores in teacher evaluation, but overwhelmingly 75% believe that common core state standards would make the United States more globally competitive (Phi Delta Kappa International, 2012). With all of the divergent thoughts on public education in the United States, one trend is becoming increasingly clear; the United States is moving towards increased accountability through standardized testing in our schools.

In the past few years, education reform, particularly the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), has stipulated that schools must produce results in the form of performance

measures of standardized tests or face public ridicule and sanctions. As a result, many schools across the nation have already been labeled underperforming or have faced sanctions in accordance with NCLB. Even schools that were once labeled top performers and designated with prestigious awards are finding it impossible to meet the unrealistic requirements of NCLB. This confusing and contradicting message has opened the eyes of the public and many states have applied for and received waivers from the federal government to protect them from the penalties of meeting NCLB. With an increased focus on testing and a results oriented public, our nation's public education institutions need to examine every facet of schooling. As such, school leadership is increasingly being examined.

It is well established in the literature that school leadership is an essential ingredient to school success (Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Elmore, 2000; Fullen, 2010; Reeves, 2009; Schmoker, 2011; Wheatly, 2006). With our nation's schools facing increased accountability and insurmountable pressure for all children to achieve, the leaders of our schools must be well versed in leadership, leadership theory, and ways of communicating essential elements of schooling. One way for leadership to manifest is through the communication of a written mission statement. Mission statements describe the purpose of schooling and they can be used by school leaders to communicate the most important aspects of education. Communicating the purpose of education is one of the most fundamental aspects of school leadership. It has been well documented that employees long to work in environments where the mission is clear and people are a part of something that is bigger than themselves (Kurtzman, 2010). This study examines mission statements as a proxy variable of mission driven school leadership to see if there

is any correlation between themes of mission statements, using Bebell and Stemler's (2012) rubric, and student achievement.

Research Questions

The following questions were addressed in this study:

1. What is the relationship between the content and frequency of themes that are present using Bebell and Stemler's (2012) rubric in district wide mission statements of high and low achieving school districts in Massachusetts?

    a) Which of Bebell and Stemler's 11 themes are present in high and low achieving school districts?
    b) What is the frequency of themes in high and low achieving school districts?
    c) 3. To what extent is there a relationship between the theme of academic achievement and academic performance?

2. To what extent are the content of district mission statements of high and low performing school districts in alignment with the Massachusetts' policy frameworks?

    a) What are the implications for Massachusetts' policy?
    b) What are the implications for Massachusetts' district level practice?

Research Methodology and Procedures

Research Setting

In this study, 288 Massachusetts public school districts are ranked according to their 2011 high school graduation rate and their 2011 tenth grade Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results. All of the information gathered to establish the rankings is public record and can be obtained from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (MA DESE, n.d.-a) website. From the 288 districts, a sample of the top 30 and the bottom 30 were selected because 30 is the

minimum sample size recommended for applying the central limit theorem (Devore, 1991). Examination data is one category of data which typically follows the normal distribution. Applying the central limit theorem to my sample size I find that the final population distribution is approximately normal also.

Design and Hypothesis

The MA DESE keeps track of graduation rates and MCAS results for all public high schools in the Commonwealth. It is important that the reader understand how graduation rates are calculated and how MCAS results are scored. The MA DESE explains how the graduation rate data is calculated,

> To calculate the 4-year graduation rate, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) tracks a cohort of students from 9th grade through high school and then divides the number of students who graduate within four years by the total number in the cohort. In other words the rate provides the percentage of the cohort that graduates in 4 years or less. For example, the formula for the 2011 cohort is:

$$\frac{\text{\# of students in cohort who graduate in } \mathbf{4} \text{ years or less}}{[\text{\# of } 1^{st} \text{ time entering } 9^{th} \text{ graders in 2007–08}] - \text{transfers out} + \text{transfers in}}$$

(Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, n.d.-a).

In addition to being ranked by the high school graduation rate, schools will be ranked according to the percent of students who score advanced and proficient on the 10th grade English and math MCAS. Student MCAS results are reported in four categories: advanced (scaled score 260-280), proficient (scaled score 240-258), needs improvement (scaled score 220-238), and warning/failing (scaled score 200-218). To obtain the percent of students who score advanced and proficient on the MCAS, one simply adds the advanced and proficient percentage categories together. The entire list of all 288 school districts in alphabetical order with student enrollment data, graduation rate, percentage of

students scoring advanced and proficient in 10th grade English and math MCAS can be viewed in Appendix G. It is worth noting that the MA DESE does not rank school districts by MCAS scores. However, it is also worth noting that many newspapers and magazines do rank and publish lists in the media.

Once all the data has been gathered and sorted, the school districts are ranked in descending (highest scoring districts top the list) order by the three categories: graduation rate, percent advanced and proficient in 10th grade English, and percent advanced and proficient in 10th grade math (Appendix H). Each category was sorted in descending order and it became apparent that some schools would score well on MCAS and have a lower graduation rate and vice versa. In other words, the top 30 schools in each category were different. In order to account for this difference, I assigned each school a number based upon their lowest rank in each category. The listings of schools were then compared line by line to find the schools that appeared on both lists (overlapping schools which are excelling in more than one measurement). The top 30 performing schools can be seen in Appendix I, while the bottom 30 performing schools can be viewed in Appendix J. It is worth mentioning that among the top 30 schools the difference in graduation rate and academic scores from number 1 school to number 30 school is very small (a few percentage points, .8% graduation rate difference, 4% English score differential, and 6% Math score differential), whereas the difference from the school at the bottom of list (Lawrence) and the school topping the bottom 30 (Oxford) is a huge gap (26 percentage points in graduation rate, 32 % difference in English, and 35% difference in Math). The 30 top performing school districts in alphabetical order are Academy Of the Pacific Rim Charter Public (District), Advanced Math and Science

Academy Charter (District), Andover , Belmont, Boston Collegiate Charter (District), Boston Preparatory Charter Public (District), Cohasset, Concord-Carlisle, Dover-Sherborn, Duxbury, Four Rivers Charter Public (District), Hamilton-Wenham, Harvard, Hopkinton, Lexington, Lincoln-Sudbury, Littleton, Marblehead, Masconomet, MATCH Charter Public School (District), Medfield, Millis, Mystic Valley Regional Charter (District), Needham, Scituate, Sharon, Southern Berkshire, Sturgis Charter Public (District), Wellesley, and Westford. The 30 bottom performing schools districts in alphabetical order are Athol-Royalston, Boston, Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter (District), Brockton, Chelsea, Chicopee, Easthampton, Everett, Fall River, Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical, Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical, Greater Lowell Regional Vocational Technical, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter (District), Lynn, New Bedford, North Adams, Northampton-Smith Vocational Agricultural, Oxford, Revere, Salem, Somerville, Southbridge, Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical, , South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical, Springfield, Taunton, and Worcester.

District mission statements were gathered from the top performing (30) school districts and the bottom (30) performing school districts. Based upon Bebell and Stemler's 1999 research stating a low rate of return (28%) while searching school websites for mission statements, I originally thought it would be difficult to find district mission statements on websites. Therefore, I developed a decision tree to record: the time it took to find the mission statement, the font of the mission statement, and the location of the mission statement in relationship to the home website page. However, my study yielded a 100% return rate and I found all mission statements quickly and easily. As a

result, I disregarded the data on the prevalence of mission statements on websites because every district had a mission statement and almost all of them were displayed on their home page. I attribute the difference between Bebell and Stemler's 26% return rate in 1999 and my return rate of 100% to the fact that over a decade has passed. The speed of technology has greatly increased since 1999 and the costs have been lowered significantly. As a result, all the school districts in my study had comprehensive school district websites which made it easy to find mission statements.

Once all of my data was collected, my next step was to code each mission statement according to Bebell and Stemler's (2012) rubric. Before I discuss the coding process, I will review my research questions and briefly discuss Bebell and Stemler's rubric. My study sought to determine the relationship between the content and frequency of themes that are present using Bebell and Stemler's rubric in district wide mission statements of high and low achieving school districts in Massachusetts; hence, the study assumed school leaders recognize the mission statement as the purpose of schooling in Massachusetts and relate the purpose of schooling to state and national accountability measures. The first research question had 3 sub questions:

a) Which of Bebell and Stemler's 11 themes are present in high and low achieving school districts?

b) What is the frequency of themes in high and low achieving school districts?

c) To what extent is there a relationship between the theme of academic achievement and academic performance

Second, my study sought to determine to what extent are the district mission statements of high and low performing school districts in alignment with the Massachusetts' policy frameworks. Hence, the study assumes that Massachusetts' policy dictates if a school

district has a highly prevalent, content rich, accessible, mission statement then all members of the organization will understand the direction of the organization which will lead to higher student engagement resulting in higher test scores and a higher graduation rate. The second research question had two sub questions:

a) What are the implications for Massachusetts' policy?
b) What are the implications for Massachusetts' district level practice?

As a result, below are my two hypotheses:

> (H1): With the increase in standardized testing and district wide accountability, the academic/cognitive theme will account for the largest represented theme.
>
> (H2): The school districts that list academic/cognitive development in their mission statements will be associated with higher levels of student achievement.

Next, I discuss Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric and then my methods of coding district mission statements.

Bebell and Stemler's Coding Rubric

Bebell and Stemler first successfully coded mission statements according to a rubric that they developed in 1999 (Appendix K). As I previously explained in chapter 2, their first study examined the mission statements from elementary schools, middle schools, secondary schools, and post-secondary schools from various regions across the United States. Bebell and Stemler's original 1999 coding rubric contained 10 themes: academic/cognitive, social, emotional, vocational/citizenship, school environment, spiritual community, local community, global community, physical, and faculty/staff. Their rubric also contained 32 subcategories which are all listed in Appendix K. I will not list all 32 subcategories, but I will use the academic theme to provide an example. In Bebell and Stemler's 1999 coding rubric there are 4 subcategories for the academic

theme: A1=foster cognitive development/ academic skills, A2= problem solving skills, A3= develop, promote, & instill creativity, and A4= research. In addition to the 32 subcategories, each theme contains a miscellaneous category that allows the researcher flexibility while coding mission statements. The rubric proved reliable and 267 mission statements were successfully coded.

Bebell and Stemler then revised their original rubric and conducted another study. The revised rubric contains 11 themes and 42 subcategories (Appendix L). The 11 themes in the revised rubric are: academic/cognitive, social development, emotional development, civic development, physical development, vocational preparation, integrate into local community, integrate into global community, integrate into spiritual community, safe nurturing environment, and challenging environment. Bebell and Stemler's 1999 coding rubric contained 10 themes with 32 subcategories, while the 2012 coding rubric contained 11 themes and 42 subcategories. Besides increasing the number of themes and subcategories, other differences include: the 1999 coding rubric held vocational and citizenship in the same category, the 1999 rubric listed school environment as a theme, and the 1999 rubric listed faculty/staff as a theme. The revised rubric separated civic and vocational into two distinct themes, eliminated the school environment theme, eliminated the faculty/staff theme, and added two themes: safe/nurturing environment and challenging learning environment. The revised rubric contains more information in contrast to the original rubric. Next, I will discuss how I used the rubric to code my data.

Coding the Data

As I previously mentioned, my search for mission statements yielded a total of 60 mission statements, 30 high performing school districts and 30 low performing school districts, for a 100% return rate. Once the mission statements were collected, my next step was to code the mission statements according to Bebell and Stemler's 2012 coding rubric. This rubric consists of 11 themes: A= academic, B= social, C= emotional, D= civic, E= physical, F= vocational, G= local community, H= global community, I= spiritual, J= safe, and K= challenging (Appendix L). In an effort to maintain consistency, I created a decision tree to be used with Bebell and Stemler's rubric. This decision tree can be viewed in Appendix M. Next, I will provide the reader with an example of my decision making process using Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric along with my decision tree.

I will use the Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School District (2013) as an example of how mission statements were coded. Pacific Rim's mission statement reads,

> Our mission is to empower urban students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds to achieve their full intellectual and social potential by combining the best of the East - high standards, discipline and character education—with the best of the West—a commitment to individualism, creativity and diversity. (para. 1)

As step 1 of my decision tree reads, I use Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric to search for the academic theme. The word "creativity" is found as the third word from the end of the mission statement and it appears on A-3 of Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric. Next, I need to use my own discretion in looking for other miscellaneous words that may be related to the academic theme, but exact words or phrases may not appear on the rubric. For instance, when I read, "to achieve their full intellectual potential" I decided that it is

reasonable to categorize it as an academic theme under miscellaneous, A-0. It is important for the reader to understand that every word in a mission statement does not appear on Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric. Therefore, the person coding the mission statements has to use individual discretion when using the miscellaneous subcategory. I qualify "achieving full intellectual potential" as miscellaneous under the academic because intellectual refers to having intellect or knowledge and is synonymous with academic. Therefore, the academic theme is marked as being present in the mission statement in accordance with Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric: A-3 and A-0. The frequency of the academic theme is recorded as 2.

There are 10 remaining themes in Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric and I will discuss how I selected for each theme in Pacific Rim's mission statement in this paragraph. Step 2 in my decision tree is to look for the social theme. The phrase "social potential" is listed in the middle of Pacific Rim's mission statement and is listed as B-1 in Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric. Therefore, the social theme is recorded as being present (B-1) with a frequency of 1. There are no other social word or phrases so I proceed to step 3. Step 3 in my decision tree is to look for the emotional theme. There are no exact words or phrases as described by Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric, but "commitment to individualism" is stated in Pacific Rim's mission. "Commitment to individualism" is similar to "self-sufficient" which is listed in Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric, C-5. As a result, the emotional theme is marked as being present (C-5) with a frequency of 1. Step 4 of my decision tree is to look for the civic theme. No exact words or phrases from the rubric can be observed, but "character education" is identified in Pacific Rim's mission statement. Character education teaches students to be

responsible contributing members of society which is listed under Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric, D-2. I classify character education under the miscellaneous subcategory under civic and record it as D-0. The civic theme is marked as present with a frequency of 1. Step 5 and step 6 are to identify the physical and vocational themes respectively. Neither theme appears and both are marked not present. Step 7 is to look for the local theme. No exact words or phrases from Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric appear in the Pacific Rim Mission statement, but "to empower urban students" does appear in the mission. As "urban" typically refers to a city and the Pacific Rim Charter District is located in Boston, I deduced that they were referring to the local community and marked the local theme as being present (G-0) with a frequency of 1. Step 8 of my decision tree is to identify the global theme. Four phrases were identified as global: "of all racial and ethnic backgrounds", "by combining the best of the East," "with the best of the West," and "diversity." The first three phrases are not listed in Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric, but they all refer to large regions, global cultures, or global nationalities. "Diversity" does appear as a subcategory in Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric under global, H-1. Therefore, the global theme was listed as present with a frequency of 4. The frequency of four is represented as 0,0,0,1 because the miscellaneous subcategory is recorded three times, while the diversity subcategory is recorded once. Step 9 is to look for the spiritual theme and it was determined not to be present. Step 10 is to locate the safe theme. No exact words matching Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric were found for the safe theme, but "discipline" was listed. As discipline can be associated with rules, order, or code of conduct, I marked it for the safe theme and reported under the miscellaneous subcategory (J-0) with a frequency of 1. Finally, step 11 is to search for

the challenging theme. No exact words or phrases directly connect to Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric, but "high standards" was used. As high standards indicate a challenging environment I marked this theme as being present under the miscellaneous subcategory (K-0) with a frequency of 1. The results of coded mission statements are listed in chapter 4. I will now discuss how I used color coding to double check my work.

After I coded all district mission statements using my decision tree, in conjunction with Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric, I employed a color coding system to double check my efforts. I used colors to signify different themes: academic= red, social= light blue, emotional= dark blue, civic= dark green, physical= dark purple, vocational= orange, local= light green, global= light purple, spiritual= yellow, safe= grey, and challenging= highlighted yellow. Using this color coding scheme allowed me to code each mission electronically in Microsoft Word using the format painter tool. The color coding pattern allowed me to easily check and save my work electronically. An example of my color coding formula can be seen in Appendix N. Specifically, Appendix N is the Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School District's mission statement that was described in greater detail in previous paragraphs. I did not include every district's mission statement coded according to color in this paper; the Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter School District is the only example provided.

The Academy of the Pacific Rim district mission statement is an example of a mission statement containing 8 out of the 11 Bebell and Stemler's themes. Not all mission statements contained that many themes and I will now provide an example of a simpler mission statement with only one theme. For instance, the Taunton Public School's mission statement (2013) reads, "Academic excellence for every student, in

every classroom, in every school" (p. 1). This mission statement has only one theme: academic. Coincidently, the phrase "academic excellence" does not appear as a subcategory under the academic theme. However, "academic excellence" is clearly related to the theme academic and I recorded it under the miscellaneous subcategory of academic (A-0) with a frequency of 1. Moreover, Taunton's mission statement contains only 11 words and illustrates the third shortest mission statement, in terms of word count, of the 60 mission statements collected. The average word count for the top 30 achieving school districts is 66, while the average word count for the bottom 30 achieving school districts is 51. Appendix O lists the total word count for the top 30 school districts and Appendix P lists the total word count for the bottom 30 school districts. I will further discuss my mission statement coding results in chapter 4.

Variables

According to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007), "In a hypothesized cause-and-effect relationship, the independent variable is the cause" (p. 642). Likewise, they indicated that "The dependent variable is the effect" (p. 637). In this study, the independent variable for Question 1 is the district wide mission statements from select districts in Massachusetts, while the dependent variable is the variability of themes within the mission statement. The variability of themes is what is being studied and it is measured by Bebell and Stemler's (2012) rubric.

For question two, the independent variable is the variability of themes in the district's mission statement, while the dependent variable is the degree of student achievement. The independent variable is measured by Bebell and Stemler's (2012)

coding rubric, while the dependent variable is the degree of achievement (high or low performing) is measured by the school district's results on the 10th grade MCAS and the graduation rate.

Also in this study, there are confounding variables. The first confounding variable is the financial resources of the school district. It is assumed that more affluent school districts would have more money and resources to devote to a district's website. In addition, the skills and website knowledge of the website developer for the school district cannot be controlled. Once again, more affluent school districts may offer a separate salaried position for a web developer, while less affluent districts may have 1 person operating all aspects of technology. The size and financial resources of a school district cannot be controlled for and pose a particular challenge to this study.

Limitations

There are several limitations for this study. First, a major limitation to this study is that there is no information as to how, when, or who originally created the mission statement. As I have previously established, it is well documented in the literature that the process of creating a mission statement is vital to getting all stakeholders to buy in to the mission. As I have also established, a school district's leadership often changes and, in this study, there is no way to determine who the top leaders in the school district are and how long they have been invested in that school district. A future study may attempt to look at the experience level and tenure of the superintendents of the school districts studied.

A second limitation is that there is no direct evidence of the nature of what the teachers, students, and parents believe to be true about their school district. This study is based on archival data documenting academic achievement and archival mission statements data that have been obtained through school district's websites. I have not visited or surveyed any of the school districts. I have no first-hand observations about the daily interactions in the school districts studied. A future study may attempt to survey or interview the leadership of the school districts studied.

A third limitation is that I do not account for the size and the number of high schools in a school district. I do list the student population in Appendix G, but I do not account for the size of the school district. For example, Boston Public Schools has 28 high schools and serves 56,037 students, while Oxford Public Schools has 1 high school and serves 2,029 students (Massachusetts Department of Education, 2012). A future study may attempt to account for student population, location, socio-economic status, or the number of high schools in the district.

Despite the limitations, this study is relevant for policy makers, educational leaders, and anyone who is interested in learning about the operation and direction of school districts in Massachusetts. This study is also current and pertinent to my role as a school superintendent in the Commonwealth.

Delimitation

This study is delimited because it looks at the district wide mission statement and does not look at the individual school mission statements. There may be greater variability at the district level as opposed to the school level. However, looking at

mission statements at a district-wide level is more interesting to me as it pertains to my current position as a superintendent in Massachusetts. A recommendation for further study would be to attempt to conduct a similar study and look at individual high school mission statements as opposed to district level mission statements.

Significance of the Study

This study is unique because it is the first time that mission driven leadership in Massachusetts' school districts is being analyzed to see if there is a connection with student achievement. Massachusetts consistently outperforms the nation in virtually every measurable education statistic. Moreover, Massachusetts has recently signed on to the Race To The Top and is looked at by others as a model. The few empirical studies that have examined mission statements have not exclusively examined Massachusetts. Bebell and Stemler (1999) concluded that the purpose of school shifts from emotional development in early levels of schooling to cognitive development at the college level. They also coded mission statements and found great variability within and between school levels with most schools emphasizing cognitive, emotional, and citizenship themes. Perfetto (2010) researched mission statements of high schools in Texas and concluded that the wording of mission statements make a difference in high and low performing schools. Perfetto found statistically significant differences between the group of USDE Blue Ribbon high schools and TEA unacceptable high schools for the themes of Academics, Excellence, Challenge, Learning, Nurture, and Lifelong Learning. Di Vincenzo (2008) examined school leadership in relation to school performance in New Jersey and he concluded there were no significant correlational relationships linking

student achievement and leadership. Bebell et al. (2010) examined mission statements from 10 states and the results indicated that civic development (58%), emotional development (55%), and cognitive development (53%) were the top three major purposes of secondary education despite the political and geographical diversity representative of the 10 states. Bebell et al. (2010) also concluded that mission is an important tool for shaping practice. This study is significant because it is the first time that mission driven leadership in Massachusetts will be examined in relation to student achievement.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to look at mission driven school district leadership in Massachusetts' public schools and attempt to identify any relationship, or lack thereof, between district mission statements and student achievement. While Chapters 1 and 2 provided an introduction and review of the literature, Chapter 3 focused on the methodologies employed and my research design. Chapter 4 focuses on the results of my study. This chapter begins with a brief introduction followed by an in-depth discussion on the results from my research questions.

Results for Research Question 1

My first research question seeks to determine the relationship between the content and frequency of themes that are present using Bebell and Stemler's (2012) rubric in district wide mission statements of high and low achieving school districts in Massachusetts. This question has three sub questions:

a) Which of Bebell and Stemler's 11 themes are present in high and low achieving school districts?

b) What is the frequency of themes in high and low achieving school districts?

c) To what extent is there a relationship between the theme of academic achievement and academic performance?

To begin, I will discuss the themes that are present in high and low achieving school districts. The next four pages contain my results for all districts examined: Table 4-1 Top 30 Frequency of Themes, Table 4-2 Bottom 30 Frequency of themes, Table 4-3 Top 30

Subcategories and Table 4-4 Bottom 30 Subcategories. A discussion of my results in greater detail will follow.

Table 4-1: Top 30 School Districts' Frequency of Bebell and Stemler's (2012) Themes

District	Acad.	Soc.	Emot.	Civ.	Phys.	Voc.	Loc.	Glob.	Spir.	Safe	Chal.
Acad. of Pacific Rim	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	0	1	1
Adv. Math and Sci. Acd.	5	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
Andover	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
Belmont	2	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Boston Coll.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Boston Prep.	3	1	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cohasset	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	4
Concord-Carlisle	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Dover-Sherborne	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Duxbury	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Four Rivers	2	1	2	2	0	0	5	1	0	0	3
Hamilton-Wenham	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Harvard	5	1	0	3	0	0	3	1	0	0	0
Hopkinton	2	0	4	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Lexington	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lincoln-Sud.	6	1	2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Littleton	10	1	4	6	1	0	6	1	0	9	2
Marblehead	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Masconomet	1	0	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
MATCH	7	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Medfield	3	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Millis	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mystic Valley	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Needham	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Scituate	7	2	5	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
Sharon	3	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
S. Berkshire	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Sturgis	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Wellesley	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Westford	1	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	2

Table 4-2: Bottom 30 School Districts' Frequency of Bebell and Stemler's (2012) Themes

District	Acad.	Soc.	Emot.	Civ.	Phys.	Voc.	Loc.	Glob.	Spir.	Safe	Chal.
Athol-Royal.	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
Boston	3	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	1	1
Boston Day & Ev. Acad.	5	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brockton	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chelsea	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Chicopee	1	0	2	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	1
Easthampton	6	0	7	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
Everett	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Fall River	1	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	2
Franklin County Reg.	2	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	1
Greater Lawrence Voc.	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Greater Lowell Voc.	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	1
Holyoke	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	1
Lawrence	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lowell	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Lowell Mid. Ac.	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
Lynn	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Bedford	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Adams	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northampton-Smith Voc.	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Oxford	3	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	2
Revere	4	2	1	0	1	0	2	1	0	1	2
Salem	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Somerville	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
S. Middlesex Vocational	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Southbridge	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
S. E. Voc.	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Springfield	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Taunton	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Worcester	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	3

Table 4-3: Top 30 Districts' Subcategories Using Bebell and Stemler's (2012) Rubric

District	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Acad. of Pacific Rim	M,3	1	5	M	0	0	M	3M ,1	0	M	M
Adv. Math and Sci.	4M,7	0	M	0	0	1	0	M	0	0	2
Andover	2,5	0	M,5	2	0	0	M	2	0	0	3
Belmont	2M	1	M,4	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
Boston Coll.	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Boston Prep.	3M	M	4M	M,2	0	0	0	0	0	0	M
Cohasset	2M	0	2M	2,4	0	0	0	2	0	1	3M, 1
Concord-Carlisle	3	0	4	M, 2	0	0	0	1	0	0	M
Dover-Sherborne	M	0	M, 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Duxbury	M	0	3,4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,4
Four Rivers	M,7	1	M,1	3,3	0	0	3M, 1,2	M	0	0	2,2,3
Hamilton-Wenham	M,7	0	0	2,4	0	0	0	0	0	M	0
Harvard	2M,1,7, 7	1	0	1,2,2	0	0	1,1,1	1	0	0	0
Hopkinton	1,7	0	3M,4	4	0	0	1	2	0	M	1
Lexington	M	1,1,1	2M,11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lincoln-Sud.	4M,3,5	1	M,11	2,2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
Littleton	7M,1,2, 7	2M,4, 8	2M,4,9	2M,2, 4	1	0	4M, 1,1	1	0	8M, 1	1,1
Marblehead	2M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	M	0	1
Masconomet	M	0	M,4	M	1	0	1	2	0	2	1
MATCH	5M,9,9	0	4M	0	0	M	0	0	0	0	0
Medfield	3M	0	M,4	2,4	0	0	1	0	0	M	0
Millis	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mystic Valley	3M	M	6	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Needham	M	0	0	M	0	0	1	0	0	0	M
Scituate	3M,2,3, 5,7	M,1	2M,1,4 ,9	2	M,1	0	M	2	0	0	0
Sharon	M,3,5	0	0	M	0	M	0	1	0	0	1
S. Berkshire	2M,3	M	0	2M	0	0	0	2	0	0	M
Sturgis	3M,9,9	0	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Wellesley	M	1	0	M	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Westford	M	1	4,5	2,4	0	0	M	0	0	2	1,2
Totals	29	13	21	21	3	3	14	14	1	10	17

M= Miscellaneous subcategory, not to be confused with 0 indicating no themes present.

Table 4-4: Bottom 30 Districts' Subcategories Using Bebell and Stemler's (2012) Rubric

District	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Athol-Royal.	M	0	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	1
Boston	M,1,7	0	M	M	0	1,2	M,1	0	0	M	M
Boston Day & Ev. Acad.	3M,3, 5	0	2M,4, 9	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brockton	3M	0	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chelsea	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	M
Chicopee	7	0	2M	M	0	2	2,2	0	0	0	M
Easthampton	4M,4, 7	0	4M,3, 3,3	0	0	0	1,1	0	0	0	M
Everett	0	1	M	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Fall River	2	0	4,7	2	0	0	1	0	0	2M,1,2	4
Franklin County Reg.	2M	0	4,7	2	0	2M	0	0	0	0	M
Greater Lawrence Voc.	M	0	0	0	0	M	0	0	0	0	0
Greater Lowell Voc.	M	0	7	M	0	M, 1	0	0	0	0	1
Holyoke	0	0	7	2	0	0	0	1	0	2M,1	M
Lawrence	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lowell	2M,9	0	M	0	0	0	0	M	0	0	0
Lowell Mid. Ac.	M	M,1	0	0	0	M	1	M	0	0	M
Lynn	0	1	3,5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Bedford	9	0	M	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Adams	7	0	4,7	M,4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northampton-Smith Voc.	3M	0	0	0	0	1,2	0	0	0	0	0
Oxford	3M	0	M	0	0	M	1	M	0	2	1,2
Revere	4M	1,1	5	0	1	0	1,1	1	0	1	2M
Salem	M	0	7	M	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Somerville	M	1	M,7	0	1	0	0	M	0	1	0
S. Middlesex Vocational	M	M	4	0	0	M	0	0	0	0	1
Southbridge	3M	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1,1
S. E. Voc.	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Springfield	0	0	4,7	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	M
Taunton	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Worcester	M	0	0	M,1	0	0	1	0	0	1	2M,2
Totals	25	5	22	14	2	10	11	7	0	8	16

M= Miscellaneous subcategory, not to be confused with 0 indicating no themes present.

Bebell and Stemler's (2012) rubric specifies 11 themes: academic, social, emotional, civic, physical, vocational, local community, global community, spiritual, safe, and challenging. Table 4-1 shows the frequency of Bebell and Stemler's themes for the top 30 school districts in Massachusetts, while Table 4-2 displays the frequency of Bebell and Stemler's themes for the bottom 30 school districts in Massachusetts. Table 4-3 depicts the top 30 district's subcategories using Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric and Table 4-4 presents the bottom 30 district's subcategories using Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric. It is important to note that I used "M" to stand for miscellaneous rather than 0 as written in Bebell and Stemler's rubric. I made this change to avoid confusion because 0 represents no theme present. Additionally, if a number appears before the M it signifies the number of times that the miscellaneous subcategory was used. For example, 3M indicates that the miscellaneous subcategory was used three times. According to the tables, the academic theme occurs most often in the top 30 and bottom 30 school districts in Massachusetts. I will discuss this further in subsequent paragraphs, while Appendix Q clearly supports this claim. Appendix Q also makes it clear that the themes spiritual and physical do not occur very often, and I need to make modifications before computing statistical calculations.

The themes spiritual and physical were not included in my results because of very low occurrence in my sample districts mission statements. The spiritual theme occurred only 1 time out of 60 (.016%) district mission statements, while physical occurred only 4 times out of 60 (.067%). The spiritual theme might often be mistaken for a religious quality and therefore purposefully excluded by public schools. The physical themes low occurrence is cause for concern in light of the current childhood obesity epidemic.

In addition to two themes being disregarded, one top performing school district was also eliminated from my sample. The Littleton School District was not included in my results because their mission statement was double the word length of other district mission statements. The Littleton School District mission contained 378 words, while the average number of words of the top 30 schools, inclusive of Littleton, was 66 words. The average word count for the bottom 30 school district mission statements was 51 words. Appendices O and P list the word counts for the top 30 and bottom 30 school districts respectively. Appendix R further illustrates Littleton as an outlier encompassing double the amount of themes (40) in comparison to the other 29 top performing school districts. In the bottom 30, the distribution was much closer and no districts were identified as outliers (Appendix S).

After eliminating the themes spiritual and physical and one mission statement from the top 30, the table below shows how many school districts had a particular theme present.

Table 4-5: Total 9 Themes Present

	Academic	Social	Emotional	Civic	Vocational	Local	Global	Safe	Challenging
Top 29	28	13	20	20	3	13	13	9	16
Bottom 30	25	6	22	14	10	11	7	8	16
Total	53	19	42	34	13	24	20	17	32

Ninety percent (53 of 59) of the sampled districts had the academic theme present in their mission statement. Millis is the only district in the top 29 who did not mention the academic theme, while the bottom 30 districts had five who failed to mention the academic theme: Everett, Holyoke, Lynn, Southeast Regional Vocational and Springfield. The emotional theme was second most present (71% of the sample, 42

districts), followed by civic (58%), challenging (54%), local (41%), global (34%), social (32%), safe (29%), and vocational (22%). The frequency of themes is broken into percentages in the following table.

Table 4-6: Total 9 Themes as Percent

	Academic	Social	Emotional	Civic	Vocational	Local	Global	Safe	Challenging
Top 29	97%	45%	69%	69%	10%	45%	45%	31%	55%
Bottom 30	83%	20%	73%	47%	33%	37%	23%	27%	53%
Total	90%	32%	73%	59%	22%	41%	34%	29%	54%

Next, a chi-square test for independence was used to test the association between the two variables of mission theme and district student performance. The null and alternative hypotheses are:

(Ho): The two variables (theme and performance) are not related (no effect).
(H1): The two variables (theme and performance) are related.

Assuming a significance level equal to 0.05, and using the observed district themes data shown above yields the following table of probabilities of expected theme occurrence in the mission of the districts sampled.

Table 4-7: Probabilities of Expected Theme Occurrence

	Academic	Social	Emotional	Civic	Vocational	Local	Global	Safe	Challenging
Top 29	0.111	0.040	0.090	0.073	0.027	0.050	0.042	0.036	0.067
Bottom 30	0.098	0.035	0.078	0.064	0.024	0.044	0.036	0.031	0.058

The sum of the total themes observed across the entire sample was 256. Using the probability chart above, I was able to calculate the expected results listed in the table below.

Table 4-8: Expected Results

	Academic	Social	Emotional	Civic	Vocational	Local	Global	Safe	Challenging
Top 29	28.36	10.17	23.01	18.73	6.96	12.84	10.70	9.10	17.13
Bottom 30	24.64	8.83	19.99	16.27	6.04	11.16	9.30	7.90	14.88

The test statistic for my sample was computed as 8.74 using the chi-square formula, $\chi 2 = \sum (E-O)\ 2 / E$ with 8 degrees of freedom. I then used the chidist Microsoft Excel function with 8.72 for the test statistic and 8 degrees of freedom and it yields probability equal to 0.36. I choose to fail to reject the null hypothesis because 0.36 is greater than 0.05. Because 36% is much greater than my P value of 0.05, the outcome is likely due to chance and the relationship of district theme and student performance variables is not likely significant. Therefore, I fail to reject the null hypothesis, and accept that the presence of the academic theme in a district's mission statement has very little bearing on that district's student performance. This is interesting because clearly "academics" is the most foundational reason students attend school. It is possible the existence of this theme in a school's mission is the bare minimum that should be stated. In other words, all schools focus on "academics" and there is no statistical significance between high and low performing school districts in terms of an academic theme in their mission statement. Therefore, I began examining other themes for differences.

Due to the support shown above for the null hypothesis, I then considered each theme separately and conducted individual (unpaired, two tailed) t-test for each of the five themes: academic, social, civic, vocational, and global since they showed the greatest variation across the two samples. I excluded four themes which had small variability across the samples (less than or equal to 2): emotional, local, safe, and challenging. The

difference between the themes present in the top 29 districts and those present in the bottom 30 districts can be seen in the table below.

Table 4-9: Delta of 9 Themes

	Academic	Social	Emotional	Civic	Vocational	Local	Global	Safe	Challenging
Top 29	28	13	21	21	3	13	13	9	16
Bottom 30	25	6	22	14	10	11	7	8	16
Delta	3	7	-1	7	-7	2	6	1	0

The table below shows the results of the individual T test.

Table 4-10: Individual T test Results

	Academic	Social	Civic	Vocational	Global
T value	2.05	1.45	2.91	-2.47	1.86

Comparing the critical T value of 2.0 to the table of T test results, I found that the academic, social, and global themes appeared so often that they are likely insignificant. Whereas, the themes of civic and vocational appear to have some bearing on performance. The civic theme is referenced much more often in the top performing school districts. These districts might be less focused on the test score race that is commonplace in districts where improvements are greatly sought after. The vocational theme was presented much more often in the bottom performing schools sample. This is not surprising because the bottom 30 schools sample contained 6 vocational schools, and of those 5 referenced the vocational theme at least once each; whereas, the top 30 sample only contained no vocational schools.

Results for Research Question 2

My second research question asks to what extent are the district mission statements of high and low performing school districts in alignment with the Massachusetts' policy frameworks? There are two sub questions:

1. What are the implications for Massachusetts' policy?
2. What are the implications for Massachusetts' district level practice?

Massachusetts' Conditions of School Effectiveness

There are two areas of Massachusetts' school policy that relate to this study; the first area is the Conditions for School Effectiveness. The Massachusetts' Conditions for School Effectiveness were voted into regulation in 2010. According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2011), there are 11 categories of school effectiveness: I. Effective district systems for school support and intervention, II. Effective school leadership, III. Aligned curriculum, IV. Effective instruction, V. Student assessment, VI. Principal's staffing authority, VII. Professional development and structures for collaboration, VIII. Tiered instruction and adequate learning time, IX. Students' social, emotional, and health needs, and X. Family-school engagement, XI. Strategic use of resources and adequate budget authority. The first condition, effective district systems for school support and intervention, is beyond the control of an individual school, while the next 10 conditions are focused at the school level. The second condition, effective school leadership, refers to a clearly defined mission and is directly related to this study because of policy implications. It states, "The district and school take action to attract, develop, and retain an effective school leadership team that obtains staff

commitment to improving student learning and implements a clearly defined mission and set of goals" (MA DESE, 2011, para. 2).

To gauge a school's progress towards the conditions of school effectiveness, the MA DESE provides two self-assessments: a school level self-assessment and a district level self-assessment. The district level self-assessment incorporates all 11 conditions of school effectiveness, while the school level self-assessment excludes the first condition because it focuses on the district as a whole. The self-assessments are accompanied by rubrics used to identify four indications of a schools progress: little evidence, developing, providing, or sustaining. According to the MA DESE (2012-b), school districts in Massachusetts, especially those in need of turnaround designated by level 3 and level 4, are encouraged to participate in ongoing school and district self-assessments to continuously assess improvement efforts.

Massachusetts' Model System for Educator Evaluation

The second area of Massachusetts' school policy that relates to this study is Massachusetts' Model System for Educator Evaluation. The Massachusetts' Model System for Educator Evaluation was adopted by the MA DESE in June 2011. The new regulations call for all educators who have a license from the MA DESE be evaluated on new standards. This list of professional educators includes all teachers, counselors, principals, assistant principals, curriculum directors, special education directors, superintendents, assistant superintendents, and all other administrators. Districts who participate in the Race To The Top must implement the new standards for the 2012-2013 school year, while all other districts in the Commonwealth must implement the new

evaluation standards for the 2013-2014 school year. The Massachusetts' Model System for Educator Evaluation standardize, for the first time ever, how all educators in Massachusetts must be evaluated.

The Massachusetts' Model System for Educator Evaluation is of particular importance to this study because mission and vision are mentioned in the model rubrics. To date, there are four model rubrics for: superintendents, school level administrators, teachers and specialized instructional support personnel. In the superintendent's evaluation rubric, mission is mentioned three separate times (in the areas of instructional leadership, budget, and family and community partnerships); while vision is mentioned twice (in the areas of instructional leadership and shared vision). In the school level administrator's evaluation rubric, mission is mentioned four times (in the areas of instructional leadership, budget, and family, community engagement, and mission and core values); while vision is mentioned three times (in the areas of instructional leadership, budget, and shared vision). Conversely, neither mission or vision are mentioned in the teacher evaluation rubric or the specialized instructional support personnel evaluation rubric.

Summary

Chapter 4 focused on the results from my study. It began with a brief introduction and was followed by an in-depth discussion of my results from my questions. Chapter 4 also included 10 tables of information encompassing my coded results of the top 30 and bottom 30 district mission statements in terms of frequency and subcategories. The remaining tables further refined my data excluding one top performing school district

(Littleton) and disregarding two themes (spiritual and physical). The remaining tables contained the results from my statistical analysis, which found four themes to appear significant: social, civic, global and vocational. Chapter 4 concluded with a discussion on the Massachusetts' Conditions of School Effectiveness and the Massachusetts' Model System for Educator Evaluation and how they relate to my study.

Chapter 5 concludes my dissertation. Chapter 5 begins with an introduction of my paper thus far. I then discuss my results and connections to existing research. This is followed by a discussion on the implications for policy and future research and final thoughts will be summarized in a conclusion.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Previous chapters of this dissertation provided background information on mission driven leadership, student achievement, the purpose of schooling, and how that purpose is communicated through a mission statement. Chapter 1 provided a brief introduction including my purpose and my theory of action. My theory of action for this dissertation is if a school district has a content rich, accessible, mission statement then all members of the organization will understand the direction and purpose of the organization which is correlated to elevated levels of student engagement resulting in higher test scores. Chapter 2 discussed a limited review of the literature surrounding education reform, the launch of Sputnik, the Civil Rights Act, the increasing role of federal policy in education, *A Nation at Risk*, standardized testing, Massachusetts School Reform, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System, the No Child Left Behind Act, the Obama Blueprint, the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind, Race To The Top, leadership, great leaders, mission, vision, creative tension, leadership theories, educational leadership, roles of school administrators, distributed leadership, mission statement development, communicating the mission, mission statements change over time, and several empirical mission statement studies. This review of literature set the stage to examine the correlations between district mission and student achievement. The literature reveals that mission driven leadership does matter. The present study examines school reform, mission driven leadership, and student achievement through a quantitative analysis of school districts' mission statements.

Chapters 3 through 5 focus on the methods, results, and conclusions, respectively. Chapter 3 focused on the methodology and research design of this study, including: the research setting, research design, hypothesis, variables, limitations, and delimitations. Chapter 4 provided the results to my research questions and also included a discussion about the Massachusetts' Conditions of School Effectiveness and the Massachusetts' Model System for Educator Evaluation and how they relate to my study. Chapter 5 begins with an introduction and proceeds to a discussion of the results and the overview of connections to existing research. Next, I provide the implications for policy, practice and future research. Finally, a conclusion will summarize this study.

Overview of the Results and Connections to Existing Research

I begin by restating my research questions and then connect my results to existing research. My first research question seeks to determine the relationship between the content and frequency of themes that are present using Bebell and Stemler's (2012) rubric in district wide mission statements of high and low achieving school districts in Massachusetts. This question has three sub questions:

a) Which of Bebell and Stemler's 11 themes are present in high and low achieving school districts?

b) What is the frequency of themes in high and low achieving school districts?

c) To what extent is there a relationship between the theme of academic achievement and academic performance?

My results showed that the academic theme occurred more frequently than all other themes in both the top and bottom performing school districts. This result is not surprising because academic development is the primary function of public education.

Moreover, academic achievement can be measured through standardized tests and Massachusetts leads the nation in virtually all standardized test results. The atmosphere of public accountability and the focus on standardized testing in Massachusetts is evident through the wide range of media coverage. Countless articles, newspaper columns, blogs and media coverage confirm that educators in the Commonwealth are constantly in the press for high or low student achievement. Even though the top performing school districts mentioned the academic theme more often than the bottom performing school districts, this relationship did not prove to be significant, hence I failed to reject my null hypothesis and accept that the presence of the academic theme has little bearing on a districts performance.

My results for the academic theme do not align with a study conducted in 2010 by Perfetto, but my results do coincide with a study conducted by Di Vincenzo in 2008. Perfetto's study did find a statistically significant result for the academic theme in mission statements which is contrary to my results. However, there are several differences in methodology between Perfetto's research and the current study. First, Perfetto's study was different from this study because Perfetto focused on individual high school mission statements, while my study examined district-wide mission statements. A high school typically has a grade configuration from 9^{th} to 12^{th} grade, while a district usually has a grade configuration from kindergarten to 12^{th} grade. District wide mission statements have a broader audience and it one reason that may account for the difference. Second, Perfetto studied high schools in Texas, while the present study is examining school districts in Massachusetts. Third, Perfetto did not use Bebell and Stemler's rubric to code mission statements, whereas the present study did use Bebell and Stemler's

rubric. In contrast, my results for the academic theme is consistent with Di Vincenzo's (2008) study in which he found no significant correlational relationships between leadership practices and student achievement.

My results did prove significant for the themes civic and vocational. An individual T test determined that the civic theme occurred significantly higher in top performing school districts, while the vocational theme occurs significantly higher in bottom performing school districts. One explanation for the vocational theme is that there are six vocational technical school districts in the bottom 30 school districts, while there are no vocational technical school districts in the top 29 school districts. This result is consistent with Stemler, Bebell, and Sonnabend (2010) that school mission is shaped by the principal and the staff. In other words, vocational technical school districts are usually small districts containing only one school with the principal having a great amount of influencing shaping a district mission, whereas other districts have many other areas of focus.

The theme that occurs significantly more in higher achieving school districts is the civic theme. The subcategories under civic are identified as focusing on productive, responsible, and contributing members of society involved in public service. In other words, one interpretation of these subcategories is that they are associated with character education. The literature reveals the importance of character education (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Caldwell, Foster & Marshall, 2011; Levine, 2012; Sojourner, 2012; Tough, 2012). In fact, Adams (2013) reports, "A growing body of research supports its (character education) effectiveness, and educators say they've seen a difference in students when positive value lessons become part of the school's culture" (p. 7). In regards to the civic

theme occurring statistically more in higher achieving school districts, a possible explanation could be that higher achieving school districts have more character education programs than lower achieving school districts. However, more research is required and examining the difference between character education programs in higher and lower achieving school districts is suggested as a topic for further research.

My results are inconsistent with Perfetto's (2010) results. As I previously mentioned, Perfetto did not use Bebell and Stemler's (1999 or 2012) rubric to code mission statements, he crafted his own system. Additionally, Perfetto examined high school mission statements in Texas, while I focused on district-wide mission statements in Massachusetts. Perfetto concluded six themes to be significant: academics, excellence, learning, challenge, nurture, and lifelong learning. In my study, the academic, challenge, and safe/nurturing themes were not significant. The remaining themes Perfetto found significant were not classified as themes in my study. However, according to Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric, lifelong learning is a subcategory of the emotional theme, but the emotional theme was not significant in my study.

My second research question asks to what extent are the content of district mission statements of high and low performing school districts in alignment with the Massachusetts' policy frameworks?

a) What are the implications for Massachusetts' policy?

b) What are the implications for Massachusetts' district level practice?

School districts are not mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or specific statutory requirements to have a mission statement, but there are two areas where mission statements align with Massachusetts' School Policy: the Massachusetts'

Conditions of School Effectiveness and the Massachusetts' Model System for Educator Evaluation. These two areas, the Massachusetts' Conditions of School Effectiveness (approved 2010) and the Massachusetts' Model System for Educator Evaluation (approved 2011) are recent additions to school policy. School districts and individual schools can self-assess against the Conditions of School Effectiveness. A suggestion for a future study is to examine the results of self-assessments from top and bottom performing school districts.

Implications for Policy, Practice, and Future Research

Before I provide my final conclusion, I will discuss two areas of interest that are directly connected to my second research question. First, I will review the implications for policy and practice and then I will discuss implications for future research. Finally, I will offer some final thoughts in my conclusion.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Educational policy makers and practitioners who recognize the value of mission driven leadership and its relationship to student achievement would be particularly interested in this study. This study ranks all public school districts in Massachusetts according to 10^{th} grade performance on MCAS and the district's graduation rate to select the highest and lowest performing school districts in the Commonwealth. Results from the juxtaposition of mission statements and student achievement reveal that both higher performing school districts and lower performing school districts equally focus on the academic theme and the acquisition of knowledge. This is not a surprise because

acquiring knowledge/cognitive development is the fundamental reason why public schools exist. State and federal reform efforts including the Massachusetts Reform Act of 1993, No Child Left Behind, and Race To The Top have all steered the mission of public education towards increased accountability and student achievement. One way for increased accountability and academic achievement to manifest is through standardized test score results. Further analysis of my results reveal that higher performing school districts focus more on the civic theme, while lower performing school districts tend to focus on vocational. My results have several implications for policy makers and practitioners.

First, the increased legislation from the federal and state government is pushing our public education system to focus efforts on standardized test results. In fact, from a macro leadership point of view, one could argue that the mission or purpose of education reform is to maximize student achievement on standardized tests. This goal of maximizing student achievement is admirable and most people want student achievement to increase, but the interpretation of how to increase student achievement is worrisome. Public schools must provide a well-rounded education and they should not get caught up in increasing test scores at the peril of other important themes such as civic responsibility. For example, the lowest performing and only level 5 school district in Massachusetts, the Lawrence Public School's (2013) mission states, "The effective use of resources to maximize student achievement is the principle on which all of the district's strategies will be based" (p. 1). One could interpret the Lawrence Public School's mission to focus on maximizing student achievement in the form of test results at the expense of everything else. In other words, one interpretation of the Lawrence mission statement is to focus

only on student achievement in the areas of English, science, and math. English, science, and math are the subject areas in which student achievement is measured in Massachusetts. I am not arguing that these subject areas and standardized tests are not important, I believe that they are incredibly important, but I also believe that policy makers need to be mindful how the message that they are sending from reform efforts is interpreted by practitioners. This laser like focus on testing is not good for our public education system. My results clearly show that higher performing school districts don't focus solely on standardized tests.

Next, as my review of literature supports, mission driven leadership is essential to moving a school district forward. Teachers, students, parents, and all stakeholders have a desire to know the purpose and direction of a school district. Research clearly posits that school districts with mission driven leadership achieve positive results. One way for a mission driven leader to communicate the essential message is through a mission statement. Mission driven leaders must frequently communicate the mission in as many forms as possible. It is also important for mission driven leaders to actively involve all stakeholders in the creation and/or periodic revision of the mission. Involving stakeholders in the creation and/or revision of the mission creates ownership and buy in from stakeholders.

Successful mission driven leaders incorporate a wide variety of leadership techniques based on theory. Practitioners and policy makers understand that transformational leadership theory is closely associated with mission driven leadership. Transformational leadership theory has four main components: intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. Successful

mission driven leaders stimulate employees to a challenging academic level and they keep them engaged in their work. Mission driven leaders also seek to help the individual employee as much as the organization. Another key component for successful mission driven leaders is that they inspire others through vision or mission. Finally, mission driven leaders establish trust and model high ethical standards. When mission driven leaders use these four components of transformational leadership, organizations, schools, or groups are poised to perform at high levels.

Mission statements are important, but alone they are not enough. Policy makers and practitioners need to understand that a mission statement is the first step of many for planning for the future. Our society changes and mission driven leaders need to adapt and plan for changes for the future. District and school improvement plans must accompany mission statements. I will discuss this further in my implications for future research.

Below, I have provided a series of recommendations for policymakers and practitioners

- Policy makers need to be mindful of reform efforts that focus solely on increasing student achievement and how it may be interpreted causing educators to focus solely on standardized test results. Policy makers and practitioners would be wise to consider the findings reported in this study.
- Policy makers need to include reform efforts that address other aspects of education, for example, character education and incorporating the civic theme into reform efforts. Top performing school districts do not focus solely on standardized tests; rather, top performing school districts are more complex and offer a wide variety of themes.
- This study supports Bebell, and Stemler's research that mission statements can be effectively coded. Policymakers and practitioners would be wise to consider that mission statements can be effectively coded and they are an important tool for shaping practice and communicating core values.

Implications for Future Research

This study examined the impact of mission driven leadership on top and bottom performing school districts in Massachusetts by comparing and analyzing mission statements from a sample of high and low performing districts. Significant findings were noted, but the study was limited for several reasons. First, this study is limited because data was taken from a single year, 2011. This study was based solely on the 10th grade MCAS results and graduation rates from 2011. Future studies on mission driven leadership may benefit by using data over a longer period of time.

A second limitation is that there was no research was conducted as to who created the mission statement, when the mission statement was created, or if the mission statement has been revised over time. Knowing the origin of the mission statement, the people involved in the creation of the mission statement, and the history of the mission statement would all be helpful to future researchers studying mission driven leadership. Future studies on mission driven leadership may benefit by knowing this information

Third, the present study examined mission statements only and did not take other school improvement data into consideration. School improvement plans, district improvement plans, core values, SMART goals, and self-assessment indicators, such as the conditions for school effectiveness self-assessments, were not examined. As the literature tells us, planning and setting goals are extremely important to achieving results and planning for the future. Future studies on mission driven leadership may benefit by incorporating improvement plans, self-assessment surveys, and short and long-term goals into their research.

Fourth, the present study is limited because it does not take the wealth of a school district into consideration. Financial resources are a huge barrier in some school districts, while other districts have more resources. It is suggested that future studies more closely examine school and district resources. It is also suggested that future studies attempt to pair like districts. For example, eliminate vocational and charter schools from the data set. On the other hand, future research could choose to more closely examine charter and vocational school districts in comparison to each other.

Finally, I would suggest that future researchers who attempt to code district mission statements use my revised coding rubric as shown in Appendix T. My revised rubric has 76 subcategories for the same 11 themes in Bebell and Stemler's rubric. As previously stated, Bebell and Stemler's original 1999 coding rubric has 10 themes with 32 subcategories, while their revised 2012 rubric has 11 themes with 42 subcategories. Therefore, my revised coding rubric has 34 more subcategories than Bebell and Stemler's most recent coding rubric.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to look at mission driven school district leadership in Massachusetts public schools and attempt to identify any relationship, or lack thereof, between district mission statements and student achievement. In this study, 288 Massachusetts public school districts are ranked according to their 2011 high school graduation rate and their 2011 tenth grade Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results. From the 288 districts, a sample of the top 30 and the bottom 30 were selected because 30 is the minimum sample size recommended for applying the

central limit theorem (Devore, 1991). All district wide mission statements were obtained from the websites of the top 30 and bottom 30 school districts with a 100% return rate. The mission statements were then coded using Bebell and Stemler's 2012 coding rubric. Bebell and Stemler's coding rubric contains 11 themes with 42 subcategories. The 11 themes are: academic/cognitive, social development, emotional development, civic development, physical development, vocational preparation, integrate into local community, integrate into global community, integrate into spiritual community, safe nurturing environment, and challenging environment.

Results from the present study found the academic/cognitive theme occurred more than any other theme in both the top and bottom school districts in Massachusetts. Statistical differences did appear for two of Bebell and Stemler's themes: civic and vocational. Conclusions of this study suggest that higher performing school districts in Massachusetts focus their efforts on the civic theme; whereas, lower performing school districts had many similar themes to high performing school districts, but seemed to focus their efforts on the vocational theme. This study is unique because it is the first time that mission driven leadership in Massachusetts school districts is being analyzed to see if there is a connection with student achievement.

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF BEBELL AND STEMLER'S (1999) STUDY

Research Question/s, Hypothesis, or Area of Focus	Primary Methodology	Sample Size	Key Findings
Hypothesis 1: Not all post-secondary institutions are attempting to accomplish the same things. In other words, there is systematic difference in mission statements of elementary, middle, secondary and post-secondary schools. Hypothesis 2: There is systematic difference between the mission statements of elementary, middle, high, and colleges.	Content analysis via emergent coding	267 schools from a mixture of elementary, middle, secondary and postsecondary. The authors defined the population as a random sample of American K-12 schools and colleges whose websites were linked to one of two comprehensive sites, one for K-12 and one for college.	The authors conclude that the purpose of school shifts from emotional development in early levels of schooling to cognitive development at the college level. Also, mission statements vary greatly both within and between school levels with most schools emphasizing cognitive, emotional and citizenship. Finally, it was the first time mission statements were coded.

APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF DI VINCENZO'S (2008) STUDY

Research Question/s, Hypothesis, or Area of Focus	Primary Methodology	Sample Size	Key Findings
What is the extent of the correlational relationships between administrative leadership attributes as determined by Kouzes and Posner's (2010) LPI self-survey instrument and the resultant student achievement as determined by standardized test results? What is the extent of the difference in the demonstrated leadership attributes as determined by Kouzes and Posner's LPI self-survey instrument respective to the private or independent and the public school environments?	Quantitative, descriptive, correlational dissertation	Sampling of the highest and lowest performing private and public schools in New Jersey: 50 high performing public schools, 50 low performing public schools, and 87 private schools.	Results revealed no significant correlational relationships between the leadership practices of study participants and student achievement, and leadership. Differences were observed between public and private school leaders, but the observations were contrary to the literature. Implications are that current emphasis on transactional and transformational leadership models for improving school leadership and student outcomes may be misdirected.

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF PERFETTO'S (2010) STUDY

Research Question/s, Hypothesis, or Area of Focus	Primary Methodology	Sample Size	Key Findings
1. What themes were present in the context of mission statements that were examined? 2. How often did the identified themes occur in the mission statements of high and low performing high schools? 3. How often did the identified themes occur in the mission statements of small, medium, and large size high schools? 4. Were there significant differences in the expected and observed frequency for each identified theme present in the mission statements among the group of high and low performing high schools? 5. Were there any significant differences in the expected and observed frequency for each identified theme present in the mission statements among the group of small, medium, and large size high schools?	Mixed method , qualitative and quantitative dissertation	49 Public and private high schools in the nation that were chosen as a USDE Blue Ribbon High School out of a total of 324, and 50 high schools in Texas that served grades 9 through 12 that received an unacceptable accountability rating from the TEA out of 1,147 high schools. The sample of USDE Blue Ribbon high schools represented the highest recognition that a school could be bestowed by the United States federal government in 2008.	Thirty-one common themes emerged in the context of the mission statements of both high and low performing high schools, six of which were statistically significant. This suggested, high performing schools focused their energy on academics, emphasized student learning, challenged students as they learned, provided a nurturing/caring environment for learning, expected excellence in what students were learning, and communicated that learning continued well beyond high school and was a lifelong process; whereas, low performing high schools had a variety of themes that were similar to those of high performing high schools, but failed to include the ones that contributed most to the difference between that of high and low performing institutions.

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF HERTZ-LAZAROWITZ, KURLAND, AND PERETZ'S (2010) STUDY

Research Question/s, Hypothesis, or Area of Focus	Primary Methodology	Sample Size	Key Findings
H1. Principals' transformational leadership style will be more positively related to school organizational learning than transactional leadership; in contrast, laissez-faire leadership will be negatively related to school organizational learning. H2. Principals' transformational leadership style will be more positively related to school vision than will transactional leadership; in contrast, laissez-faire leadership will be negatively related to school vision. H3. School vision will mediate the relationship between principals' transformational leadership style and school organizational learning.	Research paper, Mixed-Methodology: Surveys, interviews, site-visits	Data collected from 1,474 teachers at 104 elementary schools in northern Israel	School vision, as shaped by the principal and the staff, is a powerful motivator of the process of organizational learning in school.

APPENDIX E

SUMMARY OF BEBELL, SONNABEND, AND STEMLER'S (PART 1, 2010) STUDY

Research Question/s, Hypothesis, or Area of Focus	Primary Methodology	Sample Size	Key Findings
1. How much variability is there in the number and types of themes articulated across school mission statements? In a sample of public high school mission statements from 10 distinct states, is there agreement on the primary purposes of school? 2. Do high school mission statements systematically differ in their content depending on (a) contextual variables such as the geographic location of the school, (b) input variables such as the urbanicity of the school, or (c) output variables such as the school's NCLB classification?	Mixed methods research design	True random samples of 50 high schools were selected from each of 10 geographically and politically diverse states, yielding a total of 421 mission statements that were ultimately coded and quantitatively compared.	Results indicate that mission statements can be reliably coded quantitatively and that schools vary systematically and sensibly with regard to both the number and types of themes incorporated into their mission statements. Furthermore, consistent with prior research, the qualitative results showed that principles generally regard mission statements as an important tool for shaping practice and communicating core values.

APPENDIX F
BEBELL, SONNABEND, & STEMLER, 2010

Research Question/s, Hypothesis, or Area of Focus	Primary Methodology	Sample Size	Key Findings
1. Who determines the mission of a school? 2. When and why do school missions change? 3. Is there any link between what is said and what actually goes on in the high school classroom?	Qualitative	A subset of random schools from 10 states (as in the first study) were selected and 14 out of 67 principals participated providing a 21% participation rate.	School mission, as shaped by the principal and the staff, is a powerful motivator of the process of organizational learning in school. This study concludes that high school principals generally agree that mission statements are an import tool for shaping practice, communicating values, and the day-to-day operations of a school.

APPENDIX G

2011 MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL DISTRICTS ALPHABETICAL

DISTRICT	Enrollment	Graduation Rate	%(A+P) ELA	%(A+P) MTH
Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public (District)	1426	95.2	85	77
Abington	2016	88.1	87	75
Academy Of the Pacific Rim Charter Public (District)	484	86.1	97	92
Acton-Boxborough	2943	95.1	96	95
Adams-Cheshire	1503	75.9	89	65
Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter (District)	963	92.5	100	97
Agawam	4230	89.5	91	85
Amesbury	2385	82.5	88	86
Amesbury Academy Charter Public (District)	49	64.7	77	62
Amherst-Pelham	1574	90.3	93	85
Andover	6178	95.4	97	95
Arlington	4808	92.2	95	91
Ashburnham-Westminster	2337	91.3	95	91
Ashland	2624	87.9	96	92
Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical	997	85.6	82	77
Athol-Royalston	1605	67.8	74	56
Attleboro	5855	83.5	88	78
Auburn	2363	94.1	89	79
Avon	772	84.8	93	70
Ayer	915	84.5	93	80
Barnstable	4153	80.2	87	80
Bedford	2383	93.6	91	89
Belchertown	2607	89.4	95	89
Bellingham	2567	84.3	90	82
Belmont	3928	93	97	95
Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter Public (District)	262	83.3	97	70
Berkshire Hills	1351	95.3	91	81
Berlin-Boylston	415	91.8	93	86
Beverly	4251	85.9	87	80

Billerica	5792	84.1	88	84
Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical	1146	98.2	91	90
Blackstone-Millville	2013	89.7	93	83
Blue Hills Regional Vocational Technical	849	93.4	89	78
Boston	56037	64.4	67	62
Boston Collegiate Charter (District)	554	71.4	100	100
Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter (District)	323	16.2	68	43
Boston Preparatory Charter Public (District)	346	86.7	98	100
Bourne	2302	91.8	87	82
Braintree	5467	95.2	92	89
Bridgewater-Raynham	5707	92.2	88	79
Bristol County Agricultural	457	98.1	90	90
Bristol-Plymouth Regional Vocational Technical	1237	96.9	87	77
Brockton	15828	69.4	75	62
Brookline	6627	89.5	93	90
Burlington	3652	90.8	94	93
Cambridge	6019	82.7	81	77
Canton	3218	95.5	94	88
Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical	693	85.8	84	72
Carver	1785	86.2	85	78
Central Berkshire	1933	87.2	92	85
Chatham	691	92.6	90	78
Chelmsford	5307	93	94	90
Chelsea	5570	54.6	59	51
Chicopee	7875	69.7	72	59
City On A Hill Charter Public (District)	294	77.8	94	97
Clinton	1955	84.3	86	76
Codman Academy Charter Public (District)	136	43.5	85	73
Cohasset	1535	94.6	97	98
Community Charter School of Cambridge (District)	329	69.2	94	100
Concord-Carlisle	1208	96.7	97	94

Danvers	3637	89	91	79
Dartmouth	3964	93.9	90	80
Dedham	2879	85.4	84	88
Dennis-Yarmouth	3199	84.6	88	77
Dighton-Rehoboth	3186	91.7	94	87
Douglas	1731	90.4	95	78
Dover-Sherborn	1155	95.2	98	96
Dracut	4018	87.5	90	79
Dudley-Charlton Reg	4275	90.7	90	86
Duxbury	3247	98.2	97	97
East Bridgewater	2314	89.5	91	80
East Longmeadow	2846	93.3	88	85
Easthampton	1567	74.4	74	66
Easton	3893	93.4	94	89
Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers (Horace Mann Charter School)	218	100	86	63
Essex Agricultural Technical	482	96.5	96	83
Everett	6142	75.2	73	56
Fairhaven	1984	81.2	82	81
Fall River	9873	71	67	52
Falmouth	3710	86.8	90	82
Fitchburg	4881	71.5	73	67
Four Rivers Charter Public (District)	205	88.9	100	97
Foxborough	2836	95.7	94	87
Foxborough Regional Charter (District)	1177	100	96	88
Framingham	8182	81.1	84	82
Francis W. Parker Charter Essential (District)	393	91.5	100	88
Franklin	6032	93	95	87
Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical	502	92.9	74	60
Freetown-Lakeville	1920	92.5	89	82
Frontier	692	89.5	87	85
Gardner	2563	75.6	80	68
Gateway	1103	85.1	82	62
Georgetown	1652	90.1	92	87
Gill-Montague	1081	67.1	82	76
Global Learning Charter Public (District)	483	83.3	92	90

Gloucester	3203	86.3	84	76
Grafton	2872	85.7	96	88
Granby	1131	91	93	84
Greater Fall River Regional Vocational Technical	1361	95.7	84	74
Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical	1222	82.4	65	48
Greater Lowell Regional Vocational Technical	2056	92.1	68	59
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical	2132	94.9	83	73
Greenfield	1790	76.6	73	68
Groton-Dunstable	2771	98.3	95	94
Hadley	710	97.8	96	87
Hamilton-Wenham	1976	96.4	97	92
Hampden-Wilbraham	3596	92.1	93	85
Hampshire	810	89.9	94	91
Hanover	2685	96.2	95	87
Harvard	1267	94.6	100	99
Harwich	1333	84.8	95	86
Hatfield	469	80	97	87
Haverhill	6804	67.1	77	69
Hingham	4100	94	96	89
Holbrook	1187	77.5	76	67
Holliston	2870	96.9	94	90
Holyoke	5896	49.5	61	56
Hopedale	1279	88.5	99	88
Hopkinton	3454	98.8	99	96
Hudson	2993	85.8	89	78
Hull	1164	85.3	94	84
Innovation Academy Charter (District)	590	75.6	88	90
Ipswich	2111	93.8	93	90
King Philip	2142	86.5	92	84
Lawrence	12784	52.3	48	31
Lee	821	88.2	83	74
Leicester	1859	90.4	87	76
Lenox	801	95.5	91	86
Leominster	6214	90.6	82	73
Lexington	6366	92.9	98	96
Lincoln-Sudbury	1614	97.7	96	94

Littleton	1584	96.9	96	93
Longmeadow	3011	96	93	91
Lowell	13600	69.6	74	64
Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter (District)	108	13.5	64	63
Ludlow	2987	88.4	82	79
Lunenburg	1650	90.1	95	93
Lynn	13547	68.6	70	59
Lynnfield	2308	97.2	96	91
Malden	6565	74.6	76	71
Manchester Essex Regional	1518	95.6	89	86
Mansfield	4826	95.7	93	92
Marblehead	3206	96.9	96	94
Marlborough	4573	84.3	77	75
Marshfield	4671	90.7	94	87
Martha's Vineyard Charter (District)	181	80	100	83
Marthas Vineyard	677	92.5	90	91
Masconomet	2090	99.1	96	95
Mashpee	1767	77.8	87	85
MATCH Charter Public School (District)	447	65.1	98	96
Maynard	1312	84.3	91	81
Medfield	2939	97.9	99	97
Medford	4849	79.9	84	75
Medway	2640	96.7	95	92
Melrose	3775	90.9	87	77
Mendon-Upton	2720	93	96	90
Methuen	7112	80.6	76	58
Middleborough	3457	93.5	87	72
Milford	4185	85.3	87	82
Millbury	1844	94.3	77	80
Millis	1465	93.8	97	92
Milton	3921	93.6	91	88
Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical	616	87.5	86	71
Mohawk Trail	1076	76.1	75	71
Monson	1383	86	88	75
Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical	1400	95.6	87	86
Mount Greylock	602	93.8	92	71

Mystic Valley Regional Charter (District)	1390	95.9	96	93
Nantucket	1289	87.1	93	73
Narragansett	1495	89.5	86	77
Nashoba	3495	93.8	96	93
Nashoba Valley Regional Vocational Technical	665	96.6	83	76
Natick	4825	92.5	94	89
Nauset	1526	90.3	96	90
Needham	5358	96.6	96	93
New Bedford	12538	56.4	57	42
New Leadership Charter (District)	489	66.7	79	62
Newburyport	2267	93.7	95	91
Newton	11934	95.5	93	92
Norfolk County Agricultural	484	99	95	85
North Adams	1557	73.3	72	58
North Andover	4638	94.3	91	80
North Attleborough	4692	88.3	94	89
North Brookfield	595	88.9	93	66
North Central Charter Essential (District)	368	65.9	84	76
North Middlesex	3917	91	89	84
North Reading	2675	91.8	96	92
North Shore Regional Vocational Technical	466	97.2	90	82
Northampton	2681	89.2	91	84
Northampton-Smith Vocational Agricultural	444	81.9	72	52
Northboro-Southboro	1438	95	96	92
Northbridge	2603	78.2	88	73
Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational Technical	1265	94.5	78	70
Northern Berkshire Regional Vocational Technical	474	96.8	87	78
Norton	2780	90.2	91	85
Norwell	2343	97.5	96	91
Norwood	3454	88.7	91	80
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical	562	97	90	80
Old Rochester	1190	92.8	92	86
Oxford	2029	78.3	76	66

Palmer	1619	70.8	86	75
Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical	635	86.2	72	69
Peabody	6075	80.8	76	69
Pembroke	3378	95.1	91	84
Pentucket	3129	91.3	93	90
Phoenix Charter Academy (District)	192	12.7	70	71
Pioneer Valley	1132	81.1	92	82
Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public (District)	404	80	100	91
Pittsfield	5978	74.1	71	70
Plymouth	8126	88	88	79
Prospect Hill Academy Charter (District)	1115	81.7	91	79
Provincetown	125	87.5	90	63
Quabbin	2860	89.1	94	83
Quaboag Regional	1446	81.9	78	78
Quincy	9125	85.8	82	82
Ralph C Mahar	821	62.1	83	83
Randolph	2876	69.3	79	68
Reading	4459	95.9	94	93
Revere	6229	70.6	75	66
Rockland	2260	83.8	80	70
Rockport	946	90.1	97	90
Sabis International Charter (District)	1574	90.8	90	90
Salem	4565	80.5	66	59
Salem Academy Charter (District)	309	87.1	91	88
Sandwich	3432	94	92	88
Saugus	2849	79.4	78	68
Scituate	3276	90.2	97	94
Seekonk	2141	94.1	89	75
Sharon	3435	96.5	97	97
Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical	1324	97.6	96	88
Shrewsbury	5938	90.5	96	92
Silver Lake	1926	96.9	85	86
Somerset	2756	96.5	94	83
Somerville	4855	78.4	68	61
South Hadley	2075	86.1	87	82

South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical	672	84.3	70	62
South Shore Charter Public (District)	534	87.5	96	85
South Shore Regional Vocational Technical	599	91.5	87	75
Southbridge	2204	69	70	54
Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical	1262	89.2	69	65
Southern Berkshire	870	78.1	98	95
Southern Worcester County Regional Vocational Technical	1077	93.6	84	74
Southwick-Tolland	1731	90.4	85	75
Spencer-E Brookfield	1972	83.3	79	69
Springfield	25213	52.1	60	41
Stoneham	2550	88.6	92	80
Stoughton	3777	82.7	91	76
Sturgis Charter Public (District)	413	95.1	100	99
Sutton	1632	94.3	92	87
Swampscott	2273	96.3	92	86
Swansea	2038	91.7	85	82
Tantasqua	1782	89.2	85	81
Taunton	7912	81.9	75	64
Tewksbury	4049	86.2	86	82
Tri County Regional Vocational Technical	963	90.8	86	77
Triton	3059	84.8	92	88
Tyngsborough	1939	94.4	92	85
Upper Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical	666	96.8	84	80
Uxbridge	1952	79.8	88	82
Wachusett	7490	92.6	94	88
Wakefield	3359	93.1	89	84
Walpole	3961	95.1	96	88
Waltham	4796	78.4	88	78
Ware	1277	69.6	77	71
Wareham	3084	79.3	78	54
Watertown	2649	84.7	80	83
Wayland	2686	96.2	97	90
Webster	1882	73.9	78	70
Wellesley	4892	97	97	95
West Boylston	957	90.3	90	83

West Bridgewater	1299	97.8	89	90
West Springfield	3932	77.5	71	67
Westborough	3513	96.9	94	91
Westfield	5938	83.8	77	68
Westford	5291	97.2	97	97
Weston	2365	94.1	96	94
Westport	1835	76.6	83	74
Westwood	3148	95.8	96	93
Weymouth	6935	81.7	89	80
Whitman-Hanson	4391	89.7	89	81
Whittier Regional Vocational Technical	1251	98.3	88	81
Wilmington	3732	92.1	92	91
Winchendon	1551	74.5	77	61
Winchester	4282	94.6	96	93
Winthrop	1961	88.6	85	77
Woburn	4809	85.7	86	73
Worcester	24192	72	68	59
State Total	955563	83.4	84	77

APPENDIX H

2011 MASSACHUSETS SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY RANK

Rank	DISTRICT by Grad Rate	DISTRICT by ELA	DISTRICT by MATH
1	Foxborough Regional Charter (District)	Sturgis Charter Public (District)	Boston Collegiate Charter (District)
2	Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers (Horace Mann Charter School)	Harvard	Boston Preparatory Charter Public (District)
3	Masconomet	Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter (District)	Community Charter School of Cambridge (District)
4	Norfolk County Agricultural	Francis W. Parker Charter Essential (District)	Sturgis Charter Public (District)
5	Hopkinton	Four Rivers Charter Public (District)	Harvard
6	Groton-Dunstable	Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public (District)	Cohasset
7	Whittier Regional Vocational Technical	Martha's Vineyard Charter (District)	Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter (District)
8	Duxbury	Boston Collegiate Charter (District)	Four Rivers Charter Public (District)
9	Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical	Hopkinton	Medfield
10	Bristol County Agricultural	Medfield	Duxbury
11	Medfield	Hopedale	Westford
12	West Bridgewater	Dover-Sherborn	Sharon
13	Hadley	Lexington	City On A Hill Charter Public (District)
14	Lincoln-Sudbury	Boston Preparatory Charter Public (District)	Hopkinton
15	Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical	Southern Berkshire	Dover-Sherborn
16	Norwell	MATCH Charter Public School (District)	Lexington
17	Westford	Duxbury	MATCH Charter Public School (District)
18	Lynnfield	Westford	Southern Berkshire
19	North Shore Regional Vocational Technical	Wellesley	Wellesley

20	Wellesley	Concord-Carlisle	Andover
21	Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical	Sharon	Belmont
22	Westborough	Hamilton-Wenham	Masconomet
23	Marblehead	Wayland	Acton-Boxborough
24	Holliston	Andover	Concord-Carlisle
25	Silver Lake	Cohasset	Scituate
26	Littleton	Millis	Lincoln-Sudbury
27	Bristol-Plymouth Regional Vocational Technical	Belmont	Marblehead
28	Upper Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical	Scituate	Weston
29	Northern Berkshire Regional Vocational Technical	Rockport	Groton-Dunstable
30	Medway	Academy Of the Pacific Rim Charter Public (District)	Littleton
31	Concord-Carlisle	Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter Public (District)	Needham
32	Needham	Hatfield	Mystic Valley Regional Charter (District)
33	Nashoba Valley Regional Vocational Technical	Foxborough Regional Charter (District)	Westwood
34	Sharon	Masconomet	Winchester
35	Somerset	Hadley	Nashoba
36	Essex Agricultural Technical	Lincoln-Sudbury	Lunenburg
37	Hamilton-Wenham	Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical	Reading
38	Swampscott	Norwell	Burlington
39	Wayland	Lynnfield	Hamilton-Wenham
40	Hanover	Marblehead	Millis
41	Longmeadow	Littleton	Academy Of the Pacific Rim Charter Public (District)
42	Reading	Needham	Northboro-Southboro
43	Mystic Valley Regional Charter (District)	Essex Agricultural Technical	North Reading
44	Westwood	Mystic Valley Regional Charter (District)	Shrewsbury
45	Mansfield	Westwood	Ashland
46	Foxborough	Walpole	Medway
47	Greater Fall River Regional Vocational Technical	Acton-Boxborough	Mansfield
48	Manchester Essex Regional	Northboro-Southboro	Newton

49	Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical	Winchester	Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public (District)
50	Newton	Weston	Norwell
51	Canton	Hingham	Lynnfield
52	Lenox	Nashoba	Newburyport
53	Andover	Mendon-Upton	Arlington
54	Berkshire Hills	North Reading	Ashburnham-Westminster
55	Braintree	Shrewsbury	Westborough
56	Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public (District)	Nauset	Hampshire
57	Dover-Sherborn	Ashland	Longmeadow
58	Walpole	South Shore Charter Public (District)	Wilmington
59	Pembroke	Grafton	Marthas Vineyard
60	Acton-Boxborough	Norfolk County Agricultural	Wayland
61	Sturgis Charter Public (District)	Groton-Dunstable	Rockport
62	Northboro-Southboro	Medway	Mendon-Upton
63	Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical	Hanover	Nauset
64	Winchester	Newburyport	Holliston
65	Cohasset	Franklin	Chelmsford
66	Harvard	Arlington	Ipswich
67	Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational Technical	Ashburnham-Westminster	Pentucket
68	Tyngsborough	Douglas	Brookline
69	North Andover	Lunenburg	Global Learning Charter Public (District)
70	Millbury	Belchertown	Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical
71	Sutton	Harwich	Bristol County Agricultural
72	Weston	Westborough	Sabis International Charter (District)
73	Auburn	Holliston	West Bridgewater
74	Seekonk	Somerset	Innovation Academy Charter (District)
75	Hingham	Reading	Hingham
76	Sandwich	Foxborough	Belchertown
77	Dartmouth	Canton	Easton
78	Nashoba	Easton	Natick
79	Ipswich	Chelmsford	North Attleborough
80	Millis	Wachusett	Braintree

81	Mount Greylock	Natick	Bedford
82	Newburyport	Dighton-Rehoboth	Francis W. Parker Charter Essential (District)
83	Milton	Burlington	Hopedale
84	Bedford	Marshfield	Foxborough Regional Charter (District)
85	Southern Worcester County Regional Vocational Technical	Hampshire	Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical
86	Middleborough	Quabbin	Walpole
87	Easton	North Attleborough	Grafton
88	Blue Hills Regional Vocational Technical	Hull	Canton
89	East Longmeadow	City On A Hill Charter Public (District)	Wachusett
90	Wakefield	Community Charter School of Cambridge (District)	Sandwich
91	Franklin	Longmeadow	Triton
92	Chelmsford	Mansfield	Milton
93	Belmont	Newton	Salem Academy Charter (District)
94	Mendon-Upton	Ipswich	Dedham
95	Lexington	Hampden-Wilbraham	Hatfield
96	Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical	Berlin-Boylston	Hadley
97	Old Rochester	Pentucket	Hanover
98	Wachusett	Granby	Franklin
99	Chatham	Amherst-Pelham	Foxborough
100	Natick	Blackstone-Millville	Dighton-Rehoboth
101	Freetown-Lakeville	Brookline	Marshfield
102	Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter (District)	North Brookfield	Sutton
103	Marthas Vineyard	Nantucket	Georgetown
104	Bridgewater-Raynham	Avon	Harwich
105	Arlington	Ayer	Berlin-Boylston
106	Wilmington	Swampscott	Swampscott
107	Hampden-Wilbraham	Braintree	Old Rochester
108	Greater Lowell Regional Vocational Technical	Tyngsborough	Lenox
109	North Reading	Sutton	Dudley-Charlton Reg
110	Bourne	Sandwich	Manchester Essex Regional
111	Berlin-Boylston	Mount Greylock	Amesbury

112	Dighton-Rehoboth	Old Rochester	Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical
113	Swansea	Wilmington	Silver Lake
114	South Shore Regional Vocational Technical	Georgetown	South Shore Charter Public (District)
115	Francis W. Parker Charter Essential (District)	Stoneham	Norfolk County Agricultural
116	Pentucket	Central Berkshire	Hampden-Wilbraham
117	Ashburnham-Westminster	King Philip	Amherst-Pelham
118	North Middlesex	Triton	Tyngsborough
119	Granby	Global Learning Charter Public (District)	Central Berkshire
120	Melrose	Pioneer Valley	Norton
121	Burlington	Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical	Agawam
122	Sabis International Charter (District)	Lenox	East Longmeadow
123	Tri County Regional Vocational Technical	Berkshire Hills	Frontier
124	Marshfield	Pembroke	Mashpee
125	Dudley-Charlton Reg	North Andover	Hull
126	Leominster	Milton	Granby
127	Shrewsbury	Bedford	King Philip
128	Leicester	Norton	Pembroke
129	Douglas	Agawam	Northampton
130	Southwick-Tolland	East Bridgewater	Wakefield
131	Amherst-Pelham	Northampton	North Middlesex
132	Nauset	Danvers	Billerica
133	West Boylston	Norwood	Martha's Vineyard Charter (District)
134	Scituate	Salem Academy Charter (District)	Essex Agricultural Technical
135	Norton	Maynard	Somerset
136	Georgetown	Stoughton	Quabbin
137	Lunenburg	Prospect Hill Academy Charter (District)	Blackstone-Millville
138	Rockport	Bristol County Agricultural	West Boylston
139	Hampshire	North Shore Regional Vocational Technical	Ralph C Mahar
140	Whitman-Hanson	Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical	Watertown
141	Blackstone-Millville	Dartmouth	Pioneer Valley

142	Brookline	Chatham	North Shore Regional Vocational Technical
143	Agawam	Marthas Vineyard	Falmouth
144	East Bridgewater	Sabis International Charter (District)	Bellingham
145	Narragansett	Dudley-Charlton Reg	Freetown-Lakeville
146	Frontier	West Boylston	Uxbridge
147	Belchertown	Dracut	Bourne
148	Northampton	Provincetown	South Hadley
149	Tantasqua	Falmouth	Milford
150	Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical	Bellingham	Tewksbury
151	Quabbin	West Bridgewater	Swansea
152	Danvers	Manchester Essex Regional	Framingham
153	North Brookfield	Auburn	Quincy
154	Four Rivers Charter Public (District)	Seekonk	Berkshire Hills
155	Norwood	Blue Hills Regional Vocational Technical	Maynard
156	Stoneham	Wakefield	Whitman-Hanson
157	Winthrop	Freetown-Lakeville	Whittier Regional Vocational Technical
158	Hopedale	North Middlesex	Tantasqua
159	Ludlow	Whitman-Hanson	Fairhaven
160	North Attleborough	Hudson	Ayer
161	Lee	Weymouth	Stoneham
162	Abington	Adams-Cheshire	North Andover
163	Plymouth	Whittier Regional Vocational Technical	East Bridgewater
164	Ashland	East Longmeadow	Norwood
165	Dracut	Bridgewater-Raynham	Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical
166	Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical	Plymouth	Dartmouth
167	South Shore Charter Public (District)	Monson	Weymouth
168	Provincetown	Dennis-Yarmouth	Beverly
169	Central Berkshire	Billerica	Barnstable
170	Nantucket	Attleboro	Upper Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical
171	Salem Academy Charter (District)	Amesbury	Millbury
172	Falmouth	Uxbridge	Danvers

173	Boston Preparatory Charter Public (District)	Waltham	Prospect Hill Academy Charter (District)
174	King Philip	Northbridge	Dracut
175	Gloucester	Innovation Academy Charter (District)	Auburn
176	Tewksbury	Bristol-Plymouth Regional Vocational Technical	Bridgewater-Raynham
177	Carver	Northern Berkshire Regional Vocational Technical	Plymouth
178	Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical	Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical	Ludlow
179	South Hadley	Middleborough	Douglas
180	Academy Of the Pacific Rim Charter Public (District)	Bourne	Chatham
181	Monson	South Shore Regional Vocational Technical	Blue Hills Regional Vocational Technical
182	Beverly	Melrose	Hudson
183	Quincy	Leicester	Attleboro
184	Hudson	Frontier	Waltham
185	Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical	Abington	Northern Berkshire Regional Vocational Technical
186	Woburn	South Hadley	Carver
187	Grafton	Beverly	Quaboag Regional
188	Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical	Milford	Dennis-Yarmouth
189	Dedham	Barnstable	Bristol-Plymouth Regional Vocational Technical
190	Milford	Mashpee	Melrose
191	Hull	Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers (Horace Mann Charter School)	Tri County Regional Vocational Technical
192	Gateway	Tri County Regional Vocational Technical	Narragansett
193	Triton	Narragansett	Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public (District)
194	Harwich	Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical	Winthrop
195	Avon	Tewksbury	State Total
196	Watertown	Woburn	Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical
197	Dennis-Yarmouth	Clinton	Cambridge
198	Ayer	Palmer	Stoughton

199	Marlborough	Silver Lake	Leicester
200	Bellingham	Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public (District)	Clinton
201	Clinton	Swansea	Gloucester
202	Maynard	Southwick-Tolland	North Central Charter Essential (District)
203	South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical	Tantasqua	Nashoba Valley Regional Vocational Technical
204	Billerica	Winthrop	Gill-Montague
205	Westfield	Carver	Seekonk
206	Rockland	Codman Academy Charter Public (District)	Monson
207	Attleboro	Upper Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical	South Shore Regional Vocational Technical
208	State Total	Greater Fall River Regional Vocational Technical	Abington
209	Spencer-E Brookfield	Southern Worcester County Regional Vocational Technical	Palmer
210	Global Learning Charter Public (District)	Gloucester	Southwick-Tolland
211	Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter Public (District)	Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical	Medford
212	Cambridge	Dedham	Marlborough
213	Stoughton	State Total	Greater Fall River Regional Vocational Technical
214	Amesbury	Framingham	Southern Worcester County Regional Vocational Technical
215	Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical	Medford	Lee
216	Taunton	North Central Charter Essential (District)	Westport
217	Quaboag Regional	Nashoba Valley Regional Vocational Technical	Nantucket
218	Northampton-Smith Vocational Agricultural	Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical	Northbridge
219	Weymouth	Lee	Woburn
220	Prospect Hill Academy Charter (District)	Westport	Codman Academy Charter Public (District)
221	Fairhaven	Ralph C Mahar	Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical
222	Framingham	Leominster	Leominster
223	Pioneer Valley	Ludlow	Middleborough

224	Peabody	Quincy	Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical
225	Methuen	Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical	Mount Greylock
226	Salem	Gateway	Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical
227	Barnstable	Fairhaven	Ware
228	Hatfield	Gill-Montague	Malden
229	Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public (District)	Cambridge	Mohawk Trail
230	Martha's Vineyard Charter (District)	Watertown	Phoenix Charter Academy (District)
231	Medford	Rockland	Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter Public (District)
232	Uxbridge	Gardner	Avon
233	Saugus	Spencer-E Brookfield	Rockland
234	Wareham	Randolph	Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational Technical
235	Somerville	New Leadership Charter (District)	Webster
236	Waltham	Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational Technical	Pittsfield
237	Oxford	Quaboag Regional	Spencer-E Brookfield
238	Northbridge	Saugus	Haverhill
239	Southern Berkshire	Wareham	Peabody
240	Mashpee	Webster	Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical
241	City On A Hill Charter Public (District)	Millbury	Gardner
242	West Springfield	Marlborough	Randolph
243	Holbrook	Westfield	Saugus
244	Westport	Winchendon	Westfield
245	Greenfield	Ware	Greenfield
246	Mohawk Trail	Haverhill	Holbrook
247	Adams-Cheshire	Amesbury Academy Charter Public (District)	Fitchburg
248	Gardner	Peabody	West Springfield
249	Innovation Academy Charter (District)	Methuen	North Brookfield
250	Everett	Oxford	Oxford
251	Malden	Holbrook	Revere
252	Winchendon	Malden	Easthampton
253	Easthampton	Taunton	Adams-Cheshire

254	Pittsfield	Mohawk Trail	Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical
255	Webster	Revere	Taunton
256	North Adams	Brockton	Lowell
257	Worcester	Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical	Provincetown
258	Fitchburg	Easthampton	Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers (Horace Mann Charter School)
259	Boston Collegiate Charter (District)	Lowell	Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter (District)
260	Fall River	Athol-Royalston	Gateway
261	Palmer	Greenfield	New Leadership Charter (District)
262	Revere	Everett	Amesbury Academy Charter Public (District)
263	Chicopee	Fitchburg	Brockton
264	Lowell	Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical	South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical
265	Ware	Northampton-Smith Vocational Agricultural	Boston
266	Brockton	North Adams	Winchendon
267	Randolph	Chicopee	Somerville
268	Community Charter School of Cambridge (District)	West Springfield	Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical
269	Southbridge	Pittsfield	Chicopee
270	Lynn	South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical	Lynn
271	Athol-Royalston	Southbridge	Greater Lowell Regional Vocational Technical
272	Haverhill	Lynn	Worcester
273	Gill-Montague	Phoenix Charter Academy (District)	Salem
274	New Leadership Charter (District)	Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical	Methuen
275	North Central Charter Essential (District)	Greater Lowell Regional Vocational Technical	North Adams
276	MATCH Charter Public School (District)	Somerville	Athol-Royalston
277	Amesbury Academy Charter Public (District)	Worcester	Everett

278	Boston	Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter (District)	Holyoke
279	Ralph C Mahar	Fall River	Wareham
280	New Bedford	Boston	Southbridge
281	Chelsea	Salem	Northampton-Smith Vocational Agricultural
282	Lawrence	Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical	Fall River
283	Springfield	Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter (District)	Chelsea
284	Holyoke	Holyoke	Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical
285	Codman Academy Charter Public (District)	Springfield	Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter (District)
286	Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter (District)	Chelsea	New Bedford
287	Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter (District)	New Bedford	Springfield
288	Phoenix Charter Academy (District)	Lawrence	Lawrence

APPENDIX I

TOP 30 SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN MASSACHUSETTS ALPHABETICAL

Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public (District)
Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter (District)
Andover
Belmont
Boston Collegiate Charter (District)
Boston Preparatory Charter Public (District)
Cohasset
Concord-Carlisle
Dover-Sherborn
Duxbury
Four Rivers Charter Public (District)
Hamilton-Wenham
Harvard
Hopkinton
Lexington
Lincoln-Sudbury
Littleton
Marblehead
Masconomet
MATCH Charter Public School (District)
Medfield
Millis
Mystic Valley Regional Charter (District)
Needham
Scituate
Sharon
Southern Berkshire
Sturgis Charter Public (District)
Wellesley
Westford

APPENDIX J

BOTTOM 30 SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN MASSACHUSETTS ALPHABETICAL

Athol-Royalston
Boston
Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter (District)
Brockton
Chelsea
Chicopee
Easthampton
Everett
Fall River
Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical
Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical
Greater Lowell Regional Vocational Technical
Holyoke
Lawrence
Lowell
Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter (District)
Lynn
New Bedford
North Adams
Northampton-Smith Vocational Agricultural
Oxford
Revere
Salem
Somerville
South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical
Southbridge
Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical
Springfield
Taunton
Worcester

APPENDIX K

BEBELL AND STEMLER'S (1999) ORIGINAL CODING RUBRIC

A. Cognitive/Academic
   0= miscellaneous
   1= foster cognitive development/ academic skills
   2= problem solving skills
   3= develop, promote, & instill creativity
   4= research

B. Social Development
   0= miscellaneous
   1= promote social interaction

C. Citizenship/Vocational
   0= miscellaneous
   1= productive citizen
   2= responsible citizen
   3= public service

D. Physical Development
   0= miscellaneous
   1= promote physical development

E. Attitude/Values/Emotional Development
   0= miscellaneous
   1= positive student attitudes
   2=ethical consciousness/ morality
   3=joy for learning
   4=life-long learning
   5=self-sufficient students
   6=self- discipline
   7=reach potential/ discover talents
   8=emotional skills
   9=promote confidence/ self-esteem/ self- worth
   10=spiritual development

F. School Environment
   0= miscellaneous
   1= safe environment
   2= consistent environment
   3=person centered environment
   4=technological environment

G. Spiritual Community
   0= miscellaneous
   1= provide religious education and environment

H. Local Community
   0= miscellaneous
   1= promote community
   2=community partnerships

I. Global Community
   0= miscellaneous
   1= appreciation for diversity/culture
   2=instill global awareness
   3=adaptive students in a diverse society

J. Faculty and Staff
   0= miscellaneous
   1= challenging environment
   2= nurturing environment
   3= provide engaging work/ develop active learners

APPENDIX L

BEBELL AND STEMLER'S (2012) REVISED CODING RUBRIC

A. Cognitive/Academic
   0= miscellaneous
   1= foster cognitive development
   2= problem solving
   3= creativity
   4= effective communication
   5= critical thinking
   6= literacy
   7= acquire knowledge
   8= participate in the arts
   9= improve student achievement/ test scores

B. Social Development
   0= miscellaneous
   1= social interaction
   2= become effective parents

C. Emotional Development
   0= miscellaneous
   1= positive attitudes
   2= ethical morality
   3= joy for learning
   4= life-long learning
   5= self-sufficient
   6= self-discipline
   7=reach potential
   8= emotional skills
   9= promote confidence
   10= spiritual development
   11= respect for others

D. Civic Development
   0= miscellaneous
   1= productive
   2= responsible
   3= public service
   4= contributing member of society

E. Physical Development
   0= miscellaneous
   1= physical development

F. Vocational Preparation
   0= miscellaneous
   1= competitive in the workforce
   2= marketable skills

G. Integrate into Local Community
   0= miscellaneous
   1= promote community
   2= community partnerships

H. Integrate into Global Community
   0= miscellaneous
   1= appreciate diversity
   2= global awareness
   3= adaptive students

I. Integrate into Spiritual Community
   0= miscellaneous
   1= religious education environment

J. Safe Nurturing Environment
   0= miscellaneous
   1= safe environment
   2= provide nurturing environment
   3= person-centered

K. Challenging Environment
   0= miscellaneous
   1= provide challenging environment
   2= technologically advanced
   3= provide engaging work
   4= highly qualified faculty

APPENDIX M

KUSTIGIAN'S DECISION TREE FOR CODING MISSION STATEMENTS, 2012 TO BE USED WITH BEBELL AND STEMLER'S 2012 CODING RUBRIC

Step 1:

A. Is the academic theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 2. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify academic?_____

_____

_____

Go to step 2.

Step 2:

B. Is the social theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 3. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify social?_____

_____

_____

Go to step 3.

Step 3:

C. Is the emotional theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 4. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify emotional?_____

_____

Go to step 4.

Step 4:

D. Is the civic theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 5. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify civic?_____

Go to step 5.

Step 5:

E. Is the physical theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 6. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify physical?_____

_____

_____

Go to step 6.

Step 6:

F. Is the vocational theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 7. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify vocational?_____

_____

_____

Go to step 7.

Step 7:

G. Is the local theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 8. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify local?_____

_____

_____

Go to step 8.

Step 8:

H. Is the global theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 9. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify global?_____

_____

_____

Go to step 9.

Step 9:

I. Is the spiritual theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 10. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify spiritual?_____

_____

_____

Go to step 10.

Step 10:

J. Is the safe theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 11. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify safe?_____

_____

_____

Go to step 11.

Step 11:

K. Is the challenging theme contained in the mission statement? Yes_____ No_____

If no, go to step 12. If yes, how many times does the theme occur? _____

What are the words or phrases that signify challenging?_____

_____

_____

Go to step 12.

Step 12: Record data on a spreadsheet and double check with color coding system.

APPENDIX N

ACADEMY OF THE PACIFIC RIM'S COLOR CODED DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to empower urban students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds to achieve their full intellectual and social potential by combining the best of the East - high standards, discipline and character education - with the best of the West - a commitment to individualism, creativity and diversity.

A (academic)= 2

B (social)= 1

C (emotional)= 1

D (civic)= 1

E (physical)= N

F (vocational)= N

G (local)= 1

H (global)= 4

I (spiritual)= N

J (safe)= 1

K (challenging)= 1

APPENDIX O

MISSION STATEMENT TOTAL WORD COUNT FOR TOP 30 SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN MASSACHUSETTS

District	Total Word Count
Academy Of the Pacific Rim Charter Public (District)	50
Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter (District)	47
Andover	43
Belmont	44
Boston Collegiate Charter (District)	9
Boston Preparatory Charter Public (District)	47
Cohasset (listed vision and TOA, but no mission)	64
Concord-Carlisle	28
Dover-Sherborn	15
Duxbury	34
Four Rivers Charter Public (District)	111
Hamilton-Wenham	12
Harvard	117
Hopkinton	49
Lexington	37
Lincoln-Sudbury	184
Littleton	378
Marblehead	35
Masconomet	43
MATCH Charter Public School (District)	98
Medfield	49
Millis	26
Mystic Valley Regional Charter (District)	62
Needham	14
Scituate	105
Sharon	38
Southern Berkshire	42
Sturgis Charter Public (District)	43
Wellesley	23
Westford	146
Average	**66.4**

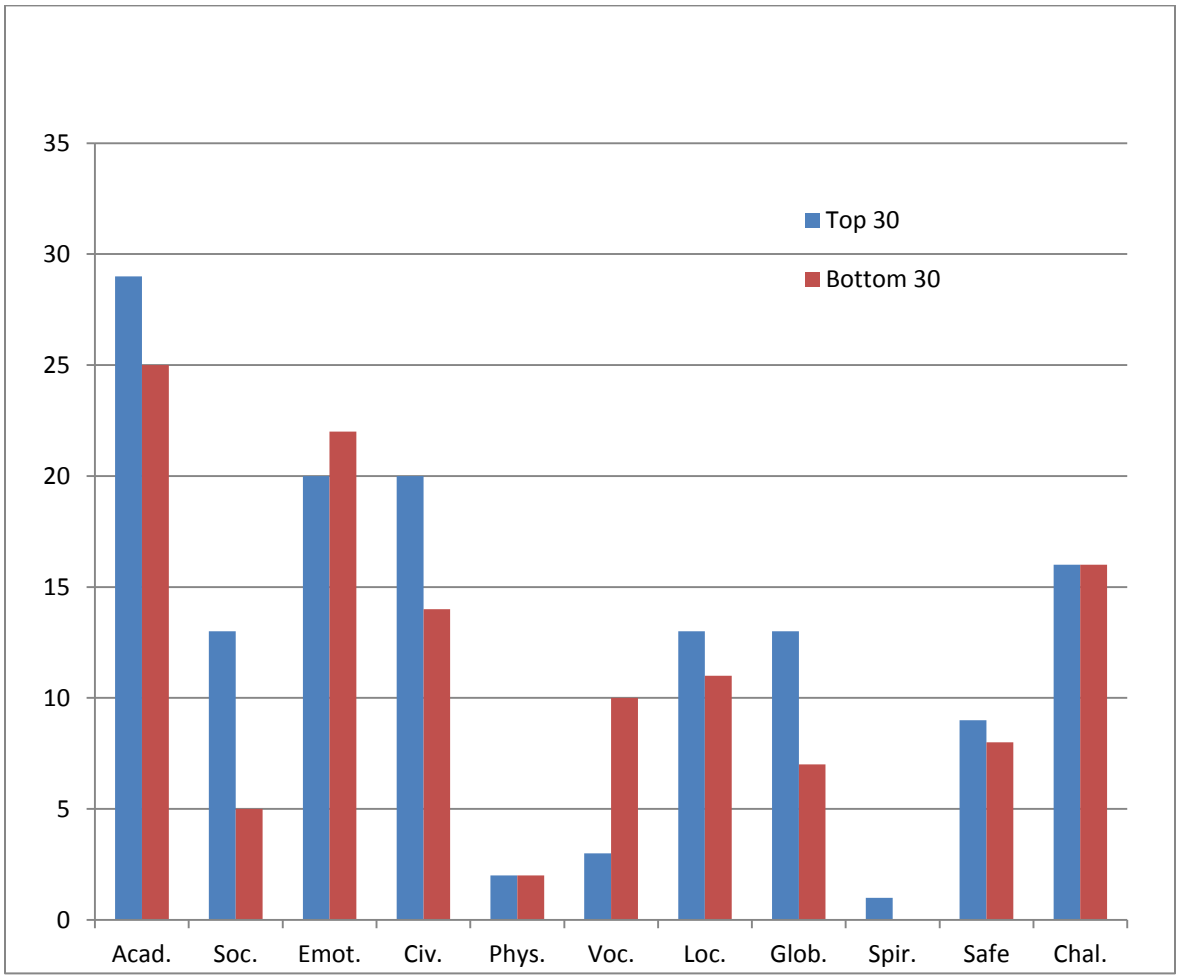
APPENDIX P

MISSION STATEMENT TOTAL WORD COUNT FOR BOTTOM 30 SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN MASSACHUSETTS

District	Total Word Count
Athol-Royalston	29
Boston	58
Boston Day and Evening Academy Charter (District)	88
Brockton	5
Chelsea	12
Chicopee	67
Easthampton	145
Everett	30
Fall River	63
Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical	59
Greater Lawrence Regional Vocational Technical	29
Greater Lowell Regional Vocational Technical	35
Holyoke	33
Lawrence	22
Lowell	45
Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter (District)	42
Lynn	33
New Bedford	20
North Adams	40
Northampton-Smith Vocational Agricultural	73
Oxford	73
Revere	205
Salem	53
Somerville	41
South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical	19
Southbridge	85
Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical	17
Springfield	43
Taunton	11
Worcester	53
Average	**50.9**

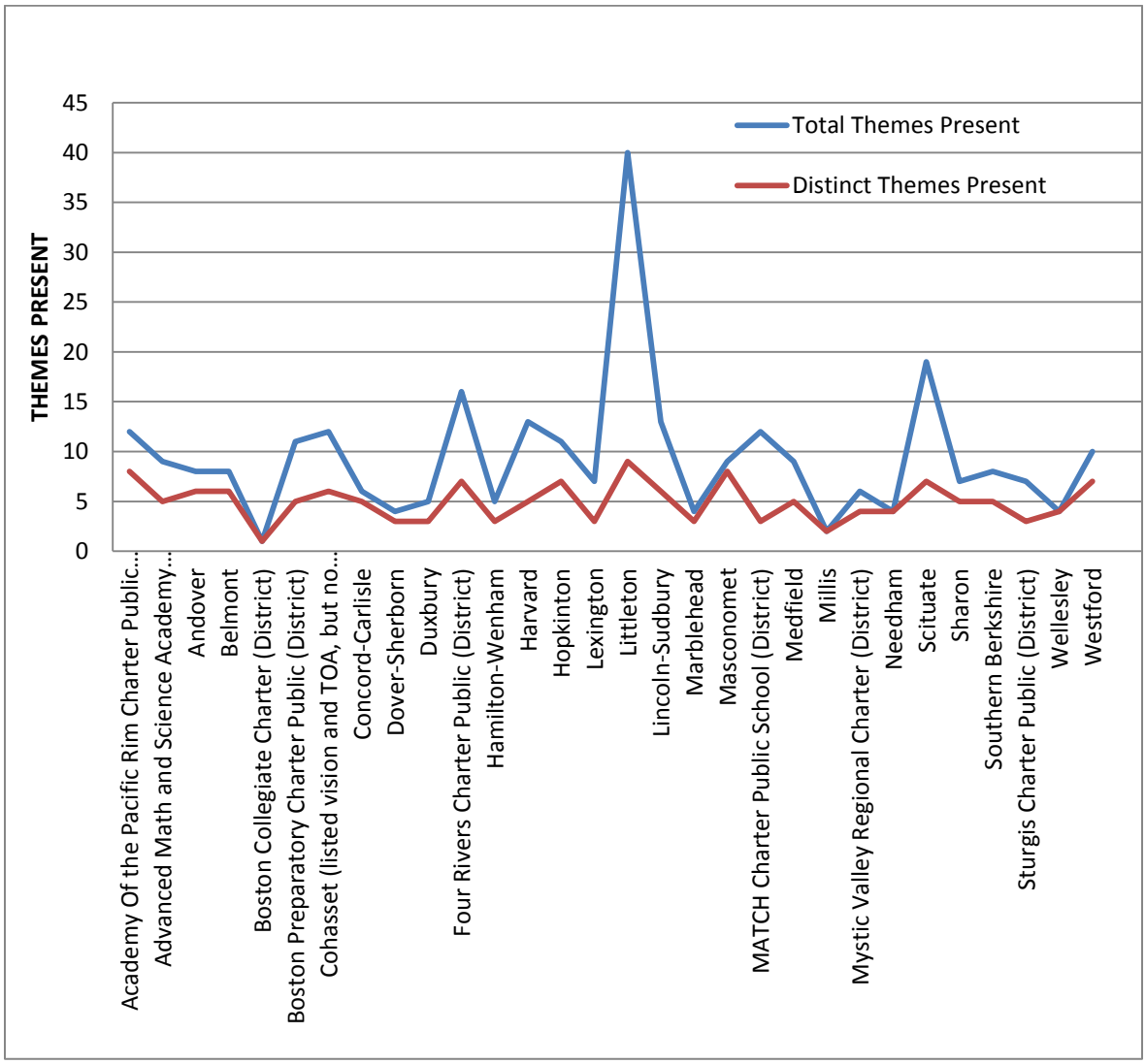
APPENDIX Q

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WITH SPECIFIC THEMES PRESENT IN THEIR MISSION STATEMENT



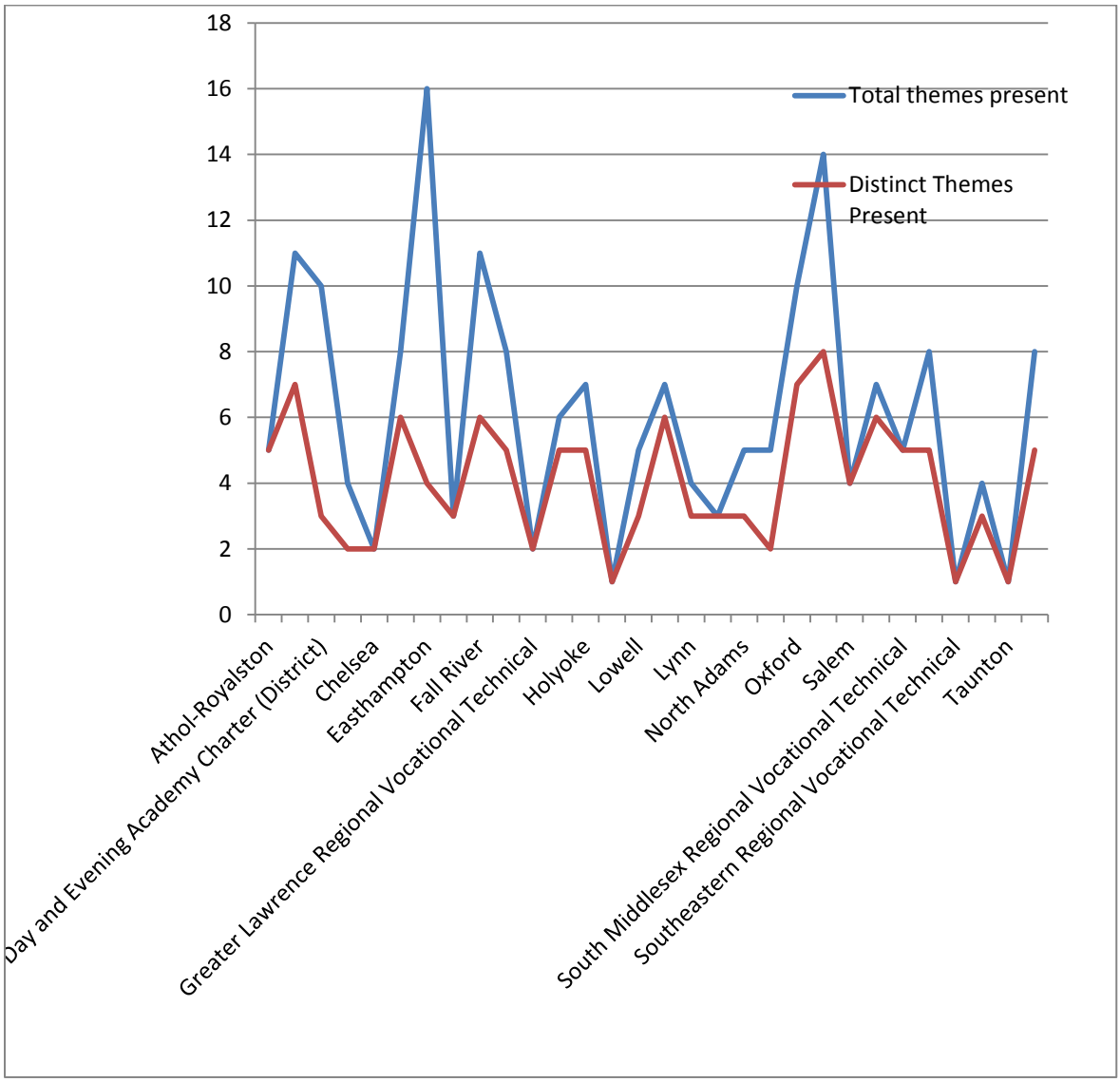
APPENDIX R

TOP 30 DISTRICTS' TOTAL AND DISTRICT THEMES



APPENDIX S

BOTTOM 30 DISTRICTS' TOTAL AND DISTRICT THEMES



APPENDIX T

KUSTIGIAN'S REVISED CODING RUBRIC

A. Cognitive/Academic
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= foster cognitive development
- 2= problem solving
- 3= creativity
- 4= effective communication
- 5= critical thinking
- 6= literacy
- 7= acquire knowledge
- 8= participate in the arts
- 9= improve student achievement/ test scores
- 10= student success & achievement
- 11=appreciation for learning
- 12= dynamic learning environment
- 13= academic standards

B. Social Development
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= social interaction
- 2= become effective parents
- 3= well mannered
- 4= cooperation
- 5= relationships
- 6= courage

C. Emotional Development
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= positive attitudes
- 2= ethical morality
- 3= joy for learning, life-long learning
- 4= compassion
- 5= self-sufficient, self-discipline
- 6= perseverance
- 7=reach potential
- 8= emotional skills
- 9= promote confidence
- 10= spiritual development
- 11= respect for others
- 12= advocate for whole child
- 13= range of supports

D. Civic Development
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= productive
- 2= responsible
- 3= public service
- 4= contributing member of society
- 5= service
- 6= integrity
- 7= respect
- 7= digital 21st century
- 8= challenges of a dynamic society
- 9= engaging
- 10= surpass expectations
- 11= rapidly changing & increasingly competitive
- 8= caring citizens
- 9= ethical implications of actions
- 10= build character
- 11= values

E. Physical Development
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= physical development
- 2= sports
- 3= physical movement
- 4= body kinesthetic

F. Vocational Preparation
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= competitive in the workforce
- 2= marketable skills
- 3= technical careers
- 4= career

G. Integrate into Local Community
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= promote community
- 2= community partnerships
- 3= birthplace of public education

H. Integrate into Global Community
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= appreciate diversity
- 2= global awareness
- 3= adaptive students
- 4= global citizenship

I. Integrate into Spiritual Community
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= religious education environment

J. Safe Nurturing Environment
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= safe environment
- 2= provide nurturing environment
- 3= person-centered
- 4= healthy
- 5= joyful
- 6= welcoming

K. Challenging Environment
- 0= miscellaneous
- 1= provide challenging environment
- 2= technologically advanced
- 3= provide engaging work
- 4= highly qualified faculty
- 5= rigorous curriculum
- 6= high expectations

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