

OPERATIONALIZING THE CONSTRUCT OF SHARED LEADERSHIP:  
A DELPHI STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the accountability movement that has engulfed education in the last 20 years have put leadership at the heart of school improvement. Student achievement is affected by multiple factors that must be addressed with unique leadership skills and specialized knowledge. No one person can be responsible for orchestrating the success of each student within a school building. When members of a school community share responsibility for the many activities that contribute to student learning, the work of educational leaders becomes a manageable task. The purpose of this study was to create an operational definition of shared leadership by identifying key descriptors that define the characteristics and behaviors of shared leadership and the aspects of school cultures in which it can be effective.

The procedure used to construct a rich description of shared leadership was a three-round Delphi study. A panel of experts was assembled from writers or researchers in the field of leadership and superintendents, principals, and teachers who have practiced shared leadership in the school environment. The first-round Delphi instrument consisted of four open-end questions that asked for key words or phrases that describe the characteristics and behaviors of shared leadership, key words or phrases that describe aspects of school cultures in which shared leadership can be effective, and key words or phrases that describe barriers to shared leadership. In the second round, panelists were asked to rate the compiled responses from round one on a four-point scale. In the third round, panelists received statistical information based on second-round responses. They were allowed to revise opinions once more using a four-point scale.

Using the Delphi technique, the panel of experts reached consensus on 84 critical elements of effective shared leadership. An inventory that can be used by schools as a guide for planning, implementing, and evaluating shared leadership in school settings was created from the data.

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, Tracy Poff, whose support and belief in me never falters and to my sister, Bette Clayman, who supported me throughout my life unconditionally.

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It is ironic that the topic of this study is so heavily dependent on collaboration for this work is the result of a true collaborative effort. I would like to acknowledge those people that have been instrumental to this accomplishment.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Since the early 1980s, a school reform movement has swept the country and caused a national, state, and local focus on finding effective practices that ensure a quality education for all children. The call for educational change has come from a variety of sources, and the suggestions for restructuring schools are abundant. Districts are exploring new ways to conduct the business of education by altering organizational structures, changing the roles and responsibilities of staff, and implementing new programs to meet the needs of diverse populations. As a result, administration, supervision, and leadership are changing to meet the demands of a complex educational system (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Reeves, 2006).

Many approaches have been undertaken to improve school performance. These include raising standards, defining specific student achievement goals, restructuring professional development, revising curriculum, and implementing high-stakes accountability programs (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Marzano, 2000). The National Staff Development Council (2000) identified school leadership as the sole factor that can impact all of these endeavors. Certainly school improvement can not rest on the shoulders of administrators alone. If leadership is the foundation of school improvement, is it not the responsibility of all educators? My experiences as an administrator and my belief that sound instruction is the best weapon against poor school performance have helped me clarify my personal response to that question. I believe there are many layers of leadership and that there are many contributors to improvements in schools where leadership occurs effectively. These beliefs, which I developed from my experiences as a teacher and administrator, served as the catalyst for this study.

## Purpose

Due to the contextuality of shared leadership, there is a certain ambiguity in the understanding and enactment of it. According to Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004), research on shared leadership dates back almost 70 years. As they noted, "...the ideas underlying the term 'distributed leadership' have mainly commonsense meanings and connotations that are not disputed" (p. 7). Even though there is a long history of research on shared leadership, further study is needed to more formally and systematically clarify its definition and how it is practiced in the school setting. This was the task pursued in this study. Consequently, a concept of shared leadership that may assist principals and faculties in considering shared leadership as a viable model for school improvement was developed.

Researchers (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Marzano, 2000; Sebring & Bryk, 2000) identified effective leadership as a factor that is present in schools that have improved student performance. In a study of Chicago's elementary schools, strong leaders were found to be the common ingredient in productive schools (Sebring & Bryk). The principals of such schools were able to facilitate long-range school development plans and orchestrate the implementation of strategies that focused the entire school community on key issues. However, successful schools do not happen because of the single actions of one person. While principals must be able to develop a collaborative culture where staff members engage themselves in an ongoing study of teaching and learning (Blasé & Blasé, 1999), it must be recognized that such a learning organization can not occur without substantial input from a variety of educators (Lambert, 2003).

Understanding how effective instructional leadership occurs is important for several reasons. First, national and state mandates require school districts to show evidence of substantial academic progress by all students. Examples of such mandates are the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Virginia Standards of Learning State Assessment program (Virginia Department of

Education, n.d.). Second, effective schools research conducted over the last 25 years has established principal leadership as a decisive factor in effective schools (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) stated, “Perhaps the most popular theme in educational leadership over the last two decades has been instructional leadership” (p. 18). To lay sole responsibility for leadership on one individual, the principal, seems unrealistic. This approach ignores many untapped, yet valuable, resources held by other key school personnel. Third, the profession cannot afford merely to identify traits and characteristics of leaders. The work of leadership is complex, dynamic, and contextualized. To maximize the impact of leadership on school improvement, clearer definitions of roles and responsibilities of leaders and the contexts in which they can be effective must be identified.

### Research Questions

This study focused on identifying the beliefs that distinguish shared leadership and the behaviors and contexts of shared leadership as it is practiced in a school environment. Four questions were crafted to guide the collection of data that would be useful in writing an operational definition of shared leadership: Based on your experiences and observations,

1. What are the key words or phrases that describe characteristics of shared leadership as it occurs in the school setting?
2. What are the key words or phrases that describe the behaviors present in the school that exemplify shared leadership?
3. What are the key words or phrases that describe the aspects of the school culture that allow shared leadership to take place?
4. What are the key words or phrases that describe aspects of the school culture that are barriers to shared leadership?

## Overview of the Research Design

Data were collected using a three-round Delphi method. The panel consisted of a purposive sample of those who have researched or written about shared leadership and superintendents, principals, and teachers who have participated in shared leadership in the school environment. By gathering information from writers, researchers, theorists, and practitioners, the result is a realistic operational description, thus allowing educators to move beyond the theoretical and general notions of shared leadership. The benefit of rich description, which integrates specific attributes of behavior and context, is a deeper understanding of shared leadership as a means of improving student achievement.

### Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following terms are defined:

*Barriers*-- any aspects of school culture that are in opposition to effective shared leadership as consensually determined by a panel of experts.

*Behaviors*-- the actions of staff members that are present in a school that exemplify shared leadership as consensually determined by a panel of experts.

*Characteristics*-- distinguishing qualities or traits associated with the practice of shared leadership in the school environment as consensually determined by a panel of experts.

*School culture*-- the basic assumptions that drive the activities of the school and the interactions of the members of the school community (Thomas, 1997). The assumptions essential to shared leadership were consensually identified by a panel of experts.

*Shared leadership*-- the collaborative enactment of leadership based on relationships between individuals, groups, and organizations (Reeves, 2006). An operational definition of shared leadership was formed from the panel's consensual agreement on actions that reflect the distinguishing concepts of shared leadership.

## Summary of Chapter 1 and an Overview of the Report

The context for the study of shared leadership is set in the first two chapters. In Chapter 1, I presented a rationale for the practice of shared leadership, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and definitions of key terms. A synthesis of the literature on the topic and a brief description of the Delphi Technique are in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, the research design and methodology are described. This includes the development and administration of the Delphi instruments, the selection of the panelists, and the analysis of the data. Short biographical sketches for the panelists are provided. The findings are in Chapter 4. This report is concluded in Chapter 5, where implications of the findings, recommendations for future research, and reflections are presented.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The intent in this review is to present literature relative to the concept of shared leadership. The chapter begins with a look at the history of leadership thought. It includes a discussion of models of educational leadership and the theoretical basis for shared leadership. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the Delphi technique and its application to the study of the characteristics, behavior, and context of shared leadership.

Multiple strategies were used to gather information for the review of literature. Addison, an electronic library catalogue offered through the Virginia Tech library system, was utilized. Searches were conducted using the databases FirstSearch, Journal@Ovid Full Text, and PsycINFO. Key words used were leadership, shared leadership, distributed leadership, shared decision making, educational leadership, principal, teacher leadership, school reform, and student achievement. Only journal articles that included a description of a theoretical framework of leadership or an explanation of a study focused on leadership were reviewed. Professional publications were reviewed to identify books with current commentary on educational leadership. Reference lists and bibliographies in journal articles and books were perused for possible additional sources of information. Finally, attendance at professional conferences allowed the research to gather additional information on sources related to current best practices in educational leadership. The variety of sources enabled the researcher to develop a broad perspective of leadership and shared leadership.

#### A Historical Perspective of Leadership Theory

The study of leaders and leadership has been extensive, and many definitions of these concepts have emerged as a result. The pursuit of a universal leadership theory has taken many directions. Based on leadership literature up to the early 2000s, Doyle and Smith (2001) defined four main

generations of theories: trait theories (McGregor, 1985), behavioral theories (Yukl, 1989), contingency theories (Feidler, 1997), and transformational and transactional theories (Burns, 1978). Although theorists have focused on leaders and leadership with different lenses, it is not uncommon to see blended elements of various theories. For example, Covey's (1990) work reflects influence of trait and transformational theories of leadership. Upon close study, there is commonality among the various leadership theorists in regard to the effect of such factors as leader influence, communication, and decision making on the success of the organization (Leithwood & Duke, 1999).

As public education grew, hierarchical, bureaucratic organizational structures defined schools and school systems (Darling-Hammond, 2000). The main task of the principal was to manage the day-to-day operations of the school. Teachers focused on the learning events within their classrooms with little opportunity for collaboration with other professionals. When the school reform movement hit in the 1980s, the early response was to seek improvement through structural changes (Murphy & Adams, 1998). Educational systems faced tightened regulations, increased requirements, and decentralized power. Although reform efforts throughout the 1990s and early 2000s rested on a top-down strategy for school improvement--standards and accountability (Murphy & Adams), the implementation of standards rested on a bottom-up strategy--shared leadership at the school level.

### *Trait Theories*

Early research on leaders focused on the individual. Leadership commentators have studied great leaders from Moses to Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the great man theory dominated thinking on leadership. Theorists proposed that exceptional leaders possessed inherent qualities that enabled them to lead successfully (Stogdill, 1974). Because of these special qualities, certain individuals would emerge as heroes regardless of circumstances. This assumption became the foundation of



trait theories of leadership. According to Stogdill, trait theorists suggested that successful leaders held certain qualities of personality and character that set them apart from nonleaders. Some trait theorists (Bird, 1940; Stogdill) compiled lists of qualities of personality and character that differentiated leaders from followers. They identified such attributes as personality, self-confidence, adaptability, and cooperativeness as common characteristics of model leaders (Doyle & Smith, 2001); however, these characteristics did not withstand the tests of researchers.

By the 1940s, researchers had failed to produce a set of traits that distinguished exemplary leaders from others. Bird, Jenkins, and Stogdill (in Stogdill, 1974) each conducted research analyses and drew four conclusions: (a) It is difficult to identify leaders in terms of traits, (b) many traits differentiate leaders from followers, (c) the necessary leader traits differ from one situation to another, and (4) trait theorists ignore the relationship of the leader to the group. Although researchers have been unable to generate a definitive list of leadership attributes, discussing leadership traits is still a widespread practice. Many of today's popular writers on the subject attempt to define qualities of exceptional leaders. Covey (1990) identified integrity, maturity, and the ability to share power and recognition as three traits essential to primary greatness. Collins (2001) identified five levels of leadership effectiveness. Level 5 leaders, the highest level in the hierarchy, are "modest and willful, humble and fearless" (p. 22).

### *Behavioral Theories*

The questions raised by the limitations of trait theories paved the way for new considerations in the study of leadership. Attention moved from traits to behaviors as a way of conceptualizing and studying leadership. Behavior theories were something tangible to study. Researchers looked at various aspects of leader behavior and how leader behaviors shaped the organization and its members. Stogdill (1974) noted, "The behavioral theorists have been

particularly interested in definitions [of leadership] that provide a basis for objective observation, description, measurement, and experimentation” (p. 11).

In 1950, Hemphill and others associated with the Ohio Leadership Studies developed the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). This instrument was used to study leader behavior. After a review of research, the developers of the LBDQ categorized leader behavior into two domains: (a) Consideration-- behaviors associated with relationships, and (b) Initiation of Structure-- behaviors associated with achievement of tasks (Stogdill, 1963). The LBDQ was used extensively in military studies, educational studies, and industrial studies. Additional research led to the revision of the LBDQ. In the fourth revision, Stogdill included the following 12 subscales:

1. Representation
2. Demand reconciliation
3. Tolerance of uncertainty
4. Persuasiveness
5. Initiation of structure
6. Tolerance and freedom
7. Role assumption
8. Consideration
9. Production emphasis
10. Predictive accuracy
11. Integration
12. Superior orientation

Four predominant leadership styles surfaced from the research on leader behavior: task-oriented leadership, people-oriented leadership, directive leadership, and participative leadership (Doyle & Smith, 2001). Commercial leadership training programs were developed to educate individuals on the behaviors of the various styles (Blake & Mouton, 1964). Individual styles were identified through surveys and inventories. Once personal leadership styles were identified, leaders could work to improve or change behaviors that would be more effective. As Doyle and Smith reported, researchers who looked at

leadership styles produced inconsistent findings. This was due to the failure of researchers to give thoughtful consideration to the interplay between leadership style and the context in which it was used.

### *Contingency Theories*

The lack of attention to the effect of internal and external factors on leader behavior brought yet another shift in thinking and moved the focus of theorists from leaders to leadership (Doyle & Smith, 2001). Scholars began to look at the context in which leadership occurred. Contingency leadership theories grew from the need to understand how the act of leadership changes due to the context in which it occurs (Stogdill, 1974). This body of work focused on the relationship between the situation and the leader's actions. There was recognition of the contingent relationships among the leader, the members of the organization, organizational policies, various external factors, and organizational outcomes.

Probably the most prominent contingency theory of leadership is that of Feidler (1997). Feidler based his theory of leadership on the interaction of the leader and the situation. He saw leaders as either task motivated or relationship motivated. This motivation is determined by the leader's needs. Factors he considered influences on leader effectiveness were leader motivation, leader-worker relations, task structure, and the inherent power of the leader's position. The effectiveness of leadership was the result of the appropriate match among these elements. A successful leader would recognize his or her leadership orientation and alter the situation to complement this orientation. Feidler called this matching of leadership needs with the situation "job engineering."

### *Transformational Theories*

After conducting a meta-analysis of 4,725 studies, Stogdill (1974) concluded that, "The endless accumulation of empirical data has not produced

an integrated understanding of leadership” (p. vii). As the demand of people to be treated as distinct individuals increased (Hersey & Johnson, 1997), organizations began to think of leadership in a different fashion. They became more attentive to individuals and the unique contributions they could make to the organization (McNamara, 2007). The challenge of leadership was how to better align the needs of the worker with the needs of the organization.

Based on historical analysis, Burns (1978) claimed power had been overemphasized in theories of leadership. He believed leadership occurred as the result of the relationships among motives, purposes, resources, leaders, and followers. Burns identified transactional leadership and transformational leadership as two different types of leadership that are the result of the interaction that takes place among these five elements.

The power of transformational leadership lies in one’s ability to inspire in others the commitment to work toward a common purpose and the ability to carry out the tasks necessary to accomplish shared goals (Leithwood & Duke, 1999). There is a transcendence of self-interest by both followers and leader. They have a higher level of personal commitment to the goals of the organization. The outcomes are extra effort and greater productivity.

In contrast, transactional leadership does not necessitate members of the organization being bound by a common purpose (Leithwood & Duke, 1999). Each individual comes into the relationship with his or her own motives. Each understands that negotiation is the means by which valued ends are achieved. Transactional leadership then is the negotiation of exchanges between followers and leader. The outcomes of transactional leadership are limited, thus transformational leadership is a preferred leadership model (Leithwood & Duke).

Various models of transformational leadership arose (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Leithwood, 1994; Sergiovanni, 1990). Bass and Avolio described a “two-factor theory,” where transformational and transactional leadership compliment and support each other. Transactional leadership allows for individual needs to be met, but change may not occur. For change to take

place, leaders must enact transformational practices that build commitment and inspire extra effort toward common goals. Senge (1990) described a leader who takes “responsibility for building organizations where people continually expand their capacity to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models--that is, they are responsible for learning” (p. 340). The various models of transformational leadership stress the leader’s ability to build vision and set goals, provide opportunity for intellectual growth, and maintain strong relationships with members of the organization.

### Models of Educational Leadership

Researchers have studied various models of leadership practiced in education. Hallinger and Heck (1996) analyzed empirical research on the relationship between the principal’s role and school effectiveness produced from 1980 to 1995. Only 40 studies meeting their criteria were found during this 15-year period. This is interesting considering that the vast majority of reform initiatives are focused on principal leadership as the key to instructional effectiveness. Hallinger and Heck’s acceptance that the concept of leadership is constantly evolving led them to conclude that there is no single theory of leadership effectiveness that is valid in all contexts. Based on their analysis of the studies, Hallinger and Heck called for greater study into school conditions that influenced leadership and school performance.

Analyzing the relationship of context to leadership behavior is hardly a new frontier. Willower (1980) identified contingency theory, the loose coupling perspective, and the garbage can model as foundations for existing leadership analysis. The context in which leadership behavior occurs is considered in all three models. Willower pointed to the work of Getzels and Guba from the 1950s. They proposed that leader effectiveness was a result of the congruence of organizational expectations and personal needs. Willower argued for theoretical advances that would result in research that yielded explicit, logical, and empirically viable explanations of leadership (p.18).

Leithwood and Duke (1999) conducted an analysis of a representative sample of contemporary literature on school leadership. The sample was derived from all feature length articles on leadership published in four educational administration journals between the years 1988 and 1995. The four journals were *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *Journal of School Leadership*, *Journal of Educational Administration*, and *Educational Management and Administration*. In all, 121 articles were used as the basis for identifying contemporary models of leadership practice. Some articles blended multiple theories of leadership while others simply implied a particular leadership perspective. After review of these articles, Leithwood and Duke identified six categories of current leadership practice. Each category was defined by a primary focus and key assumptions. The six categories are identified in Table 1.

Table 1

*Six Models of Contemporary Leadership Practice*

Model	Primary focus	Key assumptions	Significant studies (1985-1996)
Contingency	How leaders respond to the circumstances or problems they face	Variations in context for leadership require a range of leadership responses; formal leaders develop a repertoire of leadership practices	Sergiovanni, 1989 Bredeson, 1993 Heller, Clay, & Perkins, 1993 Willower, 1994
Instructional	Teacher behavior in relation to activities that directly affect student progress	Authority and influence rest with formal leaders; leadership can extend to informal leaders; leadership practices and functions support student achievement	Hallinger & Murphy, 1985 Duke, 1987 Smith & Andrews, 1989 Hallinger & McCray, 1990 Davidson, 1992
Managerial	Functions, tasks, or behaviors of the leader	Competent management by leader facilitates work of organizational members; members behave rationally	Harvey, 1986 Rossmiller, 1992 Dunning, 1993 Leithwood, 1994 Myers & Murphy, 1995
Moral	Values and ethics of the leader	Values are a central part of all leadership; decision making is based on values; leader models morals and values	Evers & Lakomski, 1991 Greenfield, 1991 Bates, 1993 Duke, 1996
Participative	Decision-making process of the group	Participation based on democratic principles; greater participation enhances organizational effectiveness; leadership is distributed	Johnston & Pickersgill, 1992 Hallinger, 1992 Savery, Soutar, & Dyson, 1992 Yukl, 1994 Murphy & Beck, 1995
Transformational	Commitment and capacities of the members of the school community	Transcendence of self-interest by leader and those led; extra effort and greater productivity; leader is charismatic	Waldman, Bass, & Yammarino, 1990 Howell & Avolio, 1991 Bass & Avolio, 1993, 1994 Leithwood, 1994

*Note.* Compiled from “A Century’s Quest to Understand School Leadership,” by K. Leithwood and D. Duke, 1999, in J. Murphy & K. Seashore Louis (Eds.), *Handbook of research on educational administration* (pp. 45-69). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Despite the quantity of research that has been conducted on the topic, a definitive definition of leadership has yet to be found. Leadership models and practices have evolved from the idea of a single leader holding total control of the organization to the conceptualization of leaders that share and distribute power willingly. While researchers attempt to distinguish between the various

leadership models and practices, upon close scrutiny there are no pure types of leadership. For example, in the models identified in Table 1, although moral leadership is centered on the ethics of the leader, it is of concern in other models. The challenges placed before schools make it essential that thoughtful consideration is given to leadership and its impact on the learning process.

### The Theoretical Basis for a Shared Leadership Perspective

The current education system has a daunting task. State and federal law makers, through standards and accountability legislation (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001), have focused the attention of educators on decreasing the academic deficits of students who are at risk for failure. While the spirit of these standards is widely endorsed, they have brought an unprecedented complexity to the responsibilities of school leaders.

In 1966, Coleman et al. issued a report entitled *Equality of Educational Opportunity*. The findings of this government-commissioned study changed the perception of public education and set the school effectiveness movement in motion. Researchers over the last four decades have studied effective schools and developed theories of school factors that influence the academic achievement of students (Brookover, Beady, Shmitzer, Flood, & Wisenbaker, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Hallinger, Murphy, Weil, Mesa, & Mitman, 1983; Marzano, 2003; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Some of the first research was conducted by Brookover et al. in Michigan in the mid-seventies. This research was carried over into the work by Edmonds, which in turn led to the effective schools movement that continues to this day. Brookover, Beamer et al. (1982) identified five school-related factors that promote higher student achievement: (a) a school climate conducive to learning, (b) an emphasis on basic skills instruction, (c) teachers who hold high expectations for all students to achieve, (d) a system of clear instructional objectives for monitoring and assessing student performance, and (e) a school principal who is an instructional leader.



Shared leadership is rooted in behavioral science. Behavioral science theorists believe that the sharing of power creates commitment and increases the effectiveness of group members (Stogdill, 1974). The distribution of leadership tasks gives members ownership and a sense of responsibility to the organization. Early studies by Bass, Hare, and McKeachie (as cited in Stogdill, 1974) contended that when groups used a structured collaborative power-sharing process, members had a higher degree of understanding, commitment, and decision making. Sharma (as cited in Stogdill, 1974) surveyed 586 teachers in 20 school systems and found job satisfaction was related to the degree to which they felt involved in decision making. As cited by Marks and Louis (1999), many researchers (Bryk, Camburn, & Louis 1996; David, 1994; Marks & Louis, 1997; Smylie, 1994) have found positive collegial relationships and improvements in instruction and student learning when participatory decision-making is concentrated on issues of curriculum and instruction. When power is more equalized across the organization, the effectiveness of the system may be increased.

Likert and Likert (1980) proposed a participative model of school leadership called *System 4*. Their theory had its roots in the field of business. They defined a set of four systems used for management purposes: System 1 is an exploitive, authoritarian leadership style; System 2 is a benevolent, authoritarian style; System 3 is a consultative approach; and System 4 is a participative model of interaction and decision making. *System 4* had been previously applied in business and industry. Likert and Likert summarized studies conducted in the 1970s by Belasco, 1973; Bernhardt, 1972; Gibson, 1974; Haynes, 1972; Likert & Likert, 1976; Miller, 1970; and Morall, 1970, and reported the closer a school or district was to *System 4* as a management tool, the lower the teacher absence, the higher the morale of students and faculty, the higher the motivation of students and teachers, and the greater commitment of members to the organization.

A growing body of evidence points to the leadership role of the principal in determining school climate and school governance. Hallinger, Bickman, and Davis (1990) wrote:

Observers of schools including parents, teachers, and school administrators have noted the seemingly obvious effects principals have on the learning climate, educational program, and the workplace norms of schools. Though farther removed from the school setting, the educational policy community is also generally inclined to believe that principals' leadership is critical to the success or failure of educational programs and student learning. Thus, there is relatively little disagreement among practitioners or policy makers concerning the belief that principals have a discernible impact on the lives of teachers and students. (p. 1)

Principals, the formal leaders within school buildings, are finding a greater need to rely on multiple layers of leadership. Supovitz (2000) noted, "By necessity, leadership in schools is increasingly being dispersed across multiple individuals" (p. 1). To Supovitz, shared leadership at the building level means the principal builds the instructional capacity of all faculty members, orchestrates leadership opportunities for staff members, allows decision making by others, and utilizes vehicles such as school teams to enact shared leadership. Personal experiences lead me to believe that Supovitz's view of shared leadership is still too narrow. In the wake of today's accountability movement, leadership responsibilities that directly and indirectly support individual schools occur at the district level as well.

### Perspectives on Shared Leadership

The basic concepts of shared leadership can be found in leadership research conducted over the last 70 years (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). There is little dispute among educational practitioners that

the work of schools and school systems is the result of many individuals at multiple levels within the organization. Recent efforts have been made to provide evidence to substantiate the nature and effect of shared leadership.

Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (n.d.) studied a concept of shared leadership focused on tasks, task enactment, and the distribution of leadership across formal and informal leaders based on context. They referred to their theory as distributed leadership. To them, leadership is what an individual knows and does in interaction with others in particular contexts related to specific tasks. The result of distributed leadership is an intricate web of relationships and actions.

Two assumptions underlie the concept of distributed leadership (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). First, to understand school leadership, the tasks of leaders must be analyzed. By tracing a task backwards and studying the smaller units of action that take place leads to better decisions about the enactment of leadership. Second, leadership practice is distributed among leaders and followers based on the task to be completed and the knowledge and skills of the members. Leadership is distributed in one of three ways according to what is warranted by the situation. Leadership is a collaborative distribution when the actions of one leader influence the actions of another, a collective distribution when leaders act independently but toward a common goal, or a coordinated distribution when multiple leaders carry out parts of the same task.

The focus of formal leaders must become the building of the capacity of all members of the school community. Elmore (2000) maintained that the basic idea of shared leadership is simple but essential in an age of complex demands on the school leader. Building a broad base of capacity can not occur if leadership roles are controlled by only a few individuals. Members vary in competence based on their interests, aptitudes, and skills. The principal's top priority becomes organizing the competences and talents of individuals so they complement each other and the vision and goals of the organization.

The work of schools involves a series of interdependent components. Conzemius and O’Neill (2001) proposed a framework of leadership for school improvement that consists of three elements: common focus, data gathering and reflection, and collaboration. When members of the school community accept the same vision, goals, values, and expectations, efforts are concentrated on a shared mission. A common focus is essential if faculties are to attend to the important long-term priorities rather than the daily urgent issues of the school. Data gathering and reflection are most effective when carried out as group processes. A group process helps maintain efforts on behalf of students rather than on individual agendas. Reflection, supported by data and subjective perspectives, is what moves a school to change for the sake of improvement. Collaboration is a process by which individuals contribute skills, knowledge, and experience. It includes faculty, central office personnel, community members, parents, and students. Through collaboration, a collective responsibility for school improvement takes place. Conzemius and O’Neill’s framework is in Figure 1.

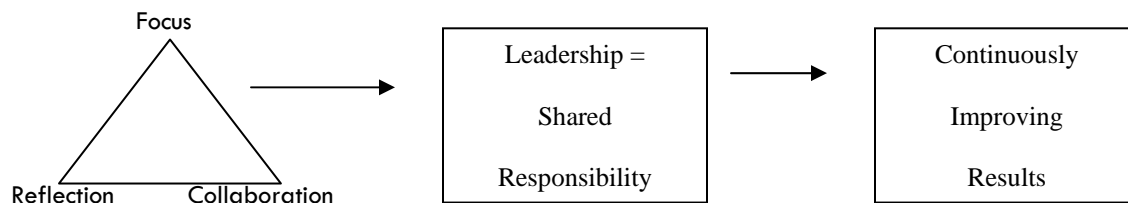


Figure 1. Shared responsibility framework and its results.

Note. From *Building shared responsibility for student learning* (p.12) by A. Conzemius and J. O’Neill, 2001, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Copyright 2001 by Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Reprinted with permission.

Other frameworks of shared leadership are based on the idea of the interplay between people and events. Lambert (2003) held that leadership should be viewed within the context of processes, activities, and the relationships in which people engage. She proposed a constructivist leadership

concept. Leaders challenge belief systems and facilitate reflection and dialogue to construct meaning and knowledge as a group. The leadership capacity of all members is increased when there is learning among the members of a school who share a common vision and are working in unison toward specific goals.

Lambert's essential assumptions of leadership are:

1. Leadership is the right, responsibility, and capability of all members of the school community.
2. An adult learning environment is critical to leadership enactment.
3. Opportunities for skillful participation are a top priority.
4. A school's definition of leadership is the framework for how people participate in roles of leadership.
5. Leadership is an essential part of professional activity.
6. Educators are deliberate in their actions, and leaders realize the value of deliberation.

One would expect that schools operating under these key assumptions would develop a collective responsibility for the school and its members.

In an executive summary of research and literature on educational leadership, Leithwood et al. (2004) concluded that leadership is second only to classroom instruction in influence on student learning. Leadership has its greatest impact on student learning when it is implemented in environments where it is most needed. Initiatives and practices that influence student learning and the behavior of others in the school community are carried out by various individuals. The successful leader relies on quality leadership from many individuals within the school; therefore, administrators must be particularly attentive to recruitment, training, evaluation, and development of personnel.

Leadership goes beyond knowing what to do as a leader. Leadership requires knowing how, when, and why leadership takes place. Marzano et al. (2005) conducted a meta-analysis of the research on school-level leadership. Sixty-nine studies were analyzed. The researchers identified 21 leadership responsibilities. The responsibilities call for a wide range of skills. Marzano et

al. recommended a leadership shift from a single individual to a team of qualified stakeholders. The effective leadership team must be guided by collective efficacy and common purpose using agreed upon processes.

Based on their findings, Marzano et al. (2005) developed a five-step action plan for effective school leadership:

1. Build a leadership team of qualified individuals.
2. Distribute responsibilities between the members of the leadership team.
3. Identify areas most likely to impact student learning and focus actions toward those areas.
4. Prioritize areas in regard to magnitude of impact on student learning.
5. Select the appropriate leadership style to complement whether the actions involve systemic change or less complex revisions to existing practices.

My review of literature relative to historical and current theories of leadership led me to form certain beliefs about the practice of leadership in the school setting. The educational improvements called for by the legislation (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) currently guiding our public school systems require fundamental changes in our concept of leadership. Engaging teachers in learning new practices is fundamental to improvement in student achievement. Therefore, one essential responsibility of leadership becomes the act of developing and distributing knowledge. A shared leadership perspective offers educators the opportunity to think differently about the purpose of their work and the collective skills and knowledge necessary to effect change in schools. Shared leadership means all members of the community accept responsibility for student learning, each contributing his or her expertise, with coordination of efforts by the principal.

My understanding of shared leadership was expanded by reviewing this literature, but a personal experience brought shared leadership to life for me. In working with a schoolwide professional development program that was

based on the practice of shared leadership, I observed tremendous professional growth in teachers. Through the implementation of professional learning communities, the faculty was allowed to analyze student needs and select instructional changes that would benefit students. As one group facilitator spoke of her group, she commented with genuine pride, “We are all leaders.” In reflecting on what had brought the faculty to this point, I realized how they had walked somewhat blindly into this journey toward shared leadership. This experience led me to recognize the need for descriptions of shared leadership that would help teachers, principals, and other school leaders to walk with greater awareness of the characteristics, behaviors, and contexts, both supportive and non-supportive, of shared leadership.

### Delphi Technique

This research was conducted using a Delphi technique to identify the characteristics, behaviors, and contexts of shared leadership as it is practiced in the school environment. In determining the appropriateness of this methodology, it is necessary to define who can provide information and through what means these individuals could exchange information. Delphi is particularly suited to situations where it is beneficial to gather subjective judgments from a collection of individuals with various backgrounds, experiences, and expertise, and the assembling of these individuals face-to-face is not a feasible option (Linstone & Turoff, 2002).

According to Linstone and Turoff (2002), “Delphi may be characterized as a method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem” (p. 3). It is a formal method of systematically obtaining a group judgment. This technique is appropriate in the study of a concept that is defined by human experience. The Delphi Technique provides insight into the basic values and beliefs that drive the opinions of an assembled panel of experts.

Two forms of the Delphi process are currently used. The first format involves the manual distribution, collection, and compilation of information. The second format is handled by means of a computer program. Although the computer method expedites the process, a manual method allows for adjustments based on the responses of the group. The small group size intended for this study, the statistical information to be reported and the available software made a mixed method of conducting the Delphi a more desirable option.

The Delphi process is carried out through a series of events that allows the researcher and the group to effectively communicate despite the barriers of time, location, or cost. The four phases of a Delphi study are:

1. An open-ended questionnaire exploring the research topic is distributed to the panel of experts. The questionnaire contains items focused on aspects of the topic that are of interest to the researcher.
2. After compiling results from the initial questionnaire, a second questionnaire with the collective responses is given to the panel, and the panel is asked to evaluate each item using a stated criterion, typically importance, feasibility, or desirability.
3. A third questionnaire is distributed to the panel. This questionnaire contains statistics on the collective ratings for each item and the panel member's own rating on each item. The panelist is asked to review the data and rate each item a second time. If his or her rating varies from the average of the group, the panelist is asked to explain this variation.
4. All previously collected information is analyzed and a final summary is sent to all panelists. (Linstone & Turoff, 2002)

There are several important characteristics of the Delphi technique. Anonymity is essential to the Delphi process. By withholding the identify of the group members, the researcher is assured that the panelists are not influenced by the reputation of other experts taking part in the study, thereby promoting the independent thought of all participants. Inductive analysis of the data is a



second characteristic of the technique. The goal is for the results to accurately represent the opinions of the expert panelists. While the focus is on the concept as a whole, inductive analysis allows for the analysis of single elements of the concept and the relationships between and among those elements.

### Summary

The historical roots of leadership theory and the theoretical basis for shared leadership were reviewed in this chapter. Four schools of leadership thought were discussed: (a) trait theories, (b) behavioral theories, (c) contingency theories, and (d) transformational theories. These were followed by an analysis of models of educational leadership. Finally, a review of the theoretical basis of shared leadership was presented.

Chapter 2 concluded with an overview of the Delphi technique. An explanation of its use as a method of research, its value in reaching an operational definition of shared leadership, and its procedural steps were discussed.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH AND DESIGN METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains the procedures of the research. The subject of the study was formulated from a review of the literature, discussion with colleagues on their leadership experiences, and my personal interest in the topic of shared leadership. Research was conducted using the Delphi technique to produce an operational definition of shared leadership based on the experiences of those who have studied or engaged in its practice.

#### Panel Identification and Selection

Panel selection is critical to the outcome of a Delphi study. Scheele (2002) believed that one method of assembling a successful mix of panelists is to select individuals who are experts and have experiences relevant to the topic of study. Careful consideration was given to identifying specific groups that could contribute information on shared leadership. Because the study was designed to formulate a rich description of the practice of shared leadership, it was determined the panel should consist of those who are creating the concepts and implementing the practices of shared leadership. These are the writers in the field of leadership, superintendents and assistant superintendents, principals, and teachers.

To identify a pool of possible panelists, the researcher reviewed the literature; sought recommendations from her advisor, Virginia Department of Education officials, and co-workers; and studied the professional profiles of finalists for the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award, the National Association of Secondary School Principals Principal of the Year Award, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals Distinguished Principal of the Year Award. The list of potential panelists was reviewed with the chair of the doctoral committee. Through review of biographical sketches offered by the professional organizations, 21 possible principals, 14 possible teachers, and 10 possible superintendents or assistant

superintendents were identified. The names of 10 writers and theorists in the field were gathered from a review of literature and from referrals from professionals in the field of education.

A list of 55 possible panelists was compiled. These individuals were selected to create a pool of panelists that was diverse in gender, geographical location, and the level of school at which the individual worked. When contacted, each prospective panelist was given a brief description of the study; information on the person's professional background was confirmed; and their knowledge of and participation in shared leadership were recorded.

An attempt was made to contact all potential experts by email and then by telephone to secure panelists for the study. Twelve potential panelists could not be reached. Of the remain 43 candidates, 23 agreed to take part in the study: two elementary school principals, two middle school principals, three high school principals, six researchers, two superintendents, one assistant superintendent, and seven teachers. Of the 23 that agreed to participate, 16 completed at least one of the Delphi instruments. The panel had 11 males and 5 females, and 11 states were represented. The panel included five Milken Educator Award winners and five national or state finalists for awards given by the National Association of Elementary School Principals or the National Association of Secondary School Principals recognizing professional excellence. Table 2 presents a demographic summary of the panelists that participated in the study.

Table 2

*Potential and Participating Panelists*

Potential panelist	Group membership	School level (if applicable)	Gender	Location	Agreed to participate	Participated in study
1	Researcher/writer		M	Wisconsin		
2	Researcher/writer		F	Virginia		
3	Researcher/writer		M	Virginia		
4	Researcher/writer		M	Virginia	X	X
5	Researcher/writer		M	Colorado	X	X
6	Researcher/writer		M	Virginia	X	X
7	Researcher/writer		F	Texas	X	X
8	Researcher/writer		M	Wisconsin		
9	Researcher/writer		M	Kansas	X	
10	Researcher/writer		M	Virginia	X	X
11	Principal	High School	M	California	X	X
12	Principal	High School	M	Washington		
13	Principal	High School	F	Texas	X	
14	Principal	High School	F	Kansas		
15	Principal	High School	F	Hawaii		
16	Principal	High School	M	Hawaii		
17	Principal	High School	F	Washington (state)	X	X
18	Principal	Middle School	F	Virginia		
19	Principal	Middle School	F	Connecticut		
20	Principal	Middle School	M	Utah	X	X
21	Principal	Middle School	F	Arkansas		
22	Principal	Middle School	F	Ohio		
23	Principal	Middle School	F	Mississippi	X	
24	Principal	Elementary School	M	Connecticut	X	

(table continues)

Table 2 (continued)

*Potential and Participating Panelists*

Potential panelist	Group membership	School Level (if applicable)	Gender	Location	Agreed to participate	Participated in study
25	Principal	Elementary School	F	Oregon		
26	Principal	Elementary School	F	Georgia		
27	Principal	Elementary School	F	Arizona		
28	Principal	Elementary School	M	North Dakota	X	X
29	Principal	Elementary School	F	California		
30	Principal	Elementary School	M	Florida		
31	Principal	Elementary School	F	Massachusetts		
32	Superintendent		M	Virginia		
33	Superintendent		M	Virginia		
34	Superintendent		F	Virginia		
35	Superintendent		F	Virginia		
36	Superintendent		M	Virginia		
37	Superintendent		M	Georgia		
38	Superintendent		M	North Carolina	X	X
39	Superintendent		M	North Carolina	X	X
40	Superintendent		M	Texas	X	X
41	Superintendent		M	Maryland		
42	Teacher	Elementary School	F	West Virginia		
43	Teacher	Elementary School	M	New Hampshire		
44	Teacher	Elementary School	F	Maryland	X	X
45	Teacher	Elementary School	F	Virginia	X	X
46	Teacher	Elementary School	F	South Carolina	X	
47	Teacher	Elementary School	F	Indiana		
48	Teacher	Elementary School	F	Washington, DC	X	

(table continues)

Table 2 (continued)

*Potential and Participating Panelists*

Potential panelist	Group membership	School Level (if applicable)	Gender	Location	Agreed to participate	Participated in study
49	Teacher	Elementary School	F	Connecticut	X	
50	Teacher	Elementary School	F	Nevada		
51	Teacher	Elementary School	F	North Carolina		
52	Teacher	Middle School	F	Arkansas		
53	Teacher	Middle School	F	Michigan	X	X
54	Teacher	High School	M	West Virginia	X	X
55	Teacher	High School	M	Alabama		

Using the described selection process, the following experts participated in the study.

### *Writers and Researchers*

Participant 1 is a Director of Staff Development for a public school system in Virginia. He was a member of a regional educational laboratory, one of ten federally funded centers that worked with state and local educational systems on reform and improvement. He is the co-designer of a conceptual framework for school leadership that is based on distributed accountability.

Participant 2 is a former teacher, principal, and superintendent. He has received numerous awards including the Distinguished Scholar Practitioner Award from a state university. He has authored books and professional articles on a variety of school reform topics. Currently, he consults with school districts and states across the country on strategies for school improvement.

Participant 3 is a Scholar Emerita with a regional research and school improvement program. She is a recipient of awards for substantial contributions in educational research and development. She has published articles and books on the change process, leadership, and professional learning communities.

Participant 4 is the CEO of a research center focused on leadership, learning, and school improvement. He has authored books and articles on leadership. He is a former superintendent of a public school system. He has conducted extensive research on leadership in the school setting.

Participant 5 is the executive director of an independent consulting firm. He spent 32 years in public education as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent. He assists school divisions in school improvement by building leadership capacity through the distribution of leadership within school buildings.

### *Superintendents*

Participant 6 is a former superintendent of a public school system in North Carolina. He currently serves as the Senior Vice President of a private educational consulting firm. During his principalship at a high school in North Carolina the school was named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.

Participant 7 is a director at an educational institute that conducts research and provides support and resources to educators and policymakers. In addition, he is a visiting professor in educational leadership at a university in North Carolina. He has served on numerous leadership and policy boards. He has been a superintendent in school systems in two states.

Participant 8 is an assistant superintendent in a school district in Texas. As principal of a middle school, he initiated a shared governance approach to school improvement.

### *Principals*

Participant 9 uses a collaborative leadership approach as principal of an elementary school in North Dakota. Under his guidance, the school has been recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence and a National Title I Distinguished School. He has won national awards for his professional efforts.

Participant 10 is the principal of a high school in California. He leads a school improvement effort that focuses on implementing a schoolwide model for building adolescent literacy. It calls for multiple layers of leadership to assist in long-term planning and model implementation.

Participant 11 serves as principal of a middle school in Utah. He includes teachers in all aspects of school improvement planning. Collaboratively, he works with teachers to set goals, evaluate programs, and implement strategies and ideas to address student achievement.

Participant 12 is the principal of a high school in Washington State. In an effort to educate teachers on how they could participate in decision making,



she organized a staffwide leadership retreat that focused on shared leadership. She then expanded her leadership team to include teachers and students.

### *Teachers*

Participant 13 is a fourth grade teacher at a public school in Maryland. She is a member of the school's Site Based Decision team and the magnet team

Participant 14 is an elementary school teacher in Virginia. She has coordinated the design and implementation of an after-school support program for students in her elementary school. She serves as a mentor to new teachers in her district.

Participant 15 is a science teacher at a middle school in Michigan. She is the school data team leader and provides the student assessment analysis information generated by this group to the school development team, which she chairs.

Participant 16 is a Nationally Board Certified English teacher at a high school in West Virginia. He is president of a state-level extracurricular association and is the chair of the Local School Improvement Council.

### Development of Delphi I

A three-round Delphi procedure was used to reach consensus on the operational definition of shared leadership. The initial Delphi instrument consisted of five questions (see Appendix A). Four individuals were selected to complete the questionnaire to assess if it would collect appropriate descriptors of shared leadership: a teacher, an elementary school principal, a middle school principal, and a central office administrator. All four individuals returned the instrument.

The responses from the trial were compiled into one list per question (see Appendix B), color-coded by question, printed, and then cut into units of meaning. The units were sorted to identify domains related to each question. Question 5 was drawing responses that did not support the purpose of the

research. It was noted that some responses for Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 were similar. The responses for Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 were combined and sorted, and domains were identified to determine the extent of overlap in the data. The results are in Table 3.

Table 3

*Summary of Trial Delphi Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Cultural Facilitators, and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Staff and leaders share responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegation of important responsibilities*</li> <li>• Empowering faculty</li> <li>• Empowering staff leaders</li> <li>• Shared decision making</li> <li>• Empowering stakeholders*</li> <li>• Involvement of all staff members in important decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers assume leadership</li> <li>• Teachers assume leadership responsibilities roles</li> <li>• The group participates in decision making*</li> <li>• Teachers take on facilitator roles within learning communities*</li> <li>• Leaders delegate decision making*</li> <li>• Teachers take leadership roles*</li> <li>• The principal shares decision making*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to include and involve everyone</li> <li>• Willingness of staff to take on additional tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of initiative from some teachers to assume leadership roles*</li> <li>• Failure to identify and utilize key staff members</li> <li>• Administration overturns staff decisions*</li> <li>• Administrator is perceived as the sole figure of authority*</li> <li>• Lack of shared decision making</li> </ul>
Acceptance of innovation and change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A willingness to try new things</li> <li>• A willingness to learn from others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers are open to new ideas</li> <li>• Teachers are willing to take chances</li> <li>• Staff is not afraid to try new ideas</li> <li>• Staff is willing to make mistakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate that fosters change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers are not willing to try new teaching methods</li> <li>• Lack of money to support innovative ideas*</li> </ul>

(table continues)

Table 3 (continued)

*Summary of Trial Delphi Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Cultural Facilitators, and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Widespread communication across school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open communication across the school*</li> <li>• High levels of communication across stakeholders*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gathering feedback</li> <li>• Discuss information openly</li> <li>• Discuss information honestly</li> <li>• Leaders in a school meet regularly to share information with other staff members</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of communication among stakeholders*</li> </ul>
Common focus that drives the actions of the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared goal setting</li> <li>• A shared vision among all stakeholders</li> <li>• Common goals</li> <li>• Common objectives</li> <li>• Shared values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting goals as a school community*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern for preserving a common vision</li> <li>• Concern for preserving common goals</li> <li>• Concern for preserving common objectives</li> <li>• A sense of commitment to a shared leadership model</li> <li>• Concern for others involved in shared leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff does not have a shared vision</li> <li>• Lack of common goals among staff*</li> <li>• Lack of commitment to a shared leadership model*</li> </ul>

(table continues)

Table 3 (continued)

*Summary of Trial Delphi Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Cultural Facilitators, and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Commitment to the children, school, education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff holds itself to high expectations</li> <li>• Staff takes an interest in the lives of the students</li> <li>• A commitment to the goals of the group</li> <li>• A commitment to the objectives of the group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff members work after the regular school day with students needing additional support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A feeling of responsibility to the school*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor work ethic of some teachers*</li> <li>• Low expectations for student performance*</li> <li>• Lack of responsiveness of some staff members</li> </ul>
Collaboration among stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A time for collaboration*</li> <li>• Business is conducted through committee meetings*</li> <li>• Professional learning communities</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving all stakeholders</li> <li>• PTA encouraged to take active role in school program, e.g., volunteers</li> <li>• Staff members are active learners</li> <li>• Staff members collaborate with their peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team approach to work*</li> <li>• Inclusivity</li> <li>• Cooperation among staff members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of time for collaboration</li> <li>• Micromanagement by the principal*</li> <li>• Inability to reach consensus on key decisions*</li> <li>• Controlling personalities</li> </ul>

(table continues)

Table 3 (continued)

*Summary of Trial Delphi Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Cultural Facilitators, and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Focus on planning for school improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academics are the focus of all planning</li> <li>• Adequate time allotted to accomplish tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff does not make excuses for lack of achievement</li> <li>• Staff looks for additional strategies to promote learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A collaborative effort of improving schools among teachers and administrators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of training on shared leadership as an organizational model*</li> </ul>
School culture is built on mutual respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowerment</li> <li>• Mutual trust among all stakeholders*</li> <li>• Optimistic outlooks</li> <li>• Openness</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledging individual contributions toward school goals</li> <li>• Acknowledging group contributions toward school goals</li> <li>• Decisions of staff supported by the administration</li> <li>• Mutual support of all stakeholders*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An attitude of encouragement</li> <li>• A nurturing environment</li> <li>• Positive climate*</li> <li>• Trust in the process of building relationships</li> <li>• A willingness to accept differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not everyone can agree to disagree</li> </ul>

Note. Asterisks indicate original response was reworded to clarify meaning.

As a result of the trial, the Delphi instrument was revised. Question 1 (Based on your experiences and observations, what are the key words or phrases that describe shared leadership as it occurs in the school setting?) was reworded for clarity, and Question 5 (Based on your experiences and observations, what are the key words or phrases that describe the impact shared leadership has on instruction?) was dropped as it was outside the scope of the study. The final instrument (see Appendix C) had four questions: Based on your experiences and observations, (1) What are the key words or phrases that describe characteristics of shared leadership as it occurs in the school setting, (2) What are the key words or phrases that describe the behaviors present in the school that exemplify shared leadership, (3) What are the key words or phrases that describe aspects of the school culture that allow shared leadership to take place, and (4) What are the key words or phrases that describe aspects of the school culture that are barriers to shared leadership? The Delphi I instrument was sent electronically to all panelists with a letter of introduction (see Appendix D).

### Development of Delphi II

The responses from the Delphi I instrument were compiled and translated into a multiple choice format. The response options for all multiple choice questions were as follows: a poor descriptor, a fair descriptor, a good descriptor, or an excellent descriptor. The multiple choice questions created from the compiled responses to Delphi I became the Delphi II instrument (see Appendix E). To expedite the data collection process [survey.vt.edu](http://survey.vt.edu) (2005) was used to create an on-line survey from the multiple choice questions. The Delphi II letter of introduction (see Appendix F) was sent electronically to all panelists. The URL for [survey.vt.edu](http://survey.vt.edu) was given in the letter for access to the instrument.

### Development of Delphi III

The Delphi III instrument was developed from the responses received on the Delphi II. Data from the Delphi II were exported from [survey.vt.edu](http://survey.vt.edu) (2005)

and imported into SPSS Version 15.0 to create a statistical profile of all descriptors. Panelists received a report of the median, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum score, and percentage of panelists who rated each item as a good descriptor or excellent descriptor. The Delphi III instrument (see Appendix G), which included the statistical data for each item, was sent to the panelists as an email attachment. Using a four point scale, participants were asked to give a final rating to those items to which 80% of the panelists had responded favorably in Round 2. A letter of introduction (see Appendix H) was sent with the instrument.

### Analysis and Use of the Data

Analysis of the data occurred after each round of the Delphi study. After Round 1, the data were color-coded, printed, and sorted to identify domains within the responses. In Round 2 panelists rated each item as a poor descriptor, a fair descriptor, a good descriptor, or an excellent descriptor. Participants' responses were converted to numerical values as follows: an excellent descriptor = 4, a good descriptor = 3, a fair descriptor = 2, and a poor descriptor = 1. Data from Round 2 were exported from survey.vt.edu (2005) to Microsoft Office Excel 2003. The Excel data file was then imported into SPSS Version 15.0 to create a statistical profile for use in the development of the Delphi III instrument. Statistics given for each item were median, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum score, and the overall percentage of panelists who rated the item 3 (a good descriptor) or 4 (an excellent descriptor). All items and related statistics were inserted into a table with a field for the panelists to rate the item again. The data from all Round 3 instruments was compiled into an Excel file. The Excel file was then imported into SPSS Version 15.0 to create a final statistical report. The descriptors to which at least 80% of the panelists responded 3 (a good descriptor) or 4 (an excellent descriptor) were used to develop a self-assessment instrument. The self-assessment instrument may be useful to schools as a guide for planning and implementing shared leadership or as a tool for evaluating existing models



of shared leadership. Details on the management of data are expanded in Chapter 4.

### Summary

In this chapter, the research and methodology was outlined. A review of the panel selection process was described and a biographical sketch of each participant was given. The chapter concluded with an account of the process for developing and administering each of the instruments used in the three-round Delphi and a brief explanation of the data analysis from each round.

## CHAPTER 4

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of this study was to identify the characteristics and behaviors of shared leadership and aspects of school culture that facilitate or act as barriers to shared leadership. A three-round Delphi technique was used to gather data from a panel of experts. The panel was chosen from four groups of professionals involved in the study or practice of shared leadership. Twenty-three individuals consented to participate in the study, and 16 participated in at least one round of the procedure. In Round 1, three principals, three researchers, two superintendents, one assistant superintendent, and three teachers responded. In Round 2 and Round 3, four principals, five researchers, two superintendents, one assistant superintendent, and four teachers responded.

#### Delphi I

The Delphi I instrument had four open-ended questions about shared leadership. The questions were designed to gather characteristics of shared leadership, behaviors of shared leadership, and aspects of school culture that support or hinder shared leadership. The Delphi I instrument (see Appendix C) and a letter of introduction (see Appendix D) were sent to the panelists. A total of 220 responses were received from twelve panelists. The response group consisted of three principals, three researchers, two superintendents, one assistant superintendent, and three teachers.

Responses to the Delphi I were reviewed for duplications and multiple descriptors in statements. Responses with multiple descriptors were separated into single-descriptor statements. All statements were color coded and sorted. Eleven domains were identified. The domains and the number of responses in each domain are in Table 4.

Table 4

*Domains Developed from the Responses to Delphi I*

Domain	Number of responses
Collaboration among stakeholders	28
Staff and leaders share responsibility	27
School culture built on mutual respect	24
Focus on planning for school improvement	21
Organizational structures support shared leadership	20
Commitment to the children, the school, and education	20
Ongoing professional development is a priority	19
Common focus drives the action of the school	17
Widespread communication across school community	17
Principal's leadership supports shared leadership	15
Innovation encouraged	12
Total responses	220

Each domain contains descriptors of the content, the process, and cultural facilitators and barriers of the identified aspect of shared leadership. This was valuable in understanding what takes place, how it takes place, and under what circumstances it takes place. The domains and the responses in each domain are in Table 5.

Table 5

*Summary of Round 1 Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Behaviors, and Cultural Facilitators and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Staff and leaders share responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All individuals understand that one person cannot independently improve the school</li> <li>• Decision making made after discussion, rather than a rubber stamp on a decision that has already been made</li> <li>• Multiple, teacher-led decision-making teams</li> <li>• Involvement of stakeholders on decisions that matter, not minutia</li> <li>• Responsibility is job-embedded for all</li> <li>• Engagement of key individuals at all levels</li> <li>• Distributed accountability</li> <li>• Internalized accountability</li> <li>• Community engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals do not make excuses</li> <li>• Fault is not placed on individuals</li> <li>• Everyone has a strong knowledge of the entire school system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willingness to take on new roles</li> <li>• Teachers and administrators assume complete accountability for student learning</li> <li>• Staff views themselves as leaders</li> <li>• Delegation of authentic power</li> <li>• A sense of distributed accountability for meeting the mission</li> <li>• Willingness to accept individual personal responsibility for the success of the whole</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of willingness for teachers to invest in a shared leadership model</li> <li>• Individuals take decisions personally</li> <li>• An unbalanced effort</li> <li>• Power structure is top down</li> <li>• Leadership roles are held by a few individuals</li> <li>• Monarchy rather than democracy</li> </ul>

(table continues)

Table 5 (continued)

*Summary of Round 1 Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Behaviors, and Cultural Facilitators and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Staff and leaders share responsibility (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site-based decision making</li> <li>• Ability to share responsibility</li> <li>• Collective responsibility</li> </ul>			
Acceptance of innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open-minded thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High engagement of all stakeholders</li> <li>• Conflict is embraced as a catalyst for change</li> <li>• High degree of initiative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trying new ideas is rewarded, rather than criticized</li> <li>• Taking risks is okay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of acceptance of ideas or suggestions</li> <li>• Jealousy among staff</li> <li>• Shared leadership is seen as an end in itself</li> <li>• Fear of the unknown</li> <li>• Fear of being responsible for change</li> <li>• Perception that school is “good enough” and there is no desire to move to “great” as an organization</li> </ul>

(table continues)

Table 5 (continued)

*Summary of Round 1 Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Behaviors, and Cultural Facilitators and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Widespread communication across school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive communications support engagement</li> <li>• Rational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open dialogue</li> <li>• Listening is a key part of the communication process</li> <li>• Effective and frequent communication between teachers</li> <li>• Effective and frequent communication between families and staff</li> <li>• Effective communication between administration and teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open dialogue</li> <li>• Dynamic communication process that is school wide</li> <li>• Courageous conversation</li> <li>• Strong communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of structures for sharing information</li> <li>• Traditional</li> <li>• Limited dialogue around corporate mission, vision, and values</li> <li>• Limited flow of information</li> <li>• Inadequate information and knowledge among staff</li> <li>• Secretive</li> </ul>
Common focus that drives the actions of the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common, agreed-upon, co-constructed vision</li> <li>• All individuals have a feeling of ownership of corporate mission, vision, and values</li> <li>• Shared vision</li> <li>• Clarity on direction and intended outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work is focused on the same goals across all staff</li> <li>• Staff members show self-discipline</li> <li>• Staff members sacrifice individual preferences to work on the common good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on achievement rather than comparison</li> <li>• Issue based</li> <li>• Shared vision</li> <li>• Inclusive but focuses on student learning</li> <li>• Focus on student learning not adult behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader centric</li> <li>• Adult-focused environment</li> <li>• Lack of clarity of purpose</li> <li>• Wandering all over</li> <li>• Staff that does not see the “whole picture”</li> </ul>

(table continues)

Table 5 (continued)

*Summary of Round 1 Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Behaviors, and Cultural Facilitators and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Commitment to the children, the school, education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources are committed to support student needs</li> <li>• Principled</li> <li>• Attention to who gets served rather than who gets credit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modeling</li> <li>• Actions are student centered</li> <li>• Commitment to tasks</li> <li>• Undaunted</li> <li>• Active involvement of stakeholders, internal and external</li> <li>• Caring</li> <li>• Responsive to the needs of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student centered</li> <li>• Determination</li> <li>• Parents are partners in the development of specific learning goals for their child</li> <li>• Teachers view themselves as the single most influential variable in a student's learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuality</li> <li>• Lack of time and energy invested by the staff</li> <li>• Teachers are peripheral rather than central</li> <li>• An attitude that students don't care</li> <li>• Uncaring and apathetic teachers</li> <li>• Resources are not dedicated to meet student needs</li> </ul>
School culture is built on mutual respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher efficacy is valued</li> <li>• Respectful consideration of suggestions</li> <li>• Recognition of different viewpoints</li> <li>• Recognition of individual and group contributions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inviting</li> <li>• Trustworthy</li> <li>• Celebration of milestones</li> <li>• Unified front</li> <li>• Connected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive, joyful climate</li> <li>• Respect for different views and experiences</li> <li>• Secure</li> <li>• Climate of trust</li> <li>• Caring</li> <li>• Honesty</li> <li>• Administration that praises staff to all who will listen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of trust</li> <li>• Being disciplined for having an opinion that is not the same as the administrators'</li> <li>• Cliques</li> <li>• Ego driven</li> <li>• Fault finding</li> </ul>

(table continues)

Table 5 (continued)

*Summary of Round 1 Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Behaviors, and Cultural Facilitators and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
School culture is built on mutual respect (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone has a sense of belonging</li> <li>• Celebration of successes--big and small</li> <li>• Unity</li> </ul>			
Focus on planning for school improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources are aligned to support goals</li> <li>• Results oriented</li> <li>• Everyone understands school improvement is ongoing and continuous</li> <li>• An inclusionary process that decides who gets what, when, and how</li> <li>• Data-driven decision making</li> <li>• Focus is on student performance</li> <li>• Decisions are focused on student learning</li> <li>• Supportive of high standards</li> <li>• Research driven</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumers of data</li> <li>• Decisions are made based on what is good for the entire group</li> <li>• Focus on continuous improvement</li> <li>• Objective</li> <li>• Decision made based on information and knowledge</li> <li>• Tenacious monitoring of improvement strategies</li> <li>• Goal centered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public use of performance or achievement data</li> <li>• Alignment of resources</li> <li>• Teachers are imbedded in strategic planning for overarching and detail-oriented adult and student learning goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus only on test results</li> <li>• Event based rather than continuous</li> </ul>

(table continues)



Table 5 (continued)

*Summary of Round 1 Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Behaviors, and Cultural Facilitators and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Collaboration among stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team work</li> <li>• Committees</li> <li>• Active and intentional collaboration</li> <li>• Common language</li> <li>• Shared expertise</li> <li>• Compromising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration within and among grade levels</li> <li>• Stakeholders see both sides</li> <li>• Open contribution and risk taking</li> <li>• A belief that collaboration can create significant impact</li> <li>• Collaborative teaming</li> <li>• Involvement of different grade levels and disciplines on school committees</li> <li>• Principal views collaboration between and among staff as a priority</li> <li>• Identifying, involving, and utilizing strengths of all staff, not simply the “shining stars”</li> <li>• Participation in individual and group reflection on practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to voice one’s opinion without penalty</li> <li>• Cooperative</li> <li>• Members value teamwork</li> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Engaged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-oriented behaviors</li> <li>• Uncooperative</li> <li>• Isolation in the classroom</li> <li>• Non-collaborative</li> <li>• Isolation of adults</li> <li>• Vesting too much power in only one team</li> <li>• Domineering</li> <li>• No agreement up front about accountability and means for judging success</li> </ul>

(table continues)

Table 5 (continued)

*Summary of Round 1 Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Behaviors, and Cultural Facilitators and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Principal provides leadership that supports a shared leadership model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the responsibilities needing emphasis in a specific situation</li> <li>• Leaders not managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal ensures that communication is two way and reciprocal</li> <li>• Principal ensures that organization allows for shared leadership</li> <li>• Principal is trusted and respected by staff</li> <li>• Principal models why shared leadership is important</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrators that are willing to “hear” the ideas of those in the trenches</li> <li>• A willingness on the part of the principal to give up some control while monitoring effectiveness of decisions</li> <li>• Risk-taking administration</li> <li>• Leadership that believes in collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsupportive</li> <li>• Poor principal leadership</li> <li>• “My way” attitude</li> <li>• Bossy</li> <li>• Principal works for own agenda</li> </ul>
Ongoing professional development is a priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational structures support shared learning</li> <li>• Learning is a continuous process for staff</li> <li>• Learning communities are a natural outgrowth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning is shared</li> <li>• Expert</li> <li>• Training relevant to shared leadership is evident among staff</li> <li>• Learning centered</li> <li>• Cooperative learning</li> <li>• Members are active participants in learning communities</li> <li>• Actively seek feedback on practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching is external and internal</li> <li>• A culture of student and adult learning</li> <li>• School-wide professional development about teamwork skills, group decision making, and consensus building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning in isolation</li> <li>• Lack of training</li> <li>• Mandated learning</li> <li>• Lack of funds and time for professional development</li> </ul>

(table continues)

Table 5 (continued)

*Summary of Round 1 Descriptors of Shared Leadership Practice Sorted by Characteristics, Behaviors, and Cultural Facilitators and Barriers*

Domain	Characteristics	Behaviors	Facilitators	Barriers
Ongoing professional development is a priority (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional learning communities that are trained and empowered to make decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal allows staff to guide and lead professional development that is linked to school-based learning goals</li> </ul>		
Organizational structures that support shared leadership are in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear governance structures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active inquiry regarding instructional and operational practices</li> <li>Acceptance of messiness and conflict as a healthy part of effective decision making</li> <li>Resourceful</li> <li>Coherent</li> <li>Formal structures allowing two-way flow of information and decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transparent decision making</li> <li>No micromanagement</li> <li>Facilitative</li> <li>Stability</li> <li>Clear expectations</li> <li>Time for structured reflection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of formal structures to facilitate collaboration</li> <li>Lack of formal structures to facilitate communication</li> <li>District-level decisions</li> <li>Outside pressures such as district mandates, standardized testing, parental pressure</li> <li>Prohibitive and inflexible school schedule</li> <li>Process is a facade: it's business as usual</li> <li>Chaotic</li> <li>Closed decision-making systems</li> </ul>

## Delphi II

The Delphi II questionnaire (see Appendix E) was administered with a web-based survey program (survey.vt.edu, 2005). After removing duplicate responses and rewriting items with multiple ideas, 180 items remained from Round 1. Items were presented under each of the four original areas of study: characteristics of shared leadership (66 items), behaviors of shared leadership (42 items), aspects of school culture that facilitate shared leadership, (37 items), and aspects of school culture that are barriers to shared leadership (35 items). Each item was presented in a multiple choice format. Participants were asked to rate each item as a poor descriptor, a good descriptor, a fair descriptor, or an excellent descriptor of the characteristics, behaviors, or aspects of school culture that facilitate or detract from shared leadership. The Delphi II questionnaire (see Appendix E) and a letter of introduction (see Appendix F) were sent to all 23 of the individuals who originally agreed to participate in the study. Sixteen panelists responded.

Using SPSS Version 15.0, a statistical report was created based on the data collected (see Appendix G). Responses were converted to numerical values as follows: an excellent descriptor = 4, a good descriptor = 3, a fair descriptor = 2, and a poor descriptor = 1. The median, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores, and the percentage of panelists that scored each item as a good descriptor or an excellent descriptor were calculated.

There were 84 items that met the criterion of 80% of the panelists rating the item as a good descriptor (3) or an excellent descriptor (4). These items were not sorted into the domains that emerged in Round 1. So there would be no bias in the analysis of the Round 2 responses, all statements were color coded and sorted with no preconceived belief of how the items were related. Sorting of the items resulted in five domains. The domain names and the number of responses in each domain are in Table 6.

Table 6

*Domains Developed from the Responses to Delphi II*

Domain	Number of responses
Collaboration	13
Common focus	12
Shared responsibility	23
Supportive culture	20
Widespread communication	16
Total responses	84

The domains and associated descriptors of characteristics, behaviors, and cultural facilitators and barriers to shared leadership are in Tables 7, 8, 9, and 10.

Table 7

*Round 2 Descriptors of Characteristics of Shared Leadership Practice Meeting the 80% Criterion Listed by Domain*

Collaboration	Common focus	Shared responsibility	Supportive culture	Widespread communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An expectation that participants will work as a team (12)</li> <li>• A sharing of expertise among participants (15)</li> <li>• Collaboration among school personnel in achieving goals (38)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A common vision among participants (8)</li> <li>• Shared ownership of a common corporate mission (9)</li> <li>• Participation in setting organizational direction (11)</li> <li>• Staff participation in professional development relevant to shared leadership (41)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple teacher-led decision-making teams (1)</li> <li>• Involvement of stakeholders in decisions that matter, not minutia (2)</li> <li>• Shared responsibility for the work (3)</li> <li>• Shared accountability for outcomes (4)</li> <li>• Shared learning among participants (27)</li> <li>• Professional learning communities that are empowered to make decisions (30)</li> <li>• An administrator who ensures that school structures allow for shared leadership (61)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher efficacy that is valued by the administration (23)</li> <li>• An administrator who is trusted by staff (62)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive communication that supports participant engagement (7)</li> <li>• Open dialogue among participants (34)</li> </ul>

Note: The numbers in parentheses represent the item number from the Delphi II instrument.

Table 8

*Round 2 Descriptors of Behaviors of Shared Leadership Practice Meeting the 80% Criterion Listed by Domain*

Collaboration	Common focus	Shared responsibility	Supportive culture	Widespread communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing teachers time to share experiences (64)</li> <li>• Holding collaboration among staff as a priority (79)</li> <li>• Utilizing the strengths of all staff, not simply the “shining stars” (80)</li> <li>• Participating in group reflection on practice (81)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing work on agreed upon goals (71)</li> <li>• Tenacious monitoring of improvement strategies by participants (82)</li> <li>• Focusing on participants’ attention to continuous improvement (83)</li> <li>• Participating in learning communities (87)</li> <li>• Focusing on who gets served rather than who gets credit (94)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing opportunities for active involvement of all stakeholders (77)</li> <li>• Making group decisions based on information (84)</li> <li>• Allowing teachers to lead professional development that is linked to school-based learning goals (88)</li> <li>• Sharing accountability with all participants (91)</li> <li>• Sharing responsibility with all participants (92)</li> <li>• Making decisions after discussion, rather than rubber stamping decisions that have already been made (108)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing different viewpoints (97)</li> <li>• Recognizing individual and group contributions (98)</li> <li>• Accepting mistakes as learning opportunities (107)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening as a key part of the communication process (70)</li> <li>• Modeling shared leadership behaviors (74)</li> <li>• Providing professional development on group decision making (101)</li> <li>• Ensuring decision making is transparent to all participants (103)</li> </ul>

Note: The numbers in parentheses represent the item number from the Delphi II instrument.

Table 9

*Round 2 Descriptors of Components of School Culture that Facilitate Shared Leadership Practice Meeting the 80% Criterion Listed by Domain*

Collaboration	Common focus	Shared responsibility	Supportive culture	Widespread communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ability to voice one’s opinion without penalty (113)</li> <li>• An atmosphere of cooperation (114)</li> <li>• Engaging work (115)</li> <li>• Intentional collaboration (124)</li> <li>• Leadership that believes in collaboration (134)</li> <li>• A shared belief that collaboration can create significant impact (144)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decisions are made based on what is good for the entire group (128)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A willingness of participants to take on new roles (109)</li> <li>• Administrative delegation of authentic power (110)</li> <li>• A sense of distributed accountability for meeting the mission (111)</li> <li>• A willingness to accept personal responsibility for the success of the whole (112)</li> <li>• A sense of collective responsibility (123)</li> <li>• A willingness on the part of the principal to give up some control while monitoring effectiveness of decisions (132)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mutually supportive climate (116)</li> <li>• Respect for different views (117)</li> <li>• Respect for different experiences (118)</li> <li>• A climate of trust (120)</li> <li>• Honesty among staff members (121)</li> <li>• Respectful consideration of suggestions (126)</li> <li>• A sense of belonging (127)</li> <li>• Trustworthy staff members (130)</li> <li>• A sense of connectedness (131)</li> <li>• A risk-taking administration (133)</li> <li>• The acceptance of collective efficacy as a critical value (140)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An expectation that students will learn (135)</li> <li>• An expectation that adults will learn (136)</li> <li>• Clear expectations (138)</li> </ul>

Note: The numbers in parentheses represent the item number from the Delphi II instrument.



Table 10

Round 2 Descriptors of Barriers to Shared Leadership Practice Meeting the 80% Criterion Listed by Domain

Collaboration	Common focus	Shared responsibility	Supportive culture	Widespread communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of structures for sharing information (146)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work that is unfocused (167)</li> <li>• A staff that does not see the “whole picture” (168)</li> <li>• An inability of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership (177)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An unwillingness of participants to invest in shared leadership (152)</li> <li>• A power structure that is top down (155)</li> <li>• Leadership roles are limited to a few individuals (156)</li> <li>• Major changes are made unilaterally by administrators without getting participant buy-in (179)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of acceptance of input (158)</li> <li>• A perception that the school is good enough (163)</li> <li>• A sense of negativity that permeates the climate (169)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited dialogue around corporate mission, vision, or values (148)</li> <li>• Limited flow of information (149)</li> <li>• Inadequate information among staff (150)</li> <li>• Secretive actions (151)</li> <li>• Unclear purposes of shared leadership (166)</li> <li>• Acceptance of the status quo (176)</li> </ul>

Note. These are the negative aspects of the culture that serve as barriers within the identified domains. The numbers in parentheses represent the item number from the Delphi II instrument.

Seven descriptors were rated as good or excellent by 100% of the panelists. These were labeled *essential elements* of shared leadership. These essential elements of shared leadership and the domains with which they are associated are in Table 11.

Table 11

*Delphi II Essential Elements of Shared Leadership*

Domain	Descriptor
Collaboration	Collaboration among school personnel in achieving goals
Common focus	Leadership that believes in collaboration
	Focusing work on agreed upon goals
Supportive culture	An ability of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership <sup>a</sup>
	A climate of trust
Widespread communication	The acceptance of collective efficacy as a critical value
	Clear purposes of shared leadership

<sup>a</sup>This item was reworded in a positive direction. The *inability* of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership was a barrier to shared leadership.

Two descriptors--tenure and teacher associations--received a mean score of less than 2.00 and had a median score of 1. Both items were associated with barriers to shared leadership in the school setting. Neither was believed to hinder the implementation of shared leadership.

### Delphi III

The Delphi III (see Appendix G) contained a statistical description of each item and the rating which the panelist had given the item in Round 2. Statistics included median, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores, and the percentage of panelists that rated the item a good descriptor (3) or an excellent descriptor (4). The instrument and a letter of introduction (see Appendix H) were sent to the 16 panelists that had participated in Round 2.

Upon review of the data, panelists were allowed to make changes in their rating for any descriptor which 80% of the panelists rated as a good descriptor (3) or an excellent descriptor (4). Ten panelists changed their rating on at least one item from the rating given on the Delphi II instrument.

Using SPSS 15.0, a final statistical report (see Appendix I) of the data was created. In a comparison of the standard deviations of Round 2 and Round 3, 52 items had a lower standard deviation at the conclusion of Round 3. This indicated the panelists were able to reach greater consensus on what describes the practices of shared leadership. The standard deviation of eight descriptors was higher (there was less agreement) in Round 3: utilizing the strengths of all staff, not simply the “shining stars”; participating in group reflection on practice; providing professional development on group decision making; allowing teachers time to share experiences; a willingness of participants to take on new roles; the ability to voice one’s opinion without penalty; respect for different views. These items still met the 80% criterion. The descriptors are in Table 12.

Table 12

*Descriptors with a Higher Standard Deviation in Round 3 as Compared to Round 2*

Descriptor	Round 2 standard deviation	Round 3 standard deviation
Utilizing the strengths of all staff, not simply the “shining stars”	.62	.63
Participating in group reflection on practice	.66	.70
Providing professional development on group decision making	.81	.87
Allowing teachers time to share experiences	.87	.89
A willingness of participants to take on new roles	.72	.75
The ability to voice one’s opinion without penalty	.73	.81
Engaging work	.79	.80
Respect for different views	.79	.81

Two items--tenacious monitoring of improvement strategies by participants and providing professional development on group decision making--no longer met the 80% criterion at the conclusion of Round 3, and

they were dropped. Because of the stability of the items meeting the 80% criterion from Round 2 and Round 3, the domains created in Round 2 were accepted as the domains of shared leadership. The Round 3 domains and associated descriptors of characteristics, behaviors, and cultural facilitators and barriers to shared leadership are in Tables 13, 14, 15, and 16.

Table 13

*Round 3 Descriptors of Characteristics of Shared Leadership Practice Meeting the 80% Criterion Listed by Domain*

Collaboration	Common focus	Shared responsibility	Supportive culture	Widespread communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An expectation that participants will work as a team (12)</li> <li>• A sharing of expertise among participants (15)</li> <li>• Collaboration among school personnel in achieving goals (38)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A common vision among participants (8)</li> <li>• Shared ownership of a common corporate mission (9)</li> <li>• Participation in setting organizational direction (11)</li> <li>• Staff participation in professional development relevant to shared leadership (41)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple teacher-led decision-making teams (1)</li> <li>• Involvement of stakeholders in decisions that matter, not minutia (2)</li> <li>• Shared responsibility for the work (3)</li> <li>• Shared accountability for outcomes (4)</li> <li>• Shared learning among participants (27)</li> <li>• Professional learning communities that are empowered to make decisions (30)</li> <li>• An administrator who ensures that school structures allow for shared leadership (61)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher efficacy that is valued by the administration (23)</li> <li>• An administrator who is trusted by staff (62)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive communication that supports participant engagement (7)</li> <li>• Open dialogue among participants (34)</li> </ul>

*Note:* The numbers in parentheses represent the item number from the Delphi II instrument.

Table 14

Round 3 Descriptors of Behaviors of Shared Leadership Practice Meeting the 80% Criterion Listed by Domain

Collaboration	Common focus	Shared responsibility	Supportive culture	Widespread communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing teachers time to share experiences (64)</li> <li>• Holding collaboration among staff as a priority (79)</li> <li>• Utilizing the strengths of all staff, not simply the “shining stars” (80)</li> <li>• Participating in group reflection on practice (81)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing work on agreed upon goals (71)</li> <li>• Focusing on participants’ attention to continuous improvement (83)</li> <li>• Participating in learning communities (87)</li> <li>• Focusing on who gets served rather than who gets credit (94)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing opportunities for active involvement of all stakeholders (77)</li> <li>• Making group decisions based on information (84)</li> <li>• Allowing teachers to lead professional development that is linked to school-based learning goals (88)</li> <li>• Sharing accountability with all participants (91)</li> <li>• Sharing responsibility with all participants (92)</li> <li>• Making decisions after discussion, rather than rubber stamping decisions that have already been made (108)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing different viewpoints (97)</li> <li>• Recognizing individual and group contributions (98)</li> <li>• Accepting mistakes as learning opportunities (107)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening as a key part of the communication process (70)</li> <li>• Modeling shared leadership behaviors (74)</li> <li>• Ensuring decision making is transparent to all participants (103)</li> </ul>

Note: The numbers in parentheses represent the item number from the Delphi II instrument.

Table 15

*Round 3 Descriptors of Components of School Culture that Facilitate Shared Leadership Practice Meeting the 80% Criterion Listed by Domain*

Collaboration	Common focus	Shared responsibility	Supportive culture	Widespread communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ability to voice one’s opinion without penalty (113)</li> <li>• An atmosphere of cooperation (114)</li> <li>• Engaging work (115)</li> <li>• Intentional collaboration (124)</li> <li>• Leadership that believes in collaboration (134)</li> <li>• A shared belief that collaboration can create significant impact (144)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decisions are made based on what is good for the entire group (128)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A willingness of participants to take on new roles (109)</li> <li>• Administrative delegation of authentic power (110)</li> <li>• A sense of distributed accountability for meeting the mission (111)</li> <li>• A willingness to accept personal responsibility for the success of the whole (112)</li> <li>• A sense of collective responsibility (123)</li> <li>• A willingness on the part of the principal to give up some control while monitoring effectiveness of decisions (132)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mutually supportive climate (116)</li> <li>• Respect for different views (117)</li> <li>• Respect for different experiences (118)</li> <li>• A climate of trust (120)</li> <li>• Honesty among staff members (121)</li> <li>• Respectful consideration of suggestions (126)</li> <li>• A sense of belonging (127)</li> <li>• Trustworthy staff members (130)</li> <li>• A sense of connectedness (131)</li> <li>• A risk-taking administration (133)</li> <li>• The acceptance of collective efficacy as a critical value (140)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An expectation that students will learn(135)</li> <li>• An expectation that adults will learn (136)</li> <li>• Clear expectations (138)</li> </ul>

*Note:* The numbers in parentheses represent the item number from the Delphi II instrument.

Table 16

*Round 3 Descriptors of Barriers to Shared Leadership Practice Meeting the 80% Criterion Listed by Domain*

Collaboration	Common focus	Shared responsibility	Supportive culture	Widespread communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of structures for sharing information (146)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work that is unfocused (167)</li> <li>• A staff that does not see the “whole picture” (168)</li> <li>• An inability of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership (177)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An unwillingness of participants to invest in shared leadership (152)</li> <li>• A power structure that is top down (155)</li> <li>• Leadership roles are limited to a few individuals (156)</li> <li>• Major changes are made unilaterally by administrators without getting participant buy-in (179)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of acceptance of input (158)</li> <li>• A perception that the school is good enough (163)</li> <li>• A sense of negativity that permeates the climate (169)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited dialogue around corporate mission, vision, or values (148)</li> <li>• Limited flow of information (149)</li> <li>• Inadequate information among staff (150)</li> <li>• Secretive actions (151)</li> <li>• Unclear purposes of shared leadership (166)</li> <li>• Acceptance of the status quo (176)</li> </ul>

*Note.* These are the negative aspects of the culture that serve as barriers within the identified domains. The numbers in parentheses represent the item number from the Delphi II instrument.



Fifteen descriptors received a score of 3 (a good descriptor) or 4 (an excellent descriptor) by 100 % of the respondents as compared to seven in Round 2. The 15 descriptors were accepted as the *essential elements* of shared leadership. Table 17 shows a comparison of the essential elements from Round 2 and Round 3 and the domains in which they fall.

Table 17

*A Comparison of Round 2 and Round 3 Essential Elements of Shared Leadership*

Domain	Descriptor--Round 2	Descriptor--Round 3
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration among school personnel in achieving goals</li> <li>• Leadership that believes in collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration among school personnel in achieving goals</li> <li>• Leadership that believes in collaboration</li> <li>• Holding collaboration among staff as a priority</li> <li>• A shared belief that collaboration can create significant impact</li> </ul>
Common focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing work on agreed upon goals</li> <li>• An ability of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership<sup>a</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing work on agreed upon goals</li> <li>• An ability of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership<sup>a</sup></li> </ul>
Shared responsibility		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing teachers to lead professional development that is linked to school-based learning goals</li> <li>• Administrative delegation of authentic power</li> <li>• A willingness on the part of the principal to give up some control while monitoring effectiveness of decisions</li> <li>• Involvement of shareholders in decisions that matter, not minutia</li> <li>• Making group decisions based on information</li> </ul>
Supportive culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A climate of trust</li> <li>• The acceptance of collective efficacy as a critical value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A climate of trust</li> <li>• The acceptance of collective efficacy as a critical value</li> <li>• Honesty among staff members</li> </ul>
Widespread Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear purposes of shared leadership<sup>b</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear purposes of shared leadership<sup>b</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup>This item was reworded in a positive direction. The *inability* of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership was a barrier to shared leadership. <sup>b</sup>This item was reworded in a positive direction. *Unclear* purposes of shared leadership was a barrier to shared leadership.

## Summary

The data collected from the Delphi instruments and an analysis of the results were presented in this chapter. The development of the instruments was explained. A description of the responses given by the participants and the domains created from the responses were reported. The chapter concluded with a comparison of descriptors for Round 2 and Round 3.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Douglas Reeves (2006) used the analogy of an architect to describe leadership. An architect starts with a vision, but the vision does not become a reality without the input of many others. Just as an architect must depend on the expertise of a wide range of workers to make the vision a reality, so does the principal. Reeves stated that “no single person can achieve the essential demands of leadership alone” (p. 28). As expectations for educating an increasingly diverse group of learners rise, the effective leader is one who can build teams with a variety of critical strengths. Effective shared leadership brings members of an organization together in ways that complement each other to meet common goals.

The purpose of this study was to create an operational definition of shared leadership with descriptors of characteristics, behaviors, and school cultures that facilitate and detract from effective shared leadership. A three-round Delphi study was conducted with a panel consisting of individuals from four subgroups: writers and researchers, superintendents, principals, and teachers. All participants had distinguished themselves as experts in the field through their study or successful application of shared leadership.

#### Conclusions

A list of 82 descriptors that define effective shared leadership was generated. After sorting the descriptors, five domains of shared leadership were identified: collaboration, common focus, shared responsibility, supportive culture, and widespread communication. Each domain contains descriptors of characteristics, behaviors and school cultures that facilitate or detract from effective shared leadership. These descriptors define the practice of shared leadership.

The five domains paint the “big picture,” but it is the descriptors within the domains that add the defining strokes that clarify shared leadership practice. The complexity of school improvement necessitates collaboration if goals are to be met. It is an integral part of how work occurs within the school. A common focus directs the work of the school. All members work toward agreed upon goals and monitor the success of efforts toward meeting those goals. Staff willingly shares responsibility. There is a sense of collective accountability that extends across a wide spectrum of activities and commands the attention of all participants. Within the school, a supportive culture exists that facilitates shared leadership. The culture gives members a sense of personal value and collective efficacy. Widespread communication ensures a constant flow of information. All members understand the goals of the school and the expectations that exist for adults and students. The practice of these critical components creates a web of interdependent relationships among people, tasks and context. For shared leadership to be effective, members of the school community must attend to these key areas. The following discussion of the results shows that shared leadership is defined by teamwork, distributed responsibility, and a supportive culture. The discussion will then focus on how the domains identified in this study relate to current theories of educational leadership.

## Discussion

School leaders face the dilemma of fulfilling a long list of assignments. Principals are charged with ensuring everything from a safe and secure environment to plans for school improvement. A school practicing shared leadership is characterized by an expectation that all members work as a team. Multiple structures exist that allow for collective work toward agreed upon goals. Collaboration is a priority among the staff.

The principal, the formal leader of the school, is not afraid to distribute authentic power among the staff. As a result, teachers are willing to take on

new roles that are important to the accomplishment of the goals.

Responsibilities such as decision making are distributed, and all members carefully monitor the outcomes. The behaviors of those involved in shared leadership demonstrate an understanding that all members are accountable for student learning.

Teamwork and distributed responsibility cannot flourish without a supportive culture. Mutual respect is a fundamental value in the school. Members recognize different viewpoints and genuine consideration is given to all ideas and suggestions. Administrators and teachers believe in collective efficacy.

Two recent studies have synthesized the research and produced descriptors of effective school leadership behavior. Cotton (2003) created a list of categories of principal behavior based on a narrative review of school leadership research. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) developed a list of principal responsibilities from a meta-analysis of research on school leadership. This research was conducted using a Delphi technique. Although the methodologies used by Cotton, Marzano et al., and this researcher all differed, the findings were similar. An analysis of the results from the three studies indicates that multiple essential elements of effective principal leadership are inherent in shared leadership. Thus, critical qualities of school leadership are characteristic of effective shared leadership. Table 18 contains a comparison of the shared leadership domains identified in this study to Cotton's 25 leadership responsibilities and Marzano, Waters, and McNulty's 21 responsibilities of school leaders.

Table 18

*A Comparison of Shared Leadership Domains Found in This Study With Recent Research Findings*

Domain (this study)	Poff's 15 essentials	Cotton's 25 practices	Marzano's 21 responsibilities
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration among school personnel in achieving goals</li> <li>• Leadership that believes in collaboration</li> <li>• Holding collaboration among staff as a priority</li> <li>• A shared belief that collaboration can create significant impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent and community outreach and involvement</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Discussion of instructional issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intellectual stimulation</li> <li>• Involvement in curriculum and assessment</li> <li>• Situational awareness</li> </ul>
Common focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing work on agreed upon goals</li> <li>• An ability of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership<sup>a</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision and goals focused on high levels of student learning</li> <li>• High expectations for student learning</li> <li>• Norm of continuous improvement</li> <li>• Use of student progress data for program improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus</li> <li>• Ideals/beliefs</li> </ul>
Shared responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing teachers to lead professional development that is linked to school-based learning goals</li> <li>• Administrative delegation of authentic power</li> <li>• A willingness on the part of the principal to give up some control while monitoring effectiveness of decisions</li> <li>• Involvement of shareholders in decisions that matter, not minutia</li> <li>• Making group decisions based on information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared leadership, decision making, and staff empowerment</li> <li>• Instructional leadership</li> <li>• Ongoing pursuit of high levels of student learning</li> <li>• Professional development opportunities and resources</li> <li>• Protecting instructional time</li> <li>• Monitoring student progress and sharing findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change agent</li> <li>• Input</li> <li>• Knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Optimizer</li> </ul>

(table continued)

Table 18 (continued)

*A Comparison of Shared Leadership Domains Found in This Study With Recent Research Findings*

Domain (this study)	Poff's 15 essentials	Cotton's 25 practices	Marzano's 21 responsibilities
Supportive culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A climate of trust</li> <li>• The acceptance of collective efficacy as a critical value</li> <li>• Honesty among staff members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe and orderly school environment</li> <li>• Self-confidence, responsibility, and perseverance</li> <li>• Visibility and accessibility</li> <li>• Positive and supportive climate</li> <li>• Emotional and interpersonal support</li> <li>• Rituals, ceremonies, and other symbolic actions</li> <li>• Classroom observation and feedback</li> <li>• Support of teacher autonomy</li> <li>• Support of risk taking</li> <li>• Recognition of student and staff achievement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affirmation</li> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• Contingent rewards</li> <li>• Visibility</li> <li>• Discipline</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Order</li> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• Monitoring and feedback</li> </ul>
Widespread communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear purposes of shared leadership<sup>b</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication and interaction</li> <li>• Role modeling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Outreach</li> </ul>

Note. Cotton's and Marzano's lists were compiled verbatim from *School leadership that works* (p.178) by R. Marzano, T. Waters, and B. McNulty, 2005, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Copyright 2005 by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

<sup>a</sup>This item was reworded in a positive direction. The *inability* of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership was a barrier to shared leadership. <sup>b</sup>This item was reworded in a positive direction. *Unclear* purposes of shared leadership was a barrier to shared leadership.

Hoerr (2005) contended, "Leadership is about relationships" (p. 7). The characteristics and behaviors of shared leadership identified in this study support Hoerr's premise. The significance of relationships in effective shared leadership is evident across the five domains. It is reflected in the descriptors of the processes and procedures of communication, collaboration, responsibility, and accountability that take place in a shared leadership environment.



Communication is open and honest. Members of the school respect the different views of others and recognize and celebrate the contributions of individuals and groups. Actions such as these create an atmosphere of cooperation and a sense of connectedness in all members. Because relationships are built on such fundamental values as trust, honesty, and integrity, leadership is accepted from any member. The effectiveness of shared leadership as a vehicle for school improvement is dependent on the quality of the relationships among the members of the school.

Current theorists (Bennis, 2003; Buckingham & Clifton, 2001; Collins, 2001; Covey, 1990; Elmore, 2000; Fullan, 2001; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001) describe leadership that centers on group contributions in a variety of ways. Covey used the term synergism to describe the use of collaboration to accomplish more as a group than as an individual. Elmore called for a distribution of leadership rather than expecting a single individual to possess all the knowledge, skills, and talent necessary to guide an organization. Fullan referred to the power of collectivism. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond defined leadership in terms of collaborative distribution, collective distribution, and coordinated distribution of tasks and responsibilities. Buckingham and Clifton believed a leader should spend considerable time selecting individuals with strengths that complement the organization and allow them to take on leadership roles in those areas. Bennis identified the ability to meaningfully engage others as one of four critical leadership behaviors. It is not unusual to find there are fruitcakes on the bus. Perhaps Collins best explained effective leadership when he wrote, "If we get the right people on the bus, the right people in the right seats, and the wrong people off the bus, then we'll figure out how to take it someplace great" (p.41). A distributed power structure and the willingness of stakeholders to share decision making and accountability for the outcomes and activities of the school are crucial to effective shared leadership

The common thread that runs through these concepts of leadership and the findings of this study is purposeful collective action. The essential elements

of purposeful collective action identified in this study describe work that is intentionally focused on agreed upon goals based on a shared mission. The formal leader, the principal, builds a complementary group of individuals with expertise in areas critical to the improvement of the school and is not afraid to relinquish control to these members. The formal leader ensures that structures which facilitate collaboration are in place, thus allowing group reflection and decision making related to the co-constructed goals of the school.

The principal distributes roles and responsibilities to allow for the engagement of all members, thus giving members ownership of the activities of the school. When the principal delegates important tasks among the school staff, two important values of shared leadership are being communicated: (a) each individual is viewed as and valued as a contributor, and (b) the impact of group action is far greater than that of individuals acting in isolation. The effective principal understands leadership is not a solitary activity. It is the result of the collective effort of a unified team.

### Recommendations for Practice

There is ample opinion, some research, and a scattering of anecdotal evidence from practice that support shared leadership as an effective organizational process for schools; however, the details of effective shared leadership practice are not well known. The purposeful actions of shared leadership are paramount to its effective practice. Educators interested in using shared leadership as a vehicle for school improvement must recognize the daily activities and contexts that bring meaning to the broad practices and responsibilities defined in current professional literature. The panelists in this study recommended 82 characteristics, behaviors, and cultural conditions that either facilitate or hinder the practice of shared leadership. These can be collapsed into five major domains. To be effective, teachers and administrators in schools must do the following:

1. Share responsibility for the planning and implementation of school improvement.
2. Focus work on agreed upon goals.
3. Ensure collaboration is the foundation of the processes and procedures of the school.
4. Nurture a culture that honors the individual and the group.
5. Practice communication that distributes critical information to all individuals.

If schools are interested in assessing their shared leadership practices, they may want to use the rating scale based on the findings of this study (see Appendix J). It may help schools identify the degree to which current practices are in line with the characteristics, behaviors, and shared-leadership environments recommended by the expert panelists in this study. The rating scale is one way for schools to stimulate discussion about and reflection on their practices and to identify areas of needed improvement.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

An important focus of future research in the area of shared leadership should be action research on shared-leadership practices. The work of shared leadership occurs through the interplay of people, events, and structures. Shared leadership should be implemented within schools, and the effects of shared leadership on teacher morale, satisfaction, and performance should be assessed. Shared leadership is not an end in itself; it must produce results. Both teachers and students must be enriched in some way. Given the current emphasis on accountability for student results, the effect of shared leadership on student performance must be a part of the assessment.

There is need for rich descriptions of shared leadership in schools. It is one thing to ask experts to describe shared leadership; it is another to observe and describe how shared leadership works in school settings. Such

observations could verify what the experts say, add to the descriptions, or counteract inaccurate descriptors.

Rich descriptions of shared leadership could be developed with three research approaches: a case study method, an ethnographic method, and a focus-group method. Case research is well suited for situations in which one wants to understand the how or why of a phenomenon. Because case research enables one to collect information using a variety of methods, the resulting body of data can be extensive and both qualitative and quantitative. Ethnographic research assumes community and the culture of the community are primary influences on the issue of study. Both community and culture are important aspects of shared leadership practice. This underlying assumption leads to data-gathering methods that yield a collective understanding of shared leadership. Interviews are characteristic of both case and ethnographic research, but focus-group research often leads to a more detailed disclosure than formal interviews. Because shared leadership involves how work is collaboratively accomplished, focus-group research could give the researcher further insight into how and to what degree collaboration occurs.

### Reflections

Many descriptors of shared leadership found in this study could be associated with other models of leadership. Certainly, open communication, utilization of the strengths of others within the organization, respect for the experiences of others, trust, and recognition of the power of the collective could enhance any leader's skills. What distinguishes shared leadership from other models is the deliberate distribution of power and the sharing of responsibility and accountability within the school. There is in shared leadership an overall spirit of collaboration.

A comparative analysis of the responses between the groups of participants was not done. A panel of experts from four groups--writers and researchers, superintendents, principals, and teachers--was used in this study

to identify characteristics, behaviors, and cultural conditions that facilitate or hinder shared leadership. Because consensus was the main interest of the researcher, the responses of one group were not compared to the responses of other groups. Such a comparative analysis would show how the groups of experts differ in their perceptions of shared leadership. The analysis of differences would add to understanding the variation in the meaning of shared leadership that is found in both theory and practice.

The Delphi technique allowed for the exchange of information among members of groups of individuals who would be unlikely to come together to communicate their expertise on the topic of shared leadership. Although technology facilitated this communication, it was not without complications. The electronic delivery of instruments was hampered by incompatible systems and computer network filter devices. This necessitated changing the email system through which the instruments were transmitted. It became critical to confirm that panelists had received each instrument. Upon initial contact with participants, it would be best to discuss potential internet difficulties and establish a confirmation of receipt process.

As the complexity of work increases so does the need to work in a collaborative fashion. My own professional experiences and my discussions with people from other professions have led me to believe that work environments that honor both the individual and the group are the most productive and the most rewarding. Effective shared leadership is a model that can facilitate such a task. Although the tenets of shared leadership appeared to be simple to implement, it is the sustained effort of those in the organization that is difficult to achieve. It is my hope that the assessment instrument developed from this research will assist schools in monitoring and reflecting on their efforts over time.

Shared leadership is not isolated to the school environment or to the field of education. Indeed, much of the literature I reviewed did not come directly from the field of education. Shared leadership is part of a much larger process of collaboration that is reshaping the world as we know it (Friedman, 2005).

Corporations and individual entrepreneurs no longer work in isolation, but coordinate their efforts to develop, improve, sell, and support products and services more efficiently than if done by a single business or individual. School leaders are taking note of the lessons learned by the corporate world. When tasks are complex, a collaborative group is more effective than any single individual. Undoubtedly, preparing the children of America to be successful in a global world is a complex task and requires such a collective effort.

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## APPENDIX A

### INITIAL DELPHI INSTRUMENT

#### **Instructions:**

This study is designed to produce an operational definition of shared leadership by identifying key descriptors of the behaviors, context, and impact of shared leadership as it is practiced in a school environment. The descriptors must clarify the distinguishing characteristics, behaviors, instructional impact, and environments of effective shared leadership. You will be asked to respond to four questions. From your experience, what are the key words or phrases that describe (1) shared leadership as it occurs in the school setting, (2) the behaviors present in the school that exemplify shared leadership, (3) aspects of the school culture that allow shared leadership to take place, (4) aspects of the school culture that are barriers to shared leadership, and (5) the impact of shared leadership on instructional practices.

For the purpose of clarity, an example is included below.

#### **Descriptors of Successful Collegiate Athletic Programs**

Successful athletic programs as they occur in the collegiate setting

- Academic and sports focus
- Athletic program involved in community programs
- Athletes held to high behavioral expectations

Behaviors of those involved in successful collegiate athletic programs

- Commitment to self and team
- Strong work ethic
- Personal sacrifice

Aspects of the culture which are conducive to successful collegiate athletic programs

- Academic support for student athlete is available
- Nurturing of the developing maturity of the student athlete
- Administrative support of the athletic program

Barriers to successful collegiate athletic programs

- Personal goals incongruent to team goals
- Lack of self-discipline of student athlete
- Lack of financial support from college/university

Impact of successful collegiate athletic programs on the student athlete

- College degree
- Development of strong interpersonal skills
- Development of time management skills

## Delphi I

### Question 1

**Directions:** Please thoroughly answer the question below. Enter your response in the text field provided.

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe shared leadership as it occurs in the school setting?

(Click within the window below to begin your answer.)

## Delphi I

### Question 2

**Directions:** Please thoroughly answer the question below. Enter your response in the text field provided.

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe the **behaviors** present in the school that exemplify shared leadership?

(Click within the window below to begin your answer.)

## Delphi I

### Question 3

**Directions:** Please thoroughly answer the question below. Enter your response in the text field provided.

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe the aspects of the **school culture** that allow shared leadership to take place?

(Click within the window below to begin your answer.)

## Delphi I

### Question 4

**Directions:** Please thoroughly answer the question below. Enter your response in the text field provided.

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe aspects of the **school culture** that are *barriers* to shared leadership?

(Click within the window below to begin your answer.)



## Delphi I

### Question 5

**Directions:** Please thoroughly answer the question below. Enter your response in the text field provided.

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe the impact shared leadership has on **instruction**?

(Click within the window below to begin your answer.)

APPENDIX B  
DELPHI I COMPILED RESPONSES FROM TRIAL

**Delphi I**

**Question 1**

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe shared leadership as it occurs in the school setting?

Shared vision and goals

- Shared ownership
- [Shared] goal setting
- Shared vision
- A shared vision among teachers and administrators

Collaboration among all staff

- Involving all stakeholders
- Inclusive
- Collaboration
- Team approach
- Trust
- Professional learning communities
- Communication
- PTA encouraged to take active role in school program, ex. volunteers.

Shared decision making

- Delegation of important responsibilities
- Shared decision making
- Empowering faculty/staff leaders
- Empowerment
- Teachers assuming leadership roles and responsibilities

High expectations

- Staff does not make excuses for lack of achievement but looks for additional strategies to promote learning.
- Staff holds itself to high expectations.

Focus on planning for school improvement

- Academics are the focus of all planning.
- Gathering feedback/input
- A collaborative effort of improving schools among teachers and administrators

Commitment to the children, school, education

- Staff that takes an interest in the lives of students
- A commitment to the goals and objectives of the group
- Staff members who want to work in the setting with the students a school serves

## Delphi I

### Question 2

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe the **behaviors** present in the school that exemplify shared leadership?

#### Teachers as leaders

- Teachers hold leadership positions (i.e., team leaders & dept. chairs).
- Teachers take on facilitator roles with Learning Communities as we look at various teaching strategies.

#### Shared decision making

- Delegation of decision making
- Involvement of all staff members in important decisions
- Group decision making

#### Inclusion of all stakeholders in model of shared leadership

- Commitment to include and involve everyone
- Communication
- Shared goal setting
- Discussing information openly and honestly
- Concern for preserving the common vision, goals, and objectives
- A sense of commitment to the shared leadership model

#### Collaboration among staff

- Cooperation among staff members
- Committee meetings
- Trust in employees
- Teamwork

#### Staff members support each other

- Positive/optimistic outlooks
- Acknowledging individual and group contributions toward school goals
- Concern for others involved in shared leadership

#### Staff members are receptive to new ideas

- Staff members are active learners and collaborate with their peers.
- Teachers are open to new ideas and willing to take chances.
- An attitude of encouragement
- A willingness to try new things

## Delphi I

### Question 3

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe the aspects of the **school culture** that allow shared leadership to take place?

Shared decision making is practiced.

- Inclusive
- Empowered
- Principal is not afraid to share the decision-making power.
- Decisions of staff supported by administration

Innovation and change are accepted.

- Climate that fosters change
- A willingness to learn from others
- Staff is not afraid to try new ideas and is willing to make mistakes.
- Flexibility

Staff accepts responsibilities of shared leadership.

- Willingness of staff to take on additional tasks
- Feeling of duty and responsibility

Sufficient time is allowed for shared leadership practices.

- Adequate time allotted to accomplish tasks
- Collaborative time

Widespread communication

- Open communication
- Open discussions of issues such as rules and test data
- High levels of communication
- Common goals and objectives/shared values
- Open
- Leaders in a school meet regularly to share information with other staff members.

Atmosphere of trust

- Support of principal for the staff--Staff supports principal
- Support of staff for the principal-- Principal supports staff
- Support of parents for the staff-- Parents support staff
- Trust in the process of building relationships
- Trust
- A nurturing environment
- Positive
- A willingness to accept differences

## Delphi I

### Question 4

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe aspects of the **school culture** that are *barriers* to shared leadership?

#### Lack of staff responsibility

- Lack of responsiveness of some key players
- Lack of leadership of some teachers--allowing a few to take on leadership roles-- others not being willing to help
- Lack of buy-in by either administration or staff (2)

#### Lack of communication

- Lack of communication (2)
- No common goals or shared vision

#### Lack of resources

- Lack of time, money, and other resources (training)
- Time
- Lack of adequate resources and support

#### Top down leadership

- Micromanagement
- Failure to identify and utilize key faculty and staff members
- Intervention and overturning of staff decisions by administration
- View that the administrator is the one and only figure of authority
- Lack of buy-in by either administration or staff (2)

#### Inability to reach group consensus on important issues

- Not everyone can agree to disagree
- Consensus may not be reached about certain decisions
- Lack of shared decision making
- Controlling personalities

#### Unwillingness to accept need for change in practices

- Comment, "We have tried that before and it did not work"
- Teachers who are not willing to try new teaching methods
- Work ethic of some teachers
- Low expectations

## Delphi I

### Question 5

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe the impact shared leadership has on **instruction**?

#### Staff improves instructional practices

- When shared leadership takes place, there is more “buy in” from all staff members so they are more willing to follow through with instructional ideas in the classroom.
- Effective instructional ideas are shared with others, and because of the trust level in the building, those ideas are likely to be implemented in the classroom.
- Strengthens weaker teachers if they are on a strong collaborative team
- Provides for quality instruction
- Greater rates of buy-in on major decisions

#### Improved student achievement

- Higher test scores
- Creating the conditions that result in high levels of student learning
- Helps schools in this age of high stake testing meet their AYP goals

#### Teacher self-efficacy

- Confident teachers
- Feelings of ownership
- Better school morale
- A feeling of shared responsibility for student learning

#### Greater collaboration on instructional issues

- Provides a team approach to reaching all students
- More collaboration and consistency between subjects and grade levels
- When leadership is shared, teachers are more willing to learn from others.
- Teams are effective with data analysis and interpretation, which has an immediate impact on instruction.
- Leadership teams within a building serve as a forum for sharing best instructional practices with one another.
- Less isolation among staff

APPENDIX C  
REVISED DELPHI I INSTRUMENT

**Instructions:**

This study is designed to produce an operational definition of shared leadership. We are trying to identify distinguishing characteristics, behaviors, and environments of effective shared leadership. You are asked to respond to four questions: From your experience what are the key words or phrases that describe--

- (1) The characteristics of shared leadership as it occurs in the school setting.
- (2) The behaviors of staff members that are present in a school that exemplify shared leadership.
- (3) Aspects of the school culture that allow shared leadership to take place.
- (4) Aspects of the school culture that are barriers to shared leadership.

For the purpose of clarity, an example related to successful athletic programs follows:

**Descriptors of Successful Collegiate Athletic Programs**

Characteristics of a successful athletic program as it occurs in the collegiate setting

- Academic and sports focus
- Athletic program involved in community programs
- Athletes held to high behavioral expectations

Behaviors of those involved in a successful collegiate athletic program

- Commitment to self and team
- Strong work ethic
- Personal sacrifice

Aspects of the culture which are conducive to a successful collegiate athletic program

- Academic support for student athletes is available
- Nurturing of the developing maturity of student athletes
- Administrative support of the athletic program

Barriers to a successful collegiate athletic program

- Personal goals incongruent to team goals
- Lack of self-discipline of student athletes
- Lack of financial support from college or university

## Delphi I

### Question 1

**Directions:** Please answer the question below. Enter your response in the text field provided.

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe **characteristics** of shared leadership as it occurs in the school setting?

(Click within the window below to begin your answer.)



## Delphi I

### Question 2

**Directions:** Please answer the question below. Enter your response in the text field provided.

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe the **behaviors** present in the school that exemplify shared leadership?

(Click within the window below to begin your answer.)

## Delphi I

### Question 3

**Directions:** Please answer the question below. Enter your response in the text field provided.

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe the aspects of the **school culture** that allow shared leadership to take place?

(Click within the window below to begin your answer.)

## Delphi I

### Question 4

**Directions:** Please answer the question below. Enter your response in the text field provided.

Based on your experiences and observations, what are the **key words or phrases** that describe aspects of the **school culture** that are *barriers* to shared leadership?

(Click within the window below to begin your answer.)

APPENDIX D  
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO PANELISTS FOR DELPHI I

Dear

I am a doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The focus of my dissertation is on the behaviors, characteristics, and environments that exemplify effective shared leadership. I am attempting to assemble a panel of individuals with experience and expertise in shared leadership from four categories: writers or researchers, school superintendents, school principals, and classroom teachers. Your name came to my attention through an extensive internet review of professional organizations, discussion with colleagues and my chair, or through a review of literature on shared leadership.

It is my hope that you can participate as a panelist in a three-round Delphi study. For the initial round (Delphi I) you will be asked to respond to four open-ended questions. Based on your experiences and observations, what are the key words or phrases that describe (1) the characteristics of shared leadership as it occurs in a school setting, (2) the behaviors of staff members present in a school that exemplifies shared leadership, (3) aspects of a school culture that allow shared leadership to take place, and (4) aspects of a school culture that are barriers to shared leadership. Once the responses of all panelists are compiled and translated to a four-point scale (Delphi II), you will be asked to rate each item on the degree it is an indicator of shared leadership. In the third round, you will receive an instrument (Delphi III) that shows the mean rating and standard deviation for each item, your rating from round two, and the overall percentage of respondents who rated the item as an excellent or good indicator of shared leadership. You will be asked to rate each item for a final time on a four-point scale. Once the study is complete, you may request a copy of the results. Below is a timetable of the Delphi study for your review.

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Date of receipt</b>	<b>Due date</b>
Delphi I		
Delphi II		
Delphi III		

In consideration of the various commitments of all participants, the distribution of all Delphi instruments will occur electronically. The potential risk to you is minimal; however, your identity will be protected by a code, and your responses will not be associated with your name at any time during the study or in the final report. You may elect not to answer any questions, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Your completion of the Delphi I will serve as your implied consent to participate.

Please notify me electronically by \_\_\_\_\_ if you are able or unable to serve as a panelist. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Joni C. Poff  
 Doctoral Candidate at Virginia Tech  
[jpoff@bcps.k12.va.us](mailto:jpoff@bcps.k12.va.us)

David J. Parks  
 Professor, School of Education  
[parks@vt.edu](mailto:parks@vt.edu)

APPENDIX E  
DELPHI II INSTRUMENT

Shared Leadership: Delphi II  
Joni Poff, Virginia Tech

You have been assigned an ID number for the purpose of this study. This number can be found in your letter of introduction. Please enter this number below.

ID Number:

Part I: Characteristics of Shared Leadership

The items in Part I were identified by panel members in Round I as **characteristics** of shared leadership in school settings. Please evaluate each item and mark it as a poor descriptor, a fair descriptor, a good descriptor, or an excellent descriptor of shared leadership.

Shared leadership in school settings is characterized by--

1. Multiple teacher-led decision-making teams.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

2. Involvement of stakeholders in decisions that matter, not minutia.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

3. Shared responsibility for the work.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

4. Shared accountability for outcomes.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

5. Site-based decision making.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

6. Open-minded thinking.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

7. Proactive communication that supports participant engagement.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

8. A common vision among participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

9. Shared ownership of a corporate mission.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

10. Shared ownership of corporate values.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

11. Participation in setting organizational direction.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

12. An expectation that participants will work as a team.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

13. The frequent use of committees to do school work.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

14. A common language to describe participants' work.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

15. A sharing of expertise among participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

16. A willingness to compromise when necessary to achieve the goals of the school.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

17. Results-oriented thinking.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

18. A decision-making process that includes participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

19. Data-driven decision making.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

20. A focus on student performance.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

21. High standards that are supported by all.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor



22. Research-driven decision making.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

23. Teacher efficacy that is valued by the administration.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

24. Celebration of successes, big and small.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

25. A mutual understanding of everyone's responsibilities in specific situations.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

26. An understanding that leaders are not managers.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

27. Shared learning among participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

28. A continuous process of learning by staff.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

29. Professional learning communities that are trained to make decisions.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

30. Professional learning communities that are empowered to make decisions.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

31. A bias for action.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

32. A strong knowledge of the school that is held by all.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

33. Much individual initiative.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

Thank you for staying with the process. You are half way through this section. I appreciate your help. You are identifying characteristics of shared leadership in school settings. --Joni

34. Open dialogue among participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

35. Frequent communication between and among teachers.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

36. Frequent communication between families and school personnel.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

37. Frequent communication between administrators and teachers.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

38. Collaboration among school personnel in achieving goals.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

39. Collaboration within and among grade levels.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

40. Staff members who are consumers of data.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

41. Staff participation in professional development relevant to shared leadership.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

42. Resourcefulness of participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

43. Administrators who don't communicate contradictory messages.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

44. Administrators who praise staff to all who will listen.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

45. Administrators who are willing to listen to the ideas of those in the trenches.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

46. Courageous conversation involving all participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

47. Staff members who view themselves as leaders.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

48. A dynamic school-wide communication process.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

49. A multi-way flow of information.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

50. Cooperative learning among participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

51. External or internal coaching.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

52. No micromanagement.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

53. A staff that is up-to-date on current best practices.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

54. The use of differentiated instruction by participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

55. Standards of performance shared by participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

56. A common planning time for teaching teams.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

57. Participants trained in shared decision making. .

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

58. A mutual valuing of expertise by participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

59. A mutual openness to contributions by participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

60. An administrator who ensures that communication is multi-directional.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

61. An administrator who ensures that school structures allow for shared leadership.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

62. An administrator who is trusted by staff.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

63. An administrator who models shared leadership.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

64. An administrator who is respected by participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

65. Active inquiry of participants into school practices.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

66. Engagement of key individuals in school operations.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

Thank you for finishing Part I: Characteristics of Shared Leadership. Please go on to Part II.--Joni



## Part II: Behaviors of Shared Leadership

The items in Part II were identified in Round I as behaviors associated with shared leadership in school settings. Please evaluate each item and mark it as a poor descriptor, a fair descriptor, a good descriptor, or an excellent descriptor of a behavior associated with shared leadership in school settings.

A behavior of shared leadership in a school setting is --

67. Not making excuses.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

68. Not placing fault on individuals.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

69. Embracing conflict as a catalyst for change.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

70. Listening as a key part of the communication process.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

71. Focusing work on agreed upon goals.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

72. Showing self-discipline.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

73. Sacrificing individual preferences for the common good.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

74. Modeling shared leadership behaviors.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

75. Taking action that is student centered.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

76. Responding to the needs of others.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

77. Providing opportunities for active involvement of all stakeholders.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

78. Involving different grade levels or disciplines on committees.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

79. Holding collaboration among staff as a priority.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

80. Utilizing the strengths of all staff, not simply the “shining stars.”

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

81. Participating in group reflection on practice.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

82. Tenacious monitoring of improvement strategies by participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

83. Focusing participants' attention on continuous improvement.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

84. Making group decisions based on information.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

85. Celebrating milestones, big and small.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

86. Presenting a unified front.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

87. Participating in learning communities.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

88. Allowing teachers to lead professional development that is linked to school-based learning goals.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

Thank you for staying with the process. You are half way through this section. I appreciate your help. You are identifying behaviors of shared leadership in school settings. --Joni

89. Welcoming feedback on practice.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

90. Accepting conflict as a healthy part of effective decision making.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

91. Sharing accountability with all participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

92. Sharing responsibility with all participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

93. Committing resources to support student needs.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

94. Focusing on who gets served rather than who gets credit.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

95. Aligning resources to support goals.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

96. Making decisions based on student learning.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

97. Recognizing different view points.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

98. Recognizing individual and group contributions.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

99. Rewarding, rather than criticizing, the implementation of new practices.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

100. Providing professional development on teamwork skills.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

101. Providing professional development on group decision making.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

102. Providing professional development on consensus building.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

103. Ensuring decision making is transparent to all participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

104. Allowing teachers time to share experiences.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

105. Not soliciting credit for a new idea.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

106. Being sincerely happy for another's success.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

107. Accepting mistakes as learning opportunities.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

108. Making decisions after discussion, rather than rubber stamping decisions that have already been made.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

Thank you for finishing Part II: Behaviors of Shared Leadership. Please go on to Part III. --  
Joni



### Part III: Aspects of School Culture that Facilitate Shared Leadership

The items in Part III were identified by panel members in Round I as aspects of school culture that facilitate shared leadership. Please evaluate each item and mark it as a poor descriptor, a fair descriptor, a good descriptor, or an excellent descriptor of an aspect of school culture that facilitates shared leadership.

An aspect of school culture that facilitates shared leadership is --

109. A willingness of participants to take on new roles.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

110. Administrative delegation of authentic power.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

111. A sense of distributed accountability for meeting the mission.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

112. A willingness to accept personal responsibility for the success of the whole.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

113. The ability to voice one's opinion without penalty.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

114. An atmosphere of cooperation.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

115. Engaging work.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

116. A mutually supportive climate.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

117. Respect for different views.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

118. Respect for different experiences.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

119. Security.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

120. A climate of trust.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

121. Honesty among staff members.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

122. Community engagement.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

123. A sense of collective responsibility.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

124. Intentional collaboration.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

125. A belief that school improvement is continuous.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

126. Respectful consideration of suggestions.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

Thank you for staying with the process. You are half way through this section. I appreciate your help. You are identifying aspects of school culture that facilitate shared leadership. --  
Joni

127. A sense of belonging.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

128. Decisions are made based on what is good for the entire group.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

129. An inviting atmosphere.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

130. Trustworthy staff members.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

131. A sense of connectedness.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

132. A willingness on the part of the principal to give up some control while monitoring effectiveness of decisions.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

133. A risk-taking administration.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

134. Leadership that believes in collaboration.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

135. An expectation that students will learn.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

136. An expectation that the adults will learn.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

137. Stability.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

138. Clear expectations.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

139. Structured reflection.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

140. The acceptance of collective efficacy as a critical value.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

141. A staff that is energized.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

142. A commitment to task achievement.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

143. Stakeholders who see all sides of an issue.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

144. A shared belief that collaboration can create significant impact.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

145. An understanding that one person cannot independently improve the school.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

Thank you for finishing Part III: Aspects of School Culture that Facilitate Shared Leadership.  
Please go to the last section, Part IV. --Joni

#### Part IV: Barriers to Shared Leadership

The items in Part IV were identified by panel members in Round I as barriers to shared leadership in school settings. Please evaluate each item and mark it as a poor descriptor, a fair descriptor, a good descriptor, or an excellent descriptor of a barrier to shared leadership.

A barrier to shared leadership in the school setting is --

146. A lack of structures for sharing information.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

147. A traditional mind set.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

148. Limited dialogue around corporate mission, vision, or values.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

149. Limited flow of information.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor



150. Inadequate information among staff.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

151. Secretive actions.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

152. An unwillingness of participants to invest in shared leadership.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

153. Individuals taking decisions personally.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

154. Some people who are not willing to "pull their share of the load."

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

155. A power structure that is top down.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

156. Leadership roles are limited to a few individuals.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

157. An organization that functions as a dictatorship rather than a democracy.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

158. A lack of acceptance of input.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

159. Jealousy among participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

160. Shared leadership that is seen as an end in itself.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

161. A fear of the unknown.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

162. A fear of being responsible for change.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

163. A perception that the school is “good enough.”

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

Thank you for staying with the process. You are half way through the final section. I appreciate your help. You are identifying barriers to shared leadership in school settings.  
--Joni

164. Leader centric.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

165. An adult-focused environment.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

166. Unclear purposes of shared leadership.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

167. Work that is unfocused.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

168. A staff that does not see the “whole picture.”

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

169. A sense of negativity that permeates the climate.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

170. A scarcity of resources.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

171. Tenure.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

172. Unions or teacher associations.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

173. Ignorance of shared leadership by participants.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

174. A lack of financial compensation for additional responsibilities.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

175. Confusion about the nature of shared leadership.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

176. Acceptance of the status quo.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

177. An inability of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

178. The need for approval by superiors.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

179. Major changes are made unilaterally by administrators without getting participant buy-in.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

180. Negative participants are allowed to continue inappropriate practice.

- a poor descriptor
- a fair descriptor
- a good descriptor
- an excellent descriptor

Thank you so very much for devoting your time to completing this instrument. Your work is sincerely appreciated. --Joni

APPENDIX F  
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO PANELISTS FOR DELPHI II

(DATE)

Dear

We appreciate your response to the Delphi I questionnaire on the descriptors of shared leadership. Attached to this email is the compilation of responses from all panelists on the four questions. For the second round, you are asked to rate each descriptor on the following scale: a poor descriptor, a fair descriptor, a good descriptor, or an excellent descriptor of shared leadership

Please read the directions for the attached Delphi II, complete the instrument, and forward it ([jpoff@rcs.k12.va.us](mailto:jpoff@rcs.k12.va.us)) by (DATE).

Again, thank you for your participation in this study on shared leadership. We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Joni C. Poff  
Doctoral Candidate at Virginia Tech  
[jpoff@bcps.k12.va.us](mailto:jpoff@bcps.k12.va.us)

David J. Parks  
Professor, School of Education  
[parks@vt.edu](mailto:parks@vt.edu)

APPENDIX G  
DELPHI III INSTRUMENT

Please compare your response from Round II with the data for the panel as a whole; consider whether you want to keep your Round II response or change it in view of the data. Use the following scale to rate each characteristic again as a descriptor of shared leadership: 1= a poor descriptor, 2= a fair descriptor, 3= a good descriptor, or 4= an excellent descriptor. Mark your response in the column titled *Your new rating*. Click inside the box to enter your response. Do not respond to the deleted items. Items with a strike through did not meet the 80% criterion on Round II.

Question 1 Shared leadership in school settings is characterized by...	Data from Round II						Your new rating
	Your Round II response	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum/maximum score	Percentage rating item a 3 or 4	
Multiple teacher-led decision-making teams (1)		3.00	3.19	.91	1/4	81.3	
Involvement of shareholders in decisions that matter, not minutia (2)		3.50	3.44	.63	2/4	93.8	
Shared responsibility for the work (3)		4.00	3.50	.82	2/4	81.3	
Shared accountability for outcomes		4.00	3.50	.82	2/4	81.3	
Proactive communication that supports participant engagement (4)		3.00	3.25	.78	2/4	81.3	
A common vision among participants. (8)		4.00	3.38	.96	1/4	81.3	
Shared ownership of a corporate mission. (9)		3.50	3.25	.93	1/4	81.3	
Participation in setting organizational direction. (11)		3.00	3.25	.78	2/4	81.3	
An expectation that participants will work as a team. (12)		3.50	3.44	.63	2/4	93.8	
A sharing of expertise among participants. (15)		3.00	3.19	.91	1/4	81.3	
Teacher efficacy that is valued by the administration. (23)		4.00	3.13	.89	1/4	81.3	
Shared learning among participants. (27)		3.00	3.19	.75	2/4	81.3	



Question 1 Shared leadership in school settings is characterized by...	Data from Round II						Your new rating
	Your Round II response	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Maximum/minimum score	Percentage rating item a 3 or 4	
Professional learning communities that are empowered to make decisions. (30)		3.00	3.31	.95	1/4	81.3	
Open dialogue among participants. (34)		4.00	3.38	.81	2/4	81.3	
Collaboration among school personnel in achieving goals. (38)		4.00	3.69	.48	3/4	100.0	
Staff participation in professional development relevant to shared leadership. (41)		3.00	3.19	.91	1/4	81.3	
An administrator who ensures that school structures allow for shared leadership. (61)		4.00	3.56	.63	2/4	93.8	
An administrator who is trusted by staff. (62)		3.00	3.27	.88	1/4	81.3	
<del>Site-based decision-making</del>		3.00	2.63	1.20	1/4	56.3	
<del>Open-minded thinking</del>		2.50	2.50	1.16	1/4	50.0	
<del>Shared ownership of corporate values</del>		3.00	3.06	.93	1/4	75.0	
<del>The frequent use of committees to do school work.</del>		2.00	1.94	.85	1/3	31.3	
<del>A common language to describe participants' work.</del>		3.00	2.50	.81	1/4	56.3	
<del>A willingness to compromise when necessary to achieve the goals of the school.</del>		3.00	2.75	.93	1/4	68.8	
<del>Results-oriented thinking.</del>		3.50	2.94	1.29	1/4	68.8	
<del>A decision-making process that includes participants.</del>		3.00	3.06	.77	2/4	75.1	
<del>Data-driven decision-making.</del>		3.00	2.88	1.20	1/4	62.6	
<del>A focus on student performance.</del>		4.00	3.00	1.32	1/4	68.8	
<del>High standards that are supported by all.</del>		3.00	3.13	1.09	1/4	75.0	
<del>Research-driven decision-making.</del>		3.00	2.88	1.26	1/4	68.8	
<del>Celebration of successes, big and small.</del>		4.00	2.50	1.10	1/4	43.8	

Question 1 Shared leadership in school settings is characterized by...	Data from Round II						Your new rating
	Your Round II response	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum/maximum score	Percentage rating item a 3 or 4	
A mutual understanding of everyone's responsibilities in specific situations.		4.00	3.00	1.03	1/4	62.6	
An understanding that leaders are not managers.		3.00	2.50	1.21	1/4	56.3	
A continuous process of learning by staff.		3.00	3.06	.93	2/4	62.6	
Professional learning communities that are trained to make decisions.		3.00	3.00	.89	1/4	75.1	
A bias for action.		2.00	2.06	.93	1/4	31.3	
A strong knowledge of the school that is held by all.		3.00	2.81	1.11	1/4	56.3	
Much individual initiative.		2.00	2.31	.95	1/4	37.5	
Frequent communication between and among teachers.		4.00	3.31	1.14	1/4	65.1	
Frequent communication between families and school personnel.		3.00	2.81	.98	1/4	65.8	
Frequent communication between administrators and teachers.		4.00	3.25	1.00	1/4	75.1	
Collaboration within and among grade levels.		4.00	3.25	1.00	1/4	75.1	
Staff members who are consumers of data.		3.00	2.75	1.13	1/4	62.6	
Resourcefulness of participants.		2.00	2.31	1.08	1/4	37.6	
Administrators who don't communicate contradictory messages.		2.50	2.50	1.16	1/4	50.0	
Administrators who praise staff to all who will listen.		2.00	2.50	1.21	1/4	43.8	
Administrators who are willing to listen to the ideas of those in the trenches.		3.00	3.19	.83	2/4	75.0	
Courageous conversation involving all participants.		3.50	3.19	.98	1/4	75.0	
Staff members who view themselves as leaders.		3.50	3.13	.96	2/4	62.5	

Question 1 Shared leadership in school settings is characterized by...	Data from Round II						Your new rating
	Your Round II response	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum/maximum score	Percentage rating item a 3 or 4	
A dynamic school-wide communication process.		4.00	3.25	1.07	1/4	68.8	
A multi-way flow of information.		3.00	3.13	.81	2/4	75.0	
Cooperative learning among participants.		3.00	3.00	1.03	1/4	62.6	
External or internal coaching.		2.50	2.38	1.15	1/4	52.1	
No micromanagement.		3.00	2.63	1.20	1/4	56.3	
A staff that is up-to-date on current best practices.		2.50	2.63	1.15	1/4	50.1	
The use of differentiated instruction by participants.		3.00	2.63	1.20	1/4	56.3	
Standards of performance shared by participants.		3.00	2.94	.85	2/4	62.6	
A common planning time for teaching teams.		3.00	2.69	1.30	1/4	62.5	
Participants trained in shared decision making.		3.50	3.06	1.12	1/4	68.8	
A mutual valuing of expertise by participants.		3.00	3.00	.89	2/4	62.5	
A mutual openness to contributions by participants.		3.50	3.25	.86	2/4	75.0	
An administrator who ensures that communication is multi-directional.		3.00	3.13	.96	1/4	75.1	
An administrator who is respected by participants.		3.00	2.94	1.00	1/4	75.1	
Active inquiry of participants into school practices.		3.00	2.81	.98	1/4	68.8	
Engagement of key individuals in school operations.		3.00	2.81	1.11	1/4	68.8	

<b>Question 2</b> <b>A behavior of shared leadership in a school setting is...</b>	<b>Data from Round II</b>						<b>Your new rating</b>
	<b>Your Round II response</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Minimum/maximum score</b>	<b>Percentage rating item a 3 or 4</b>	
Listening as a key part of the communication process. (70)		4.00	3.63	.62	2/4	93.8	
Focusing work on agreed upon goals. (71)		4.00	3.63	.50	3/4	100.0	
Modeling shared leadership behaviors. (74)		4.00	3.81	.54	2/4	93.8	
Providing opportunities for active involvement of all stakeholders. (77)		4.00	3.50	.73	2/4	87.5	
Holding collaboration among staff as a priority. (79)		4.00	3.69	.60	2/4	93.8	
Utilizing the strengths of all staff, not simply the "shining stars." (80)		3.00	3.38	.62	2/4	93.8	
Participating in group reflection on practice. (81)		3.00	3.19	.66	2/4	87.6	
Tenacious monitoring of improvement strategies by participants. (82)		3.00	3.13	.96	1/4	85.1	
Focusing participants' attention on continuous improvement. (83)		4.00	3.44	.89	1/4	87.5	
Making group decisions based on information. (84)		4.00	3.50	.63	2/4	93.8	
Participating in learning communities. (87)		3.00	3.13	.96	1/4	85.1	
Allowing teachers to lead professional development that is linked to school-based learning goals. (88)		3.00	3.31	.60	2/4	93.8	
Sharing accountability with all participants. (91)		4.00	3.56	.81	1/4	93.8	
Sharing responsibility with all participants. (92)		4.00	3.50	.82	1/4	93.8	
Focusing on who gets served rather than who gets credit. (94)		4.00	3.44	.73	2/4	88.6	

Question 2 A behavior of shared leadership in a school setting is...	Data from Round II						Your new rating
	Your Round II response	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum/maximum score	Percentage rating item a 3 or 4	
Recognizing different viewpoints. (97)		3.00	3.38	.62	2/4	93.8	
Recognizing individual and group contributions. (98)		3.00	3.31	.70	2/4	87.6	
Providing professional development on group decision making. (101)		4.00	3.44	.81	2/4	81.3	
Ensuring decision making is transparent to all participants. (103)		3.00	3.25	.68	2/4	87.5	
Allowing teachers time to share experiences. (104)		3.50	3.31	.87	1/4	87.5	
Accepting mistakes as learning opportunities. (107)		3.00	3.19	.75	2/4	81.3	
Making decisions after discussion, rather than rubber stamping decisions that have already been made. (108)		4.00	3.50	.89	1/4	87.6	
<del>Not making excuses.</del>		2.00	2.63	1.09	1/4	43.8	
<del>A willingness of participants to take on new roles.</del>		3.00	3.06	.93	1/4	75.0	
<del>Embracing conflict as a catalyst for change.</del>		3.00	2.81	.83	1/4	68.8	
<del>Showing self-discipline.</del>		3.00	2.81	.91	1/4	62.5	
<del>Sacrificing individual preferences for the common good.</del>		3.00	3.13	.89	2/4	68.8	
<del>Taking action that is student centered.</del>		3.50	3.06	1.12	1/4	68.8	
<del>Responding to the needs of others.</del>		3.00	2.75	.86	1/4	62.6	
<del>Involving different grade levels or disciplines on committees.</del>		3.00	2.81	1.17	1/4	62.5	
<del>Celebrating milestones, big and small.</del>		3.00	2.69	1.20	1/4	62.6	
<del>Presenting a unified front.</del>		4.25	2.75	.86	2/4	50.0	
<del>Welcoming feedback on practice.</del>		3.00	3.00	.89	1/4	75.1	

Question 2 A behavior of shared leadership in a school setting is...	Data from Round II						Your new rating
	Your Round II response	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum/maximum score	Percentage rating item a 3 or 4	
Accepting conflict as a healthy part of effective decision making.		3.00	3.00	.89	1/4	75.1	
Committing resources to support student needs.		3.00	2.88	1.20	1/4	62.6	
Aligning resources to support goals.		3.00	3.13	.96	1/4	74.1	
Making decisions based on student learning.		4.00	3.25	1.13	1/4	75.0	
Rewarding, rather than criticizing, the implementation of new practices.		3.00	3.13	.81	2/4	75.0	
Providing professional development on teamwork skills.		4.00	3.31	.95	2/4	68.8	
Providing professional development on consensus building.		3.50	3.06	1.06	1/4	72.5	
Not soliciting credit for a new idea.		2.00	2.31	1.14	1/4	43.8	
Being sincerely happy for another's success.		3.00	2.88	.96	1/4	62.6	

<b>Question 3</b> <b>An aspect of school culture that facilitates shared leadership is...</b>	<b>Data from Round II</b>						<b>Your new rating</b>
	<b>Your Round II response</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Minimum/maximum score</b>	<b>Overall percentage</b>	
A willingness of participants to take on new roles.(109)		3.00	3.13	.72	2/4	81.3	
Administrative delegation of authentic power. (110)		4.00	3.38	.96	1/4	81.3	
A sense of distributed accountability for meeting the mission. (111)		4.00	3.44	.73	2/4	87.6	
A willingness to accept personal responsibility for the success of the whole. (112)		3.00	3.25	.68	2/4	87.5	
The ability to voice one's opinion without penalty. (113)		4.00	3.44	.73	2/4	87.6	
An atmosphere of cooperation. (114)		4.00	3.56	.63	2/4	93.8	
Engaging work. (115)		3.50	3.31	.79	2/4	81.3	
A mutually supportive climate. (116)		3.00	3.38	.62	2/4	93.8	
Respect for different views. (117)		3.50	3.31	.79	2/4	81.3	
Respect for different experiences. (118)		3.50	3.31	.79	2/4	81.3	
A climate of trust. (120)		4.00	3.93	.26	3/4	100.0	
Honesty among staff members. (121)		3.00	3.33	.72	2/4	81.3	
A sense of collective responsibility. (123)		4.00	3.57	.65	2/4	81.3	
Intentional collaboration. (124)		4.00	3.56	.73	2/4	87.6	
Respectful consideration of suggestions. (126)		3.00	3.31	.70	2/4	87.6	
A sense of belonging. (127)		3.00	3.19	.75	2/4	81.3	
Decisions are made based on what is good for the entire group. (128)		3.00	3.13	.81	1/4	81.6	
Trustworthy staff members. (130)		3.00	3.38	.62	2/4	93.8	
A sense of connectedness. (131)		3.50	3.38	.72	2/4	87.5	
A willingness on the part of the principal to give up some control while monitoring effectiveness of decisions. (132)		4.00	3.50	.63	2/4	93.8	
A risk-taking administration. (133)		3.00	3.25	.78	2/4	81.3	

Question 3 An aspect of school culture that facilitates shared leadership is...	Data from Round II						Your new rating
	Your Round II response	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum/maximum score	Percentage rating item a 3 or 4	
Leadership that believes in collaboration. (134)		4.00	3.80	.41	3/4	100.0	
An expectation that students will learn. (135)		4.00	3.44	.97	1/4	81.3	
An expectation that the adults will learn. (136)		4.00	3.50	.89	1/4	87.6	
Clear expectations. (138)		4.00	3.50	.63	2/4	93.8	
The acceptance of collective efficacy as a critical value. (140)		4.00	3.69	.48	3/4	100.0	
A shared belief that collaboration can create significant impact. (144)		4.00	3.50	.63	2/4	93.8	
<del>Security.</del>		3.00	2.75	1.00	1/4	62.5	
<del>Community engagement.</del>		3.00	2.80	.94	1/4	56.3	
<del>A belief that school improvement is continuous.</del>		4.00	3.25	1.07	1/4	68.8	
<del>An inviting atmosphere.</del>		3.00	3.00	.89	1/4	62.5	
<del>Stability.</del>		3.00	2.75	.93	1/4	56.3	
<del>Structured reflection.</del>		3.00	3.06	.93	1/4	75.0	
<del>A staff that is energized.</del>		3.00	2.88	.80	2/4	62.5	
<del>A commitment to task achievement.</del>		3.00	2.88	.96	1/4	62.6	
<del>Stakeholders who see all sides of an issue.</del>		3.00	2.88	.72	2/4	68.8	
<del>An understanding that one person cannot independently improve the school.</del>		4.00	3.31	.87	2/4	75.1	



Question 4 A barrier to shared leadership in the school setting is...	Data from Round II						Your new rating
	Your Round II response	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum/maximum score	Percentage rating item a 3 or 4	
A lack of structures for sharing information.(146)		4.00	3.56	.73	2/4	87.6	
Limited dialogue around corporate mission, vision, or values. (148)		4.00	3.56	.63	2/4	93.8	
Limited flow of information. (149)		4.00	3.56	.63	2/4	93.8	
Inadequate information among staff. (150)		4.00	3.56	.73	2/4	87.6	
Secretive actions. (151)		4.00	3.44	.73	2/4	87.6	
An unwillingness of participants to invest in shared leadership. (152)		3.00	3.31	.70	2/4	87.6	
A power structure that is top down. (155)		4.00	3.56	.73	2/4	87.6	
Leadership roles are limited to a few individuals. 9156)		3.50	3.31	.79	2/4	81.3	
A lack of acceptance of input. (158)		3.00	3.19	.75	2/4	81.3	
A perception that the school is “good enough.” (163)		3.00	3.19	.75	2/4	81.3	
Unclear purposes of shared leadership. (166)		4.00	3.63	.50	3/4	100.0	
Work that is unfocused. (167)		4.00	3.31	.95	1/4	81.3	
A staff that does not see the “whole picture.” (168)		3.00	3.13	.62	2/4	87.5	
A sense of negativity that permeates the climate. (169)		3.00	3.31	.70	2/4	87.6	
Acceptance of the status quo. (176)		3.00	3.19	.91	1/4	81.3	
An inability of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership. (177)		4.00	3.63	.50	3/4	100.0	
Major changes are made unilaterally by administrators without getting participant buy-in. (179)		4.00	3.56	.73	2/4	87.6	

Question 4 A barrier to shared leadership in the school setting is...	Data from Round II						Your new rating
	Your Round II response	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum/maximum score	Percentage rating item a 3 or 4	
<del>A traditional mind set.</del>		3.00	2.81	1.11	1/4	56.3	
<del>Individuals taking decisions personally.</del>		3.00	2.81	.91	1/4	62.5	
<del>Some people who are not willing to "pull their share of the load."</del>		3.00	3.00	.82	2/4	69.8	
<del>An organization that functions as a dictatorship rather than a democracy.</del>		4.00	3.38	1.03	1/4	75.1	
<del>Jealousy among participants.</del>		3.00	2.88	.81	2/4	62.5	
<del>Shared leadership that is seen as an end in itself.</del>		3.00	3.06	.85	2/4	68.8	
<del>A fear of the unknown.</del>		3.00	2.75	.58	2/4	68.3	
<del>A fear of being responsible for change.</del>		3.00	2.88	.72	2/4	68.8	
<del>Leader centric.</del>		3.00	2.94	.85	2/4	62.6	
<del>An adult focused environment.</del>		3.00	3.00	.97	1/4	68.8	
<del>A scarcity of resources.</del>		2.00	2.31	1.01	1/4	31.3	
<del>Tenure.</del>		1.00	1.63	.96	1/4	18.8	
<del>Unions or teacher associations.</del>		1.00	1.63	.89	1/4	12.6	
<del>Ignorance of shared leadership by participants.</del>		3.00	2.81	.75	2/4	52.6	
<del>A lack of financial compensation for additional responsibilities.</del>		2.00	2.00	1.03	1/4	25.0	
<del>Confusion about the nature of shared leadership.</del>		3.00	3.27	.80	2/4	75.1	
<del>Negative participants are allowed to continue inappropriate practice.</del>		3.50	3.19	.98	1/4	75.0	
<del>The need for approval by superiors.</del>		3.00	2.56	1.03	1/4	56.3	

Note. Items with a strike through did not meet the 80% criterion on Round II.

APPENDIX H  
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO PANELISTS FOR DELPHI III

(DATE)

Dear Panelist,

We appreciate your response to the Delphi II in which you rated descriptors of shared leadership. Attached to this email is the Delphi III. For each item, you are given your Round II response and the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores, and percentage of panelists that rated it as a 3 (a good descriptor) or 4 (an excellent descriptor). Please review the provided information and rate each item using the same four-point scale. You may assign the item the same rating as you gave it in Round II or you may revise your response.

Please read the directions for the attached Delphi II, complete the instrument, and forward it by email ([jpoff@rcs.k12.va.us](mailto:jpoff@rcs.k12.va.us)) by (DATE).

Again, thank you for your participation in this study on shared leadership. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Joni C. Poff  
Doctoral Candidate at Virginia Tech  
[jpoff@bcps.k12.va.us](mailto:jpoff@bcps.k12.va.us)

David J. Parks  
Professor, School of Education  
[parks@vt.edu](mailto:parks@vt.edu)

APPENDIX I

FINAL STATISTICAL REPORT BASED ON RESPONSES OF PANELISTS TO DELPHI III

<b>Question 1:</b>					
<b>Shared leadership in school settings is characterized by...</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Minimum/maximum score</b>	<b>Percentage rating item a 3 or 4</b>
Multiple teacher-led decision-making teams.	3.0	3.38	.62	2/4	93.8
Involvement of shareholders in decisions that matter, not minutia.	3.5	3.50	.52	3/4	100.0
Shared responsibility for the work.	4.0	3.56	.73	2/4	87.5
Shared accountability for outcomes.	4.0	3.56	.73	2/4	87.5
Proactive communications that support engagement	3.0	3.25	.68	2/4	87.5
A common vision among participants.	4.0	3.50	.89	1/4	87.5
Shared ownership of a corporate mission.	3.5	3.25	.93	1/4	81.3
Participation in setting organizational direction.	3.0	3.19	.75	2/4	81.3
An expectation that participants will work as a team.	3.5	3.44	.63	2/4	93.8
A sharing of expertise among participants.	3.5	3.44	.63	2/4	93.8
Teacher efficacy that is valued by the administration.	3.0	3.25	.86	1/4	87.5
Shared learning among participants.	3.0	3.25	.58	2/4	93.8
Professional learning communities that are empowered to make decisions.	3.0	3.13	.81	1/4	87.5
Open dialogue among participants.	4.0	3.44	.81	2/4	81.3
Collaboration among school personnel in achieving goals.	4.0	3.75	.45	3/4	100.0
Staff participation in professional development relevant to shared leadership.	3.0	3.19	.83	1/4	87.5
An administrator who ensures that school structures allow for shared leadership.	4.0	3.69	.60	2/4	93.8
An administrator who is trusted by staff.	3.5	3.31	.87	1/4	87.5

<b>Questions 2:</b>					
<b>A behavior of shared leadership in a school setting is ...</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Minimum/maximum score</b>	<b>Percentage rating item a 3 or 4</b>
Listening as a key part of the communication process.	4.0	3.75	.58	2/4	93.8
Focusing work on agreed upon goals.	4.0	3.69	.48	3/4	100.0
Modeling shared leadership behaviors.	4.0	3.81	.54	2/4	93.8
Providing opportunities for active involvement of all stakeholders.	4.0	3.63	.62	2/4	93.8
Holding collaboration among staff as a priority.	4.0	3.75	.45	3/4	100.0
Utilizing the strengths of all staff, not simply the “shining stars.”	3.5	3.44	.63	2/4	93.8
Participating in group reflection on practice.	3.0	3.31	.70	2/4	87.5
Tenacious monitoring of improvement strategies by participants.	3.0	3.13	.96	1/4	75.0
Focusing participants' attention on continuous improvement.	4.0	3.50	.89	1/4	87.5
Making group decisions based on information.	4.0	3.56	.51	3/4	100.0
Participating in learning communities.	3.0	3.19	.91	1/4	81.3
Allowing teachers to lead professional development that is linked to school-based learning goals.	3.0	3.38	.50	3/4	100.0
Sharing accountability with all participants.	4.0	3.69	.79	1/4	93.8
Sharing responsibility with all participants.	4.0	3.63	.81	1/4	93.8
Focusing on who gets served rather than who gets credit.	4.0	3.50	.73	2/4	87.5
Recognizing different view points.	3.0	3.31	.60	2/4	93.8
Recognizing individual and group contributions.	3.0	3.25	.68	2/4	87.5
Providing professional development on group decision making.	4.0	3.31	.87	2/4	75.0
Ensuring decision making is transparent to all participants.	3.5	3.44	.63	2/4	93.8
Allowing teachers time to share experiences.	4.0	3.38	.89	1/4	87.5
Accepting mistakes as learning opportunities.	3.0	3.19	.75	2/4	81.3
Making decisions after discussion, rather than rubber stamping decisions that have already been made.	4.0	3.63	.81	1/4	93.8

<b>Question 3:</b> <b>An aspect of school culture that facilitates shared leadership is...</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Minimum/ maximum score</b>	<b>Percentage rating item a 3 or 4</b>
A willingness of participants to take on new roles.	3.0	3.19	.75	2/4	81.3
Administrative delegation of authentic power.	4.0	3.63	.50	3/4	100.0
A sense of distributed accountability for meeting the mission.	4.0	3.56	.63	2/4	93.8
A willingness to accept personal responsibility for the success of the whole.	3.0	3.31	.60	2/4	93.8
The ability to voice one's opinion without penalty.	4.0	3.44	.81	1/4	93.8
An atmosphere of cooperation.	4.0	3.56	.63	2/4	93.8
Engaging work.	3.5	3.31	.79	2/4	81.3
A mutually supportive climate.	3.0	3.38	.62	2/4	93.8
Respect for different views.	4.0	3.44	.81	2/4	81.3
Respect for different experiences.	4.0	3.44	.73	2/4	87.5
A climate of trust.	4.0	3.94	.25	3/4	100.0
Honesty among staff members.	4.0	3.56	.51	3/4	100.0
A sense of collective responsibility.	4.0	3.69	.60	2/4	93.8
Intentional collaboration.	4.0	3.56	.73	2/4	87.5
Respectful consideration of suggestions.	3.5	3.44	.63	2/4	93.8
A sense of belonging.	3.0	3.19	.75	2/4	81.3
Decisions are made based on what is good for the entire group.	3.0	3.38	.62	2/4	93.8
Trustworthy staff members.	3.0	3.38	.62	2/4	93.8
A sense of connectedness.	3.0	3.31	.70	2/4	87.5
A willingness on the part of the principal to give up some control while monitoring effectiveness of decisions.	4.0	3.56	.51	3/4	100.0
A risk-taking administration.	3.0	3.25	.78	2/4	81.3
Leadership that believes in collaboration.	4.0	3.81	.40	3/4	100.0
An expectation that students will learn.	4.0	3.44	.96	1/4	81.3
An expectation that the adults will learn.	4.0	3.50	.89	1/4	87.5
The acceptance of collective efficacy as a critical value.	4.0	3.69	.48	3/4	100.0
Clear expectations.	4.0	3.63	.62	2/4	93.8
A shared belief that collaboration can create significant impact.	4.0	3.69	.48	3/4	100.0

<b>Question 4</b>					
<b>A barrier to shared leadership in the school setting is...</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Minimum/maximum score</b>	<b>Percentage rating item a 3 or 4</b>
A lack of structures for sharing information.	4.0	3.56	.73	2/4	87.5
Limited dialogue around corporate mission, vision, or values.	4.0	3.56	.63	2/4	93.8
Limited flow of information.	4.0	3.56	.63	2/4	93.8
Inadequate information among staff.	4.0	3.63	.62	2/4	93.8
Secretive actions.	4.0	3.44	.73	2/4	87.5
An unwillingness of participants to invest in shared leadership.	3.0	3.25	.68	2/4	87.5
A power structure that is top down.	4.0	3.63	.72	2/4	87.5
Leadership roles are limited to a few individuals.	3.5	3.31	.79	2/4	81.3
A lack of acceptance of input.	3.0	3.25	.68	2/4	87.5
A perception that the school is "good enough."	3.0	3.19	.75	2/4	81.3
Unclear purposes of shared leadership.	4.0	3.69	.48	3/4	100.0
Work that is unfocused.	4.0	3.38	.89	1/4	87.5
A staff that does not see the "whole picture."	3.0	3.13	.62	2/4	87.5
A sense of negativity that permeates the climate.	3.0	3.25	.68	2/4	87.5
Acceptance of the status quo.	3.0	3.25	.68	2/4	87.5
An inability of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership.	4.0	3.69	.48	3/4	100.0
Major changes are made unilaterally by administrators without getting participant buy-in.	4.0	3.63	.62	2/4	93.8

## APPENDIX J

### POFF'S SHARED LEADERSHIP SCHOOL RATING SCALE

This instrument was designed to assist schools in assessing characteristics, behaviors, and cultural conditions associated with shared leadership. Listed below are attributes that experts believe are in schools practicing effective shared leadership. Rate each item according to the degree the attributes are exhibited in your school. The rating scale is 1- 4, with 1 being a low degree and 4 being a high degree. Please circle the number of your response.

<b>The shared responsibility of staff and leaders in our school is characterized by...</b>		<b>Our school culture supports...</b>	
1. Multiple teacher-led decision-making teams	1 2 3 4	22. A sense of collective responsibility	1 2 3 4
2. Involvement of stakeholders in decisions that matter, not minutia	1 2 3 4	23. Teacher efficacy as a critical value	1 2 3 4
3. Distributed responsibility for the work	1 2 3 4	24. Respect for different views	1 2 3 4
4. The acceptance of collective efficacy as a critical value	1 2 3 4	25. Respect for different experiences	1 2 3 4
5. A willingness of participants to take on new roles	1 2 3 4	26. A sense of belonging	1 2 3 4
6. Administrative delegation of authentic power	1 2 3 4	27. A sense of connectedness	1 2 3 4
7. A sense of collective accountability	1 2 3 4	28. A positive attitude that permeates the climate	1 2 3 4
8. A climate of trust	1 2 3 4	29. Recognizing different view points	1 2 3 4
9. Trustworthy staff members	1 2 3 4	30. Recognizing individual and group contributions	1 2 3 4
10. A principal that shares power while monitoring effectiveness of decisions	1 2 3 4	31. The belief that mistakes are learning opportunities	1 2 3 4
11. A willingness of participants to invest in shared leadership	1 2 3 4	<b>Widespread communication across our school community is facilitated by...</b>	
12. A distributed power structure	1 2 3 4	32. Proactive communication that supports engagement of all	1 2 3 4
13. Numerous formal and informal leaders	1 2 3 4	33. Open dialogue among participants	1 2 3 4
14. Clear purpose statements for use of a shared leadership model	1 2 3 4	34. The ability to voice one's opinion without penalty	1 2 3 4
15. An administration that supports innovation	1 2 3 4	35. Honesty among staff members	1 2 3 4
16. Structures that facilitate shared learning of the staff	1 2 3 4	36. Respectful consideration of suggestions	1 2 3 4
17. Teacher-led professional development that is linked to school-based learning goals	1 2 3 4	37. Adequate information among staff	1 2 3 4
18. Group decision making based on information	1 2 3 4	38. The belief that listening is essential to the communication process	1 2 3 4
19. The matching of personal strengths to jobs or tasks	1 2 3 4	39. Participation in group reflection on instructional practice	1 2 3 4
20. Distributed accountability for meeting the mission	1 2 3 4	40. Decision making that is transparent to all participants	1 2 3 4
21. The involvement of all stakeholders prior to decision making, rather than expecting stakeholders to rubber stamp decisions that already have been made	1 2 3 4		



### Poff's Shared Leadership School Rating Scale (Continued)

The rating scale is 1- 4, with 1 being a low degree and 4 being a high degree. Please circle the number of your response.

Our school has a common focus that drives...		Collaboration among stakeholders is evidenced by...	
41. A single vision among staff members	1 2 3 4	55. A shared belief that working in unison can create significant impact	1 2 3 4
42. Shared ownership of a corporate mission	1 2 3 4	56. An expectation that participants will work as a team	1 2 3 4
43. Participation in setting organizational direction	1 2 3 4	57. Sharing of expertise among staff members	1 2 3 4
44. Decision-making that is based on what is good for the entire group	1 2 3 4	58. Working collectively to reach agreed upon goals	1 2 3 4
45. Ongoing dialogue around corporate mission, vision, or values	1 2 3 4	59. Leadership that supports collaborative efforts	1 2 3 4
46. A belief that there is always room for improvement	1 2 3 4	60. An atmosphere of cooperation	1 2 3 4
47. How work is prioritized	1 2 3 4	61. A mutually supportive climate	1 2 3 4
48. All efforts being connected to "the big picture"	1 2 3 4	62. Intentional actions of joint effort and work	1 2 3 4
49. Leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership	1 2 3 4	63. Multiple opportunities for active involvement of stakeholders	1 2 3 4
50. Continuous professional development relevant to shared leadership	1 2 3 4	64. Giving priority to collaborative work	1 2 3 4
51. Our principal to ensure school structures allow for shared leadership	1 2 3 4	65. Allowing teachers time to share experiences	1 2 3 4
52. An expectation that students will learn	1 2 3 4		
53. An expectation that the adults will learn	1 2 3 4		
54. Communication of clear expectations	1 2 3 4		

**Poff's Shared Leadership School Rating Scale**

The rating scale is 1- 4, with 1 being a low degree and 4 being a high degree. Please circle the number of your response.

<b>Shared leadership in our school is hindered by...</b>					
66.	A lack of structures for sharing information.	1	2	3	4
67.	Limited dialogue around corporate mission, vision, or values.	1	2	3	4
68.	Limited flow of information.	1	2	3	4
69.	Inadequate information among staff.	1	2	3	4
70.	Secretive actions.	1	2	3	4
71.	An unwillingness of participants to invest in shared leadership.	1	2	3	4
72.	A power structure that is top down.	1	2	3	4
73.	Leadership roles are limited to a few individuals.	1	2	3	4
74.	A lack of acceptance of input.	1	2	3	4
75.	A perception that the school is "good enough."	1	2	3	4
76.	Unclear purposes of shared leadership.	1	2	3	4
77.	Work that is unfocused.	1	2	3	4
78.	A staff that does not see the "whole picture."	1	2	3	4
79.	A sense of negativity that permeates the climate.	1	2	3	4
80.	Acceptance of the status quo.	1	2	3	4
81.	An inability of the leaders to convey a compelling vision of shared leadership.	1	2	3	4
82.	Major changes are made unilaterally by administrators without getting participant buy-in.	1	2	3	4