

**FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AMONG HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

by

Christopher Stephen Colville

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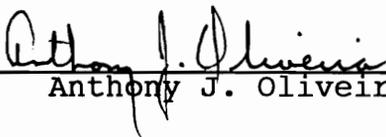
APPROVED:


Wayne M. Worner, Chairman


David J. Parks


Stephen R. Parson


Claire C. Vaught


Anthony J. Oliveira

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Christopher S. Colville

Wayne M. Worner, Chairman

Educational Administration

(ABSTRACT)

This study was designed to investigate factors that influence the acquisition and development of interpersonal skills among high school principals. The study involved the identification of five principals with exemplary interpersonal skills. Two different groups were asked to identify principals with exemplary interpersonal skills. Those identified by both groups formed the list from which five principals were selected and asked to participate in the study.

The study involved in-depth interviews with the five principals. During the interviews the principals were asked about their personal and professional backgrounds. Questions about their professional background included topics such as degrees and majors, positions held in education, and length of time in education and in those

positions. Their personal background included questions about their activities in high school and college, family, personality, and characteristics. Individual case analysis' were done on each interview and a cross-case analysis was done on all five interviews.

The results of the study suggest that the principals' interpersonal skills were not developed through formal programs but over time and through their life experiences. Some of the factors that seemed to influence the principals' interpersonal skills include: activities that exposed them to the public, strong families, the positive impact of others, and similar personality or character traits. The study also produced some recommendations for further study, implications for principal preparation programs and lessons for principals to learn.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of my parents, Warren and Mary Colville. Their faith in me and encouragement while they were alive has always been and will continue to be a source of inspiration in my work and life.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Background

Research on effective schools has documented the importance of the principal. This research verifies that the principal occupies a position of critical importance and in every school considered to be productive or effective, the principal is the central figure (Pellicer, Anderson, Keefe, Kelly, and McCleary 1990). The development and success of an effective school depends to a large degree on the effectiveness of the school administrator (Kelly, 1987). The Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity (NASSP, 1975) described the principal as the most important and influential individual in a school.

The leadership demonstrated by a principal impacts the entire school (Irwin, 1986) but the principal cannot accomplish much without the cooperation of others (Sergiovanni, 1984). In fact, the ability to work with people is central to the effectiveness of school principals (Kelly, 1987). Greenfield (NASSP, 1982) identified interpersonal skills as one of the critical characteristics of effective principals and Gorton and McIntyre (1978) identified effectiveness in this area as the outstanding

characteristic of exemplary principals.

In 1992 the United States Department of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, SCANS, identified interpersonal skills as a critical skill area for the American work force. These skills were identified by numerous studies prior to this report and by others since its publication. The most significant of these studies is Mintzberg's (1973), but studies by Gibbs (1994), Mazzarello & Grundy (1989), Smith, Montello, & White (1989), Manasse (1984), Burlingame (1974), and Weick (1976) all focused on the importance of interpersonal skills for managers.

Mintzberg (1973), Burlingame (1974), and Hall (1991) list the area of interpersonal skills as one of the essential skill areas for managers. Weick's (1976); Mazzarello and Grundy's (1989); and Gibbs' (1994) research also focused on how these skills permeate a manager's job. Castonguay (1993), Manasse (1984), and Smith, Montello & White (1989) put forth the notion that these skills are important in any leadership setting, one of them being school leadership.

Statement of Purpose

This study attempted to determine factors that influence the acquisition, development, and refinement of the interpersonal skills of five principals who have been

identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills. These principals were identified through a three step process and were asked to participate in an in-depth interview. The study was designed to be exploratory and to look at five distinct cases concerning the acquisition, development, and refinement of these interpersonal skills.

Two additional outcomes of this research were: areas were identified in which further research is warranted and areas of interest in the development of principals were identified. Elements that were present in all five individuals or that were significant to principals in this study are areas where further research is warranted. This research also identified areas that are of interest in principal preparation programs or programs of staff development for principals.

Significance of The Study

A review of the research illustrates the importance of interpersonal skills for school principals. This claim is based on three major concepts: the amount of time principals spend with other people; the importance of these skills from the point of view of educators and others connected to education; and the effects of interpersonal skills.

Martin and Willower (1981) conducted one of the early significant studies on the interpersonal work of school administrators. They found that the school principal's worklife was similar to that of managers as described by Mintzberg (1973). This study and the work of Blumberg and Greenfield (1986), Willis (Chapman & Willis, 1982), Allison (1984) and Peterson (1978), showed that the work life of the secondary school principal involves a tremendous amount of interaction with other people.

School personnel from all different levels have expressed the opinion that it is important for principals to possess good interpersonal skills. Chapman (Chapman & Willis, 1982), Goldman and Kempner (1988), Bredeson (1989), and Lester (1993) found that principals believe interpersonal skills are important in their jobs. Goldman and Kempner (1989) and Lester (1993) also found that administrators, ranging from superintendents to assistant principals, indicated it is important for principals to possess good interpersonal skills. These studies showed that teachers, students, and others connected to education also believe interpersonal skills are an important aspect of the principal's job (Martin, 1990; Furtwengler, 1992; and Chapman & Willis, 1982). Finally, professional associations have expressed opinions concerning the importance of

interpersonal skills for principals. The American Association of School Administrators (AASA, 1969), the National Policy Board for Educational Administration and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education all consider interpersonal skills to be important (Polite, 1990). The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASPP) examines components of interpersonal skills in their assessment centers.

Some researchers have reported lack of interpersonal skills to be the cause of failure for administrators. Abrams (1987) states "most school executives who fail-do so because their interpersonal skills are weak" (p. 20). If the lack of these skills doesn't hold individuals back, it can cause them to fail once they are promoted (Kizilos, 1991). Machura (1991) found a significant difference between the interpersonal skills of principals in schools judged to be effective and in those schools judged to be less effective.

Many positive benefits are to be realized from the development of interpersonal skills by principals. The entire school climate and atmosphere are affected and can be more conducive to the tasks of education. Donaldson (1991), Pierson and Bredeson (1993), Stumpf (1991), Pickney (1987), and Wendel, Hoke and Joekel (1993) found that interpersonal

skills facilitate greater knowledge of the groups with which principals interact and, in turn, foster loyalty, motivation, and dedication toward the goals of the school. These skills not only help develop rapport, trust, and support (Yrle and Galle, 1990), but also increase understanding and collaboration between the principal and staff (Calabrese, 1987).

Research Questions

Four research questions dealing with interpersonal skills form the basis of this study. The first three are concerned with the acquisition, development and refinement of interpersonal skills. The fourth one is concerned with identifying those skills that are part of interpersonal skills.

Research Question One: What factors in the principals' professional backgrounds have influenced the acquisition, development, and refinement of their interpersonal skills?

Research Question Two: What factors in the principals' personal background have influenced the acquisition, development, and refinement of interpersonal skills?

Research Question Three: What personal qualities of the

principals have influenced the acquisition, development, and refinement of their interpersonal skills?

Research Question Four: What individual skills and characteristics do principals with exemplary interpersonal skills consider to be part of their interpersonal skills?

Definitions

Secondary School Principals: "Secondary school Principals" are defined, for the purposes of this research, as principals in middle schools, junior high schools and high schools.

Interpersonal Skills: "Interpersonal skills" are defined in the Encyclopedia of Psychology (Corsini, 1994) as "the constellation of behaviors that define the quality of person-to-person relationships" (p 617). The literature includes many different individual skills and characteristics in the term interpersonal skills. They can be grouped into the following skill areas: communications skills, listening skills, conflict management skills, decision making skills, group skills and leadership skills. The literature also includes

the characteristics of visibility, efficacy, empathy, and humor.

Exemplary Interpersonal Skills: Principals with "exemplary interpersonal skills" are successful in their dealings with most of the individuals and groups with whom they have contact, that is their staff, students, parents and the community.

Professional Background: Professional background includes principals' educational training and subsequent professional positions.

Organization of The Study

The study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter includes the background of the study, the statement of purpose, the significance of the study, research questions, definitions and limitations. Chapter Two includes the review of related research and a bibliography. Chapter Three contains the methodology of the study. This includes how the study was designed, how the principals were selected, how the data were collected and how the data were analyzed.

The fourth chapter contains the individual analysis' of each of the five interviews and the cross-case analysis of the five cases. The findings, conclusions, and

recommendations that result from the study are found in Chapter Five. Following the fifth chapter are the appendices which include: the letters sent to superintendents, State Department field representatives and principals, the "interpersonal skills components matrix", the "interview guide" used in the interviews, and the transcripts of the five interviews.

Limitations

There were a number of limitations present in the study. A major limitation of the study was the lack of experience the researcher had in interviewing. To overcome this limitation two things were done. First, an interview guide was developed (Appendix E) and used in the interviews. This helped to ensure that the principals were asked the same general questions. The second thing done was that following the transcription of the interviews, the researcher contacted the principals to clarify or expand upon the principals' answers and to ask additional follow-up questions.

Another limitation was geography. The study was limited to the southwest area of Virginia. A sample drawn from a larger geographical base might have produced principals with a different set of personal and professional

characteristics.

Related to this there is the limitation that all the principals were male. The lists of principals identified by the superintendents and state field representatives contained only males, therefore there was no opportunity for a female to be selected for an interview.

A final limitation was that the term "interpersonal skills" was not defined for the superintendents and the state field representatives. They were asked to identify principals who had "exemplary interpersonal skills" and given a very broad definition. This was intentional so they would use their own interpretation of interpersonal skills. Had interpersonal skills been more tightly defined the principal identification might have been different.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature

This chapter reviews the literature concerning interpersonal skills from both a current and historical perspective. The historical perspective is included because earlier research examined the importance of interpersonal skills for management. More currently there is a body of research that has focused on the work of school administrators and shown it to be comparable in many ways to management positions in business. One of the areas of commonality is the amount of time spent interacting with others. Combining elements of these enable us to see the importance of interpersonal skills for school administrators.

This review of literature is divided into four sections. The first section of the chapter examines the importance of interpersonal skills. The second section looks at what interpersonal skills are and how they are defined. The third examines the benefits of good interpersonal skills and the fourth identifies what the literature says about the acquisition and development of these skills.

Importance of Interpersonal Skills

There are a number of different perspectives from which interpersonal skills can be examined. One approach is to look at what the research says about their importance in business and education, a second approach is to examine the importance of interpersonal skills regarding the amount of time principals are involved in interpersonal interactions.

A final approach is to review what principals and others in education say about their importance.

Interpersonal Skills in Business and Education

The advent of the human relations approach to management was a development that had a tremendous influence on the need for interpersonal skills in business. One of the most significant influences on this development was William Ouchi's "Theory Z". The "Theory Z" style of management promotes an organizational structure emphasizing the human side of organizations, in which there is "a life of interdependence" with people relying upon one another to accomplish goals (Ouchi, 1981). Another significant influence was Rensis Likert's principle of "supportive management." This principle guides the relationships between individuals in the organization (Likert, 1967). Likert states:

the behavior of the superior and the perceptions of the subordinate must be such that the subordinate, in the light of his background, values, and expectations, sees the experience as one that contributes to his sense of personal worth and importance, ... his sense of significance and human dignity. (p. 48)

Burns (1978) proposed that leadership must be related to and inseparable from follower's needs and goals, and the essence of this relationship is the interaction among those people. Peter Senge (1990) argued that the model where "the top thinks and the local acts" must be replaced by a leadership style in which thinking and acting take place at all levels. This style of leadership requires a new set of skills in which the predominant theme is one of shared visions.

In 1967 Likert identified interpersonal skills as crucial skills for management to develop in working with subordinates. More recently the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) identified interpersonal skills as critical in the American work force. The report listed interpersonal skills as one of the work place competencies most needed today (US Government, 1992). Most of the processes involved in business today involve interpersonal interaction (Gibbs, 1994), making these skills an important aspect of any manager's job.

This sentiment is reiterated by others, though not always directly expressed in their definition of leadership or their listing and categorizing of managerial or leadership skills. A number of authors have divided managerial work into different categories which include at least one area referring to interpersonal interaction. Mintzberg (1973), Katz and Kahn (1978), Sergiovanni (1987), Daresh and Playko (1989), Yukl (1989), Hall (1991), and Kowalski (1992) all list an area that relates to interpersonal skills.

Mintzberg divided management into three major roles: informational, decisional, and interpersonal. Katz and Kahn (1978) proposed the conceptual, human, and technical areas as three managerial skill areas. Hall (1991) and Sergiovanni (1987) listed six management skill areas involved in the principal's job: communication, delegation, conflict management, motivation, leadership, and use of power/authority. Sergiovanni (1987) looked at these roles and how they are affected by five different forces: technical, human, educational, symbolic, and cultural. In this profile each force, including the human force, is articulated within each of the six roles. Every skill area references the interaction between the manager and others (Hall, 1991).

Instead of roles, Dunstan (1981) divided leadership into three dimensions: structural, participative, and supportive. These three dimensions all involve interaction. The structural dimension looks at the relationship between the leader and the group and among the members of the group. The participative dimension is concerned with the interdependence involved on the job and the supportive dimension is concerned with enhancing individual feelings of worth and importance.

Within the interpersonal role, Mintzberg listed three tasks: figurehead, leader, and liaison thus presumably requiring interpersonal skills. These tasks do, in fact, require interpersonal competence especially the activities identified in the role of leader. The "leader" role implies involvement in all the activities of the organization, and it is next to impossible to separate this role from any of Mintzberg's other nine roles (Weick, 1976). If the leader role involves interpersonal skills and is connected to all the other roles, then interpersonal skills are important to these roles as well.

Interpersonal skills are needed to complete tasks by large, diverse groups (Manasse, 1984) and to develop and maintain relationships with individuals (McIntyre, 1981). To develop these interpersonal skills, leaders must have an

understanding of human nature, demonstrate understanding, and listen effectively (Castonguay, 1993).

Interpersonal skills distinguish effective leaders in a variety of settings (Manasse, 1984), and any model of leadership requires the mastery of these skills (Smith, Montello, & White, 1989). One of these settings is that of the school principal. The principles for establishing an effective management environment, which are found in Ouchi's Theory Z, can be applied effectively to the educational environment (Cook et al. 1987).

The work of high school principals is similar to the work of managers in business. Martin and Willower (1981) found that the job of high school principals is very similar to the work of managers as identified by Mintzberg. The Louisiana State Department of Education (1985) characterized the work of school principals as brief, varied, and fragmented encounters with other people. These encounters are mostly unplanned and reactive and usually involve interaction with subordinates. The leadership roles in the public and private areas are very much alike, but the greatest similarity appears to be in the area of personal contact (Allison, 1984).

Donaldson (1991) noted that current research is beginning to focus on the interpersonal work life of the

principal and points out that many books and articles document how the principal's job centers on his/her interpersonal worklife. Sproul (1976) defined the role of principal as a "human engineer" whose job is to provide encouragement, support, and growth opportunities for teachers, staff, and students. Morris, Crowson, Porter-Gehrie, and Hurwitz (1984) described the school as a large complicated enterprise in which the principal is in contact with many different people. They say the school is a true center of community life for students, parents, friends, and neighbors. Running such a center involves career planning, psychological support, behavior control, baby-sitting, and entertainment. The leadership needed for these activities is not the impersonal delegation of duties and responsibilities but requires interaction between people (Mazzarello & Grundy, 1989). Daresh and Playko (1989) listed socialization skills and Cawelti (1982) listed relational behaviors as areas principals need to be concerned with if they are to be successful.

Burlingame (1974) related Mintzberg's three managerial roles to five general problems faced by administrators. These problems are concerned with curriculum, facilities, finance, district organization, and personnel. Each one of the three roles is impacted by all five of the problem

areas. Smith, Maehr, and Midgley (1992) described five types of administrative behaviors: defining goals, promoting instructional climate, overseeing curriculum, supervising teachers, and monitoring student progress. Each of these involves interaction between the principal and others. Sergiovanni (1987) outlined six task areas for principals; three of them are pupil personnel, staff personnel, and community relations. Blumberg (1989) placed the content of school administrators' work into six categories: healing wounds, dealing with conflicts, supervising the work of others, developing the organization, and implementing or reinforcing educational ideas. These categories show that a principal's job involves areas in which interpersonal skills are needed.

Time Spent in Interpersonal Interactions

The principal's job is overwhelmingly weighted towards interpersonal contacts, and the greatest percentage of this time is spent face-to-face. Mintzberg (1973) and Willis (Willis & Chapman, 1982) both observed that managers and high school principals spend more than seventy-five percent of their time interacting with others. Morris, Crowson, Porter-Gehrie, and Hurwitz (1984) reported that principals spend around eighty-seven percent of their time interacting

with others. Peterson (1978), in his study of principals' tasks, noted that between seventy-six percent and eighty-five percent of high school principal's time involves working with students, staff, and parents. Willis (Chapman and Willis, 1982) indicated that sixty-five percent of the principal's day was spent in some form of information transmission, and Martin and Willower (1981) reported that over sixty-three percent of the administrator's time was spent in verbal interaction. The National Association of Secondary Principals (1982) found that school principals spend over fifty percent of their time in face-to-face interaction with others.

While research has demonstrated that there is similarity in the amount of interpersonal contact of principals and managers, the nature of the contact differs. Mintzberg (1973) identified top-level managers as spending more time in scheduled meetings and Martin and Willower (1982) showed that high school principals spend more time in unscheduled meetings and other activities requiring interaction. Chapman (1982) reported that principals spent around thirty-seven percent of their time with just one other person and over thirty percent of the administrator's time is spent with more than four people. The people most frequently found with the principals in these encounters are

teachers.

Martin and Willower (1981) found that school principals spent approximately forty-five percent of their time in either scheduled or unscheduled meetings and another nine percent in activities called exchanges. While this type of interaction took up only nine percent of the principal's time, it was the most frequent activity and was defined as a verbal contact lasting less than a minute and involving one or two teachers. Unscheduled meetings took up twenty-seven and a half percent of the time and were described as brief, spontaneous, and informal. Scheduled meetings accounted for approximately seventeen percent of the time and were mostly with teachers and students.

These studies looked not only at the time spent during the regular school day but also at principals and activities after school hours. Martin and Willower (1981) found that principals spend up to fifty-five hours a month at after school activities. These activities include athletic events, school programs, and meetings requiring administrators to use interpersonal skills in a different way than during a school day. In extracurricular activities, administrators deal with large numbers of people and interact with many of them simultaneously. In many instances, the administrator's interaction is on a much more

informal basis than during the school day.

The studies discuss the importance of interpersonal skills based on the large percentage of time principals spend with others while on the job.

What Educators Say about Interpersonal Skills

The literature also discusses the importance of interpersonal skills from the perception that principals and other educators have about which skills are important for a principal to have on the job. Those who have identified interpersonal skills as important include the entire range of educators, from superintendents to teachers and professional organizations. The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) (1969) considers interpersonal skills a requirement for effective administrators. In research studies sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) (Gorton & McIntyre, 1978; McCleary & Thomson, 1979; NASSP, 1982; and Pellicer, et al. 1988), the ability to work with people was considered to be crucial in determining the effectiveness of principals. Gorton and McIntyre (1979) showed effective principals rated very high on the maintenance of good interpersonal skills. This study predicted that the ability to work with a variety of other people would continue to be

important for the effectiveness of future principals. Greenfield (1985) suggested that characteristics such as the ability to work closely with others face-to-face and the ability to manage conflict are critical to a principal's effectiveness.

Goldman and Kempner (1988) reported that administrators themselves felt that technical skills were far less important than interpersonal skills. Eighty percent of those interviewed in the study mentioned interpersonal relations as important in the operation of schools. In a New York study that involved administrators ranging from superintendents to assistant principals, interpersonal skills were listed by every group as being one of the top five skills needed by school administrators (Lester, 1993). Principals also believe that listening and attending skills were important but that being supportive and providing feedback were equally important (Bredeson, 1989). In research on effective principals (McCleary & Thomson, 1979; Gorton & McIntyre, 1978), those judged to be effective placed a high value on good communication and expressed the need to give more attention to the development of human relations skills and personality characteristics.

Not only do administrators feel that these skills are important but others, directly involved in education, also

express the need for principals to have these skills. McCleary and Thomson (1979) found that all groups principals work with agreed with the principals that the ability to relate well with other people was important. Chapman (Chapman & Willis, 1982) conducted a survey of teachers, students, education department personnel, and principals. The area of interpersonal skills was one of two areas perceived to be the most important by all groups. Teachers want principals to communicate effectively with them (Martin, 1990; Furtwengler & Hurst, 1992) and to recognize their potential. Teachers also want leaders they can trust and leaders who are caring, sensitive, and respectful (Furtwengler, 1992). The greater the interpersonal distance, the greater the dissatisfaction with the principal (Martin, 1990).

Effects of Interpersonal Skills

The literature has numerous references to the effects of positive interpersonal skills. These skills can influence the principal, staff, and students and can also have an effect on the entire school and its performance. Argyris (1957) found a positive correlation between the interpersonal skills of administrators and the effectiveness of an organization. In comparing schools judged to be more

effective and less effective, a significant difference was found in the administrators' interpersonal skills. In the schools judged to be more effective, the principals' interpersonal skills were developed to a greater degree than for the administrators in the less effective schools (Machura, 1991). Jacobson and Marshall (1984) put it very simply when they state that good interpersonal skills help principals run better schools.

Interpersonal skills have been identified as one of the keys to being a successful administrator (Edwards, 1979; Green, Cook & Rogers 1984). Through the development of these skills, principals can create an atmosphere that is more conducive to accomplishing the tasks of education. Interpersonal skills enable principals to know the constituencies with which they come in contact better (Donaldson, 1991; Wendel, Hoke, & Joekel, 1993). Through this increased knowledge they can influence loyalty, accommodate adversity, stay on task, and motivate the staff and students. (Donaldson, 1991; Pierson & Bredeson, 1993; Pinkney, 1987; Stumpf, 1991). The school can also be more open and supportive (Yrle & Galle, 1987) and less stressful (Calabrese, 1987). Through the development and use of interpersonal skills principals are able to demonstrate integrity, maintain a sense of humor, and improve school

climate (Abrams, 1987).

In the relationship between the principal and teachers, interpersonal skills are mutually beneficial. These skills can help build better rapport, develop trust (Yrle and Galle, 1990), increase understanding, and make the relationship less hierarchical and more collaborative between the principal and the teachers (Calabrese, 1987).

Abrams (1987) and Calabrese (1987) point out that poor interpersonal skills create ambiguity which can lead to misunderstandings and insecurity. Abrams (1987) also found that most school executives who fail do so because of poor interpersonal skills. Kizilos (1991) warned that the lack of interpersonal skills can cause people to be held back from achieving promotions or failing once they get there.

Interpersonal Skills Defined

Interpersonal skills may be defined from a total concept or idea of interpersonal skills or broken down into the different skills found within the term "interpersonal skills."

The American Association of School Administrators (1969) defined interpersonal skills as those skills required for effective administration. The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (1989) defined them as the skills

used in working with groups, building coalitions, and managing conflict. Polite (1990) defined interpersonal skills as those skills needed to carry out the charge of instructional leadership and to develop the competence in dealing with the constituency groups -- internal and external -- to the public schools. Interpersonal skills are those skills that enable principals to influence teachers, students, and others in desired directions and to maintain or change the standards in their schools.

While these definitions are helpful in placing importance on interpersonal skills, they do not give specific ideas about the individual skills and characteristics included in the term "interpersonal skills." The literature identifies many different aspects or components of interpersonal skills. It is difficult to identify a definitive list that applies in all situations (Blumberg, 1989), but from the literature we can compile a list of those skills and characteristics that a number of authors include in their examination of interpersonal skills.

To identify these skills and characteristics, the researcher developed a matrix using thirty-six sources (Appendix D). These sources, although not exhaustive, represent a wide range of sources taken from both literature

about managers in general and literature about school administrators. There were a large number of skills and characteristics identified in the literature. These were collapsed into ten broad areas: communication, listening, conflict management, decision making, group dynamics, leadership, visibility, efficacy, empathy, and humor. The first six areas can be classified as skill areas while the final four appear to be characteristics or qualities.

The first two skill areas listed are **Communication** and **Listening**. Communications was mentioned by over seventy-five percent of the sources in the matrix and listening was mentioned by almost fifty percent. Some authors mentioned only communication and a few mentioned only listening, but fourteen of the sources mentioned both communication and listening. Some sources listed listening as a separate category from communication, while others described it as a part of communication. For example, Finch, Gregson and Faulkner (1991) and Goldman and Kempner (1988) identified communication as a general skill area but in discussing it talked about listening as an important individual skill for administrators. Polite (1990), on the other hand, listed communication and listening as two distinct skills for principals. AASA (1969), Blase (1993), Bothwell (1983), Brown (1991), Burgess and Dermott (1983), Chapman and Willis

(1982), Deutsch (1994), Doggett (1987), Donaldson (1991), Hall (1991), Johnson (1973), Mazzarello and Grundy (1989), and Redmund (1987) identified the general area of communications but did not single out listening as a separate area. Mazzarello and Grundy (1989) stated that communication is the central quality needed by school leaders. Included in their discussions on communications were such things as informal and formal communication, face-to-face communication, speaking, writing, and non-verbal communication.

Chumley et al (1992), Rothberg (1993), Sergiovanni (1987), and Smith et al (1992) identified listening without mentioning communications. In listing characteristics of leaders, Castonguay (1993) emphasized that leaders should always be ready to listen. Blumberg (1989) specified listening as the skill for school administrators to possess. He stated:

Every time I asked an administrator what was most important for him or her to be able to do well, the response was, "listening," ... I reduce the idea of basic skills to that of a basic skill--that of listening to understand. (p. 131)

Four other components -- conflict management, decision making, group dynamics and leadership -- appear to be very closely connected. Fisher (1994) included group dynamics,

and decision making as part of the conflict management skills. The National Association of Secondary School Principals, NASSP, (1989) defines leadership in the context of group skills. Depending on the context and author, each of these four areas may contain some elements of others.

Leadership is one of the skills assessed at NASSP

Assessment Centers and is defined in the following manner:

the ability to get others involved in solving problems; ability to recognize when a group requires direction, to interact with a group effectively and to guide it to the accomplishment of a task. (Summary of Skills to be assessed during Assessment Center)

The American Association of School Administrators (1988)

identifies leadership as one of the skills used by outstanding administrators. Leadership involves setting expectations or objectives that are high but attainable (Doggett, 1987; Castonguay, 1983), developing a meaningful vision (Castonguay, 1983), and motivating others (Finch, Grayson & Faulkner 1991; Matson, 1993). Adams and Bailey (1989) and Wendal et al. (1993) discuss leadership that is collaborative or non-bureaucratic. Leadership also involves making decisions about objectives or priorities and delegating authority (Castonguay, 1983).

Decision Making is mentioned by one-third of the sources used in the matrix and the concept mentioned most often in connection with decision making is that it should

be a participatory process. Blase (1993), Wendal et al. (1993), Leithwood and Poplin (1992), Doggett (1987), and Chumley et al. (1982) included in their discussions the concept of participatory or shared decision making. They cautioned that employees need to be part of the decision making process for it to be effective and involving teachers in the process makes it easier for decisions to be accepted. They also pointed out that solutions are more likely to be accepted by a large group if more than just a few are involved in the process.

Finch et al. (1991) pointed out that in the decision making process it is important to consider the context in which decisions are made. It is also important that a decision be based on the information available and relevant to that situation. Some other characteristics or skills involved in the area of decision making are tact, diplomacy, confrontation, analysis, and problem solving (Blase, 1993; Coyle, 1993; Donaldson, 1991; Finch, et al 1991). Chumley et al. (1992) discussed informed decision making and the importance of communications in the process. It is important to get people together, ask questions, and listen to them so that decisions are made from an informed point of view. It is also important to develop decision making skills from the win-win concept or approach. This idea, also important in

the area of Conflict Management attempts to resolve situations in such a way that everybody involved benefit or come out a winner.

Conflict Management, the third of the four areas, was identified by school administrators as being an important aspect of their job skills (Lester, 1993). Lester's study involved administrators from assistant principals to superintendents and found that conflict management skills were included as important skills for school administrators. Hall (1991), Johnson (1973), Kelly (1987), and the AASA (1969) identified conflict management as one of the important areas of interpersonal skills.

Conflict management, like decision making and leadership, should also be collaborative. Wendal et al (1993) stated that it should be collegial and collaborative, while Chumley et al. (1992) and Blase (1993) call for a shared process, soliciting input from teachers or others involved. To develop successful conflict management skills, it is necessary to develop effective working relationships with each of the parties (Deutsch, 1994) and to be able to focus on the source and type of the conflict (Fisher, 1994).

Conflict management requires a number of different abilities. One must be able to support conflicting practices or positions and be able to accept diversity

(Donaldson, 1991). Being successful in resolving conflict involves the use of tact, diplomacy, analysis, and constructive confrontation (Finch et al. 1991; Blase, 1993; Coyle, 1993; Fisher, 1992; and Donaldson, 1991). Schools are organizations with great interdependence among the different parts (Leithwood & Poplin, 1992) and principals must be able to acknowledge differences between the parts (Donaldson, 1991).

The fourth skill area is **Group Dynamics or Group Processes**. This area has been alluded to in the discussion of Leadership, Decision Making, and Conflict Management. Group skills are important in developing and maintaining effective relationships with the different segments of a school (Burgess & Dermott, 1983) and in soliciting contributions from different members of any organization (Wendal et al. 1993). Leithwood and Poplin (1992) discussed how these skills are important in helping develop and maintain a professional school culture. In the study done by Chapman (Chapman & Willis, 1982) this area was rated as highly important by teachers, representatives of teacher associations, and education department personnel. Other abilities in this area include team building, tact, communicating purpose, respect and experience sharing (Finch et al. 1991; Donaldson, 1991; Daniel, 1992; and Smith et al.

1992).

The next two areas are **Efficacy and Empathy**. Efficacy is defined by Adams and Bailey (1989) as making people feel good about themselves. Finch et al. (1991) identified efficacy as showing a concern for others and taking an interest in what they are doing. Other authors discussed elements of this idea of efficacy without naming it. Chumley et al. (1992) pointed out that principals need to be sensitive to the needs and characteristic of those in the organization. Yrle and Galle (1993) mentioned the importance of appreciating the uniqueness of each person and group. Doggett (1987) said that positive reinforcement is important in making others feel good about themselves.

Some other characteristics involved in efficacy for principals include showing respect (Adams & Bailey, 1989; Donaldson, 1991; Finch et al. 1991; Smith et al. 1992), giving praise (Berry, 1993) and support (Adams & Bailey, 1989), treating teachers as professionals (Wendal et al. 1993), treating them with dignity and fairness (Castonguay, 1983) and increasing their confidence, self-esteem, and belonging (Adams & Bailey, 1989).

Empathy is defined by Yrle and Galle (1993) as viewing situations from another person's frame of reference. They also addressed the fact that empathy is one of the most

difficult skills or abilities to develop. It is hard to view things from another frame of reference if we have never been in that position or situation. In these types of situations it is important to develop an accepting attitude and to show concern for individuals as functioning people.

The last two areas are **humor and visibility**. Bothwell (1983) listed humor as one of the ten basic principles of human relations and Pierson and Bredeson (1993) listed humor as a critical dimension principals need to develop. Joan Abrams (1987), a former school superintendent, discussed the importance of humor. She mentioned that it prevents us from taking ourselves too seriously and that we can use it to make meetings seem enjoyable as well as productive. She found this to be true from volunteers and committee members and board members as well. Humor can be used to reduce tension in stressful situations and to help prepare personnel for difficult decisions. Humor helps principals maintain poise and makes them appear more human (Pierson and Bredeson, 1993). According to these authors the most important reason to consider humor as an important part of interpersonal skills is the relationship between it and two important school characteristics. They found that humor has a positive impact on school climate and loyalty. Coursen and Thomas (1989) reported that the use of humor created a

more relaxed atmosphere in schools. Teachers and students felt more at ease and comfortable. This leads to more effective communication and more positive relationships. The second school characteristic impacted by humor is the loyalty of the faculty to the principal. Humor helps remove barriers to communications which creates a more open atmosphere and greater loyalty (Pierson & Bredeson, 1993; Coursen & Thomas, 1989).

Doggett (1989) listed visibility as one of eight characteristics or behaviors needed by principals and Sweeney (1982) mentioned visibility as one of the characteristics of effective principals. Visibility also has a positive impact on some of the other skills involved in the principal's job. The schools of the future will need leaders who can adapt quickly (Chumley & McFarlane 1992) and are sensitive to the needs and characteristics of the organization. By maintaining a high degree of visibility, principals can be more aware of the what is going on in the school and more sensitive to the needs of the organization.

Summary

The literature, both past and current, shows the importance of interpersonal skills. Not only is the work life of school principals heavily interpersonal in nature,

but many of those in education believe that interpersonal skills are as important as, if not more important than, the technical skills learned in principal preparation programs. If this is accurate, and the literature seems to support this belief, then it is important to develop a more thorough understanding of how these skills are acquired and developed. This understanding could impact the content of principal preparation and improvement programs.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter describes the design of the study and gives the rationale and justification for the type of research used, as well as the limitations of the study. The procedures used in the identification and selection of principals for the study are also discussed.

Design

This study looked for factors that have influenced the acquisition, development, and refinement of interpersonal skills among selected secondary school principals. The study involved four stages: identification of principals with exemplary skills, selection of a sample from those identified, in-depth interviews conducted with this sample, and an analysis of the information obtained through the interviews.

The study was designed to be qualitative in nature so that a number of different influences on the acquisition and development of interpersonal skills among secondary school principals might be examined. Taylor and Bogdan (1984)

point out that qualitative research allows the researcher to look at people holistically, taking into account their past as well as their current settings. Additionally, through this type of research the complexities and interactions of many variables may be considered (Marshall & Rossman 1989).

Selected superintendents and regional representatives for the State Department of Education were asked to identify secondary principals with exemplary interpersonal skills. The superintendents were from school systems within a geographic region that would facilitate the completion of the in-depth interviews. The area used for the study was that part of Virginia bounded on the north and the east by Highland, Augusta, Amherst, Bedford, Pittsylvania counties and Lynchburg and extending through the southwest portion of Virginia. This area covers forty-six school divisions; thirty of them are counties and sixteen are cities. This area was chosen so that each interview could be accomplished during a single day. This area included part of Superintendent's Study Group V and groups VI and VII. The Department of Education regional representatives contacted were those who serve the regions in which the school systems were located.

Selection of Principals

The selection of the secondary principals was accomplished through a three-step process. The first step was to ask superintendents through a letter to identify principals who have exemplary interpersonal skills (Appendix A). They were asked to name the principal or principals they felt had exemplary interpersonal skills. They were informed that principals would be identified from other sources and that nominees from more than one source would constitute the pool from which the principals to be interviewed were selected. Participation by the principals was completely voluntary. A recommendation did not commit a principal to participate in the study nor insure that he or she would be selected.

The second step involved regional representatives for the Virginia State Department of Education. The State Department representatives were also asked through a letter to identify secondary principals whom they considered to possess exemplary interpersonal skills (Appendix B). They were also advised that the principals were identified from other sources and that nominees from more than one source would form a pool from which the sample to be interviewed was taken. The identification of a principal did not commit him or her to participate in the study nor guarantee his or

her selection to participate in the study.

The following criteria were given to the superintendents and regional representatives to be used in identifying secondary principals:

1. Secondary school principals were defined for the purpose of this study as principals in middle schools, junior high schools, and high schools.
2. "Exemplary interpersonal skills" implies that the principals have been successful in their dealings with most of the individuals and groups with whom they had contact.
3. The State Department of Education representatives and superintendents were asked to select those who have demonstrated exemplary interpersonal skills with the many different groups with whom they interacted.

The third step in the selection process involved principals named by both the superintendents and the state field representatives. The principals who were named by both groups were put together into one list and from this list five principals were selected. The five principals selected were from two high schools, two middle schools and a school that is a combined school. The five principals selected were asked to participate in the study. If any of

the five principals selected declined to participate in the study another name would have been selected from the list.

The principals were contacted initially by letter (Appendix C) and were later telephoned. One principal who was already known to the researcher was contacted initially by telephone. When the principals were contacted by telephone, the study was explained to them and they were asked to participate. When asked, each principal agreed to participate in the study and a time and place was set for the interview to take place.

Data Collection

The purpose of this study was to ascertain how principals who are identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills acquired these skills and what factors have influenced their development and refinement.

Data were collected through the process of an in-depth interview. The in-depth interview used in qualitative research is described as a conversation, an interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee, and is designed to obtain valid and reliable information (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). It is further described by Taylor and Bogdan (1984) as a face-to-face encounter between the researcher and the subject. The purpose of this encounter

is to obtain and understand the respondents' perspectives on their lives, experiences and situations.

There are three types of in-depth interviews described by Taylor and Bogdan (1989). The first type is a "sociological autobiography." In this "life history" the researcher tries to discover the individual's prominent or significant life events and to ascertain how these experiences became defining moments in their history. The second type looks at events and activities which would be hard to experience or observe directly. The interviewee plays a significant role in this type, acting as the eyes of the researcher. The third type of interview yields a wide range of settings, situations, or people. This type of interview is very helpful in surveying a large number of people in a short period of time.

The interview used in this study consisted of a combination of the first two types above. Through that process demographic information about the interviewee was obtained and an effort was made to identify events that were significant in the development of interpersonal skills.

Taylor and Bogdan (1984) identified five situations in which in-depth interviewing is appropriate:

1. The research interests are relatively clear and well-defined.
2. Settings or people are not otherwise observable.

3. The researcher has time constraints.
4. The research depends on a broad range of settings or people.
5. The researcher wants to illuminate subjective human experience.

The research interest in this study was the interpersonal skills of school principals and how these skills were acquired, developed, and refined. The interview attempted to identify experiences that have impacted the interpersonal skills of the interviewee. Since these experiences had already occurred, they were not observable by the interviewer.

This type of research has both strengths and weaknesses. One weakness results from the interaction between people. The interview has been defined as a conversation between the interviewer and interviewee and therefore must involve interaction (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). During this interaction the interview can be slanted by either person.

Kahn and Cannell (1991) state that it is impossible to interview a subject without having interviewer effects. Responses to questions can be influenced by the manner in which the questions are asked and the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewee can also have an effect on the interview by the way questions

are answered. Answers can be incomplete, false, or what the interviewee thinks the interviewer wants to hear. Other limitations of this type of research involve problems in communication. Misunderstandings can occur because of different language usage and the inability to study it within common usage (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984).

Another limitation can be the skills of the interviewer. Inadequate listening skills, the lack of expertise or experience in interviewing, and the quantity of the data may make it difficult to manipulate the data.

To help counter these effects, a number of different techniques were employed. To help reduce interviewer bias an interview guide was developed. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) explain that there are a number of advantages to using interview guides. The interview guide served as a reminder to ask questions in certain areas. It also helped ensure that all respondents are asked the same general questions. The guide also facilitated gathering large amounts of data, and allowed for immediate follow-up or clarification during the interview (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). With the interview guide, the interview was more flexible and spontaneous and it allowed for greater depth in the interview. By creating spontaneity the interview guide also allowed for the exploration of new areas of inquiry as they

arose during the interview. (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991).

The interviews took place at a time and place that was convenient for each of the principals. The interviews all took place at the schools where the principals worked. Three of the interviews were conducted in the afternoon after the school hours. The other two interviews were conducted during the school day, one during the middle of the morning and the other in the afternoon just before school dismissed.

Prior to the interview and for a while following, the researcher took some time to get to know the principals and to talk about colleagues known to both the researcher and the principal. In one instance the principal asked the researcher to accompany him while he briefly visited some teachers. The actual interviews lasted between seventy-five and ninety minutes. The actual time spent with the principal ranged from two hours to two hours and thirty minutes. At the end of the interview there was also some time spent in exchanging information about schools, educational ideas, or people the researcher and principal both knew.

The interviews were taped to facilitate their transcription and to allow the interviewer to concentrate and listen carefully to the responses. The recording of the

interviews also provided a complete record of the responses and the manner in which the questions were asked during each interview.

Analysis of Data

Wolcott (1994) reports that there are three ways to "do something" with data. The first two involve describing the data as it is recorded and expanding it with an analysis that identifies key factors or relationships. The third way to "do something with the data" is to try to interpret it and reach some sort of understanding about the data.

The analysis of the data was accomplished using both individual case analysis and multicase cross-case analysis. Each interview was studied to identify factors influencing the acquisition, development and refinement of interpersonal skills for that case. The analysis of the interviews included: a description of the context in which the principals work, a summary of their personal and professional backgrounds, a summary of the skills and characteristics they identified as part of their interpersonal skills, a summary of their personality and personal characteristics and a summary of the influences on their acquisition, development, and refinement of their interpersonal skills.

The multi-case, cross-case analysis looked for factors common across the five interviews. The areas examined in individual cases were compared across the five cases. This cross-case analysis facilitated a deeper understanding of what was being studied and allowed for greater generalization of the results. While the purpose of the study was to examine factors that influence the acquisition, development, and refinement of interpersonal skills, a cross-case analysis added to the potential of generalizing the relevance or applicability of the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Wolcott, 1994). A cross-case analysis also increased the understanding and explanation of what was studied (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The cross-case analysis was also used to identify common areas where further research was warranted.

Reporting The Data

The interviews were transcribed as they were recorded with two minor changes. The first involved minor syntax or grammatical changes that did not change the meaning of what the principals said. The second change involved information that would identify the principal being interviewed. During the interviews the principals often mentioned their schools, the towns their schools were located in, or some information

that would identify them. To help maintain confidentiality these were omitted and a phrase such as "mentions his school" was substituted. The principals were also given pseudonyms for the analysis of each case and the cross-case analysis. The pseudonyms for the five principals in order from the first through the fifth interview respectively are: Allen, Bill, Cliff, Don and Ed.

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis of Data

Overview

This chapter contains the analysis of the five interviews and the cross-case analysis of the five interviews. The transcripts were made from the tapes of each interview. The interviews were transcribed as they were recorded with two exceptions. Anything mentioned in the interview, such as the name of a school, the town where the school is located or other specific data that would immediately identify the principal was changed to protect confidentiality. The other changes were minor syntactic or case changes that did not affect the content of the interview.

Each interview was conducted with the help of an interview guide (Appendix E). The principals were contacted by phone to set up a time and place to conduct the interview. Each interview began with the following introduction from the interview guide.

Introduction: As I explained to you in my letter you have been identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills. My interest is in trying to determine what factors may have had an influence on the acquisition, development, and refinement of these skills.

During the interview I will be asking you questions about your professional development and personal background. In reporting the data from this interview you will not be identified. If anything specific is mentioned it will be kept anonymous. Please ask for further explanation if clarification is needed. Please answer each question as completely as possible.

The questions then followed in the order they appear on the guide for the first part of the interview. Follow-up questions were asked in each interview depending on the timing and flow of the interview. Some follow-up questions were asked immediately and some were asked at the end of the interview. During the second part of the interview the order of the questions varied some during each interview.

Prior to the formal interviews and there was some time spent exchanging greetings or introductions. In some cases the interviewer and the principal had met previously through a mutual colleague. The transcripts of the interviews occasionally contain references to these earlier conversations.

The transcript of each interview was sent to the principal, who reviewed it for content, accuracy and final approval. After the transcript had been sent to the principals, they were contacted by phone. At this time, each principal was asked about the interview and additional questions were asked to clarify or expand upon something

brought up during the interview.

During the interview the principals were asked, in question five, to think about and describe a professional situation in which their interpersonal skills were especially required. The incidents reported were different for each principal but all involved bringing individuals or groups together and most of them involved resolving conflicts. During the analysis of the cases there are some references to these situations and are referred to as "the incident."

CASE ONE: ALLEN

Context in Which Principal Works

Allen is principal in a small high school of about 335 students. The school is in a district that has one elementary school, one middle school and one high school. The student-teacher ratio in the school is about 10 to 1 with additional para-professionals. The student population is about ninety-six percent Caucasian and four percent African American. There a few Hispanics but according to Allen the numbers are not significant at this time.

The community in which the high school is located is primarily a blue collar community with textile and furniture manufacturing the primary industries. Approximately fifty

percent of the people are high school graduates. There is a dichotomy between the professional people and the non-professional; the upper socio-economic class consists of the doctors, lawyers and other professional people and the lower socio-economic class is made up of those who work in the textile and furniture factories. The middle class in the community consists primarily of those individuals who work in the schools in the community.

Background

Allen has been at his current school for seven years. Immediately prior to his current position he was an assistant principal for seven years and an English teacher for ten years before that. Allen also coached on the high school level for five years. He has been in education almost twenty-four years.

In college he majored in Spanish as an undergraduate and minored in English. His master's degree is in English education and he is currently enrolled in a doctoral program in educational administration.

Allen grew up in Southwest Virginia and is the youngest of three children. He describes his childhood as being a normal family situation but mentions that his father passed away when he was fourteen. While they did not have a lot of

extras, he feels they had the necessities and felt loved and cared for. As a child he attended school and played with a group of friends in the neighborhood. While growing up Allen had the usual types of jobs or chores that children typically are given by parents. He was responsible for such tasks as taking out the garbage, keeping his room clean, mowing the yard and doing whatever else he could do to help with the upkeep of the house. He did not have a formal job while in high school but worked during the summers mowing yards and jobs like that.

Personality and Characteristics

Allen describes himself as being extroverted or outgoing in terms of his job but liking his privacy off the job. He said, "I am a thoroughly outgoing person in terms of the job setting," and "people who know me in school probably would say that I'm an extrovert. But those who know me outside of school would call me an introvert." He also explains that this is probably due to all the public demands involved in being a high school principal. He identifies himself as trustworthy and comments that this is a necessary trait for principals. Allen describes himself as having a strong work ethic, doing what is necessary to get a job done. Allen believes that while you need to

accept things as they are when you first encounter them, you can work to make them better. He also believes that people can succeed at whatever level they choose.

Allen cares about other people and is interested in them. When he speaks to others he talks with them about things that are important to them. In answering question two, (what he does that would cause someone to identify him) he said, "I take time to let them know that I care." He added later that the success of an organization is "dependent on the leader being able to infuse a sense of caring throughout the entire organization." Allen thinks you should treat people the way you expect to be treated. He stated, "I'm going to treat others with dignity and respect because that is the way I expect to be treated."

Allen sees his job as principal to be that of a facilitator. He sees it as one of empowering the teachers to teach, making their jobs as teachers easier. He stated, "I need to work with the staff who then work with the students I facilitate their expertise."

Interpersonal Skills

In talking about his interpersonal skills Allen mentioned communication and listening most frequently. In question one about why he was identified, he cited active

listening and in question two about what he does, he mentioned speaking to faculty and students and talking with them about everyday matters. In the answer to question six, which asks about important skills used in a particular situation, he mentioned listening as a skill that is important. He said that people need to express their viewpoints and that if we communicate, most problems can be solved. Near the end of the interview Allen said, "We're not going to be very successful if we can't communicate.

He also mentioned making people feel that they and their time are important. In his answer to question two (what he does that would cause someone to identify him) he said, "I have the tendency to make those people feel their time is important to me." He mentioned speaking to the students and the staff and inquiring about them. He asks them how they are getting along or how they are feeling and talks with them about things such as schoolwork, ball games and sports teams. He said further, "I'm going to treat people with dignity and respect because that's what I expect in return." Other skills he mentioned are empathy, decision making, and problem solving. Allen talked about the ability to empathize with others, that is to put himself in their shoes to gain a better understanding of their feelings and where they are coming from. He also mentioned the ability

to solve problems and make decisions.

Acquisition, Development and Refinement of IPS

In regard to the acquisition of his interpersonal skills, he feels that he is a product of all the experiences in his life. He has been influenced by his parents, friends, teachers, peers in the school profession, former principals and central office personnel. He specifically mentioned the influence of Lou Holtz in his life. Lou Holtz, the football coach at the University of Notre Dame, lists three keys to success in life: you need to do what is right, do the best you can in everything you do and treat others as you would want to be treated. The third thing listed here reflects back on what he said about treating people with respect because he expected that in return.

Allen credited his course work as a whole in the development of his interpersonal skills but there isn't one specific course that he could mention as being critical in the acquisition of these skills. He developed ideas from the content of the courses and through the interaction with professors and class mates and said he has "taken a little bit from here and a little bit from there."

In the development and refinement of his interpersonal skills the only characteristic or skill he has consciously

worked on has been sensitivity.

CASE TWO: BILL

Context in Which Principal Works

Bill works in a high school that was established seven years ago when two other high schools were merged to form a new one. There are now approximately 850 students in the school in grades nine through twelve. The student population is about thirty percent minority and is fairly stable, that is, there are not many transients. According to Bill, most of the students who attend this high school have at least one parent who attended one of the two schools combined to form this school. The typical industries in the area are wood and textile manufacturing with a number of service jobs in the area. The students come from middle to lower middle class families. With the downsizing and closure of some of the industries, there are growing numbers of lower middle class families. The average family income of the area is around twenty-five to thirty-five thousand dollars. The parents are typically both high school graduates but did not finish college. There exists, however, the entire spectrum ranging from high school dropouts to college graduates.

The school is usually first or second among the schools in the area on standardized test scores. Approximately fifty-five to sixty percent of the school's graduates go on to either two year or four year colleges. The school has strong parental support but not as strong as the parental support at the school where Bill worked previously. The staff demographics at the school are representative of the student population; however, seventy-five percent of them are within eight to ten years of retirement. Bill classifies the school as rural in terms of the problems encountered.

Background

Bill has been in education for thirty years. He has been principal at this school for seven years and was principal at another high school for fifteen years. He taught social studies and coached for five years and for three years was an elementary school principal.

Bill's undergraduate degree was in business administration and his master's degree was in education with an emphasis in social studies. He has a doctorate in educational administration. The undergraduate degree is from a small college in North Carolina and both of his graduate degrees are from The University of Virginia.

Bill was born in Southwest Virginia and has an older brother and a younger sister. He stated that he comes from a family with a history of educators. His mother was a school teacher and his father was a school teacher and principal. His sister is a teacher and he has aunts and uncles who are or have been involved in education.

Bill started working when he was in the ninth grade and worked through high school and college as well as during the summers between school years. During his high school years he was also involved in a number of school activities. He participated in junior and senior play productions and was editor of the yearbook his senior year. Bill was also active in athletics, participating in football, basketball and baseball. He played American Legion baseball during the summers.

Personality and Characteristics

Bill classified himself as a survivor and described himself as a very even-tempered individual explaining that he doesn't have a lot of highs or lows. Bill also said he isn't a very vocal person; he doesn't holler or shout very much. He credited this to the environment in which he grew up. He has a very open and positive outlook. This is substantiated in what he says about students and teachers.

He stated, "There is good in every person," and we can do something for even the "worst kid." In talking about teachers he feels that teachers have gone into the profession because they want to help people. He stated, "The worst teacher wouldn't be doing this if they didn't think they could accomplish something for people." He seems very realistic in his outlook. He admits that while he started on some of the athletic teams in high school, he was like a big fish in a little pond.

Bill appears to have a strong work ethic. He worked as a sales clerk in a local department store while in high school. After high school he worked in a furniture factory for three summers and a paint factory for two. In high school he also found time to be active in activities such as yearbook and junior and senior play productions. Outside of high school he was also very active in his church youth group.

Interpersonal Skills

In talking about interpersonal skills, the one he mentioned most often is communication. He also mentioned listening, being visible, showing that you are concerned about people, making people feel important, having empathy with them, involving them in decision making, working with

them in groups, and being open and honest with people. Bill began the interview by stating, "A measure of success for school principals is being able to communicate with the different constituencies with whom they deal." These constituencies he mentioned are the staff, the students, the community and the central office personnel. He mentioned not only communicating with these groups but being able to relate to them as well. He talked about speaking with them on their terms and about things that are important to them. He also mentioned listening as an important skill. He feels that a principal should be perceived as a good listener, one who is open to things and doesn't have a closed mind.

While he doesn't identify it as such, he included many characteristics mentioned earlier as being part of the characteristic of efficacy. He said a principal should be interested in what is going on throughout the entire school; the principal needs to convey to different constituencies he cares about them; he is interested in what is important to them; and the principal should make them feel that their opinions are important and worthwhile. In two incidents he discussed how he wanted the groups to feel important. In an incident involving the consolidation of the two schools he talked about making the one school and community feel that their input was important, that they would be involved in

making decisions just like groups from the other school would be involved. He said, "I was able to convey to the student body... and to the community that I was just as concerned about their feelings." He made them feel that their input was just as important. In a discussion about block scheduling he talked about involving the students, staff, and community in the process and involving them in the decision making process.

Another skill he described in the discussion of these situations is group skills, the process of bringing different people together to build a group and reach a consensus in that group. In the school consolidation example he discussed how he had to bring groups from two very different schools together to make decisions about their new school. In essence he created one group that could work together to make decisions. Bill worked with other groups in the communities and within the school to get things accomplished. Within the context of his work, Bill feels that his interpersonal skills are more important now because it is a bigger school and more diverse population. He said that his interpersonal skills are more important and discusses how he makes better use of groups such as department heads and departments.

Acquisition, Development and Refinement of IPS

Bill feels that his leadership style and interpersonal skills evolved over time and were really a product of his background. He did identify a number of specific influences on them. He identified his doctoral program as having an influence on them. His doctoral research pointed out that the type of leadership in a school impacted the morale of the school and this affected the success of the school. He said his research showed that a collaborative type of leadership tends to create higher morale. This research reinforced his feeling about this type of leadership and enabled him to put a name on it.

He also credited the development of his interpersonal skills to his personality and said his personality is the product of his background. He mentioned, more than once, his family background and the presence of other educators which seemed to be very important to the development of his leadership style. A significant event in his professional career is the experience of working for a principal with a very authoritarian style of leadership. He saw this as a style that didn't work effectively and one he didn't feel comfortable with and wanted to change. He says that the research for his dissertation in his doctoral program supported this feeling.

CASE THREE: CLIFFContext in Which Principal Works

Cliff is principal of a large middle school with approximately 1600 students. It is the only middle school in the county with a number of elementary schools in different parts of the county that feed this school. Prior to being at this school he was principal at one of these elementary schools. The school is like two schools on one campus and Cliff has two building administrators to assist him. The student body is approximately eleven percent minority students and eight-nine percent Caucasian. Approximately twenty-six percent of the student population qualifies for free or reduced lunches.

The school is located in a county that is large geographically but does not have a large population. The students come from diverse backgrounds and socio-economic status. Some students come from very poor housing areas such as trailer parks in the mountains or houses without running water and indoor plumbing. There are also students who come from the upper middle class areas that can be found around communities with homes ranging from \$250,000 upwards.

The educational background of the parents is also very diverse. They include a large number of high school

dropouts but also a significant number of well educated professional people. The county has also become a bedroom community for a small city, which has created an increase in the upper socio-economic and upper educational levels.

The major industries in the county are textile and wood products manufacturing. Most of the factory workers are without high school diplomas.

Background

Cliff grew up in New York State. He is one of six children but doesn't recall much about his childhood. He remembers starting music in the fourth grade but was not involved in a lot of sports or anything else. He grew up in a large family that provided a lot of support and where the siblings tended to provide a lot of nurturing for one another. As one of the older children he provided a lot of the nurturing for the younger siblings. His father was a professional for a major company and his mother worked in the house raising the family. The family was involved in church activities and, being Catholic, he said his family just sort of lived through a lot of the things involved in the church. In high school he was involved in track and cross country, band, drama and student government.

At an early age he began working in a restaurant. This affected the activities he became involved in at school. He felt that school athletics would limit his availability to work and he valued the independence he got from his job. The people he met on the job were older took him under their wing, and treated him well. The people he met while working there also had an influence on his choice of which college to attend.

The high school he attended was large with about 945 students in his graduating class. In the ninth grade he became very active in school. He was active in student government, band, choir, and drama. He participated in tennis and cross country for a short time and felt that he could have been quite good at either of these sports. But as mentioned earlier he valued the independence that he got from his job, and athletics took up too much time. After high school he attended a small private college in the same town as a branch of the State University of New York. He chose this school for three main reasons. The most important reason was that he was offered a full scholarship at this school, but he also chose it because it was small and some of his friends from work were also attending this school. Since the school was located in a town with a branch of the state college system, he was able to take

advantage of many of the opportunities offered there.

At the time of the interview he was starting his second year as principal of this school. Immediately prior to this assignment he was the principal of a small elementary school in the same county for four years. Cliff has also served in central office positions in New York for two years, as an assistant principal for three years, and initially was a music teacher for six years. He has been in education a total of seventeen years, six years in the county he currently works and eleven years in New York. He has some coaching experience at recreation league level but not in a school setting.

Cliff has a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree in music education. He has a certificate of advanced graduate studies from New York and has just finished his doctorate at Virginia Tech. His area of study for both of these was educational administration.

Personality and Characteristics

Cliff described himself as outgoing but shy. He mentioned during the interview that at work he is very outward but while he is at home or in social settings he feels uncomfortable unless the topic turns toward work. He identified himself as a very complex individual and a risk

taker. He feels that he really cares about people almost to the point of becoming too involved in their situations. He stated that he will try anything he feels is good for students but will back away from situations he knows he can't win. He is fiercely competitive, admitting that this characteristic is at least due in part to the fact that he has a brother who is only fourteen months younger.

Prior to the interview the researcher was able to spend a few minutes with him as he "raced" around the campus. He had a few things he needed to take care of and some teachers to see. During this whirlwind tour, he communicated with teachers using their first names and giving them his undivided attention, even if it was only for a couple of moments.

Interpersonal Skills

Cliff said he interacts with a large variety of people. In discussing the groups he deals with, he mentioned communication. He particularly mentioned talking and listening. With the parents, students and staff he feels that it is necessary for them to feel their opinions are important and that he is willing to listen and give them and their thoughts consideration. In situations involving interpersonal skills, he talked about skills involved in

working with groups, getting people to support ideas and letting people have input into decision making. He also talked about making his staff feel that he is interested in them as people, that they are important and their feelings are important. With the central office staff he said he is much more guarded or careful in his communication. While he said communication is important in getting along with the central office staff, he has to watch what is said and be aware of the politics involved in that area. While he doesn't like this type of communication, he sees it as a challenge, almost a game when dealing with them.

He said that his energy is a key characteristic that enables him to deal effectively with people. He feels that it is contagious and that people are attracted to it. Part of this energy, but identified separately, is being upbeat or positive. He said, "Interpersonal skills are a repertoire of skills, not skills that we use all the time, but they are there and when we need one, we pull it out and use it."

Acquisition, Development, and Refinement of IPS

Cliff stated that he began to acquire these skills in his first job in the restaurant. That is where he learned to communicate and interact with a large variety of people.

He feels that starting this job at an early age with the older people working there was very beneficial. They all sort of showed him the ropes and taught him how to get along. He feels that had he been older this probably wouldn't have happened. He also credited being involved in music and drama as helping him develop his interpersonal skills. He said learning to perform and feeling comfortable in front of people was important.

When asked about influences since he has been in education he first stated "just doing it." He couldn't pinpoint one specific thing but said he was given opportunities to develop them. At the end of the interview he credited his doctoral program at Virginia Tech as being very important in the development of his interpersonal skills. He was put in situations he hadn't been in before and this enabled him to learn a little bit about himself and add to his interpersonal skills.

He feels that these are skills we are always developing. At the end of the interview he stated "It's something that you always work on." While he referred back to his first job, he said he had a lot of opportunities to develop them throughout his life. He also feels that these skills gradually developed. He didn't set out with a plan to develop them, they just gradually developed. He also

just gradually moved into areas that helped him develop these skills. There was a natural progression from playing in the pit orchestra to acting on the stage and then into student government. The people he was associating with in the other areas got involved there and he just gravitated towards that also.

CASE FOUR: DON

Context in Which Principal Works

Don works in a middle school of approximately 900 students in grades six, seven and eight. These students come from a number of elementary schools in the section of the county in which the school is located. He explained that there is a significant minority population because there are students of many different nationalities. The parents of these children are employed at or go to school at the college located in the area. Don mentioned that just recently a student from Germany enrolled into the school. The community is supportive of the school in so far as the education of the children is concerned.

As mentioned there is a university in the area. The university is the area's major employer but there are several light industries in the area that help provide for a stable economy.

Background

Don has been in education for twenty-six years. He has been at this school as principal for four years and was a principal at an elementary school for nineteen years. Prior to becoming a principal he taught seventh grade for three years and coached for two years. He attended a small college in West Virginia for his undergraduate work and had a double major in social studies and physical education. He has a master's degree in school administration.

Don has three sisters, two older and one younger. His mother passed away when he was a child and after this his oldest sister practically raised him. He grew up in the town where he lives and the school in which he is principal was his high school.

In his youth there were two areas in which he was primarily involved. Don was very involved in athletics. He played football and basketball in high school and earned a scholarship to play basketball in college. He still tries to stay active in sports when time allows. Don was also involved in his church as a young person. He said his church was very important as a youngster and he was very involved with church activities. He continues to be active in his church today and this takes a lot of his time.

Personality and Characteristics

In discussing his personality Don described himself as being out-going and enjoys people. Describing his childhood, he classified himself as a loner and a child that could have gone either way. There is a sense of deep caring about people and making sure their feelings are considered. He said that he wants to "handle things the way I would want somebody to handle me and it's honestly, up front, in a caring way." In his incident dealing with the young lady and young man he was very concerned that the young lady knew exactly how he would handle the situation, and he was also concerned that the girl's mother knew what had been discussed the day before. He also was concerned about the young man and his feelings.

Another characteristic of Don's is sensitivity. Don said "I'm probably too sensitive." But in the discussion of the incident involving the bus accident, he said he understood parents needed to know their children were all right, and he let them go down and look to see they were there. He said he felt like people need to have a sense of security in situations like this and on a day-to-day basis.

During this incident he felt like he was able to be in charge and make decisions. He said that he needed to be in charge but not be overpowering, to let parents see their

children but to make them understand they needed to be there.

Interpersonal Skills

In discussing interpersonal skills, Don mentioned communication as being the most important. He said if you don't communicate "it will kill you." He talked about listening as a separate skill and says it is also important. At one point in the answer to question three, which deals with the development of his interpersonal skills, he said "I try to be a good listener and listen to what people have to say," and in discussing important skills he said, "In my job you've got to be able to listen."

Don also mentioned or alluded to other qualities or skills as important parts of interpersonal skills. He said, "fairness is as important as anything but also said confidentiality, developing people's trust, and confidence are also important." He mentioned these three together and said, "People want to be able to share things with you and know where they're going and maybe more important than that know where they're going to end up."

Another skill Don discussed is decision making. He talked about being able to think through things, knowing what needs to be done and following through with things once

they are started. He feels people are continuously looking at principals to see what they are going to do in a particular situation. When he was talking about important skills in the answer to question seven, Don said that the principal is the one under the spotlight, he said "The buck stops here" and then added later "You're kind of ... under that microscope all the time"

At the end of question six that asks about important skills, he talked about caring and being there for people. He expressed the need to be there for people especially when they are hurting. He gave the example of visiting the funeral home or calling a staff member who has been sick for a few days.

Don also discussed being able to relate to people. In this discussion he included not asking people to do things he wouldn't do and being available when they need you.

Acquisition, Development & Refinement of IPS

In discussing the acquisition and development of his interpersonal skills, Don said they go back to his personal life. He said that when his mother passed away he was only nine and he had a hard time understanding why it happened. But he had to keep on going. He said that he also had some good teachers along the way. He identified a principal,

social studies teacher and coaches as influences on his interpersonal skills.

Don said that the acquisition, development and refinement of his interpersonal skills was a deliberate process only from the standpoint that he cares how people perceive him. He said that he cares how people perceive him and has worked to improve these perceptions. Beyond that he really didn't think of it as a deliberate process but considers working with people to have been one of his strengths throughout the years.

Don also credited athletics with the development of his interpersonal skills. He said, "I learned a lot on the football field in high school and the basketball court about getting along with people. All those things that I've talked about. . . ."

CASE FIVE: ED

Context in Which Principal Works

Ed works in a school with just over 500 students in grades six through twelve. He has been principal at this school for seventeen years. The school is in a community that has evolved and is still in transition from one that was almost exclusively farming to one that has numerous housing developments. Ed described it as a bedroom

community composed of professional people who work in the region.

The school graduates about sixty to seventy students a year. There is a small but not a significant minority population.

Background

Ed has been in education for thirty-four years and principal at this school for seventeen years. Prior to this position he was an assistant principal at another school in the county. He worked in North Carolina for sixteen years as an English teacher, a technology education or industrial arts teacher and as an assistant principal at a large regional vocational center.

Ed has an undergraduate degree in English and industrial arts. He has one master's degree in English and a second in secondary administration. He grew up in the community in which he works and lives in the house he grew up in. As a youth, Ed was involved in Boy Scouts, church youth activities and 4-H activities

Personality and Characteristics

Ed described himself as both extroverted and introverted. He said he can be outgoing but can also be

intensely personal. He said he loves to sit and read and not be disturbed. He and his wife don't socialize a lot but prefer the company of a small group of people to large parties when they do socialize. Ed mixes a lot with the students at the school, attending activities at the school and celebrations and other activities in the community.

Interpersonal Skills

In discussing interpersonal skills Ed mentioned communication as an important skill. At the beginning of the interview he said, "I think communication is what sets us off in many ways from the lower animals... and maybe if you are a good communicator, then you often have good interpersonal skills" and "I tend to be a person who sits down and talks through issues." He said he will talk with anyone "on pretty much any subject, there's no limit."

Throughout the interview he specifically mentioned listening and talking. He said "I think I'm a good listener," and "you've got to talk that kid down, you've got to listen, you've got to talk to that teacher." Ed also gave examples of how he talks to students about athletics, grades or other personal things and how he writes a personal note to each student who makes the honor roll. In the answer to question six that deals with skills he found

helpful in the incident discussed, he said listening intently was important.

One particular aspect of communicating with people that Ed mentioned is using people's names. He said the fact he knows them and calls them by name makes communicating with people easier and more effective. Ed modeled this by calling the interviewer by name throughout the interview

Ed discussed skills or traits such as caring about people, being sensitive to their needs and concerns, being interested in what they are doing and acknowledging or recognizing people. He cited the examples of writing individual notes to students about things they are doing and acknowledging teachers for helping out at school activities. He also said that we just need to say thank you to people and let them know they are appreciated.

Ed mentioned elements of group skills a number of times throughout the interview. He said we need to be able to build teams and develop groups that can work together. He also said we need to set common goals, be accepting of others, and be able to work together.

There are a number of other skills Ed discussed as important throughout the interview. He talked about conflict resolution between teachers, students and parents. Problem solving, flexibility, versatility, and self control are also

mentioned during the interview. He also said it is "important for kids to see that you are human too, to do silly things, to occasionally lose your cool ..."

Ed mentioned caring during the interview and brings it up at the end of the interview. He gave different examples like writing a personal note or asking about something that is important to a student. At the end of the interview he said "Just caring, to let kids know and parents know that I really care about what is bothering you, the problem (that) is eating (at) you." He finishes the interview by saying that we should "just be genuine." If we are not - the "kids are better than anybody else ... at spotting a phony."

Acquisition, Development and Refinement of IPS

Ed identified individuals from both his past and present as having an influence on his interpersonal skills. He identified his parents as having a major influence on his interpersonal skills. His parents were both very different, but each in their own way influenced him. He learned about listening to people and finding out about them from his father while he learned about dealing with people from his mother. He also learned about dealing with people from his parents' friends. As a youngster he wasn't around people his own age but with friends of his parents, and this

interaction helped him develop his skill in dealing with others.

His former elementary school principal and a couple of high school teachers and college professors were strong influences on the development of his interpersonal skills. He stated, "They seemed to really like people and genuinely care about them." He also credited his college chaplain with helping him learn about people from different backgrounds. Ed also learned about dealing with people from his children and other young people at his school. He said he learns something from the students every day and this makes him a different person.

Within the discussion he said that there was virtually no formal training in communication, but that principals should be trained in that area as well as others.

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

The cross-case analysis looks at the four research questions and attempts to identify common elements found in each of the five interviews that would help answer each question. In the cross-case analysis each of these questions is addressed individually.

Research Question One

What factors in a principal's professional background influence the acquisition, development and refinement of their interpersonal skills?

The first question concerns the professional background of the principals. The professional background includes the educational training, positions held in education, length of time working in education, length of time as principal and length of time in current position (See Table 1, page 83).

The principals interviewed have a range of seventeen to thirty-four years in education. Cliff has been in education for seventeen years, the shortest amount of time among the five principals. Allen has twenty-four years and Don has twenty-six years in education. The other two principals, Bill and Ed, have been in education for thirty and thirty-four years respectively.

In terms of number of years in their current position and total number of years as a principal there is also a wide range among the five principals. The range for years in their current position is from two to twenty-five years. Allen has been in his current position for seven years and this is the only principalship he has held. Bill has been a high school principal for twenty-two years and was an elementary principal for three years prior to being a

TABLE ONE
Factors in Principals' Professional Background

	ALLEN	BILL	CLIFF	DON	ED
Years in Education	24	34	17	26	34
Years as Principal	7	25	7	23	17
Years Current Position	7	7	2	23	17
Major/ Minor in College	Spanish and English	Business Administration	Music	Social Studies & Physical Education	English & Industrial Arts
Masters Degree	English Education	Social Studies Education	Music Education	Educational Administration	English Education
Second Masters or Doctorate	Enrolled EDD Educational Administration	PhD Educational Administration	EDD Educational Administration	None	Second Masters Secondary Administration
Subjects Taught	English	Social Studies	Music	Social Studies & Physical Education	English & Industrial Arts

high school principal. He has been in his current position for seven years but was principal for fifteen years in one of the schools that was consolidated to form his current school. Cliff was principal at an elementary school for five years before becoming principal at the middle school where he has been for two years. Don has been at his current school for four years and was an elementary principal for nineteen years before this current position. Ed has been in his current position for seventeen years, the only principalship he has held and the longest in the current position of any of the five principals.

In looking at their backgrounds from the perspective of their education and training, differences are noted. There is a variety of majors in their undergraduate degrees and their masters degrees. Four of the five have undergraduate degrees in the area of humanities. Two of the principals have double majors and one has a major and a minor. Allen majored in Spanish and minored in English. Ed had a double major, in English and industrial arts, and Don majored in both social studies and physical education. Cliff majored in music and Bill majored in business administration as undergraduates. While there are obviously differences in the majors for their undergraduate degrees, as mentioned four of the five have degrees in some area of the humanities

There is some similarity among the five principals in looking at their master's and post-master's education. Four of the principals have advanced degrees in the areas they taught in school and all five have either an advanced degree or are enrolled in a degree program in educational administration. Allen has a master's in English education and is enrolled in a doctoral program in educational administration at Virginia Tech. Bill has a master's degree in social studies education and a doctorate in educational administration from UVA. Cliff has a master's degree in music education and a doctorate in educational administration from Virginia Tech. Don has a master's degree in educational administration and Ed has two master's degrees, one in English education and the other in secondary administration.

In looking at their work experience in education prior to becoming a principal, some differences are noted. Four of the principals served as assistant principals prior to becoming principals. Cliff also served in the position of Director of Instruction for two years and Don went directly from being a teacher to being a principal at the elementary level.

The subjects taught by the principals are varied however all five taught a subject that can be considered

part of the humanities. There are two principals who taught English and two that taught social studies. Allen and Ed both taught English but Ed also taught industrial arts. Bill and Don taught social studies and Don also taught physical education. Cliff taught music.

Significant factors in the principals' professional backgrounds are: the total number of years in education, humanities background, pursuit of advanced degrees in an area of school administration,

Research Question Two

What factors in a principal's personal background influence the acquisition, development and refinement of interpersonal skills.

The second research question asked what factors in the personal backgrounds of the principals influenced their interpersonal skills. The term "personal background" was defined to include where they grew up, their family backgrounds, and activities they were involved in growing up. (See table two, page 87)

Four of the five principals grew up in the southwestern part of Virginia. Two principals, Don and Ed, are in their home towns and are principals in schools which they attended. Allen and Bill live within a few hours of where

TABLE TWO
Factors in the Principals' Personal Background

	ALLEN	BILL	CLIFF	DON	ED
FAMILY FACTORS					
BIRTHPLACE	SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA	SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA	LONG ISLAND NEW YORK	SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA	SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA
Father's Background	Coal Miner		Business Executive		Lawyer
Mother's Background	Cafeteria Worker	Teacher	Housewife		Teacher
Number of Siblings	2	2	5	3	0
ACTIVITIES OF PRINCIPALS					
Church	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Work	Summer Only	Yes	Yes		Yes
Fine Arts	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Athletics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

they grew up. Cliff, the only principal not from southwest Virginia, was raised on Long Island.

There are some similarities among the principals regarding their family background; however, these similarities are not common to all principals. The number of siblings ranges from being an only child to being one of six children. Ed is an only child and was raised on a farm; Cliff is the second oldest of six children and was raised in a suburban area. Cliff mentioned that there is a significant age difference between the three oldest and the three youngest and he is the middle child of three older children. Allen is the youngest of three children and Bill is the middle child of three children. Don is the third of four children.

The five principals have different family histories from the perspective of their parents background. Two of the principals experienced the death of a parent early. Allen's father passed away when he was fourteen years old and Don's mother passed away when he was nine years old. Allen's father was a coal miner and his mother was a cafeteria worker. Bill's father and mother were both educators. His father was a principal and his mother was a teacher. Cliff's father was an executive for a large corporation and his mother worked at home as a housewife.

Don said he was pretty much raised by his older sister. His father was around but involved in other areas. Ed's father was a lawyer and his mom was also a teacher.

In talking about their activities as teenagers and young adults, the five principals mentioned a number of activities. All said that church was an important activity in their past. Cliff stated "church was a very important part of growing up" and Allen and Don remarked they were "very active in church." Don said "church activities were important" and Ed said he was involved in the church youth group growing up.

Another element that appears in the principals' background is work. During high school three principals were involved in work besides regular household chores. Bill's first job was in a department store during his high school years and he worked in a furniture factory during college. Cliff began work at the age of thirteen in a restaurant and worked there through his high school career. Ed was raised on a farm and had to work beyond what we might consider ordinary household tasks or chores. He said, "I had specific chores that I was responsible for, such as feeding cattle before and after school." While this was on the family farm, it appeared to be significant to him. Allen didn't have a formal job during the school year but

mowed yards and did other yard work during the summers while he was in high school and worked during college. Don is the only one of the five who didn't talk about work as an adolescent. When asked in follow-up questions, he said that he did not work while he was going to school.

Athletics was another activity that was identified as being important. There was a sense that they learned a lot about getting along with people on the football field, the baseball field and basketball court. Don earned a scholarship to play basketball in college and said he learned a lot about dealing with people on the basketball court and football field. The principals were also involved in activities that are artistic in nature such as band, drama, chorus and journalism and about activities such as student government, Boy Scouts, and 4H.

There is a consensus among the five principals that the development of their interpersonal skills just happened. None of the five principals worked specifically to develop these skills and none of them could cite any formal training. Allen acknowledged sensitivity as an area he needed to work on, but said the development of his interpersonal skills was a combination of everything he has done. Don echoed this idea saying, "I guess it goes back to my personal life." He also added that he thinks about how

things are going to work or how people are going to perceive him but there wasn't a deliberate process. Cliff responded to the question by saying, "The only thing I can pinpoint in my career is just doing it." The situations he credited with helping develop these skills he gravitated towards because his peers were involved in these areas but that there wasn't any planning on his part. Don said he doesn't remember identifying skills he needed to work on and added, "I just try to learn; I try to watch." Ed said, "I think it just developed by trial and error." When something didn't work he would back up and try something different. He feels that while his administrative training had virtually no training in interpersonal skills, it should have.

The principals credit parents, former teachers, principals, peers and others as influencing the development of their interpersonal skills. Cliff credited his doctoral program at Virginia Tech, and Allen credited his graduate work as influencing their development. Cliff said his program put him in situations that helped him develop these skills, and Bill said, "the give and take between classmates and professor" helped the development of his interpersonal skills. None of these principals could identify specific course work as an influence on the development of their interpersonal skills.

Factors that appear to be significant in the principals' personal background are: their involvement in church, family environment, work as young adult, involvement in fine arts and activities that teach responsibility and cooperation

Research Question Three

What personal qualities of a principal influence the acquisition, development, and refinement of their interpersonal skills?

The third research question dealt with the principals' personal qualities. The personal qualities were defined to include their individual qualities, characteristics and overall personalities. This is where the greatest similarities seem to be found among the five principals.

The first common area seems to be the dichotomy between being outgoing on the job and being introverted or inward directed away from the job. Allen in discussing his personality says he is thoroughly outgoing in terms of his job, but likes his privacy. He added, "Those who know me outside of school probably would say I am introverted." Cliff describes himself as outgoing but shy. He said as a child he felt insecure and intimidated even around his small circle of friends. Today he still feels uncomfortable in

social settings, but in a professional setting he isn't afraid to speak out or talk with people. Don likes to be around people and is outgoing and secure. As a child, though, he considered himself a loner. Ed tends to be outgoing but can be "intensely personal and introverted." He likes small groups when he socializes but mixes a lot with students at ball games, dances and other student activities. Bill said he is a very open person on the job but went on to add he felt he was "Richie Cunningham reimpersonated." Richie Cunningham is a character from a situation comedy who in his own group of friends was confident and a leader but outside the group was just the opposite.

The second characteristic that we consistently see in all five of the principals is their care or concern for others. Without exception all five principals talked about how they cared for or were concerned for the people within their schools. Throughout the interviews, without realizing it sometimes, they gave examples of how they cared about these people.

In the answer to question two, Allen said, "I take time to let people really know I care." Bill said it is important to be interested in the things that go on around you, "You have to be perceived as a caring person." He also

said, "I take the time to let them know I'm concerned about them and I care about them as a person." Cliff in talking about his personality said, "I care about people" and restated this at the end of the interview by saying, "You have to care a lot about people." Don also stated that you need to "care about people" and added, "Once people realize you care, they are willing to trust you." Ed said, "I'll sit down with any faculty, staff, or student on pretty much any subject" and added, "This type of attention lets them know you care about them." At the end of the interview he added, "...Just caring...to let kids know and parents know that I really do care about what is bothering you, the problem that is eating you."

In the discussion of situations where their interpersonal skills were really helpful, the idea of caring was obvious. In his situation involving the consolidation of the two schools, it was evident that Bill cared not only for the feelings of students in the original school but also about those in the other school and the people in the community in which the school was located. Don was very caring in the way he dealt with two young people in the incident he discussed. He said that he handled the situation "in a way I would like somebody to deal with me, honestly, openly and in a caring way." Cliff was concerned that he doesn't have

the same connection with the people in his school that he developed in his previous school. He feels this is an important way to let people know you are concerned about them. Allen, in discussing the incident involving the student, teacher, and parent, said, "I wanted to make sure that all three parties felt like they were winners." He was concerned about the feelings of the student and his parents and at the same time concerned about the dignity and professional status of the teacher. When Ed was talking about dealing with others, he said, "People are looking for respect and someone to be concerned about them."

The principals also talked about specific things they do that add to this feeling of care or concern. They mentioned greeting faculty and students, asking about things such as a ball game or homework and commenting about a work of art they had done. They mentioned calling staff on the phone if they had been sick, asking about a relative, visiting at the funeral home after the death of a family member, and going to important occasions like weddings. These are all things that they feel are important in showing concern for others.

Research Question Four

What skills do the five principals consider to be part of interpersonal skills?

The fourth research question deals with the individual skills and characteristics these principals feel are part of their interpersonal skills. Research identifies many different skills and characteristics as being part of interpersonal skills. For the purposes of this research these skills and characteristics were grouped into six skill areas and four characteristics. The six skill areas are: communication, listening, decision making, leadership, problem solving, and group process skills. The four characteristics are: efficacy, empathy, humor and visibility. Throughout the interviews the principals identified concepts or ideas found in nine of the ten areas. (See table three, page 97)

Communication and listening were mentioned many times and were discussed more than any other skill during the interviews. The principals not only talked about communication and listening but they also discussed different elements or aspects of these skills. They mention the importance of being able to talk with or communicate with different groups or constituencies, especially the teachers and students. The principals mentioned the

TABLE THREE

SKILLS MENTIONED OR DEMONSTRATED BY PRINCIPALS

	ALLEN	BILL	CLIFF	DON	ED
COMMUNICATION	M	M	M	M	M
LISTENING	M	M	M	M	M
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PROBLM SOLVING	M	D	D	D	M
DECISION MAKING	M	M	M	M	M
LEADERSHIP			M	M	M
GROUP DYNAMICS	D	M	M		M
EMPATHY	M	M			D
EFFICACY	M	M	M	M	M
HUMOR	D	D		D	D
VISIBILITY	D	M	M/D	M	M

M = Principals named these skills or elements of these skills during the interview.

D = Principals don't name these skills specifically but either included them in their discussions or demonstrated them before or after the interview

importance of communicating on the level of their audience and about things that are important to them.

Leadership skills and group process skills were also mentioned by a number of the principals. Among the individual skills mentioned in this area are empowering teachers, building working relationships, creating win-win situations, and bringing groups or individuals together. Almost all the incidents the principals talked about involved bringing different groups or individuals together.

The ability to make decisions and resolve conflicts were also mentioned by the principals. Again in the incidents cited by the principals, four of the five principals, resolving a problem was the goal. One principal said being decisive was important and another mentioned being able to establish a consensus.

More than one principal mentioned efficacy, empathy, and visibility. They all talked in some manner about elements of efficacy in their answers. They talked about making people feel important, caring about them and being genuine with them. The principals also mentioned acknowledging people and recognizing them for their work. In their discussions of things they do, visibility comes out a number of times. They talk about being in the halls before school starts and being visible during the day and at

functions after school hours. Two of the principals specifically mentioned empathy and another one talked about being able to see things from other people's point of view.

The one characteristic that wasn't mentioned during the interview was humor. Humor was mentioned the fewest times in the literature review, but was felt to be an important characteristic by those authors who mentioned it. In the course of the interviews, humor was not mentioned by any of the principals as being an important characteristic. While it was not mentioned during the actual interviews, all the principals displayed a sense of humor during their interaction with the researcher before and after the interviewer. It is interesting that none of the principals mentioned humor and yet it was quite evident that they all displayed this characteristic.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

This study was undertaken to examine the factors that influenced the development of interpersonal skills among high school principals. Based upon this limited examination of five principals, there are a number of findings worthy of mention. The research questions in this study examined the principals' professional backgrounds, their personal backgrounds, and their personal qualities. The findings of this study are outlined in response to these research questions.

Finding One

The first finding relates to the professional background of the principals. The principals' professional backgrounds (preparation and teaching experience) include elements of the humanities. Their undergraduate degrees included: social studies, English, foreign language, and music. The principals also taught in those areas and four of them hold advanced degrees in one of those fields.

Finding Two

The second finding is in response to the research question that asked about elements of the principals' personal backgrounds. A number of factors were identified that seemed to have influenced the interpersonal skill development of the principals. The first of the factors involved the family. All of the principals grew up in a strong family environment. The principals identified their families as loving and caring; even the principals who lost a parent at an early age mentioned the influence of the other parent or an older sibling. One of the activities that was common to the principals was active participation in church activities. All the principals identified church as an important element in their background. These two factors may be related - that is involvement in church may have been a result of the strong family background or the strong family background may have been related to the church influence. At least that connection is often made by current advocates of "family values" in our society.

Finding Three

Another factor that seemed to influence the development of interpersonal skills for these principals was the positive impact of others in their lives. These significant

others included parents, former principals, coaches, and peers.

Finding Four

The fourth finding is that the principals were involved in activities that exposed them to the public early in their lives. Some of the principals started work at an early age and credited that experience as a possible positive influence on their interpersonal skills. Several of the principals had been involved in activities such as drama, student government, 4H, Boy Scouts, and athletics. All of these activities involved some type of exposure to the public. Even Ed, an only child, growing up on a farm and not involved in these types of activities said association with his parents' friends likely made him more comfortable with people.

Finding Five

The fifth finding is that the principals had similar characteristics and traits. The first characteristic is that while all are extroverted on the job, they tend to describe themselves as introverted away from the job. They also seem to use a lot of energy on the job and be more relaxed away from the job. There was not a sense of using

this time away from the job as an escape but more as a means to regroup or recoup energy. A second characteristic the principals reflect is a concern for others. They demonstrated this concern in a number of ways all of which involve knowing the people around which they work. These principals know their teachers and the students in their schools and use this knowledge in their interaction with them.

Finding Six

The sixth finding produced a listing of skills that the principals consider part of interpersonal skills and how these skills were developed. The principals identified almost the same skills that were identified in the research. Some of these skills were named and some of them were demonstrated during the interviews. According to the principals these skills were developed over time and not through formal training or programs. The skills most often identified by the principals were communication and listening. They also named decision making skills, group skills and elements of efficacy almost as often. They also indicated that interpersonal skills were at least as important as the technical skills they had learned.

Conclusions / Recommendations

Based on this limited study there are three sets of recommendations that can be made. The first includes recommendations for further study. The second suggests implications for principal preparation programs. The third - lessons for principals.

Recommendations For Further Study

This study was limited to five principals who were identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills. Further study is warranted on a wider scale with more cases. An expanded study could add to the findings of this study and enhance our knowledge in this area. A study done on a wider scale might look not only at more principals but at principals with different backgrounds. A wider study might also include principals who are females or minorities.

The other area for further study is the characteristics of principals who have exemplary interpersonal skills. A knowledge and understanding of these characteristics could be incorporated into principal preparation programs and programs for principal improvement.

Implications for principal preparation programs

Those involved in principal preparation should consider incorporating some of the findings from this study into their programs. Interpersonal skills are described in the literature as important in the principal's job. The principals in this study confirmed them as important. The principals also mentioned that they had received little or no training in interpersonal skills.

Principal preparation programs should consider including more training in interpersonal skills particularly in the areas of communication, listening, decision making, problem solving and group skills.

Elements of communication need to be taught. The principals need to know the different elements of communication and how to communicate effectively including the use of feedback. Principals also need to be effective listeners. This includes active listening and critical listening. A good example of this is the principal who had a teacher who would come into his office and rant and rave for a few minutes and then leave. He said that she just wanted to come in and sound off and have somebody listen. Courses taught in communications and/or counseling might be helpful in developing these skills.

Principals also need to learn how to deal effectively with different and sometimes antagonistic groups. How to bring people together to resolve conflict and build consensus. In almost every interview the principals talked about bringing people together for some purpose. Activities focusing on group process, consensus building, and team building seem appropriate additions to principal preparation program curricula.

Principals need to learn problem solving and decision making skills. How to get information needed to make a decision or solve a problem and the processes one goes through to accomplish these objectives should be included in the program. Relevant courses may already be available within colleges and universities preparing principals.

Principles for Interpersonal Skills

The third set of recommendations might better be called "lessons to learn" or "principles to practice." Principals interested in developing better interpersonal skills might follow some of the examples of the five principals in this study

The first principle, evident in all five of the principals, is **get to know the people with whom you work.** All five of the principals talked about how they know (and

know about) the staff and students in their schools. These Principals spend time learning about the culture in the school and the culture in which the school is located. Principals should also know the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers and staff in their schools. The five principals in this study knew their people well. Cliff, who said he didn't know his teachers and parents as well as he had in his previous school, expressed the need to get to know them better. Ed felt that he had an advantage because he not only knew the people in his community but knew about their work as farmers because of his own experiences on the farm. This doesn't mean that principals need to experience everything in the community but they do need to develop an understanding of the community.

The second principle that can be gleaned from this study is **take time for yourself**. This may seem contradictory to having good interpersonal skills but it is important to have some time to recharge oneself. This time doesn't have to be in solitude but it should be time to regenerate or to just relax. The principals all talked about being introverted away from the job but they discussed it in terms of needing to get away from crowds. Whether it is small dinner parties, traveling, rock climbing, or reading a good book the principals seemed to relish these

times and derive benefit for themselves.

The third principle is **to be visible**. The five principals were all very visible in their schools. They talked about meeting buses, being at athletic events, dances and other activities. They also talked about being visible at events away from the school. They didn't seem to dislike these activities but saw them as opportunities to help accomplish the first principle of getting to know the people. The principals believe that the more visible they were, the better they got to know the students and staff. This, they believe, made their jobs easier. Part of being visible is being open and yourself. According to the principals in this study, being open and not phony lets the students see the human side of you and get to know you better.

Epilogue

Throughout the time span of this study a number of significant events have taken place in the researcher's life. Taking on the challenge of a new job, moving from the town I had lived in for fifteen years, and finishing a degree and the stress that goes along with these events has at times taken its' toll. In hindsight it might have been more prudent to finish the work for the degree before taking

on the other challenges.

Throughout this period of time being able to get along with people, on the job and away from it, has enabled me to survive. By adopting some of the ideas mentioned by the principals in this study, I have been able to develop a better understanding of the people around me. This better understanding has in turn facilitated better working relationships with these people.

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APPENDIX A

SUPERINTENDENTS LETTER

Dear Dr./Mr./Mrs. Superintendent:

I am conducting research on the interpersonal skills of successful secondary school principals. Realizing that all administrators have interpersonal skills, I am looking for effective principals who have exceptional or exemplary interpersonal skills. The study would involve an in-depth interview with a sample of those identified and I would like your help in identifying these principals.

Your assistance would involve identifying successful secondary principals, in your school system, who have exemplary interpersonal skills. Principals will also be identified or nominated from other sources. Those identified by more than one group will form a pool from which the sample to be interviewed will be selected. Participation in the study will be completely voluntary and your nomination will not commit a principal to participate in the study nor guarantee his or her selection to participate in the study.

For the purpose of this study I am defining secondary principals as principals at the Middle School, Junior High School or High School levels. Principals with exemplary interpersonal skills are successful in their dealings with most of the individuals and groups with whom they have contact, that is their staff, students, parents, and community.

If you are willing to assist me, I have attached a form to this letter for you to identify the principal or principals who have exemplary interpersonal skills. Thank you for your time and effort in this project and for your commitment to research in education. If you have questions, please contact me at (703) 228-3157 (GWHS), (703) 228-7424 (Home) or my advisor, Dr. Wayne M. Worner at (703) 231-6426.

Appendix A: Superintendent's Letter

APPENDIX B

STATE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE'S LETTER

State Department Representative

Dear Dr./Mr./Mrs.

I am conducting research on the interpersonal skills of successful secondary school principals. Realizing that all administrators have interpersonal skills, I am looking for effective principals who have exceptional or exemplary interpersonal skills. The study will involve an in-depth interview with a sample of those identified. I would like your help in identifying these principals.

Your assistance would involve identifying the secondary principals, in your service area, who have exemplary interpersonal skills. Principals will also be identified or nominated from other sources and those identified by more than one group will form a pool from which the sample to be interviewed will be selected. Participation in the study will be completely voluntary and your nomination will not commit a principal to participate in the study nor guarantee his or her selection to participate in the study.

For the purpose of this study I am defining secondary principals as principals at the Middle School, Junior High or High School levels. Principals with exemplary interpersonal skills are successful in their dealings with most all the individuals and groups with whom they have contact, that is their staff, students, parents, and community.

If you are willing to assist me, I have attached a sheet to this letter for you to identify the principal or principals who have exemplary interpersonal skills. Thank you for your time and effort in this project and for your commitment to research in education. If you have questions, please contact me at (703) 228-3157 (GWHS), (703) 228-7424 (Home) or my advisor, Wayne M. Worner at (703) 231-6426.

Appendix B: State Representative's Letter

APPENDIX C

Dr./Mr./Mrs./Principal

Dear Principal:

I am doing research on the interpersonal skills of school administrators. In my preliminary research you were identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills and I would like to ask you to be a participant in my research. Your participation would involve an interview that would take around an hour and a half. The interview would be at a time and place that is convenient for you.

I would like to contact you by telephone to find out if you are willing to participate. At that time, if you are willing, we can find a time that will be convenient for you and set up the interview.

Sincerely,

Christopher S. Colville

APPENDIX D

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS COMPONENTS MATRIX

Legend

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| CO - Communication Skills | GP - Group Dynamics |
| L - Listening | EM - Empathy |
| CM - Conflict Management | EF - Efficacy |
| DM - Decision Making | H - Humor |
| LD - Leadership | V - Visibility |

SOURCES	C	L	CM	DM	EF	EM	GD	LD	V	H
KELLY, 1987	X	X	X						X	
Polite, 1988	X	X					X			
Goldman & Kemper, 1988	X	X			X	X				
Coyle, 1993	X	X	X	X			X			
Yrle & Galle, 1993	X	X			X	X				
Wendal, et al, 1993	X	X		X	X			X		
Donaldson, 1991	X		X		X				X	
Castoguary, 1983	X	X		X	X			X	X	
Chumley, et al, 1992		X	X	X					X	
Smith, et al, 1992		X			X	X				
Finch, et al, 1992	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Sweeney, 1982	X	X			X				X	
Daniel, 1992	X	X				X	X			
Berry, 1993	X	X			X			X		
Brown, 1991	X							X		
Hall, 1991	X		X					X		
Chapman & Willis, 1982	X						X			
Mazzarello & Grundy, 1982	X									

Appendix D: Interpersonal Skills Components Matrix

APPENDIX D continued

SOURCES continued	CO	LI	CM	DM	EF	EM	GD	LD	V	H
Blase, 1993	X	X	X				X			
Burgess, 1983	X				X		X	X		
Sergiovanni, 1987			X			X	X			
Rothberg, 1993			X	X			X	X		
Fisher, 1994			X	X						
Leithwood & Poplin, 1992			X	X			X			
Bothwell, 1983	X		X	X		X			X	X
Deutsch, 1994	X		X	X			X			
Adams & Bailey, 1989				X	X		X	X	X	
Doggett, 1987	X				X				X	X
Cook & Green, 1987	X	X					X	X		
Dunstan, 1981					X			X	X	
AASA, 1969	X		X					X	X	
NASSP	X		X					X		
Coursen & Thomas, 1989	X	X			X		X			X
Johnson, 1972	X		X		X	X				
Pierson & Bredeson, 1993										X
Blumberg, 1989										
Redmund, 1987	X							X	X	

COMPONENTS OF INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Throughout the literature there are numerous references to interpersonal skills and there are many different concepts that make up the framework for interpersonal skills. Some of these can be considered individual skills

Appendix D: Interpersonal Skills Components Matrix

while others may be looked at as characteristics or qualities. Different skills or qualities are included by different authors. This matrix was developed to look at a number of different authors and develop a list of components to be included as part of interpersonal skills. This matrix is not intended to be an exhaustive one but to represent those skills or qualities mentioned most often in the literature.

There were many components, some of which were mentioned only once or twice. When these components were similar or related they were collapsed into groups together.

The end result was a list of ten components to be included in the matrix. These were: Communication, Listening, Conflict Management, Decision Making, Group Dynamics, Leadership, Empathy, Efficacy, Humor and Visibility. The first six components can be considered skills while the last four can be considered qualities or characteristics

Although listening is generally considered part of communication it is included as a separate component because it is mentioned very frequently, sometimes as a separate skill from communication. In one case it was mentioned as the only skill needed for good interpersonal relationships.

Included in the component of communication are both oral and written communication. There were a few authors who listed one or the other however there were also authors who included both in communication.

The conflict management component includes the use of skills as confrontation and diplomacy. Sometimes resolving conflicts requires the ability to use diplomatic skills and to be able to confront both sides of an issue. Decision Making skills include the ability to look at more than one point of view and information processing skills. The group dynamics component involves team building and group process skills. Leadership involves skills such as motivation, coaching, and visioning. Efficacy includes such components as respect, recognition, and showing interest.

Appendix D: Interpersonal Skills Components Matrix

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRINCIPALS

Introduction: You have been identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills. My interest is in trying to determine what factors may have had an influence on these skills.

During the interview I will be asking you questions about your professional development and personal background. In reporting the data from this interview you will not be identified. If anything specific is mentioned it will be completely anonymous. Please ask for further explanation if clarification is needed. Please answer each question as completely as possible.

This section involves questions about job related skills.

1. You have been identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills. Why do you think you were identified?
2. What is it that you do that would cause someone to recommend you? (This may be answered in the first response.)
3. How and Where do you think you acquired these skills?
4. Has the development and/or refinement of these skills been a deliberate process? (Did you work on these skills in any systematic way?)
5. Think about and describe a professional situation in which your interpersonal skills were required.
6. What were some of the individual skills you found helpful in this situation?
7. How important are interpersonal skills within the context of your position, school and community?

Appendix E: Interview Guide

Appendix E continued**Interview Guide**

Demographic Data: These questions may be asked in different order based on the individual interview and information obtained during the interview.

What is the highest degree you've earned?

What was your major?

What other degrees do you have and what were your majors?

How long have you been in Education?

How long have you been principal at this school?

What are the demographics of the school and community.

What other jobs have you held in education?

Describe your personality?

Describe what your childhood was like? (Where you lived, number of siblings, hobbies or interests growing up, responsibilities as a child and young adult)

APPENDIX F

Interview with Allen

QUESTION 1. You have been identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills, why do you think you were identified?

ANSWER 1. Well that's an interesting question too because I don't know that I have really stopped to reflect that I may have exemplary interpersonal skills. I suspect it may be due Chris, in large part to the fact that I tend to make people feel at ease when I'm dealing with them. I tend to actively listen when they're talking to me or requesting things. I suspect that I have a tendency to make those folks feel like their time is important to me.

QUESTION 2. What is it that you do that would cause someone to identify you?

ANSWER. I take time to speak to faculty, staff and students on a daily basis as they enter the building coming to work. I greet them. I try to inquire a little bit about them. How they're doing. How they're feeling. Maybe we'll talk about a ball game if I know they're a sports fan and they watched television last night. I may inquire about how did those Yankees do last night and we'll have a discussion about that. Or, "I noticed you were working on a paper, how is your paper." I take the time to let people know Chris, that I care about them. I think that the tone of every organization be it a school division or be it one of sales, or either high school, middle school or elementary school, whatever the organizational setup is, I believe that leader of that organization sets the tone of that organization. It's success or failure in large part is due to whether or not the leader can infuse the whole organization with his sense of caring. I think attitude is important and I try to project to my staff a positive "can do" attitude. I take time. Primarily I take time to let them know that I'm concerned about them and that I care about them as a person.

QUESTION 3. How and where do you think you acquired these skills?

ANSWER. Well obviously I believe that what I am, is a product of all the experiences I've had in my life. I cannot pinpoint any one episode or any one facet of my life that may have influenced me to do this or that but just the experience that I've had, being from a humble background, exhibiting a strong work ethic and really believing, and it's a sidetrack here, I really do believe that I lived the American dream. That it doesn't matter where you came from or how much you have or don't have. Through hard work and determination one can succeed at whatever level one wants to succeed at and I firmly believe that. So whatever my total life experiences have been, I think they have molded me or colored me or colored my outlook to what it is today and to what I am today.

I guess what one of the things I try to live by is a code. Code may not be the right word but it is a series of rules that I once heard and I heard them from Lou Holtz. Lou is kind of role model or hero if you will of mine. I heard him say once that there were three keys to success and I had kind of internalized this as part of me. One of them is that you need to do what's right and the second key is that you need to do the best you can in everything you do, that you should not settle for mediocrity. The third thing is simply the Golden Rule. Treat others as you want to be treated. So I try to think about those things when I deal with people and deal with situations. Am I doing the right thing. If I'm entering this particular task I'm going to do it to the best of my ability and above all I'm going to treat people with dignity and respect because that's what I expect in return. But I don't know any one thing that I could say influenced me.

Obviously I have been influenced by my parents. I have been influenced by friends. I've obviously been influenced by teachers. Teachers were great motivators in my personal life. Peers, when I got into the school profession, other school personnel such as former principals of mine or a former central office personnel who took the time to work with me have offered me view points that maybe I haven't considered before. I think all of those things kind of put into a pie and stirred around a little bit have kind of made

me what I am today and helped form the relationships that I like to develop with those that I work with.

In a follow up conversation Principal A said there were two principals and an Assistant Superintendent in particular who had an influence on his interpersonal skills.

QUESTION 4. Do you think the development of these interpersonal skills has been a deliberate process? Did you work at developing them in a systematic way or did they just evolve?

ANSWER. The only thing that I could really say to you Chris, as deliberately worked on and I still continue to work on, is one of sensitivity. Being sensitive to the needs of others. I realize that in that area at times I need work (okay I need to work on that) Sometimes I come across as being less sensitive than I really am. Therefore when I deal with people, that's always in the back of my mind. Are you trying to really understand what they're telling you. Are you seeing the situation from their point of view rather than just dismissing it as well "they're crazy or they don't what they're doing or whatever." So sensitivity is the only area that I consciously think I need to work on.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. As far as your professional training is there anything that you can think of that influenced the acquisition of these skills?

ANSWER. Again Chris, I would have to answer that by saying that the various course work that I've had throughout the years obviously I'd pick things up from that. I'd pick things up from the interaction in those classes where the professors are, with the peers in the class that I'd have maybe take a little bit here and a little bit there and maybe had internalized it and used it in my own life. I can't say specifically this class did this, this class did that but it's a combination of all those things I've done.

QUESTION 5. Think about and describe for me a professional situation in which your interpersonal skills were required.

ANSWER. Yes, it was, it happens, in my present job. One that readily comes to mind a couple of years ago. I had a situation between a student, teacher and parent. We had a

conference. The student was adamant about not returning to this particular teacher's classroom. That regardless of what the student did it was wrong and therefore the student could never succeed and the parents were not concerned about the rules and regulations of the class and what had to be. They were concerned that their child was going to be successful and that the rules and regulations were my problem and I needed to solve those for the benefit of their child. We had a conference, the parents, me, the student and the teacher in question.

I think by using the interpersonal skills that I have, making the parents feel like they were making a worthwhile contribution; making the student feel like he was making a worthwhile contribution; and at the same time protecting the dignity and the professional status of the teacher, I was able to enact a solution that was agreeable to all parties and we didn't have the traditional win-lose situation. Everyone came out feeling like they were winners. I think as Steven Covey might say, everyone felt like they had a win-win situation. As a matter of fact after the conference I received a letter from the parents expressing their gratitude for the professional manner in which I had handled the conference and they felt like indeed they had gotten what they needed, the child had gotten what he needed and that the teacher had gotten what she needed in this case. So it was a very tough, intense situation but through I guess common sense and hard work and realizing everyone has a viewpoint and you need to express it and get it out in the open and get it on the table where you can deal with it. That if we will communicate that generally we can solve most problems.

QUESTION 6. You mentioned some of them already, but what are some of the specific individual skills you found helpful in that situation?

ANSWER. Listening was important. Being able to restate others' ideas to be sure that what I was interpreting was indeed the message that was being communicated. Being able to empathize with the other person. Having the ability to show where valid points exist on one side or the other. Trying to point out where common ground existed and how we could build on that from the opposing sides.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTION. You said "to empathize" and a lot of people interpret that differently. What did you mean by that?

ANSWER. Understanding where the other person is coming from, their feelings, their frustrations, where they may hurting. Just trying to, I think, put myself in their shoes for a moment to try to gain greater clarity of where they're coming from.

QUESTION 7. How important is the context in which you work, how does that effect how your interpersonal skills come into play?

ANSWER. Well in my situation now, we are a small school system. Our context consists of an elementary school, a middle school adjoining the campus of the high school. So we are three facilities and we're within a block proximity of one another. Our school board office is across the football field. So we're kind of all clustered very close together as one big happy family. So since I'm the only game in town as far as the high school goes it is very important that I be able to communicate effectively and I be able to relate with and have the interpersonal dealings with community members because educationally we are kind of the central focus. So within that context I think it is very important that I be able to relate to the professional staff, to the central office, to the other schools and to the community at large because we're kind of right here. We're kind of the only thing. We're being looked at and examined on a daily basis. I've got to be able to deal with the constituencies of our school.

(This next set of questions deals with you and your background)

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

QUESTION. What is the highest degree that you have earned?

ANSWER. I have a master's plus and I am presently enrolled in a doctoral program at Virginia Tech. (In Educational Administration) A Master's at this point would be it.

QUESTION. What was your major area of study for your master's?

ANSWER. English Education.

QUESTION. What was the area of study for your undergraduate degree?

ANSWER. Major in Spanish and minor in English.

QUESTION. Do you have any other degrees?

ANSWER. No sir.

QUESTION. How long have you been in education?

ANSWER. Twenty three and a half years.

QUESTION. How long have you been principal of this school?

ANSWER. I've been at this school seven years.

QUESTION. What was your position prior to this?

ANSWER. I was Assistant Principal for seven years in (another) County. Prior to that I was an English teacher for ten years.

(Allen said in a follow up conversation that he had coached for five years while he was a teacher.)

QUESTION. You've touched on this a little bit already but would you describe your personality for me?

ANSWER. Well, I think that's an interesting question Chris. I am a thoroughly outgoing person in terms of the job setting. However I do like my privacy. If it's possible to be an introvert/extrovert, I'm probably one of those. People who know me in school probably would say that I'm an extrovert. But those who know me outside of school would call me an introvert because I enjoy my privacy. I think that's probably because of all of the public demands that being a high school principal involves. So I enjoy my quiet time when I don't have to be in the public eye. I would dare say that I'm obviously trustworthy. I'd say that's one need, in terms of a personality trait. I think I operate from the tenet that one needs to do what it takes to get the job done even if it's beyond normal eight to four hours. If

you have to come early and you have to stay late, if that's what it takes to do the job then you need to do it. I believe you need to accept the situation that you find and work to make it better rather complain about it or whine about it because that doesn't do any good. I think I have a very strong work ethic as a personality trait.

QUESTION. Where are you from originally?

ANSWER. I'm a native of Southwest Virginia. I was born (names home town) and grew up there and was educated in the public school system.

QUESTION. Describe what your childhood was like - how many siblings do you have?

ANSWER. I have one brother and one sister.

QUESTION. Where are you in the group?

ANSWER.. I'm the youngest.

QUESTION. What was it like growing up in your house and what were the things you did as a child or young adult?

ANSWER. You know earlier on I mentioned to you that I felt like I lived the American dream. Where I'm coming from on that is I sprang from what I consider very humble beginnings. I was born in a coal yard in a cinder block house. My parents being very loving and supportive parents had not much in the way of a formal education. I guess my dad maybe had gone through fifth or sixth grade. He came from a large family who were farmers who lived on a farm. I really don't know a whole lot about my mother's family, she was an orphan. I hate to admit this to you I guess but I can't tell you whether she graduated from high school or not. She obviously had some education but whether she matriculated, who knows. Growing up in my family with my brother and my sister, as I said I was the youngest, we had I suspect what I consider at that time to be a normal family situation. We did not have lots of money but my dad was a coal dealer and my mom worked in the coal business some and she also worked as a cafeteria worker. We had the necessities, we didn't have a lot of extras but we had the necessities. But we felt loved and that our parents cared for us and they did the best they could. My father died

when I was fourteen and therefore my mother, you know my brother and sister were gone and so I was kind of alone with my mother and she did the best she could with me until I graduated. I enjoyed all the normal things kids do. I had a group of friends in the neighborhood and we'd play and we went to school and I played youth league ball. I did all the normal things. I participated in activities at school going up through the ranks there of schooling. While I had my moments, I guess I would consider myself a good kid. I think I was respectful.

QUESTION. Thinking back on your childhood and when you were a young adult, what were some of the responsibilities that you had growing up, you said your older brother and sister were gone, what were some of the responsibilities you had?

PRINCIPAL'S QUESTION. The responsibilities in terms of around the house? Yes.

ANSWER. I was responsible for actually keeping my room clean. I was responsible for taking the trash out, mowing the yard. Just things I could do around the house to help with the upkeep.

(Principal A did not work during high school except doing things like mowing yards during the summers. He did work after high school, while he was in college.)

FOLLOW-UP QUESTION. You mentioned in some answers dealing with students and some of the staff and in the incident you talked about parents, are there other groups or constituencies involved in your job?

ANSWER. Well, in the school business you've got to be sensitive to community obviously I've mentioned the students. The staff, both professional staff and non-professional staff, parents. You have to be sensitive and you have to be able to deal with the community at large. The people who may be in the power structure in the community. You've got to be able to deal with those folks effectively. You've got to be able to deal with the your central office personnel, supervisory personnel in an effective manner. Just all those folks who may have a say or a stake in the learning community you've got to be able to deal and interact with them effectively.

QUESTION. Now when you gave me some ideas about what you do like you talk to them about ball games and stuff. I was assuming that you were talking about students there.

ANSWER. Well, I do but I also talk to faculty. You know, I indicated that I greet them in the morning as kind of a greeting. It's kind of a positive sort of thing as they come in the morning besides a "Hi, how are you, good morning" I may talk to them just to engage them in some sort of conversation, to hopefully start the day on a positive note.

QUESTION. What are some of the things that you do in terms of dealing with the community or the central office?

ANSWER. Well, Obviously I try to make the building available to the community. I try to involve them in our instructional program and in our curricular and co-curricular programs. We have instituted an academic boosters club which basically brings in the business and industry industrial community to be partners with us and our school. We use them as a vehicle to help provide reward incentives to our students who are achieving or show progress from one period to the next or may be improving in their attendance. We try to award students and I try to involve the community in being a part of those rewards. I believe that it's important that students feel good about themselves and about coming to school and I would like to think that over the course of the year that every student at my student could be recognized at least once for something positive. So I involve the community in helping make those recognitions possible. Central office personnel, obviously I interact with them on a daily basis in talking about programs or things I would like to have that help me work with teachers who then work with the kids. You know Chris, to digress here just a minute I've come to realize something and I've brought it to a conscious level that I really know that I've realized before. Probably ten years ago if you had of asked me why do you want to be principal, I would probably have said to you "well gee I just love working with those kids, I want to get out there and work with those kids that's why I want to be principal." It's just been recently that it dawned on me, my job as a principal is really to work with

the teachers. To empower them and to make it possible for them to work with the students. They're the ones who need to do that. I need to make their job easier. It's kind of like telling me your principal at (names school) pretty much let's the teachers do what professionally they feel they need to be doing and he kind of stands in the background. Well that's kind of what I'm saying, I need to work with the staff who then work with the students. I need to make it so that they can be most effective for those kids. So, I don't know if that has any thing to do with anything you asked me but I need to, they are the experts in their areas and I what I need to do is facilitate their expertise.

QUESTION. Describe your school for me. How large is it?

ANSWER. Okay, we are a nine-twelve high school. We have about 335 students at this point. I have a faculty of about 34. I have an assistant principal. We have some para-professionals that work with us. A strong teaching faculty. The usual cafeteria and custodial services we need.

QUESTION. What is the make up of your student body?

ANSWER. We're, in terms of ethnicity, we're about 96% white and 4% black. We have a little bit of influx of Hispanics but at this point those figures would be negligible.

QUESTION. What types of industry does the community have?

ANSWER. Primarily manufacturing textile and furniture.

QUESTION. Can you describe the people in the area? What is their background and education?

ANSWER. Chris, I have seen figures done on the educational level of the city itself. Now the city is of course an independent city surrounded by (names other) counties. I have seen the city's but I really can't remember. I'm not sure I would do justice by attempting to quote them. I do think we probably are approaching 50% high school graduates in the city. We also have (it's probably) a dichotomy between the professional class and the non-professional class. Probably the folks that are employed in the

educational community within the city would constitute the middle class. We have obviously professional people here. We have a hospital here, the doctors and those folks and we obviously have lawyers and we have the educators and beyond that folks are working in one of the plants in the manufacturing or furniture plant or textile plant. I would be hesitant to even take a stab at a percentage in the city what the educational level was.

QUESTION. Is there anything else that comes to your mind as far as interpersonal skills?

ANSWER. Well, obviously I believe having effective interpersonal skills are important because we have to deal in the context of people everyday and if we can't relate to the folks within that context in which reality dictates we deal, then we're not going to, I don't think, be very effective because if we can't communicate if we can't be effective in that communication between and among people then I see the chance for success as being very slim.

QUESTION. You've mentioned specific skills. You've mentioned communication and listening. You've mentioned making people feel at ease. You've mentioned being empathic. Are there any other skills that you would consider interpersonal skills?

ANSWER. I think another one that I would consider is being decisive. I think you have to be decisive. As an interpersonal skill I think you have to be able to look at a position hear whatever input there may be to the situation and I think if it requires a judgment to be made or a decision to be made you have to look at those and have the ability to make that decision based on what you perceive to be the best information and stick with that decision.

In a follow-up conversation, Allen said he spent five years as a coach. He didn't hold a formal job during high school but worked during the summer doing jobs like mowing lawns. When asked further about peers that influenced his interpersonal skills he said that there were two Principals and an Assistant Superintendent who had an influence on him.

APPENDIX G

Interview with Bill

Question 1. You have been identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills, why do you think you were identified?

Answer. Well, I'm not sure how to answer that, I have to think that part of the reason is that I'm a survivor of the principalship being a high school principal since 1973. I think the longevity in the job probably carries with it some idea of some measure of success and certainly a measure of success in secondary principalship now is being able to communicate well with staff, with students, with community and with central office personnel. Probably one reason I've been able to survive is that I feel like in my mind, I've been able to do that. I think I have related well to teachers, to students and to parents down through the years and I would hope that maybe if someone has mentioned my name as having certain skills, that's an indication that outside of the immediate area where I work, people have acknowledged that my longevity must indicate that I have certain skills that are necessary to be successful in the principalship. I don't know beyond that why I would be identified. I have, through school evaluations and through conferences and trips have met other administrators, college personnel, teachers all around the state. I've had occasions, some occasions, to speak to groups and one of the things I've always emphasized when I speak with other groups or meet and work closely with other administrators is the need, particularly in the time that we live and work in, is the need to be able communicate effectively, honestly and openly with your community, with your staff, with your students and with your central office personnel. So if I have been mentioned I hope that maybe it's a combination of all of those things.

Question 2. What is it that you do on the job that would cause someone to identify you?

Answer. I think the fact that I'm a very open person on the job. An overwhelmingly majority of my time is to be out

Appendix G: Interview with Bill

here in the building as opposed to here in the office. Things that I have to get done in the office I often do them at times like this after everyone's gone. I think it's imperative that a school administrator today be visible in the building. That classroom teachers see the administrator as a person who is interested in what's going on in the building, going in and out of classrooms, being in the halls when classes change, being in the cafeteria, visible in the cafeteria at lunch time, not necessarily in an administrative supervision type role but being visible, speaking to students, and speaking to teachers, dropping in and out of classrooms as I've mentioned, at school activities or events whether it be choir or music, athletics, forensics or whatever. I just think it's imperative that students and staff see that the building principal is a person who is interested in what's going on. I think if they see that and perceive that, it creates an atmosphere where they're more willing to come and talk with me about problems they might have or perceive. I have, since I've been a high school principal, kind of committed myself to being an open person and to be available out in the building. Talking to students on their turf and to teachers on their turf as opposed to trying to communicate totally in the principal's office behind closed doors. I think that's served me well to be that type of person.

Follow up question. You mentioned communication, then you mentioned visibility and then you mentioned helping people with their problems, are there any other specific skills you feel are important as far as interpersonal relations are concerned?

Answer. I think that you have to be perceived as a caring person and you have to be perceived as a good listener. You have to be perceived as a person who is open to suggestions, not a person with a closed mind. I think that teachers, members of the community, students have to feel like, (his name) is a person who will listen to the way you feel. He may not always agree with you but he will make you feel like your opinion is important and is worth hearing and is worth his consideration. He is not a person who makes decisions and forms opinions and carries out actions without allowing input from what I consider your three main constituents: the students, the community, and the staff. I can convey to

people that I'm willing to take the time to sit down and listen and to listen with an attitude that's open as opposed to the attitude "tell me what you want and move on because I have other things to do."

Question 3. How and where do you think you have acquired these skills?

Answer. I'm not sure. When I went through my doctoral program, several of the courses I took dealt with Theory X and Theory Y, I think were the right terms, of leadership styles and I never before that time had really tried to classify myself into one of those two. In fact I'm not sure that I was aware that the two theories existed other than doing what I wanted to do myself.

When I began to do that or began to study that and got really interested in leadership and how leadership can effect the overall operations and success of the school, I did my doctoral dissertation on teacher morale in the state of Virginia. A lot of data I collected plus a lot of the literature that I had read simply reinforced my feeling that an open principal, the non dictatorial type principal, the principal who allowed and even solicited input into decisions generally was a more successful principal. Teacher morale was higher in those schools and the research also indicated that in those schools where teacher morale is higher, learning takes place to a higher degree among students. If the teachers are happy, content, satisfied, feel appreciated in the job they're in, research would indicate that they do a better job in the classroom. So I guess really that during my doctoral studies a lot of what I had believed before was simply reinforced by that, and I had never sat down and tried to categorize the way I did things opposed to the way a principal down the road might do it.

But going through those studies kind of reinforced in my mind the idea that if I do things this way my school is going to be a more smoothly run school. I think my personality probably has been that type. I feel very strongly that you accomplish a great deal more through cooperative methods than you do dictatorial methods. I'm not sure I could survive as a principal whose means of achievement and results was out of fear or coercion or if you don't do this then this will happen to you. Such a personality is not one that I could be very successful

using, maybe some are but I couldn't.

Clarifying Question. I think what you're saying, let me paraphrase it for you as what I'm hearing, is that in all the processes involved in the school, collaboration or shared decision making is important.

Answer. I don't mean by that you just kind of open the door and say let's do what everybody wants to do. Obviously the principal has to take a position. He has to first be convinced the position he wants to take is a right one and then follow it through and you don't always get full consensus on something like that. I think that if you solicit input and you convey to the staff that you are really interested in what they have to say and you will consider their opinions and even though in some cases you may decide to go in a different direction, they go away from that thinking well he listened to us, he's willing to consider alternatives other than his way. Even though in some cases they might not always agree, I think you get support because they feel like they have input and they're involved in the decision making process.

Question 4. Do you think the development of these skills was a deliberate process? Did you work on these skills in any systematic way or did they just evolve?

Answer. I think it probably more evolved. I don't know that I've ever sat down deliberately and said I'm going to do things this way. I think that my whole background, my dad was a high school principal, my mom was a teacher, is such that when I came into administrative positions I felt to be successful I had to have support.

The way to gain support from faculty, from the community and from students was to convey to them that their concerns, their interests, their opinions were worthwhile and I think as I grew in the administrative position that simply was reinforced by what I saw. I went into a situation in a school where I followed a principal who was very dictatorial. He had no involvement with the staff. He was I guess, I hate to use a cliché, but through the whole school the principal runs the school and he makes every decision and this is the way he is and it's not really subject to debate. He was a principal who spent most of his

time in the office. I'm sure his office looked much neater than mine does here.

He was aloof from teachers and from students and when I went into that school there was an atmosphere I thought that reflected that type of attitude of leadership and it was something that I went there wanting to change. I felt like in order to change it, I needed to be open, accessible and establish a good working relationship with the staff. I had been a teacher in this school and I had seen the leadership style that had been used there and I just felt like well I want to do things differently. I don't know that I ever sat down and enumerated these things and said that this is what I'm going to do. I think in the back of my mind and as a part of my overall personality it just kind of evolved that way.

Question 5. If you could I would like for you to think about and describe a professional situation in which your interpersonal skills were required?

Answer. Well I can name a couple but I guess when I was appointed principal here, we consolidated two schools together, two schools that had formally been very bitter athletic rivals, two schools that not only were they athletic rivals but they were two very diverse communities. The other school was traditionally a black school located in a black community where the student body there was about 50/50 at that time I guess. That school and that community suffered from in their perception of a second class citizenship label. They felt like well we never have gotten what we should get, you know the other schools get new things we don't get. The school was not strong academic school. The school at which I was located the community of course was quite different.

So when the two were put together it was very diverse, two diverse schools, bitter rivals the kids were very bitter athletic rivals. One school had a very good academic reputation the other school did not have a good academic reputation. That was the perception in the community and the area when I was named principal that well (his current school) is just going to be (my old school) with a different name. I kind of made a pledge to myself that I would involve both communities fully in some of the things we did.

So I went to met with the representatives of the

student body of (the other school) and brought together representatives of the two student bodies and had meetings where we chose school colors, school nicknames, ring designs, every possible thing. Went into service organizations of the (other school's) community and spoke to them; the Radian Club, the Lions Club, PTA, Boosters Club. Brought members of the two groups together, really for about a year. I was fortunate enough to be able to work here in the school for about eight months before it opened so that I was able to do some of these things.

I think during that period of time that I was able to convey to the community that this school was going to be a new school. It was not just (my old school) with a different name and a different building. That they would be as much involved in the decision making process of the things that would become tradition here as the (my old school) community would be involved. We culminated of course by opening the school in the fall of (that year) and a lot of people said "ah they're going to have all kinds of trouble there, you know it's going to be really a mess" and it was just one of the smoothest years possible. We were successful in athletics in fact we won the state championship in basketball the first year. Teachers and students meshed together really well.

All of the nay-sayers who had predicted all of these problems, they just didn't happen and then when we begin to look back why didn't we have them. A lot of that revolves around the fact that, I'd like to think that it revolved around the fact that, I was able to convey to the student body at the other school and to the community that I was just as concerned about their feelings and just as solicitous of their input into the new school as I was the school I served and I think it all came together really well.

Another item that I would mention of a little bit different nature, we started the four by four block scheduling here at (this school) last year. First school in this area to do it. I had for two or three years studied it and was very interested in it. Thought it had some things to offer, some positive things to offer. Went before the school board and convinced them to at least let me do some preliminary planning to implement this and they gave me the go ahead to do that. Then I had the task over a year and a

half time to solicit and gain support on my staff because I didn't want to make that change unless my staff supported it. I did not want to go into a major change like that and split the faculty with half of them saying "oh this is the worst thing in the world" and the other half saying "yea we'll do it." I also wanted to sell the community on the idea. I didn't want them thinking "what has this crazy guy come up with" and "how is it going to effect our students?"

So I went through a period of community meetings where I actually went in to some areas of the community, the civic groups and churches, talked about what we were trying to do, talked with teachers here and finally and the students, involved the student government organization. Finally when we reached the point where we had to make a decision, I went before the faculty and said well we have come to this point, if we're going to make this change for the following year, we need to start registering students and now is the time when we need to make a decision.

In my own mind I had laid the ground work for a positive response to that. I would have been really surprised if the faculty had come back and said no we don't want to do this. But I did leave them the option, I said we're going to make this change if I have as much as 75 -80% support on the staff to do it and if we don't have that then we'll do some more studying and we'll come back and consider it later. So we put it to a vote and we got golly over 95% support. I felt like that was a situation where again and I certainly don't want to draw all of the (credit) it wasn't all just me, I involved other people in doing it. But looking back over that, I think one of the reasons we were ale to do it successfully is because hopefully I communicated with the parents, the community, the students and the staff. I was able to convince them of and to appreciate the advantages that this four by four block scheduling could offer our school. So that when we made the change, people went into it with a positive nature as opposed to a negative nature "well he's done this and he's going to do it regardless and I guess we've got go along with it." I feel like probably those two things are two that come to mind that without I think good communication skills and without good interpersonal relations skills could have been a lot more difficult. I know my wife is in another high school now and it's considering this and

they're really having some problems. They're having problems getting consensus of the staff to make the change.

Question 6. Within those situations you talked about communication, collaboration, and being able to bring groups together. What are some of the other skills, specific skills you think were helpful in that process or the process of block scheduling?

Answer. Well, I think the consensus building is certainly very important in being able to bring diverse opinions and build a consensus within those diverse opinions. This may come across the wrong way and I don't mean it to but, I been a building principal for a long time and have and I guess fairly good success so I think if over period of time you can establish a record of some success, it's probably maybe a little bit easier to get people to listen to what you have to say. I mean it makes sense that they would listen to someone that maybe has had some success as opposed to a person who maybe didn't have a record, a successful record in the past and I don't mean to imply that I haven't had failures too, I certainly have. I do think consensus building I think honest openness in dealing with people. You know sitting down and even though you might disagree, agreeing to disagree amicably is important and I think I have that reputation. I don't know that there are other things that would mention specifically. I think so much of it is just open communication and then over time convey to people that you really value their feelings about things.

Question 7. (The last question in this area has to do with the context in which you work.) How important are interpersonal skills considering the context in which you work?

Answer. I think probably interpersonal skills are more necessary in the position I'm in now than in the previous position because the communities are more diverse, the student body is more diverse the staff I don't know if I can say the staff is more diverse but yeah I guess it is more diverse and I think this situation as opposed to the other situation is a more difficult situation to manage and administer. We've lost the community school concept you know. It's no longer there it's now much larger. I think

it's been more necessary to have the interpersonal skills here and I have had to do some things differently here. I've made much more use of department heads and departmental meetings and meetings with groups of teachers as opposed to the entire staff. In fact I think it's because of the design of the building, the fact that we had a very small building where it blended together and we kind of you know saw each other, Here we don't see each other a lot. The building's all spread out so I think there has been more of a need for strong interpersonal relations skills here than there was at the other building. Obviously the larger the school the more diverse the school and the more necessary those things would be, I think.

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Question. I know that the highest degree that you have is your doctorate from UVA. What was the major of that degree?

Answer. Secondary School Administration with a minor in Secondary Curriculum.

Question. What other degrees do you have and what were your majors?

Answer. My undergraduate degree is Guilford College in Greensboro and it was a Business Administration degree surprisingly. My Master's degree is also from the University of Virginia and it was a Master's Degree in Education with emphasis on Social Studies Instruction. When I went into teaching I taught American Government and that's why my master's degree was in Social Studies as opposed to Administration. I really at that time hadn't planned on going into administration, I hoped maybe teaching college. I went ahead and went that direction later.

Question. You said you have been a principal since 1973, and you've been here since 1988, seven years, What other positions were you in prior to this?

Answer. I taught for five years, taught and coached for five years, was an elementary principal for three years and then went back to high school and have been a high school principal since except for the year and a half I took off to go back to get my doctorate.

Question. So you've been in education then for about twenty-nine years?

Answer. Actually this is my thirtieth year.

Question. You've done this for me a little bit but if you would elaborate on it. Describe your personality for me?

Answer. I mentioned earlier that both of my parents were in education and I guess as most people who go into education, I have this idealistic idea that in order to be a successful person in life, and this was instilled in me by my parents, in order to be a successful person in life you need to do something for other people. I went into college not intending to go into education and worked for a year after that at college and decided yes I do need to do that and I think my whole philosophy and personality is the belief that there is some good every person and for "the worst kid" we can do something that can make that person a little bit better. The "worst teacher", instead of feeling disdain or dislike, I feel like they wouldn't be doing this if they didn't feel like they could accomplish something for people so therefore I'm going to do everything I can to make it possible for them to be successful.

I think my personality is such that I probably have more empathy for a classroom teacher because I feel like they're trying to accomplish something and we need to make it possible for them to fulfill their accomplishment. I'm very much an even tempered person, I don't get real high or real low about things and I think that's necessary if you want to have longevity in the job because in school administration there are going to be big disappointments and a lot of lows and highs too but you have to try to balance them out. I'm not a loud vocal type person, I think, with students or teachers when I talk with them. That my overall demeanor, I think, tends to keep them on more level keel. I don't holler or shout and as a result of that, they normally don't holler or shout either.

Because of my personality, I think that when I'm in a position where I have to reprimand a teacher or have to try to change their behavior that it comes across more as a helping concerned action as opposed to a threatening disciplinary type action. I think that I'm able to convey

to them when they go away from what could be an unpleasant situation, because of something they're not doing that they should be. That they go out of that with the idea that I don't dislike them individually that I would like to see them change a certain action but it's not directed at them. That's worked for me. Maybe for other people who have a more commanding physical presence than I do other types of actions work better but I don't try to frighten kids or frighten teachers to impose or present an imposing figure to them and as I say, that's served me well for others something else might work better.

Question. Have you always lived in Southwest Virginia?

Answer. Yes. I grew up in southwest Virginia and of course attended school in Greensboro and my whole teaching and career in education has been here in this county. But as I mentioned earlier, I come from a family of educators. My sister's a teacher, my mom's a teacher, my dad was a principal, aunts and uncles were in education and I guess I don't know if I believe it's in your blood or not but certainly I've gravitated back to it. All of my career has been spent here and I'm not sure if that's good. You made a statement that I would agree with I think that maybe moving to different areas and changing environments is probably better for your career than if you stayed in the same place but yes, I think that my character but well I don't want to say character, I think that my background, my demeanor, my personality is very much reflecting of my up bringing. I came up in a calm household no icings, I was Richie Cunningham reimpersonated. I had a nice calm childhood and I think that's all reflected in my personality. I like people, I really like people, I enjoy people. I enjoy young people. Some people say "golly how can you stand being around teenagers the way they are today" and I think well I kind of like them. I might not like everything they do but basically if you deal with them one on one you know I enjoy it.

Question. You mentioned that you have a sister that's in teaching, do you have any other siblings?

Answer. I have an older brother he's in business he works

in Westinghouse Corporation.

Question. Is your sister older or younger?

Answer. She's younger.

Question. What were some of the responsibilities and some of the activities you had as a child and young adult?

Answer. Well, when I was in high school I participated in all the athletics, I really enjoyed that. With both my parents working I had certain responsibilities at home and I was assigned those and did them without a lot of question and I'm sure it makes me come across as some kind of well certainly I was not the perfect child but I never really questioned that. I started working when I was in the ninth grade. I worked every Saturday in a Belk's store. In the town where I grew up they had a Belk's Department Store. I worked as a sales clerk all the way through my senior year. After I graduated I worked in a furniture factory right out of school, just doing the worst jobs they could find in the furniture factory. When I was in college I worked in that factory two summers and then worked in a paint factory in Greensboro the remaining two so I always worked and provided my own spending money.

My parents provided all the necessities of life so I had a good childhood, it wasn't like I was deprived in any way but I did always work and earned spending money and had that responsibility and that probably has been or was a good influence on me growing up. My parents didn't have a lot, I never had a car for example I had access to the family car, but as I look back on that I never really felt deprived. Other people sometimes had more than I did but I never felt deprived in any way. I had a very happy childhood and I was just going to say that when I compare that to my children, I have two children who are both now grown, and I think probably in my childhood I had more responsibility and probably assumed that responsibility maybe a little more than my children did. I was very cognizant of that as my children grew and still wasn't able to for my children what my parents did for me for what ever the reason.

Question. You mentioned high school athletics were there other activities you were involved in growing up?

Answer. Well, I was active in the church youth group, I grew up in a church family we attended a Methodist church and I was very active in the church youth group. Played summer league baseball, American Legion Baseball through the summer, in school at that time we had junior plays and senior plays didn't have a drama departments but that was the way the classes made their money and I was in both of those. I was editor of the yearbook senior year and again that comes across like and I don't mean to come across like I'm tooting my own horn there but I was in a small high school and we had about fifty in our senior class and I loved school.

I commiserate with my son now who's a senior at Appalachian State and he is so anxious to get out of school and school has been a struggle for him he's gone for a year or so and then worked for a while and then go back to school, and he said dad it's not my thing, I don't like it and I think how different because I loved high school, I loved college, I loved it when I went back to work on my master's and doctorate. You know I could be a student forever I just enjoyed that the whole college scene and whatever the high school scene.

If there was, growing up in a very small town like I did, if there was something going on, I was part of it in one way or another or I tried to be. Wasn't a very good athlete, I was small and played football, basketball and baseball but was good enough to play and be part of the group and even be a starter for junior and senior year so I was probably like a big fish in a small pond I guess.

Question. Describe your school the size the population and the community that it's in.

Answer. Okay, in this school we've got 850, approximately 850, students totally. We have a staff, including itinerants who are here and at the middle school part of the day and some we share with other high schools, of about 65 teachers. Two assistants, three guidance personnel. our student body is about 70% white with about 30% minority students. It's very much a middle to lower middle socio-economic student body. We do not have a great many students of professional people doctors, lawyers but some teachers. We are very much a middle to lower middle socio-economic. Most of our kids parents work in some of the blue collar

type mills in town or in service occupations.

The school has a stable student population in that we don't have a lot of transient students. Most of the students in this school come from families where one of both of the parents attended one of the two schools that were consolidated to form this school which gives us a fairly stable population. In recent years, I'm disappointed to say, that a larger and larger percentage of our students come from nontraditional families. Maybe the nontraditional family are becoming the traditional family I'm afraid but they live in households where one or in some cases both of their natural parents are no longer present.

In terms of overall achievement our standardized test scores at the 11th grade level of the five high schools our scores would either always be either second or first overall. The lowest we've ever been in comparison to the other local schools is third in those scores. We send about 55 - 60% of our students on to either four or two year college. We have a community college so we have a significant number that go there.

We have I guess for this area pretty strong parental support although not as strong as it was ten years ago when we were in the other school and I see an ebbing of that even more in terms of parental support for good strong school programs. With the closure of several of the better paying industrial plants in this area or the down sizing of those plants we're seeing a larger percentage of our students who have fallen into the lower socio-economic lower middle socio economic where ten years ago we could say we were pretty much totally middle gradually sliding down to lower middle.

Our teaching staff at this school is and they would probably not like to hear me classify them this way but they're an aging teaching staff. We probably have 75% of our staff within eight to ten years of retirement. We have very little turnover. I see that as a problem and I wish that we had a better proportion of young teachers coming in. That's one reason why I felt good about the fact I was able to convince these people to make the change to the block scheduling. It's hard for people who have been teaching for 20 to 25 years to change and I had expected a lot more resistance to that than I got.

Our teaching staff reflects, I think pretty much, the student body in terms of racial make up of about 70 - 30%.

We still, I think, would fall into the category of a rural school in terms of overall student management problems. We don't have the problems that the urban schools have. I would be very naive if I said we didn't have students who've experimented with drugs or alcohol we do have. Probably not to the extent maybe with the more affluent and more urban schools would see but we see it also and unfortunately I've seen more of it in the last couple of years and there was a period of time when I thought it declined but I'm sorry to say that I think it might be going back the other way. Does that kind of answer your question?

Follow Up Question. From what you say the community is basically blue collar industry?

Answer. Pretty much so. The typical student here would come from a family which both mom and dad worked at one of the blue collar industries in town. Typical student here would come from a family that probably both parents finished high school but neither finished college. We have some of course that cover the spectrum from some the families who didn't finish high school and some who come from families who have degrees but if you were to describe a typical family it would be more in which both parents probably finished high school but neither had college. A typical family income is 25 - \$35,000 totally and that might even be a bit high in some cases.

Question. Is there anything else that popped into your mind about interpersonal skills and your job that you might just want to finish up with?

Answer. Well I can't think of anything that I haven't already said and repeated myself several times. I think it's important for a principal to convey a real interest in the people he works with and the students he has in school, to ask questions about their family, their life and their interests, the things that are important to them and to ask them in such a way that you display genuine interest as opposed to nosiness and again I don't know that I've ever sat down and attempted to enumerate or categorize all of those things but if you went to my teachers and asked them they would say well he's a guy if you wanted to go down and talk to him, if he's in the office you can and that it's not

surprising to see him walk into the classroom and maybe even join in the discussion ask a question. I'm a great one particularly in Social Studies and some of those classes to go in and ask some trivia question and say who can answer that and the kids like that. They think well he's a regular guy, he knows who so and so is and I wouldn't have thought an old guy like him would you know who the newest guy on the block is. I think the kids kind of identify with that a little bit and I think they know also when I'm talking in a serious frame to them and when you know it's something that's kind of chit chat. I hope I haven't come across as being to self serving in this thing, that hasn't been my intention. We have problems here just as well as other schools have and I have them as an administrator just as others have but I think if a person can convey a genuine concern and interest to the people he works with and carries his own like I think it goes.

APPENDIX H

Interview with Cliff

QUESTION 1. You've been identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills. Why do you think you were identified?

ANSWER. Probably because I'm very vocal. I'm not afraid to speak out and talk to people - in a professional setting. It's a little different in a social setting, but in a professional setting I'm not afraid to share my thoughts and my opinions. And usually try to do it in a way that my opinions and thoughts are heard, but I really work at not being offensive because I realize that I can be aggressive at times. So I think I work at it, very hard, and I think that comes across.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. Is there a difference then in the way that you carry yourself or you act in a professional or social setting?

ANSWER. Oh, very much so. In the professional setting I feel more confident in a professional setting. I feel like I know how to carry on conversations. I feel knowledgeable in that area. Sometimes in a social setting I feel a little uncomfortable. Unless, of course, conversation turns to job-related types of things. Then I'm very comfortable. And that's a criticism. A lot of the people that my wife and I socialize with are education folks, and somehow we always manage to get the conversation turned around to that and go off and start talking about work-related types of things. But, yeah, I think it's just because that's where I feel very comfortable in my knowledge base.

QUESTION 2. What is it that you do that would cause someone to identify you?

ANSWER. In my particular job now, I just interact with a large variety of people. I have to interact with teachers constantly. Of course, other administrators, since I supervise the administrators on the campus and work very

closely with them. I put myself in a position, by my own choice, to interact more with students by taking on a teaching assignment and that was because I felt I needed that wide spread type of interaction. I needed to interact with everyone in the school community. I interact with parents through the parent advisory council which I set up for that very purpose. This is such a large school that I didn't feel I was getting to know the parents and the community folks enough. So I set up a council at least to be able to make a start there, to be able to get to know some individuals really well and start to understand what was on their minds a little closer.

And then of course linkages out to the other areas in the educational community. Because of its position I do go to a lot of conferences. I travel a lot to see other programs. I work very closely with the superintendent and other central office personnel on various projects which means a lot of different meetings. So I'm constantly interacting with a lot of different segments of the educational community. And I like that. It's very varied. You interact differently with different facets of that community and it's sort of a challenge to figure out what type of skills you're going to be using - what type of interpersonal skills.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. What are some of the different ways that you interact with teachers and students and community members and so forth?

PRINCIPAL C's QUESTION. Different ways? Do You mean different settings or different issues?

QUESTION. Different things that you do. In other words, you might interact with a teacher differently than you would interact with the superintendent.

ANSWER. Oh sure. That's what I meant. It makes it interesting because you do interact differently with all the different groups. With the students, I really see my interaction on a lot of different levels. I sort of have to play the major authority figure because I am the campus administrator so I have to carry that off as the person that's running the whole program.

But I also, in my classroom, I try to really play the role of a teacher and let them see me as a teacher and as

much as I know I need to have that principal thing going I really do want the kids to think of me more in the terms of a teacher. And more in the terms of someone who will guide them, rather than an authority figure as they would typically think of a principal. More friendly, in the classroom though then I tend to be in other situations with students.

Generally on the level of principal when I'm dealing with students it's usually at an assembly with a large group. We usually have up to 800 kids in an assembly. So you have to really be pretty stern and they need to know what you expect. And in the classroom it's a little more free and I feel a little more comfortable being able to interact with them on a different level - a more open, personal-type of a level. And then of course also interaction with students would be through things like student council, where once again it's a small group of students and I feel like there's a lot of open communication, conversation going on - me soliciting their thoughts on where we need to be going as a school from the students' point of view. Also twice a year I run focus group interviews with random groups of students at each grade level - usually about 6-8 students from each grade level in each building. And that's a real interesting type of a setting because I get to interact once again more of a casual basis, listening to their concerns.

Teachers - that's a tough one and I'm having some trouble with this particular form of interaction right now. I have very high expectations for teachers and sometimes I come across as almost aggressively pounding on them for them to meet those expectations. Sometimes I come across as being negative in that they don't feel like I stroke them enough and tell them that there's enough positive things going on. And those are usually the interactions I have when I'm with the full faculty or in large groups of teachers.

But in a one on one setting with teachers or in a small department or when I'm working with the exploratory teachers I get a very different sense and I think they get a very different sense of me. It's a much closer relationship. It's a much more friendly relationship. We tend to chat more. I think they know me better. I can more or less convince them more of my openness to their ideas, of my sincere belief that teachers are professionals, and that

they do a lot of good things, and that my job is just to see that we're all moving in the same direction.

So I see that interaction as different also. The faculty interaction is different from the small group and the one on one teacher interaction. With teachers, with anybody really, I'm a firm believer that if there's a problem with the person I don't hesitate to go to them and sit down one on one and say I'm having a problem with this. Or if they're having a problem with me and I hear about it I'm not afraid to go to them and say "I heard you have a problem with something I did. Let's talk about it." And I think that they appreciate that, that's a good way to communicate with people.

Parents - unfortunately, in this school sometimes I feel like my parent interaction is very superficial. I don't ever feel like I get into anything deep with parents, and usually when I do it's in a defensive mode, where I'm defending something that somebody has done or a school program or something. I haven't been able to bring that around yet, and I've only been in this school two years. I'm used to a smaller school setting. Before this school, the biggest school I had was 500 students. And there, if you go and talk to any parent that walks in that hallway, they will tell you that they felt like I had a close relationship with them. I call them by name, they call me by name. They would come into the office and feel free to sit and talk. They would call me on the phone and felt that I was going to listen to them - and might not always agree and I might not always do what they request, but they always knew that I was going to listen and take their side into consideration. And when I disagreed with them and made a decision that went contrary to what they thought, they accepted it very well because they knew I was listening to them. And I can't get that here because it's just too big. I haven't been able to get that.

Central Office - interesting. It's very guarded, very "watch your words", very ...I'm much more aware of the politics of the job when I'm dealing with central office or community members other than parents. I'm not sure I like that feeling, but sometimes it's fun. Sometimes it's a challenge, sometimes it's sort of a little bit of a game, but it definitely is a different type of interaction. It's much more guarded, much more careful, much more calculated in a way. I can't say as I like that. I'm much more of an

informal...tend to be pretty frank and let's throw it on the table person, but I've learned that you can't deal that way in those types of structures and settings. There's too much ego or something, I don't know what it is. Too many different agendas going, too many power games going, in order to deal with that.

Those are the main groups that I communicate with, and I do communicate differently.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. You've mentioned so far, you've talked about a number of skills and you've mentioned communication quite often, you've mentioned listening, you mentioned making sure that the teachers and the students and the community feel that you've listened to them, that you give their ideas consideration, that you make them feel important. Are there any other aspects of your skills that you would consider interpersonal skills?

ANSWER. Yeah, I think the one thing I have going for me is my energy level. I think I just sort of exude this energy - high energy - that I think people are attracted to that. Sometimes it bowls them over, but I think by and large they're attracted to that. They think that's a good quality to have. I always try to be very upbeat, energetic, move quickly, talk quickly, big flashing eyes, show that I'm alive and active and well. And I think people like that. I really think that's part of the key to the whole thing. They sense the energy that comes from me and it's sort of contagious. They feel they have to buy into that energy or in a sense of teachers, teachers feel they have to buy into that energy or they probably don't belong in this type of setting.

QUESTION 3. How and where do you think that you acquired these skills?

ANSWER. I acquired these skills in my first...I started working when I was 13 years old in a restaurant, and I think that's where I started to start to learn to communicate with different types of people in an organization. And to this day, I'm very thankful to the people - it was a big family restaurant, German family restaurant - and I'm very thankful to those folks for giving me that opportunity so young, because I really think it changed my life. I was a very quiet child. I came from a large family, six kids, really I

see myself as being very quiet, very shy, not a joiner, afraid to be a joiner, did not have a lot of friends, I had a group of friends around the house, home area, but even with the group of friends I always felt a little bit intimidated by them, and insecure. Some of that insecurity is still there in social settings. But when I took that job I was young, very young, compared to most of the people that worked there, and I had to learn to maneuver around waitresses who were, women waitresses, and old German cooks who were very demanding, and eventually when I ended up working on the floor of the restaurant various types of customers, all different types of people. I had to work around older teenage boys who were working as busboys, or some as waiters, bartenders who were in their twenties - just a real range of people. And I had to survive in that setting. I say it's lucky that I started when I was young, because being the youngest person that was employed there I was sort of taken under the wing of everybody. They would show me the ropes and I started getting very comfortable in the environment and learned through that how to start to work with people. I think had I gone in as a teenager, like most of the kids that started that job, I still would have remained insecure about who I was. I think it was a real turning point to my life. So I think that's one thing.

The fact that I got very involved with music forced me into a situation where I had to perform, had to be in front of groups of people and had to perform, and I think that is a real contributing factor. Because I had to feel comfortable doing that, and eventually that led into doing some theater, drama, plays, that kind of stuff, where I had to feel comfortable doing that. And by the time I was in high school I became pretty active. I was not only working a 20-25 hour week, but I was also involved with drama and student government, holding office with student government, very involved with the music department and the choir and the band, holding office with those groups, jazz ensemble - just real active with those types of things. So I think it started when I was thirteen, but it evolved. I started taking on more and more. And the things I tended to take on tended to be very performance oriented where you had to be in front of people and you had to interact and you had to in a sense put on a personality and do the thing to make it work.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. What about since you began your professional career? Is there anything within your career?

ANSWER. The only thing that I can really pinpoint in my professional career is just doing it. Once again, I fell into a lot of situations. I was very lucky. I was a music teacher. And I was a good music teacher. I got a lot of recognition for being a good music teacher - by peers, by administration. I was the type of teacher that had a strong enough reputation that I could go in and ask for what I wanted and got it. By the time I was there three years I had asked for an accompanist and got a full-time accompanist to work with my choir so I could just direct. I was very lucky that way and I tend to think once again going back a lot of that came - a lot of what was perceived as being a good teacher in that setting came because I brought a lot of that energy I was talking about. And people found that energy very charming, very enthralling. And it was different. I was in an older - the school was generally an older group of teachers - here comes this young guy. They used to call me "the tornado". I'd whirl into the faculty room and slam the door, make a lot of noise and joke around and I was just well-liked. And I think that just kind of - everything just kept feeding it, just kept feeding it. I was - it was recommended that I go into administration and I did that and the school made a place for me in administration when I did my internship. They said "We're going to give you administrative duties for your internship." I was just very lucky. I kept being fed these opportunities, and so trying to pinpoint one thing, I can't. It's a matter of - I really had a lot of opportunity to develop them, but I go back to the fact that I think it was because I had that opportunity way back when I was 13 to develop those skills at a young age and then to bring those skills with a lot of energy into a setting just opened doors continually. And the more doors I opened, the more experiences I got and the more experiences you get, the better you get.

QUESTION 4. When you were working and when you were in high school you said you were involved in drama and music and these helped in developing your interpersonal skills. Do you think this was a deliberate process? Did you work at them in a systematic way or is it just something that just

evolved?

ANSWER. Yes, it just happened. I started music when I was in 4th grade. And I was good. And I just kept going. I never really thought about why I was doing it. I think I did that because my father was involved in music and it was just the thing to do. The smart kids in school all did that. We all did it - my brothers and sisters - we all did it. As far as the drama - I got involved in the drama through the music, because I used to play - they used to have big musicals and I would play in the pit orchestra - and then it was just kind of a natural evolution. I enjoyed what was going on on-stage and started trying is just how that happened. As far as student government, once again, I was in band - there were a lot of - you get into the cliques...By the time I was in high school I had my own group that I was fairly popular in and that's how I ended up getting fed into student government, because that's where that group was going.

QUESTION 5 If you could think about and describe a professional situation in which your interpersonal skills were required.

ANSWER. Where I used good interpersonal skills to get out of a situation, to work out a situation, to solve a situation?

RESPONSE. Yes, to solve a situation.

ANSWER. In my last school, we were trying to implement a fairly revolutionary program for a very/fairly conservative elementary school district. I knew that in order for it to work I was going to have to get everybody on board and convince them that this was the best thing since sliced bread. So what I did was I set out to deliberately, laid out a deliberate campaign of looking at the constituencies out there and bringing them on board with the idea by getting them in many times in small groups and feeding them small bits of it and letting them start to develop the idea, with a little bit of, I try not to use the word, but I guess it's a little bit of manipulation. You're massaging their...you're taking your ideas, throwing them on the table for them to digest, and then you're massaging what's coming back so it's coming out to be a product that's going to work. I did a lot of that with small groups, spent an awful lot of time doing that, mainly with teachers and parent

groups. And then of course, once I had the whole thing formulated, brought the two groups together and made the plan work.

Once we had the parents and the teachers supporting it, I was then able to go to the central office and meet with the superintendent and convince him that I had all the support for it and he financed the plan. That was pretty revolutionary at the time. We put in a science lab and a computer lab and all our kids went... we had to hire a science teacher full-time, and a computer teacher, and it was a financial commitment on the part of the school division.

(But I think by)..I think it was...once again I went in there, I worked with those constituencies out there, not going in and saying "we're going do this", but going in and saying "here's an idea, let's develop it", and massaging the development of the idea. And then using my energy with all those groups to convince them that we could absolutely pull this off, and then going to the superintendent and using that same energy, that same "I know we can do this." And I think this again goes back to the energy level. I think that he really feels that it is important, and I think he gives in because he thinks that I have the energy to pull almost anything off. I'm in the job I'm in today because he said to me, I'm the only one with the energy to do this job in the school division. He said to somebody else, it got back to me, he said that the job will either kill me or I'll make a go of it. Because this is a very stressful job I'm in right now. It goes back to energy.

QUESTION 7. How important are your interpersonal skills within the context of your position and the school and the community that you work in?

ANSWER. How important are my interpersonal skills within the context? They are the most important thing. I'm not - you wouldn't know it to look around my office, but I'm not a very organized person. I have a very neat outward appearance, but I count on, in order to keep me organized in this job, I count on three secretaries, that I have assigned to me, that just keep me organized. I'm not very organized. I think the whole thing is interpersonal skills. Getting people to, once again, feel like you are capable of pulling off what you say you can do. Getting people to feel that

you are open to listening to their concerns and their ideas and their suggestions. And then doing something with it...I guess you could have the interpersonal skills to do all that but then you may still not be able to get the job done. So it must be interpersonal skills combined with having some semblance of competence to be able to get the things done which have to get done. I still think without the interpersonal skills you would not get as much done.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION: The school that you work at now is a much larger school, I heard you say earlier. Does the fact that it's a larger school than the school you came from, and I'm not sure what school you came from, the communities I'm assuming are different, does that affect how you deal with people, the interpersonal skills that you use with people?

ANSWER. I think it does. Things that I could do at, the school I came from was in (names town) which was or is in the southwest corner of this county, and it is very, it's in the mountains, it's a very rural community, but it has a college across the street from the school, so it's an extremely diverse community. And it was 325 students. I went from that to a central middle school with 1600 students, where every student in the county comes here. So I've got all these communities out there to deal with. Which makes it virtually impossible, with the parent aspect of things, to really get a feel for that and to use my interpersonal skills to the max. What I can do with parents here is kind of be very charming and friendly and open and energetic and smile a lot, let them know that I'll listen to their concerns. But I can never, I don't ever think I'll be able to, make the connection I made at that small school, that community school. That was a very, that was like a family. And the parents - I've been gone two years now - parents still come up to me and say "Boy, we miss you. We really miss seeing you in the office and being able to come in and talk." And I feel, in my heart, I feel loss at leaving that community. Here I don't feel that way. And I think I can't use the same types of skills. I just don't use them. It's not as open.

Using the same types of skills with faculty - once again I can't do it because that was a small faculty. We had about - I think we had 26 faculty and staff, not

counting kitchen, custodians staff. Here I'm dealing with, at last count it was probably 140 faculty and staff, not counting kitchen/custodial, that kind of folks. That's a huge difference. I think just the sheer size of it - where in that building I could talk to everyone every day and have a nice conversation with them and touch base and say "How's your family and how are you? Got a new car today I see." There may be people on this faculty that I don't see the entire week. And so, when I do see them I have to work all the harder to kind of, to make that personal connection I think that's important. That says "I'm here to supervise you as a professional, but I also care about you as a person." I think that's tough.

The level of - I think what I got at the small school was a real strong level of trust because they knew me as a person as well as knew me as a principal. They knew that I was a person who was true to their word. Here I feel a lot of times that there's still that lack of trust. That they don't - they think that I'm kind of doing things behind their back instead of in front of the table. And I think it's just the sheer size and the fact that I have not been able to make a real personal connection with everybody.

QUESTION. I'd like to just ask you some questions about your personal background. I know that the highest degree that you've earned is your doctorate. I'm assuming that was in educational administration?

ANSWER. Yes.

QUESTION. What other degrees do you have and what were your majors?

ANSWER. I have a Bachelor's in music education, a Master's in music education, and what New York State called a certificate of advanced study in educational administration.

QUESTION. How long have you been in education?

ANSWER. Seventeen years.

QUESTION. If I think I heard you correctly, your job prior to this job was principal in a smaller school?

ANSWER. A small elementary school, K-5. I was there for four years

QUESTION Where were you prior to that?

ANSWER. Prior to that I was the director of instructional and special services for a small upstate New York school district for two years. Prior to that I was an intermediate school administrator, Part of a team of three administrators for three years and prior to that I was a music teacher for six years.

QUESTION. How long have you been principal at this school?

ANSWER. This is my second year at this school.

QUESTION. Can you describe the demographics of this school for me?

ANSWER. Of this school?

QUESTION. Yes, the size, the population...

ANSWER. There's approximately 1600 students. Extremely varied in cultural background and socio-economic status. We run at about 26% free/reduced lunch. Our minority population is at about 11%. It's a central middle school for a very large county, a county that covers a lot of large geographic area. Not high in population, but large in geographic area. Some of our students ride the bus for an hour and 45 minutes in the morning. We are a diverse county in the types of places students live. We have students that live in very poor housing areas, trailer parks in the mountains, some with no running water or indoor plumbing, running the gamut to a large population in a resort/recreational area, where the homes start at \$250,000 and move up. We have diversity among our parents' educational backgrounds, from a large number of high school drop-outs who work in factories, local factories, mostly textiles or wood products, to professional-type people living (names area of county) or working in the local professional industries - the doctors, the lawyers, educators, those types of things. We have also become a bedroom community for (names a city nearby), so the population on the upper end of the socio-economic status is growing. Does that give you enough?

QUESTION. What are the major industries here?

ANSWER. Wood products and textiles are the major

industries here.

QUESTION. Describe for me your personality.

ANSWER. My personality? I'm very complex. Outgoing but shy. I think I'm really, I think I care a lot about people. Sometimes that's not always good because I can become too involved with people in situations, feel things too deeply for them. And as an administrator that's not always the best thing when you have to be hard with somebody. I'm also fiercely competitive, and I know those two don't seem to go together. As I said, it's very complex. I am fiercely competitive. But, because of my insecurity I will sometimes back away from situations that I feel I cannot be successful at. I am a risk-taker in a major way, sometimes probably too much out there. I will try anything that I think is good for kids. Sometimes I fear at the jeopardy of my own career. But if I think, if I firmly believe that it's good for kids and there's some research to support that, I'm going give it a shot. You see risk-taking even in my personal life, the types of things I like to do - my favorite sport right now is sport rock climbing. I love to climb a 90-foot face. I just like to kind of live on the edge.

QUESTION. You said earlier that you were one of six children. Where do you fit into that group - how many brothers and sisters?

ANSWER. I have one brother who is 14 months younger than me - I think that's where the competitive nature in me comes from - and I have an older sister, and then I have three younger sisters - that are younger. So there's three at the top and three at the bottom. That's how it works. So I'm really second oldest.

QUESTION. Where are you from? Where did you grow up?

ANSWER. I grew up on Long Island. When I graduated and went to college I went to a small private school in upstate New York that was next to a large, one of the University of New York colleges, so it was in a pretty big college town. Even though I went to the private school I had access to all the stuff that was going on at the state university. I chose the private school because...three reasons: One, I had a group of friends from work, the job I had, that were going

there. The German restaurant - members of that family were going there. I really like the aspect of going to a small college. There were about I'd say 1800 students there. I had come from a huge high school. My high school graduating class had 945 students in it. It was very large. But the main reason I went to that school was I got a full scholarship. So that really took the pressure off. Then stayed in upstate New York for 11 years, and then moved here. Been here for six.

QUESTION. You said earlier that you were involved in drama and music in high school and that you worked. What are some other responsibilities and/or activities that you had as a child and a young adult?

ANSWER. I don't remember much of my childhood. I really don't. I don't remember life before age...13? I know that sounds sad, but it's really true. I don't think that growing up I did a whole lot, other than in fourth grade started music. Being a member of a big family is interesting. You know, you have a large support network, but your parents don't have a whole lot of time to spend with any individual child. You tend to grow up being nurtured by the siblings, and since I was one of the oldest ones I was doing a lot of the nurturing. Just, at that time, we were just not involved with a lot of things like sports, because we just had too many kids to haul around. We were sort of active in our church. We were Catholic.

Being a Catholic is more like a culture than a religion, so you sort of live through a lot of that kind of stuff. But I don't remember anything in childhood. When I got into 9th grade I think I became real active in school. I've said student government, band, choir, drama. I ran cross country for a while and played tennis, but the problem with any of the sports was the time commitment after school hours that I could not make and keep a job. And the job was very important to me. So I really, I was a good runner, I really would have done well in track and field, I would have done really well in tennis, but I just didn't...the job was just way to important. That (whole) job gave me so much independence and I really wanted that.

[In conversations other than the interview he said his father was a professional with a major corporation. His mother stayed home and worked in the house as a housewife

raising the six children.]

QUESTION. To sort of summarize, is there anything else that you want to add about interpersonal skills that maybe have come to mind in our conversation?

ANSWER. I really see them as something that you're always developing. And you sort of have this repertoire of skills that you use when it's appropriate. You pull out this card when you can use it and that card when you can use it. I really see it as something that you're always developing. Every time you come to a new situation you're developing new interpersonal skills. I think for me one of the most rewarding experiences I've had was the doctoral program at Tech. Probably it was the most educational, the most educationally meaningful experience that I can remember of all my graduate work. Including my master's program, which was a very rigorous program.

The thing about that doctoral program at Tech was that I think that I grew in my interpersonal skills there. By being put in different types of situations I hadn't been put in before. As I said you sort of add to your repertoire. And learned a lot about myself and my own interpersonal skills in that setting. So I mean I do think it's something that you always work on.

APPENDIX I

Interview with Don

QUESTION 1. You've been identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills. Why do you think you were identified?

ANSWER. I don't know. I have no idea even who identified me, but I guess probably it's, I feel one of my strengths, working with people. And over the years I think I have demonstrated that ability in the community and/or within the school community or (school) climate. So I guess that's the only thing I can think of. You know, I've had a pretty smooth career and not many grievances against me, you know, those kinds of things.

QUESTION 2. You say you're pretty good at working with people, What is it that you do on the job that would cause someone to recommend you?

ANSWER. Of course, you know, we're in the business of dealing with humans. So many times I think people forget that we're really dealing with humans and not a lot of other things. And I guess I've got two or three things that I try to live by. I try not to ever ask somebody to do something I wouldn't do myself. And I try to live by that. And that goes from cafeteria worker to custodian to teacher. I just don't ask people to do something I wouldn't do myself. I think they sense that and feel that. I try to build a working environment with people, that we're in it together, and we work at it together, and I tell people that a lot of people have more expertise in a lot of areas than I do, and I don't necessarily think that I'm the expert in anything really. So I try. I don't have, I don't guess I have, a real big ego. I try to be down to earth, and that I don't have to be the boss. I try to empower people to do their job and get out of the way and let them do that. So, those are two or three things that I think are real important. I guess the one biggest things is I don't ask anybody to do anything I wouldn't do. And, again, I try to just empower people to do their job.

Appendix I: Interview with Don

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. You mentioned that we're in a people business. What are some of the groups, constituencies if you will, that you have to work with on the job and how do you approach them or deal with them?

ANSWER. Well I think it's endless. Of course we have, you know, the usual things are the different facets that are present in the school - teachers, custodians, parents and the different types of people that you work with. And then the outside community, you've got parents and you've got community support. And I guess I try to make them feel like it's their school and we want them very much to be a part of the learning environment. And I guess or I think something I've always said is, it's, the day is really gone when you send your kid to school and say, 'Okay, educate them'. Kids learn from the time they get up to the time they go to bed. And I think parents, the closer that they can work with the schools, the better they're going to be able to educate and support and communicate with the kid when they get home or when they get up. So I think that's one...I guess communication is really the most important thing. That's the most important part of my job. And that doesn't matter whether it's with parents or kids. Communication is...you know somebody said money is the root of all evil... and I think communication is. If you don't do it, it kills you.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. Are there any other skills that are important in the job besides communication?

ANSWER. I think communication, I think fairness...I think fairness is probably as big as anything. Confidentiality...people want to be able to share things with you and know where they're going. And maybe more important than that, know how they're going to end up. They've got to have that level of trust and confidence to share something with you and realize that you're going to handle it in the right sort of way. (And I tell kids) Matter of fact I had a kid this morning, we were dealing with the kid, and it was about...she had some male students that were touching her inappropriately. And she and I talked about it, and I said, "Now let me tell you up front. I'm not going to do anything until we can agree on whatever that is. Because I want you to feel good about it." And I try to approach every situation that way. And after we

decided what we were going to do, I did that. I talked with the other student, with the male student. I came back to her and I said, "This is what I've done. Just so you know, you're not walking around here wondering what he said or did he identify me?" So there's a lot of things that come to play, and I think that level of trust has got to be there. And you got to earn that - you can't demand it - you just got to, over time get down on people's level and be willing to kind of be there when they need you. And support them a lot of times in the way that they need support.

QUESTION 3: How and where do you think you acquired these skills?

ANSWER: I don't know, I guess it goes back to maybe my personal life. My mom died when I was nine and I pretty much had to, I guess, suck it up and go on. And I guess that's probably it. I think back at it and I guess it made me. You know at the time when I was a kid I couldn't understand why, you know, here I lost my mom, and here I was kind of alone, or a loner, and I probably could have gone either way. And that's probably as much of it as anything that I can put my hand on. And I guess too, I've had some pretty good teachers along the way, that I've learned from. And I think, because I have that attitude, that I can learn from somebody, no matter how old or how young. A lot of people maybe don't look at it that way, but I try to be a good listener and try to listen to what people have to say, because they've got more experience a lot of times than I do, even in a particular situation. So, I don't know, those are the only things I can put my finger on.

In a follow up conversation Principal D said he was influenced by a Principal, a high school Social Studies Teacher and coaches he has had through out his athletic career.

QUESTION 4: Do you think that the development of these skills is something that you did in a deliberate manner, a deliberate process, or did they just evolve? Did you work on it in a specific way?

ANSWER. I guess, they probably were deliberate in that I guess I care how people perceive me. In that way I always think, 'How's it going to work? How are people going to

perceive me handling this situation that way?" But as, any other way, no, I don't really look at it as being deliberate other than that.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. But in the process of doing this did you set down and say "I need to develop these skills." or "I need to work on this?"

ANSWER. I don't ever remember doing that. And I still don't. I just try to learn. I try to watch. But as far as saying "Well this is really a big weakness, I'm going to work on this," I don't ever, not that I have them all mastered, but I don't ever remember saying this is an area I really need to work on.

QUESTION 5. What I'd like you to do for me if you could, think about and describe a professional situation in which your interpersonal skills were required.

ANSWER. I guess I think they're required all the time, and that's the reason I'm having a hard time separating them out. I really.

Clarifying Question. Let me clarify. Is there a particular situation in which your interpersonal skills were really helpful in resolving, or in solving, that situation.

ANSWER. I can't come up with one right now. I can't think. Maybe we can come back to it or something.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION (Question 6). You said interpersonal skills are pretty much required all the time. What are some of the individual skills then that you find helpful in your daily work every day?

ANSWER. I think some of them I've already mentioned. I think listening - I think you've got to be, in my job you've got to be able to listen. You've got to be able to, I guess foresee the end before it gets here. And that's, a lot of times people don't have that skill. And to be able to think through the steps that needs to happen before really the end is there. I guess probably as important as listening is follow-through. So many people will start and talk a good game, and before they've seen it through it kind of dies on the vine. And I do that with discipline - generally when I discipline a kid, and I do part of the discipline here, too,

because I think that's important. Again, I don't ask another assistant to do something that I wouldn't do. Or, I want to deal with kids. And if I'm going to be an administrator I can certainly have an easier job than being an administrator in a building. I guess what draws me to that is the young people I work with. And there's no use for me to be an administrator here and not work with them. So I do my share of the discipline. So I think, I try to follow through. If a kid comes in here, I'll take it all the way to the end and deal with it and bring closure to that. So many people don't, or won't. They'll start it and say I'll do this, and then leave part of it and I'll pick it up tomorrow - talk to this teacher tomorrow about that - or whatever it is. And it's just easier for me to complete that whole cycle...I think follow-through is really important.

So listening and follow-through, and something I haven't mentioned is caring. You really have to care... care about people. Probably that's the baseline. And a lot of people probably don't. And a lot of people don't take the time. And I guess I've got a philosophy - I don't think my job ends ever. And I think when a teacher's hurting, either with a death of a family member, whatever, it's nice to see my face at the funeral home, or it's nice if they're sick and have been sick for two or three days or something, I pick up the phone and call and say "Hey, how are you feeling today?" Those are the little things, and there's many more that you could think of and I could too. Those are the little things that I think separate people. And I think it gets back to that - once people realize you care that they're much more willing to trust you. And once they realize you're genuine in what you're saying and what you're doing, then, I mean it makes everything else so much easier. Those are all the things I can think of.

QUESTION 7. A question about the context in which you work. How important are interpersonal skills within the context that you work?

ANSWER. I think they're real important because people are all the time looking. Somebody once told me that the principalship is probably the loneliest job that they could think of. And I tend to agree with them. If you do it right it probably is a lonely job because people are

continually coming to you - if you have an open door policy and if you're open to hearing things. People are continually coming to you with confidential kinds of things, or just needing to unload. Just needing to close that door and say, you know, "The person I'm teaching with stinks" or whatever it is. And get it off their chest, and then leave.

So I guess people are continually looking to you as a principal to see how you're going to react. And you're on - you're - the buck stops here. You're kind of in that - it's not a limelight - but you're kind of in that, under that microscope all the time. Or at least I feel that I am. And the way I combat it - I just try to be myself. And you get what you see. It's not anything else. And honesty is the most important thing. I'm going to do what I tell you I'm going to do. And if I don't tell you I'm going to do it, I'm not going to do it. If I tell you I'm going to do it, I'm going to do it. And you can count on it.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. I don't know if you've thought of anything yet, a professional situation in which your interpersonal skills were required?

ANSWER. I can't...

The next set of questions are personal questions, and maybe when we get done with them we'll come back to that.

QUESTION: What is the highest degree that you've earned?

ANSWER. A Master's [from Virginia Tech].

QUESTION. And what was your major?

ANSWER. Administration.

QUESTION. What other degrees do you have and what were your majors?

ANSWER. My undergraduate degree was in social studies and physical education. I taught both of them for a couple of years before I went into administration.

QUESTION. How long have you been in education?

ANSWER. I entered in 1969, so that would be...about 26 years.

QUESTION. How long have you been principal here at this school?

ANSWER. I've only been here, I think, this is my fourth year. I was in an elementary school for 19 years.

QUESTION. As a principal?

ANSWER. Yes. I had the, I guess good fortune or bad fortune, to open, to start an elementary school. And I did that at age 25. And it was pretty much starting it from scratch. It was a new school that had been built to relieve a couple of the other schools. And that was a tremendous experience and I appreciate the confidence that the superintendent at that time had in me to be able to do that. So it was an experience I'll never ever regret.

Probably I got into administration - I was teaching 7th grade, and at that time 7th grade was, it was kind of, you taught your own kids for math, science, and social studies - everything - so I can remember we were diagramming sentences and one of the kids in the back of the class raised their hand and said "Why do we have to do this? What good is it?" And I couldn't come up with an answer. Because I guess I thought, and I don't think I've ever diagrammed any sentences since I've been even out of high school. That kid, I can remember the kid's name, Steve Atkins, who asked me that question and I couldn't answer it. And that got me thinking there's got to be a better way of learning. There's got to be a better way of doing it. Then that led to my interest in administration, because I felt like "Well, if I'm going to have a greater influence, I'm going to have to do it maybe in a school, or something larger than a classroom." So that was my interest in administration. I guess the second year I was teaching was an unfortunate situation. I was the only male teacher in a school of about 350 kids, elementary grades K-7. There was a bus accident where two students, two pupils, were killed. The principal happened to be away from the building, and so, I don't know whether it was just by fate or what, everybody looked to me. And I handled that situation - and it just gets back to that interpersonal situation - but I handled that situation and it was, even though it's been 20-some years ago, it's stayed vivid in my mind, to see. The bus had gone by the school, it was within about a quarter-mile of the school, and had

pulled off the road to turn and come back, and nobody knows why, but a gravel truck, when it pulled out into the road, a gravel truck ran broadside into it and a couple of students were killed. Not any of my particular classroom I was teaching, but as you can imagine it was chaos in the building. Once it hit the news media, parents, grandparents, people were coming in the school, just wanting to be able to see if their son or daughter was alive. And we were trying to keep track of the kids and not let parents take them, and they wanted to take them. It was just, I felt like I had control. It was thrust on me and I had control. The superintendent after that talked to me and he said I think you're certainly have exhibited the skills to look toward administration.

QUESTION. What are some of the specific things that you did there?

ANSWER. I guess, I feel like in any situation somebody needs to be in charge. Not an overpowering kind of a thing, but in any new or threatening situation people feel, need security. And somebody, I tried to provide that security in that, you know, there's a way to do this. You know, we need to be here. We need to have your kid here. You can walk down and look in the room and see that they're there, but there kind of needed to be a method to that madness. So I guess, I think people need that security, need to feel that security. And it doesn't have to be, I don't guess it has to be a threatening situation or upheaval of some kind. I think a lot of times people just need to feel that day to day. So I think that was something I tried to provide that stability and security for that faculty. And I was a faculty member at that time. And then, it gets back to the caring. I was out in the hall and trying to provide some kind of, I guess, not a mass exodus of kids or that kind of thing. People realized I had to do the job.

QUESTION. So you were a principal at the one school for about 19 years?

ANSWER. Yes.

QUESTION. And then you taught at this other school for a few years before that.

ANSWER. Yes.

QUESTION. What are some of the demographics of this school and the community it's in?

ANSWER. We have, it's really a pretty good cross section. We've got approximately 900 students, in 3 grades, six, seven and eight. And we have kids who, probably out of 900 we probably have 75 to 100 kids on free lunch. We have a small black population. We have a large minority in that, we've got practically every nationality because of the university community. It's kind of a melting pot. We had a German kid register today, for example. Couldn't speak a word of English. So those are, that's a daily occurrence around here that we deal with. Kids come around pretty quick. It's a good cross-section. I would think that we're a good supportive community. The parents are pretty supportive of the kids and of their education. They're willing to volunteer and to put the time in that it takes to get their kids a good education.

QUESTION. Other than the university, what's the major type of industry in the area?

ANSWER. Not any heavy industry. There's some light industry - small type industry - (names some of the industries) (Names the university) is probably one of the bigger, probably the biggest employers. So it's, in one respect it's probably an educated community, which brings on the fact that you have several university professors as parents. And many times they want to challenge you or feel like they know as much and they probably do, but it kind of gets down to, well you may know as much but we got to do it this way.

QUESTION. Describe your personality for me.

ANSWER. I guess, using words, I feel like I'm secure, outgoing, caring. I like to be around people. Those are the things that come to my mind.

QUESTION. Tell me something about your personal background. How large was your family? How many brothers and sisters did you have?

ANSWER. I have 3 other sisters...in between...next to the youngest. My older sister pretty much raised me when my mom

died. So, my dad was always around, but he had other things that he was involved in. I was successful in athletics in high school and college. I went to, I did my undergraduate work in a small school in West Virginia - played basketball, went there on a basketball scholarship. But I think I learned a lot on the football field in high school, and the basketball court about getting along with people. All those things that I've talked about as important; following through, the work ethic and so on. So I guess I learned a lot about life in those particular areas. I grew up here in (Names the town). I went to school in West Virginia, came back and was hired, matter of fact, this is the school that I attended high school. So, if the walls could talk they probably would say a lot of things about me as a student here. So, but the community's changed a lot since I went to school here. It's still my hometown.

QUESTION. What were some of the activities or responsibilities you had growing up?

ANSWER. Church was very important - it's always been a very important part, still is, part of my life. I'm very involved in my own church now, and I even was as a youngster. That takes a lot of my time.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. Thinking about dealing with the children in a situation, and you mentioned earlier a situation with a young lady and some gentlemen, what were some of the individual skills that you used with them?

ANSWER. This young lady...I'll just kind of go through the situation. The girl came in and she said, "You know, really this male student has been touching me inappropriately," she said. And I tried to listen through all this. She came with the guidance counselor...she and the guidance counselor came together. She said, "You know, I'll probably have been at fault some because I've been kidding around and every time that he would touch me on my breast or whatever I'd say 'Oh quit that' and he had never known maybe I was serious." And I said, "Have you talked to your mom?" "Yeah, I've talked to mom." And I said, "I think there's several ways..." after we'd talked through it and I assured her that I wouldn't do anything unless we talked about it. I said, "There's probably two or three different ways we can handle

it. You can handle it. You could go back to that student and say "I don't appreciate it. I want you to stop it." I could handle it. I could say "Sally's been here and talked to me and she's fed up with you handling, touching her inappropriately." I could go and say to the kid "There are students who are coming to me saying that you, that they've seen you touching somebody inappropriately. And I said "We can handle it two or three different ways, but what I want you to do is I want you to go back and talk to mom tonight. You guys talk about it and ask mom to come in tomorrow and we'll all sit down and talk about it." And so, I said, "Lay out all the options, talk about it, and then, when mom comes in tomorrow I'll pull you out of class and we'll go through the options. Or maybe you're set on exactly what you want to do." So I said, "Do you feel okay about that?" And she said she did, and the next day we, mom and the daughter and the counselor and I met again. And I said "Here are the options we talked about yesterday." And I always started it by saying, to mom, "Mom, you weren't here yesterday. This is what Sally and I talked about, and here's my advice. And she was going to go home last night and talk to you. And here we are." I always try to summarize that, not leave anybody out of the loop, because the reason I wanted her to go back was to include mom and...so that, 'because ultimately she's responsible, and she's got to live with that kid the rest of her life and I don't have to. So I think it's really important. I think a lot of times we as administrators and counselors and teachers, break down the family unit, not knowingly doing it. And I always try, I try to be the other way. I try to build it up. And that's exactly what I did here. I said to her to go home and talk to her. Then let's get back together so we've got a unified effort. There's home and school working together so that, for the good of this kid. And so the decision was, she said "I probably..." and the girl was real mature. She said, "I probably should go and talk to him myself. But I don't want to." She said "I don't feel comfortable doing that." She said, "I see the need to do that." And I said, "Well, let me talk to him." I said, "Let me.." I said, "I'm going to be up front with you. I'm not going to do it in a threatening way. I'm going to go.,." I do a lot of the disciplining in the hall. You know, at the end of the hall, whatever. I don't like to bring kids down here unless I

need these closed doors. So I just went to the classroom and said, "We need to walk down the hall here." So I said, "Look, I need to give you some advice. I've been hearing from other students that you're touching some female students inappropriately. I want to give you a heads up. Now stop it. And if you don't stop it then I'm going to be back talking with you again, but I'm going to have your mom and possibly the police with me, because I think this student will probably, if it doesn't stop, press charges." And I said, "I just want to... I care about you and I just want to give you a heads up." And so, I said, "I'm not even asking you, don't even tell me whether you're doing it or not. But I'm hearing it, so there must be some fire where that smoke's coming from." And he said, "Okay." So I immediately came back, got the kid, the girl, and I said, "This is what I've said." And I told her exactly what I said to him. "Now," I said, "I did not use your name, so you don't have to feel awkward about seeing him the next time or whatever. But this is what I've said and I expect you to be big enough if he continues to do it, then you need to come back to me and we'll go at it again." So I guess that, again, there's a lot of things involved about that. The follow-though... And I think it was in a caring way. I think I handled both of those, both of those young people, in a way that I would want to be handled, if I was doing the touching or if somebody was touching me. I did it in a way where I, the girl I hope didn't lose any dignity because I told her, I said, "I admire you for coming in here and being able to tell me this. And I admire you, and I don't think any more or less of you today than I did three weeks ago." So I guess I try to handle all those situations in that kind of a way.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. So what I hear you saying is you try to put yourself in their position and empathize with them?

ANSWER. Yeah. I guess I'm probably too sensitive a lot of times. I want to handle things the way I would like for somebody to handle me. And it's honestly, up front, in a caring way, in a way that I'm not yelled at, you know I don't lose what confidence that I have. And I think we do that, you know a lot of times people do that. They'll bring a kid in and yell at him. Now I yell at kids, but I tell

them, "I am upset with you and you have pushed me to the end." I think they need to hear that sometimes. But I always say, "I care about you. I hate what you're doing. I hate your actions. I don't like your actions, but I like you." And I think that's important.

QUESTION, Is there anything else in the area of interpersonal skills that may have popped into your mind since we started talking that you want to mention or bring up?

ANSWER. Not that I can think of.

APPENDIX J

INTERVIEW WITH ED

QUESTION 1. You've been identified as having exemplary interpersonal skills. Why do you think you were identified?

ANSWER. Chris, I'm not sure why I was identified but I enjoy working with people. I like people, I like to hear of their aspirations and what they've done and where they're headed and what their views are on subjects. I think I'm a good listener and I do like people a lot maybe that comes out when ever I'm talking with whoever this mystery people or person is who have identified me. I just like communication and I think communication is what sets us off from in many ways from lower animals in the chain and maybe if you're a communicator then you often have good interpersonal skills in conjunction with that perhaps, I don't know.

QUESTION 2. What is it that you do that would cause someone to recommend you?

ANSWER. Well I think in the context of here at school, I tend to be a person who sits down and talks through issues. I'll sit down with any faculty member or any staff member or any student on pretty much any subject, there's no limit. So someone comes in and they may have a personal problem. They may have a concern about who to find to put gutters on their house or they may have a concern about what to do about the kids in fourth period class who don't seem to be learning biology and I think I treat each of those although obviously we're paid to work as professionals and education is our game, I think I would treat each of those as someone who's interested and cares about the person I'm talking with.

Students come in sometimes they have a concern that maybe doesn't have a whole lot to do with anything but it's really gnawing at them. Here I deal of course with middle and high school students in a combined setting. Middle school children often have what we would consider

insignificant problems that really bother them a whole lot and I think you've got to be very careful to be sensitive to all sorts of conditions and things as people come in. I remember, I'm going to tell you a little story and then you can erase it off the tape. It was a story I read a number of years ago by a woman, her name was Agnes Rothery, and she used to write books about Virginia. Her husband was a professor at the University of Virginia and she said they were getting ready for graduation in Charlottesville one May Saturday morning and the phone rang and this lady said "can we come by to see you on our way to graduation." She said "my initial response was I really don't have time, we're very busy, we're rushing around here." But she said fortunately as she had discovered later she had made the right decision when she said "Oh sure come by for a minute." She said that this couple appeared at her door obviously parent-age couple and they introduced themselves and they said "our son, and they gave his name, should have graduated today but he went to the war in Korea and was killed and this would have been his graduating class" and she said to Mrs. Rothery "he often spoke of you and Dr. Rothery and how important you were to him" and so the point of her essay was what if I had said no. You never really know how you may be influencing somebody or you never find time to deal with something like that. I think the essay was called "What If I Had Said No" and I think we need to say yes when we're communicating with people and when we're dealing with interpersonal issues. A long answer to a short question.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. You mentioned listening and you mentioned communication but are there specific activities you do here on your job that are interpreted as interpersonal skills related?

ANSWER. Sure. Several years ago we were involved, this school and four others across the commonwealth were involved, in a project called The Virginia School Climate Project. It was founded by the Department of Education and by of all things The Virginia Penal System, The Corrections Department, and we were the only school in this part of the state. There was a school in Charlottesville, there was a school in Norfolk, downtown Norfolk. Three other schools and we were involved in that project and one of the things, the objectives, was if you can change the climate of the school

for the staff and for the parents and for the students, you have a better chance of educating kids and the corrections people were involved because in those days and maybe better times in Virginia, we felt that if we catch kids early and intervene, that we could deal with that instead of paying to keep them in prison for the rest of their life.

So as a part of that we started developing some activities within the school. Ways to recognize teachers ways to recognize kids. We had a project and if you looked in our library today you would see about 25 banners that hang in there and one of the little projects we did was called "With Flying Colors." We gave each club and I think in those days it was maybe 25 bucks to go out and make a banner for your club or your organization so the Science Club and the Library Club and the FFA and all of them created a banner for the library. Well that was just one of those team building activities that worked well for clubs and got kids talking together. We all had a common goal which was or put these banners up in the library that represented the soul of the school in terms of clubs.

We did other things, we did recognition for teachers and special things for kids which was similar to the Josten's Renaissance programs, it's a national program now. And I know when one of the people visited me they said well you've brought those neat aprons for your cafeteria workers and they all have their names stitched on them and embroidered on them and she said, "Well what did you do for your bus drivers" and I kind of said "Oh wow, bus drivers, we haven't done anything." So I said "Well we need to do something" so we started doing a breakfast about twice a year for bus drivers. Just invite them to come in, have a sausage biscuit and a cup of coffee and just sit and for a few minutes and talk. Just a way of saying thank you for hauling the kids safely everyday and dealing with discipline and not losing your cool and all those things. Most of my bus drivers have been driving at this school for 10, 15, 20 years, rarely ever turned over. Most of them are dairy farmers who do this after the morning milking and before the afternoon milking. But those are the kinds of things that I think build interpersonal relationships and certainly build a school but you've got to consciously do that often.

Well let me give you another example, today we had a faculty meeting. At the end of the faculty meeting I said

to our faculty "you all came back from two days of inservice," we've had two division wide days of inservice, "and about five people said to me 'it really makes me appreciate our school and our leadership and my colleagues when I talk to people from other schools.'" Well I reiterated by telling them how much I appreciated them. Often we don't do that, I believe. I believe that our teachers are outstanding, they do a great job but there are many times that I don't find time to say that or I don't bother. Don't bother to say is too strong a term because it's not that I don't bother it's that I don't consciously do it. Something that a number of years ago I wouldn't have done because I would have been too self conscious, now I don't mind going up to somebody and saying you're really doing a great job, I appreciate how you helped Johnny today thanks for staying last night and taking up money for the ball game or whatever. There was a time in my life when I wouldn't have done that, that's developed over the years.

QUESTION 3. That leads me to the next question. The next question is how and where do you think you acquired these skills?

ANSWER. I think that one's a lot easier. I was privileged to grow up with a very loving family. My dad was a lawyer although he was up in years by the time I was growing up. Most of my growing up life dad was retired but he certainly had incredibly good verbal skills with people although he was a fairly quiet unassuming person and my mom was a former school teacher, former English teacher who loved literature, loved communication.

I was an only child and the deficit probably in my communication of my interpersonal skills in growing up was among my own peers because I didn't grow up playing with a lot of kids. I grew up on a farm so I was remote from other kids, didn't have a neighborhood really. But I did grow up talking a lot, especially with adults. Many of my parents' friends were my friends. So I think from an early age I learned some skills on how to deal with the adult world. I think my skills in dealing with people my own age, which I obviously do nowadays with other adults, I think came later because I didn't develop that in school with other kids. I was pretty much a loner. I think in college is probably where I began to blossom in terms of realizing that as a

person I could have influences on other people and I could use my gift of gab or persuasion or whatever. I discovered you know, I went away, I was no longer this little ugly duckling from the country and so forth. I was now just another kid in college among other bright kids who had good thoughts to think and good things to say and I would say that was where my skill developed.

In terms of application to the job world that probably didn't really happen until I moved from teaching into administration. I didn't see myself as a leader among teachers but once I became an administrator I found myself as a leader among teachers. But when I was a teacher I wouldn't have said so. Well you know how some teachers they're always the president of the local, they're involved in a political action committee and they're doing all these other things and everybody looks up to them. I don't think I was ever that kind of a person as a colleague, as a teaching colleague. So you know it's interesting then in a transition when I get in a leadership capacity it works much much better.

QUESTION 4. Was the development of these skills a deliberate process, in other words did you work on these skills in a systematic way or did they just sort of happen?

ANSWER. No, I think systematic is too strong. To me when you say did I work on these skills systematically I conjure up things like did you go to Toast Master's and learn how to speak to a crowd, or did you go to a Dale Carnegie course that taught you how to win friends and influence people. None of those things. I think it just developed by trial and error. You know, I would sit down with somebody and say let's work through this problem and when I got to a certain block in the road that didn't work I backed up and went in a different direction and probably filed up here in the old brain "confronting that person didn't work let's try strategy B instead." So I'm sure there was some conscious and subconscious formation of that but nothing so conscious as I trained for it. In fact my administrative training had virtually nothing sadly and I think should have had but I think as administrators we should have been trained in conflict resolution and communication, and interpersonal skills. There are lots of things there that would be helpful and in the days that I was in administration you

learned school finance, school law and all those things are important. You learned something about curriculum and something about a host of things but nothing much about really about how to work with people and yet I'm probably judged more on a day to day basis by the parents.

I started with a parent call at 6:45 this morning and I'm judged probably more and you may coming to this in your questions but on how I mediate with a parent who's angry about what her daughter was slighted or his son's feelings were hurt or whatever or how I deal with a teacher who's upset or with a student who says "well I'm not going back to that 'blankity-blank' so and so's class, I'll never go back there another day in my life." You've got to talk that kid down, you've got to listen, you've got to talk to the teacher, and you've got to at some point bring the two of them back together. So all of that has nothing to do with school finance or school curriculum.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. You mentioned your father as an influence, were there other people or things that were an influence on your interpersonal skills?

ANSWER. Yes my, probably in order, my mom followed by my dad. My mom was a tiny little red headed woman with a red headed temper a feisty temper. She was one to watch out for her and yet I had a great admiration for her but that's not the way I work. I don't come across you know screaming at people or losing my cool for the most part. She was a positive influence not a negative influence. My dad was a positive influence because he was as smooth as silk with people. He just had a great gift of sounding out and listening to people and finding things about them. Those were the most influential people.

I think I had a couple of school people who were highly influential. One was my elementary principal in this school. I started elementary school in this school. I went through the eighth grade when this school was a union school in all the grades. I went to this school and my principal (names him) who's still living was certainly an influence on lots of generations of people in this community and certainly on me. I had a couple of high school and college teachers who were influential people that I emulated because they seem to really like people and cared genuinely cared about people and then I had a college chaplain who was a

major influence as well. He taught me things, I had grown up here in Southwestern Virginia a rural sheltered environment. I had never interacted with people who were racially different ethnically different from me, he taught me a lot about that, and today I sometimes see colleagues who are scared off because well let's say a black kid sort of is confrontational or has a problem at school. Sometimes people get threatened by that and I've spent enough time listening to and talking to and responding, living with if you will, people of other races and ethnic backgrounds but I have a little bit of understanding and I probably have a little bit of an edge because of that so all of those people were influences on me.

I'm also influenced by young people. My own children, I've got a daughter in college , a son here in middle school, at my advanced age and I'm influenced by them as well. It's not just older people who've influenced me. I think lots of the young people my own children and the kids in this school influence me. They teach me something new everyday and I think that makes me a different person.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. In the answer to a couple of other questions, you talked about the interpersonal skills with teachers and students and then you mentioned parents, are there any other groups or constituencies that you would have to deal with on an impersonal basis?

ANSWER. Yes, I have to deal with of course central office administrators and school board members. More with central office administrators and I probably do that less well than with any other group because sometimes I find their actions or their presence threatening not personally threatening, I mean I'm old enough I can retire whenever I want. I'm not threatened in a literal sense but I sometimes find that they're representing a view or something that's a little bit foreign or maybe they're coming out with something that's new or different that I don't want to confront and I'm not sure I always best deal with people who are confrontational. I can do it better with people who are in my own court. If I have a parent who is confrontational, I know exactly how to deal with that because I've done it a thousand times, they come in they're ready to whip somebody's tail because Billy's book is missing and they know that teacher took it or whatever I can work through that, but if the

superintendent comes out and let's say that he's confrontational because of something he's heard concerning us then I don't deal nearly as well with that. I don't feel that I'm in the driver's seat in that kind of sense. So that's probably my weakest link for interpersonal skills.

QUESTION 5. What I'd like you to do now if you could is to think about and describe a professional situation in which your interpersonal skills were really required.

ANSWER. In the past three years we've been visiting whether or not we're going to go to a different instructional delivery. Whether we're going to go to a four by four block scheduling or an alternating day or whether we're going to stay on a seven period day which we're on right now. We've been talking with parents, with students, with central office administrators and among ourselves and we still haven't reached a solution.

On Tuesday night I met with about 60 people in our library: about a dozen of our own staff, plus parents to talk about the issue, and one of my guidance counselors I think summed up on Wednesday morning when she came in how she felt about Tuesday night. She said I felt like a lot of parents came with their minds made up and left with an open mind, and I was real pleased by that comment because I perceived the same thing, and I think a lot of our staff did. We talked about block scheduling, we talked about how nobody's made up their mind yet and we're looking at about a dozen different models, including our existing seven period model, and that we're not going to make a firm decision until the first of March, and in the meantime we're going to get as much information in as we can.

As an aside Educational Leadership this month has an entire issue devoted to it and it would be good if you're interested to read it. I think my skills work well in that situation because some parents come with an agenda. One mom was very hot about students having too much homework, and she perceived that if we went to a four by four block that this would be the answer because teachers could teach for 45 minutes and the other 45 minutes the kids could do their homework. I, and I think in a kindly way, tried to say to her and our faculty who were there that I hope that never happens that if you go to a 90 minute period that you'd have to cover twice as much in each of those 90 minutes you've

got to cover 2 days worth everyday and you can't do 45 minutes of teaching and 45 minutes of homework, and as I did that I was trying to address the issue with her which was that she feels her kid had too much homework or maybe he says he does. I'm not sure that he has but I think my interpersonal skills work in that kind of a setting. I had at least a dozen other parents who had different agendas, different concerns, you know, some might say "Well you all are really reluctant to change and you're not going to do anything, you're going to keep doing the same thing you've always done" and another parent who said, "Do you really have objectives established or are you just doing this because it's the trendy thing to do?" So I think all of those as we worked through them and my faculty responded beautifully, they're bright and real articulate bunch of folks but I think we all used our interpersonal skills in that kind of setting. I also use my interpersonal skills with a parent who's angry because she's come down the bus lane and it says buses only and I say nicely but firmly that she's going to have to back out of the bus lane. So everyday there are many times when you use those skills. I probably use them best in a group setting where I'm talking to people about an issue like block scheduling.

QUESTION 6. In that circumstance, what were some of the individual skills that you found helpful?

ANSWER. Listening intently, looking at a person straight on, reading their body language, seeing if they are angry or agitated or just sort of devil's advocate and just poking questions, responding to people by name. I've been in this school I guess 17 years now, so I know all these parents by name. I can say to Rosemary or to Elva or to John, I call them by name they call me (uses his name) for the most part. I guess I built over the years such a skill that holds me well you know. I think there is an old saying about that you have power over a person if you know their name and if I say "Chris stop running in the hall" it's a whole lot easier than saying "hey you, tall guy with the purple jacket stop running in the hall."

So I think that works when I deal with parents. The fact that I know them, I try and never be condescending or high handed when I talk to them and yet I don't try to use

good 'ole boy and don't try to be something I'm not. They know I don't spit tobacco juice, dip snuff and those things. Yet they know that I am not going to put them down. You know I respect them because they are a farmer or they are a physician, or they are a professor, or they are an auto mechanic.

I respect them for their values and what they stand for and I think those are the kinds things that people are looking for. Do you have respect for me? Are you willing to listen to my side of the story, to my concerns? I've had parents come in and I have a teacher who used to regularly come in and really just vent. She used to come in this office, she would rant and rave about say a student problem for about 15 minutes and then she would say thank you and she'd walk back out the door. She didn't want an answer, she didn't want a solution to a problem. She wanted me to listen to a problem. She wanted me to listen to her frustrations.

I think all of us have those frustrations and sometimes we just need somebody to listen. Parents sometimes or often do come up with any kind of creative solution to the problem. A lot of the those problems aren't easily solved but they just want to be heard and want somebody else to know how doggone frustrated they are. So I think that's you know probably one of the issues.

QUESTION 7. How important are your interpersonal skills within the context of your position in relationship to the school and community?

ANSWER. Well, its obviously a several prong question isn't it. With my faculty, I think they need to know where I stand. I don't need to be 'wishy washy'. If I say there is too much noise in the hall then I need to go to a faculty meeting and say that our halls are out of control and we need to tighten down. The time between Thanksgiving and Christmas when kids get revved up and had too much chocolate to eat and too excited about what is coming up. It's time we all get out of our doorway and step in the hall and start calling students by name and saying you're too loud, or you threw paper on the floor, or you were running down the hall.

I need to convey that and there I use a very direct model. It's not let's have committee meeting and talk about whether the hall is too noisy. I use other styles at other

times with parents. I'm also now a days you know as I get older in the profession. I'm often sort of seem as an advisor. They will come in and say "(Uses his name) you've been at this for how many years now?" Well, 34 years. Well what would you do if you had this problem? Or, you have a daughter who went to school here. Your daughter graduated, what did you do when you were dealing with this issue then?" I sort of become maybe a favorite uncle or a grandfather figure or something like that.

I'm not sure I'm old enough yet to be a grandfather figure but so my skills there are listening and sometimes advising and yet with kids I've got to be out there and (I you know that you know) I put my arm around their shoulder I hug them I talk with them about last week's football game or last night's basketball game or how their grades are. I write a note. Every student that makes honor roll, gets a letter that is computer driven, then I write a hand written note on every one of those letters, and I try and refer to something, you know, "I saw your art at the mall last week" and "I really like the painting you did of the dog" or "Sorry your mom has been in the hospital I'm glad she is home." Things like that personalize for kids and I think kids don't forget that. They know that you care because frankly there are people in education who don't they basically open their classroom they teach then they close it and go home and they never see kids or never deal with kids and their concerns and I'm bothered by that. I think our work is much too important to just make it from 8 to 4.

QUESTION. What is the highest degree that you have earned?

ANSWER. I have a masters plus some additional graduate work but no CAGS.

QUESTION. What was the major for your masters?

ANSWER. I have a Master's in English and a Masters in Secondary Administration.

QUESTION. What other degrees do you have and what were your majors?

ANSWER. I have an undergraduate, BS from (Names College) in English and Industrial Arts. Strange combination.

QUESTION. You said that you have been in education for 34 years?

ANSWER. Yes, this is year number 34.

QUESTION. How long have you been principal in this school?

ANSWER. 17 years, This is my 17th year.

QUESTION. And what was your job prior to becoming a principal?

ANSWER. I was an assistant principal for 1 year here in (names the county) and another combined school (names the school). Prior to that I was the administrator in a vocational, large vocational center in West Salem, North Carolina. Grew up in this county but spent 16 years in North Carolina as a teacher first of English and then of Tech Ed. which would have been Industrial Arts in those days and then as an assistant principal. My last assignment there, I was in a vocational center that served 2400 kids. It was huge. I came back to this part of Virginia with a school of roughly 600 kids. Thought I'd died and gone to heaven.

QUESTION. How large is this school?

ANSWER. We have 535 students grades 6-12 so it's a very small school located in the southern part of the county. Let's say about 535 students so in each grade or level we have about 80 to 90 kids and graduate usually about 65 to 70 kids each year. We have less than one percent minority but the students are very different in other ways.

QUESTION. Describe for me if you would, the community that the school is in?

ANSWER. With pleasure. The community I grew up in, it's evolved. When I was growing up it was exclusively an agricultural community. This village was simply a crossroads. Had a post office, a feed mill, and a store. The community has changed significantly and in the last five years especially. It is very quickly becoming a bedroom community for (names local colleges) and professional folks affiliated with (names the area). We get doctors, dentists, bankers, college professors. Still have farmers though

fewer active farms. Nearly every farm in this community now is sporting a housing development instead of cattle so we are seeing major changes in the make up of the community.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION. Have your interpersonal skills changed, the individual skills that you use have they changed with this transition in the community?

ANSWER. I think so, somewhat. I believe Chris that I have a fairly broad background. So when I'm talking with farmers I can talk about crops. I've raised a few calves myself so I can talk about that kind of thing. I can talk you know whether all the corn is chopped or the silos are full but I also have lived in Winston-Salem which is a very cosmopolitan town. My wife and I enjoy going to dinner, going out and going to an opera occasionally or to a ballet and so I think I can talk with parents whose background is quite different, who are fairly urban and urbane and have done you know, have traveled extensively and are into the arts or literature or discussion groups, things like that and I might talk with them a little differently then with the folks with whom I've grown up with the community.

QUESTION. Describe your personality for me.

ANSWER. Quirky, strange, I sometimes tell people that folks in this community say well (Uses his name) different but he's the only principal we've got and we sort of tolerate him and he sort of tolerates us. We get along together. I tend to be outgoing though I can also be intensely personal and introverted. I love to sit and read by myself and not be disturbed by anybody. I don't socialize a lot. My wife and I our idea of socializing is probably to have dinner for about six people. We like small groups of people. We don't like cocktail parties, large parties although we get thrust into those some. I tend to mix with all ages of people though which is quite different from what I've described when I was growing up. I mix a lot with kids, I come to their dances, come to all their ball games. I'm here essentially at every home game and a good many away games. Whether it is girls basketball or football or baseball or whatever. I get invited to a lot of the ceremonies of their lives. You know eagle scouts and when they get married and I'm sort of expected to be at family

funerals when grandma dies those kinds of things. I guess I probably stay too long in the same community I'm very much a part of it. That about it I say.

QUESTION. You've described for me a little bit about your childhood and you've told me that you were born in this community, that you went to school in this community and that you are an only child. Describe for me some of your activities and responsibilities as a child and young adult.

ANSWER. Okay, grew up on a farm, on the same farm that we live on now. We came back home to our family farm. Living in the same house I grew up in. As a child I had lots of chores. My dad has retired from the practice of law. Had a beef cattle operation. Probably was somewhat well to do although I never knew it. We lived very modestly. I had to feed variously about 100 cattle morning and night. Before I went to school in the morning I fed put hay out in four different sheds for cattle and did the same thing in the evening when I got home. Didn't play sports, didn't socialize a lot.

While I went to this school through the eighth grade beyond that I went to high school in (names city). Even though I didn't change addresses I was sent to a city high school. There I was among my friends were attorneys' children, and physicians' children and people in (names the city) you know who had privileges and I was sort of poor little farm boy in terms of the way they knew me. I had lots of responsibilities and yet I never wanted for anything. I never had money to spend, and yet if I wanted books or a high-fi, as we said in those days, I got it. I had a car to drive that was supplied to me but it was an old car, and so I never lived in any privilege. When I went off to college, dad said, "If you want to work for me in the summers on the farm I'll pay you the going rate that I'm paying the rest of the help," \$2.05 an hour or whatever the rate was at that time. "You save up your money and you can go to school over in (names the town), it's a good school and you can get an education." I did that, never realized I could have probably have gone to school anywhere because we lived modestly very plainly. So that probably still influences me today. I don't want for anything nor do my children. They don't have the chores that I had you know they have to unload the dishwasher, carry in firewood for

the fireplace insert in the kitchen fireplace but they don't have to do hard labor like I consider I did growing up, and my wife and I never want for anything and yet we don't live lavishly at all. Our pleasure is coming back out to school watching the kids play and seeing our young kids grow up. Vacationing and traveling, we have gone to England three times, we've enjoyed every bit of that. But we don't buy massive color TVs new cars, except for when the old one wears out.

In a follow up conversation Principal E said as a youth he was involved in Church youth activities, Boy Scouts and 4-H activities.

QUESTION. To conclude, if you can think back on anything pertaining to interpersonal skills that has come to your mind that you want to add.

ANSWER. Let me just make one little observation. When I was young, a small kid, and if my behavior wasn't appropriate, I lived in a big old farmhouse, we never used the living room, I guess it would have been like a Victorian parlor almost. We lived in the kitchen and mostly in the farm buildings where we were doing chores, but if my behavior wasn't acceptable at age 5 or 6 my mom would say "Let me take you in the living room, and you can sit in one of the winged chairs, and when your behavior changes, and you want to come back and join the group, you may." That was the punishment that was often used, so I was punished for not being socially acceptable.

By being isolated from society and I guess that sent a pretty strong message that you learn to get along with people or you go out and sit in the living room and our living room was a place you went to have a sit. When our children were growing up when they little we used a very similar method. Both our daughter and son at ages 3 and 4 were like every other kid. They had temper tantrums and they would do things and we used a similar kind of thing except sat with them. We would say "We'll go out and we're going to sit until your behavior changes." We'll just sit and I'll take a book along and I would read and they would sit and they would sniffle a little while and I'd finally hear them say I'm sorry and then we would start over. I think it had an influence on me and has had an influence on

our kids. They are two absolutely wonderful kids. They are everything a parent could hope for, but I think maybe we did send that message that what is acceptable is to be a productive member of society and to engage in appropriate behavior with other people. I see lots of kids today who don't, who are hostile with other kids, who are very angry, who have lots of acting out behavior. Nobody ever made them go out and sit in a corner so to speak. So that's a little bit of my philosophy I suppose.

QUESTION. Within the context of our interview you've mentioned some things that are part of interpersonal skills. Let me reiterate those to see if there is anything you want to add. You mentioned listening and communication quite a bit but you also mentioned conflict resolution, you mentioned showing respect for other people, showing an interest in other people, and at least a couple of times you mentioned solving problems. Is there anything else that you see as part of your interpersonal skills?

ANSWER. We sort of talked around this, but just caring. As a subject by itself. To let kids know and parents know that I really do care about what is bothering you the problem is eating you. You know to see a guy or girl out here in the halls whose just broken up with their fellow of girlfriend to say I know you are really hurting. I think that it is important I think it is important for kids to see that we are human too. To do silly things, to occasionally lose your cool and scream at the referee too and then being sorry that you did it. Say I really shouldn't don't that and if I had better control I wouldn't have said that was a stupid call ref and to let kids see that side of you too. To let them know that you're not a machine that they plug in this chair that runs the school.

QUESTION. In other words you should be yourself?

ANSWER. Yes! Yes! Just to be genuine. Kids are better then than anybody else, far better than parents, superintendents, or school board members at spotting a phony. They know a phony from many yards away.

VITA
Christopher S. Colville
14300 Riverside Dr.
Ashland, Virginia 23005
Date of Birth: September 25, 1950

Education:

Doctoral Candidate, Educational Administration, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University,	Current
Master's of Arts, Student Personnel/Counseling, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University,	1988
Bachelor of Science, Management, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University,	1975
Associate of Applied Science, Business Management Northern Virginia Community College,	1973

Professional Experience:

Assistant Principal, Spotsylvania High School Spotsylvania County, Virginia	1995-1996
Administrative Assistant, George Wythe High School, Wythe County, Virginia	1990-1995
Counselor, George Wythe High School Wythe County, Virginia	1988-1990
Marketing Teacher, Rural Retreat High School, Wythe County, Virginia	1980-1987

Professional Organizations:

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
National Association of Secondary School Principals
Delta Sigma Pi, International Business Fraternity

