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Arts and Academics: How teachers perceive school climate relating to subject area (homerooom or special area) in an elementary school.

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ARTS AND ACADEMICS: HOW TEACHERS PERCEIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE RELATING
TO SUBJECT AREA (HOMEROOM OR SPECIAL AREA)
IN AN ELEMENTARY SETTING

by

TRACIE WELBORN BRACK

Under the Direction of Dr. Jami Royal Berry

ABSTRACT

This study examined teachers' perceptions of school climate as it relates to subject area in an elementary school setting. For the purpose of this dissertation it is important to distinguish between two different groups: *Homeroom Teachers* refers to teachers in core subject areas traditionally evaluated through standardized tests, and *Special Area Teachers* refers to teachers in areas that are not tested with standardized tests such as art, music, and physical education. The inquiry included four teachers from one elementary school whose student population closely mirrored the demographics of the school district as a whole. The qualitative and quantitative data included school climate data and teacher perception data. The school climate data was collected from the Georgia School Personnel Survey administered as part of the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) included in Race to the Top. The teacher perception data was accumulated through semi-structured interviewing. The survey results revealed special area teachers feel less connected to and less supported by other teachers. Several responses within the semi-structured interviews suggested that although the results of the School Personnel Survey for the selected elementary school were very favorable and suggested a very positive school climate, the relationship between special area and homeroom teachers was not necessarily symbiotic.

The results of the research constructed a microcosm description of how perceptions of homeroom teachers and special area teachers differed on the subject of school climate.

INDEX WORDS: Arts, Accountability, Teacher Perception, School Climate, Homeroom Teachers, Special Area Teachers, Testing, Race to the Top

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TRACIE WELBORN BRACK

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DEDICATION

At this moment, I feel I could write a dissertation simply thanking those who have believed in me throughout this process. My friends and colleagues have been my constant cheerleaders. Words cannot express how grateful I am for them. My family has been my pillar of strength. The vision of my grandfather, W.E. Woodson, Jr., working on his advanced degree and the thought of how pleased and proud of me he would be, has been a compelling force. My grandmother, Julia Jean Woodson, has been a place of refuge when I needed to slow down, refocus, and find balance. My parents, Michael J. and Nancy Welborn, have encouraged me, kept my children, edited countless papers, and loved me unconditionally despite times of impatience and exhaustion. My brother, Todd and sister-in-law, Laurie Welborn who knew I was crazy before I started this craziness. I am thankful for my other parents, Charles and Jeannie Brack, who have occupied my children and husband for many a weekend throughout the past few years and waited patiently for me to finish.

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1 A REVIEW OF ARTS, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SCHOOL CLIMATE

As No Child Left Behind (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2003) slowly rode off into the proverbial sunset, the dawn of Race to the Top (RT3) shed new light on hope for accountability in arts education thus possibly escorting art education out of the margins and into the mainstream (Waldorf Education, 2000; CEP 2010; Kearns, 2011). The U.S. Department of Education (DoE), the National Council on School Climate (NCSC) and the Character Education Partnership (CEP, 2010) suggested as a nation the United States was standing on the precipice of a defining moment in public education with the launch of accountability indicators in Race to the Top (RT3) that measure school climate (CEP, 2010). As part of Race to the Top (RT3) in the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI), teachers in traditionally non-tested areas, such as music, world language courses, Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) courses, and physical education Fitnessgrams (GaDoE, 2013), could influence the Challenge areas and Star ratings which could sway schools' overall ranking.

The castigatory nature of standardized testing and the sanctions under No Child Left Behind (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2003) had the capacity to damage the relationships between students and teachers, teachers and teachers, as well as teachers and administrators. Gibson (2001) exclaimed "Standardized tests, all of them, help shatter the vital relationship of educators, students and their community" (p.6). Not only do the high stakes tests have the potential to impair relationships within the schools, but they do not tell the whole story about whether a school is improving overall or simply improving in the area of testing. The focused accountability measures under No Child Left Behind (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2003) evaluated the items in schools that are easy to measure quantitatively, but fail to tell the whole story. "Education policy makers have become increasingly aware that NCLB-type accountability is too nar-

rowly focused" (Cohen, Pickeral, & McCloskey, 2009, p.45). Test scores and attendance rates paint only half of the picture.

Guiding Questions

The questions that guided the research were:

1. Do the perceptions of homeroom teachers and special area teachers regarding school climate differ?

2. How do administrators influence the working relationships between homeroom teachers and special area teachers?

Purpose of the study.

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perceptions of school climate as it relates to the subject area. In order to glean a more comprehensive understanding of school success, many schools have started using school climate data as an additional statistical source when considering the health and improvement needs of a school (Cohen et al., 2009). The data collected regarding school climate can facilitate powerful conversations between students, teachers, and the community. Stipek (2006) warns that in an era of such high stakes accountability, educators need to remain mindful of the relationships that affect student performance and not allow accountability measures and high stakes testing to overshadow the meaningful interactions in schools. Gersick, Bartunek, Dutton (2000) declare our relationships with individuals and groups establish the environment in which we live our professional lives. Such environments can be "nurturing sources of learning, inspiration, and enjoyment, or they can be destructive sources of frustration and injury. They send us powerful messages about who we are and how we are valued" (p.1026). The relationships within a school make a difference (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008; Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Stipek, 2006; Barth, 2006). In the article "Improving Relationships

within the Schoolhouse," Barth (2006) echoes the sentiments of Gersick, Bartunek, and Dutton (2000) stating "the relationships among educators in a school define all relationships within that school's culture. Teachers and administrators demonstrate all too well a capacity to either enrich or diminish one another's lives and thereby enrich or diminish their schools (p. 8).

Review

Measuring what matters in schools.

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a framework for the study of teachers' perceptions of school climate as it relates to subject area. Peer-reviewed empirical research provides the basis for the literature review. However, references to several books were included because of the significance added to the context of the review. This literature review begins with an overview of the complexity of the relationships among arts, school climate, and accountability. Next, the review provides and explanation of the various methods of art instruction and the benefits of arts education. Following the discussion of the arts, there is an examination of accountability and its effects in schools. The review concludes with a discussion of school climate and how accountability and relationships within schools can influence school climate.

Relationships in schools matter (Stipek, 2006). Arts Education in schools matters (Seif, 2013). Standardized tests matter (Grant, 2000). School Climate matters (Shah, 2013). How do educators decipher which one matters most? According to The Character Education Partnership (CEP, 2010) "What gets measured, matters" (p.7). If schools only measure the significant subjects, then it is reasonable to conclude that in many public schools, in America, only tested subjects "matter" (CEP, 2010, p.7). Therefore, those non-tested subjects, or special areas, such as art, music, physical education, and other indeterminate areas that often influence school climate, must not have measurable value. The underlying notion that tested subjects matter and special

subjects are superfluous has the potential to create feelings of resentment from both camps. Homeroom teachers often perceive that special area teachers have less accountability through standardized testing and less curricular responsibility. Special area teachers maintain that, while the arts and other non-tested areas may not be as valuable in the world of academia, they are highly valued in the world in which we live (Baker, Barton, Darling-Hammond, Haertel, Ladd, Linn, Ravitch, Rothstein, Shavelson, Shepard, 2010).

Referring to the value of the arts, Elliot Eisner (1995) probed, "Given the fact that we build palaces to house them, erect concert halls to hear them, construct theaters to see them, pay performers of the arts fortunes to provide them, why the discrepancy between our out-of-school behavior and our in-school priorities?" (para.1). Consider the average salary of a teacher in the United States in 2012-2013 which was about $56,383 (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Compare the teacher salary with the average salary of a National Football League (NFL) player at $1.9 million per year with the highest salary topping $22 million (NFL, 2014). Weigh that $1.9 million against the $125 million singer and songwriter Madonna grossed in 2013 (Forbes, 2013). There is quite a discrepancy between the salary of a teacher, a tailback, and a top 40 artist. However, in schools the focus is rarely on physical education or music performance. Educators are not particularly concerned with Madonna's income or Aaron Roger's multimillion dollar paycheck. Consequently, why is this commentary on in-school and out-of-school values note-worthy? Consider the response from children when asked about their professional aspirations. A 2009 study in the United Kingdom indicated that many children dream of catching the winning Super Bowl touchdown, singing at the Grammies, or receiving the coveted Oscar (Telegraph, 2009). In a 2014 careers survey, children chose their top four choices as astronaut, musician, ac-tor, dancer (Doyle, 2014).The reality is that students are more likely to become educators than

entertainers, however, the athletes and entertainers engage learners. Students are drawn to the activities that engage body and mind as in subjects such as art, music, and physical education. According to an International Survey of six cities conducted by Benesse® Educational Research and Development Center (2007) children all around the world overwhelmingly rate a special area subject at the top of the list when asked to rank school subjects from most to least liked. Supporters of art education, who understand that the arts engage student learning, have looked to research to reveal the value of teaching the arts in schools.

Advocates for more aesthetic instruction conducted research associating increased success in traditional academic learning with the concept of skills transfer through arts education (Deasy, 2002) in order to bolster their claims regarding the importance of arts education. The research from schools at all levels around the globe supports value for students in creative arts learning. Skills developed through learning the creative arts influenced students at school and aided in their career path (Bamford, 2006; Catterall, Chapleau & Iwanaga, 1999). Teachers found it easier to facilitate students' development of fine motor skills, social skills, student confidence and cross curricular learning through creative arts instruction (Alter, Hays, O'Hara 2009). In a literature review from Scotland addressing the social and economic impact of the arts, Ruiz (2004) suggested that there are multiple positive outcomes from arts education including social cohesion, health and well-being, community image and regeneration all of which can transfer to the workplace.

These connections sound encouraging; yet the disconnect lies herein: arts conjure words such as creativity, imagination, self- expression, and tolerance, which are difficult to quantify with a grading rubric (Jansen, 2001). How does one evaluate creativity, enumerate imagination, or measure the value of the arts? Over the past two hundred years, most American public educa-

tion systems sprouted from the economic model of industrialism (Amadio, Truong, Tschurenev, 2006). Under this model, the schools focus on mathematics, reading, and science, not creativity, imagination, and self-expression. Public schools in America arose following the Civil War, as a response to increased immigration, in order to institute social order, maintain strict discipline, and assimilate immigrants into a common culture (Coulson, 1999). Previously, in the United States, education was for children whose parents could afford private, tuition based schools or children who benefited from charity schooling (Coulson, 1999). Words and phrases such as institute social order, strict discipline, and assimilation conflict with words in the vein of creativity, imagination and self-expression. Although public schools in America were built on the foundation of assimilation, as time passed, the nation changed yet, so much about public education remains the same (Wren, 1999). Many districts find that traditional education systems fail to prepare children for the changing landscape of the current economic climate and must change in order to meet evolving needs of current and future economic workforces (Peterson, 2009).

Within the current workforces in schools, research indicates that staff relationships and interpersonal interactions influence teacher attitudes that in turn define the climate of a school (Price, 2012; Haertel & Wang, 1994; Hoy & Henderson, 1983; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Moolenaar, Daly, & Sleegers, 2010; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Rosenholtz, 1985; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). The phrase school climate is often used interchangeably with the phrase school culture. While there are literally hundreds of articles on the topic of school climate, there is no common definition of the elements of school climate or what defines a positive school climate (Shah,

1) "They (homeroom teachers) drop the kids off early and come back to get them late."

2) "They act like our time isn't valuable even though we teach every kid in the school."

3) "We are the first ones they ask to combine classes, help with dismissal, and move our schedule around."

Figure 1: Examples of Comments from Special Area Teachers

2013; Johnson & Stevens, 2006). Although an exact definition has not been determined, "Virtually all researchers and the National School Climate Council agree that four major factors shape school climate: safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and the institutional environment" (Cohen et al., 2006, p.46). School climate positively affects the learning environment in many ways.

A positive school climate enhances academic achievement, teacher retention, and student success (Mitchell, M., Bradshaw, C., & Leaf, P., 2010; Cohen et al., 2009), increases student learning opportunities (Bryk & Schneider, 2003), and influences school effectiveness (Price, 2012; Goddard, LoGerfo, & Hoy, 2004). National School Climate Center and Fordham University perused more than 200 literature reviews about school climate and concluded that "sustained positive school climate is associated with positive child and youth development, effective risk-prevention and health-promotion efforts, student learning and academic achievement, increased

1) "They (special area teachers) are only teaching specials. Why do they get so upset about our classes being a couple of minutes early or late?"

2) "They act like we can get all this planning and paperwork done in 40 minutes. It isn't possible. How hard it is to plan for music, art, and PE?"

3) "We just have to have our planning, even during CRCT. We must have spe-

Figure 2: Examples of Comments from Homeroom Teachers

student graduation rates, and teacher retention" (Shah, 2013, p.1; National School Climate Center, 2014). With so many positive correlations, these studies support the move toward the inclusion of school climate in the overall evaluation of a school's improvement.

As evaluation instruments and what is measured continues to change and evolve in education, school leaders still engage in playing the game of high stakes testing (Figlio & Getzler, 2006). One way administrators navigate the process of high stakes testing, is how they determine teacher assignments within the school. Chingos and West (2009) suggest that "In this environment [high stakes testing accountability] administrators have clear incentives to keep their most effective teachers in tested grades and subjects while reassigning their less effective teachers to positions in which they will less directly (or less immediately) influence a school's performance rating." A 2013 study, conducted by Grissom, Kalogrides, and Loeb, found that teachers whose students perform poorly on standardized tests are more likely to be moved to a non-tested subject area or grade. The study also concluded that administrators are more involved in student and teacher placement in tested grades in order to improve test scores as much as possible (Grissom, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2013). Cohen-Vogel's 2011 research refers to various ways administrators

use personnel placements to improve test scores. She has coined the phrase "staffing to the test" to describe the technique of strategically moving personnel to increase student achievement on standardized tests (Cohen-Vogel, 2011). With this information in mind, administrators can speak volumes to their staff members without saying a word simply by moving a teacher to a different grade level or subject area.

The relationship between school climate and student achievement has been a topic of conversation in education circles for decades. Educators started the discussion on school climate as far back as 1908 (Perry, 1908) and the conversation has continued and evolved since. A 1977 study found that a positive or negative school climate served as a more accurate predictor of student achievement than did socioeconomic status or ethnicity (Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer & Wisenbaker, 1977). More recently, Johnson and Stevens (2006) discovered a positive and statistically significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of school climate and student achievement. However, the standardized tests used as the measuring stick of student achievement and to define successful schools under No Child Left Behind (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2003) do not measure school climate nor emphasize the importance of the intangibles that create school climate. The Character Education Partnership (2010) as well as others (Karp, Spring 2003; Marshak, November 2003; Mathis, 2006; McKenzie, November, 2006) suggested that in the effort to prepare students for high stakes standardized tests, schools and teachers have neglected other pertinent subjects such as science, social studies, the fine arts, and physical education. While neglecting these subjects, not only can students suffer academically, but research suggests that schools could also create deficits in skills that often ensure success in future careers (Ruppert, 2010). In 2008, The New Commission, a group of governors, business leaders, school leaders, and prior secretaries of education and labor, conducted an extensive evaluation of em-

ployment data from the United States Department of Labor (Ruppert, 2010). The New Commission's major finding was that, all else being equal, the skills needed to set employees apart in a global economy, are creativity and innovation (Ruppert, 2010). A 2013 Forbes article listed the top 10 skills employers are expecting in new employees. The top 3 included abilities such as team work, decision making, problem solving, planning, organization, prioritizing (Forbes, 2013). These abilities are often enhanced through the study of the arts (Sousa, 2006; Ruppert, 2010).

Arts: Various models in schools.

Around the world, countries address the call for change in education through exposure to the arts with various responses. Many Asian countries chose an approach called Art-in-Education (AiE) which utilizes the arts as educational tools for other subject areas, acknowledges multiple intelligences, and employs creative and investigative thinking across fields (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2005). In North America and Europe, the two most popular approaches are Education *in* Art (UNESCO, 2006) through which students foster culture knowledge and investigate cultural identity; and Education *through* Art, (UNESCO, 2003) which uses art as a medium for general education results and aptitudes.

Three themes emerged throughout the literature discussing how arts education influences learning. First, claims exist that arts education develops skills that increase aptitude across all subject areas including arts as well as academics (UNESCO 2005; Sousa, 2006; Oak, 2012). Second, arts education cultivates skills that are beneficial and unique specifically to art education (UNESCO, 2006; Eisner, 1998; Davis, 2007). Finally, arts education fosters skills that transfer from art education to core academic subjects (UNESCO, 2003; Hetland & Winner, 2004; Deasy,

2002; Spelke, 2000). This literature review will focus on these three themes in an effort to high-light the many positive influences arts education has across subject areas.

      Music affects the brain.

      In order to make sense of the three themes of how arts education influences achievement, it is first important to narrow the focus substantially. The phrase, the arts, encompasses so many subject areas, including but not limited to, dance, drama, visual arts, physical education, social studies, and foreign language (Alter, Hays, O'Hara, 2009). For the purpose of this literature review, music will be the exact art, in order to achieve a more specific focus. The interest in the neurology of music was spurred by the 1977 book by Critchley and Hensen, *Music and the Brain: Studies in the Neurology of Music*. This book spurred further research on how music affects the brain and eventually led to work on Music Therapy (Luttman, 2009). Music specifically affects brain function in many ways. In the Hodges' (2000) article, *Implications of Music and Brain Research* there are several premises about music and the brain:

1. The human brain has the ability to respond to and participate in music.

2. The musical brain operates at birth and persists throughout life.

3. The musical brain is highly resilient

4. Early and ongoing musical training affects the organization of the musical brain.

5. The musical brain consists of extensive neural systems involving widely distributed, but locally specialized regions of the brain: Cognitive components, affective components, and motor components (Hodges, 2000).

These findings seem intuitive, however, upon closer investigation, these common sense findings have a deeper message. Primarily, all children can learn music and music education should not be exclusively for those with "talent," those who can afford it, or those whose parents revere mu-

sic education (Hodges, 2000). Often, people categorize those who excel at music as "talented" as if one is born with musical ability or born without it. However, research illustrates that all students are musical and able to learn music, even those with compromised intellect (Weinberger, 1995; Hodges, 2000; Sousa, 2006).

Next, music learning is not a right brain or left brain issue. Studies illustrate that musical development occurs throughout the brain "front/back, top/bottom, left/right" (Hodges, 2000, p.20). Not only does musical development occur throughout the brain, but "music can actually prime the brain's neural pathways" (Jensen, 2000, p. 246). Finally, there is the notion that "music is dissociated with linguistic or other types of cognitive processes" (Hodges, 2000, p.21). In other words, the procedures used while learning music are specific to the practice of learning music. Therefore, neuroscientists are able to learn about the brain in a very specific manner by studying the effects of learning music (Bennet & Bennet, 2009). Schlaug, Norton, Overy, and Winner (2005) conducted similar research on "Effects of Music Training on the Child's Brain and Cognitive Development" and concluded music training in children resulted in "long-term enhancement of visual–spatial, verbal, and mathematical performance" (Schlaug et al., 2005, p. 219). The study explained that the results indicating transfer were often between related areas. For instance, music notation is spatial, so it makes sense for it to affect spatial reasoning. The notation of rhythm in music requires comprehension of fractions, division, proportions and ratios, so it is expected that musical education improves mathematical understanding (Schlaug et al., 2005).

The educational realm does not hold a corner on the market of research involving music and how it affects the brain. Even the mainstream media is interested in the effects of music on the brain. In her 2013 CNN article, "This is your brain on Music" Elizabeth Landau cited the work of Daniel Levitin, a leading psychologist who researches the neuroscience of music at

McGill University in Montreal, whose studies revealed several positive effects of music and the brain in the realm of medicine (Landau, 2013). For example, music received credit for decreased stress levels during medical tests, increased levels of immunity antibodies, and enlarged counts of germ fighting bacteria (Landau, 2013). Levitin also noted that music has a connecting quality. He uses a concert as an example saying that it is not a natural inclination to willingly join a mass of 20,000 people; however, for the concert of a favorite musician people are willing to step outside of what is innately comfortable (Levitin & Tirovolas, 2009; Landau, 2013). She also cited the research of Daniel Abrams, head author and postdoctoral researcher at Stanford University School of Medicine, whose research indicates that several common areas of the brain are engaged when subjects listen to music.

The regions controlling movement, attention, planning, and memory were triggered in all subjects while listening to music (Landau, 2013). In the 2013 article, "Inter-subject synchronization of brain responses during natural music listening," Abrams discussed the research of Daniel Levitin as well. The research involved subjects who listened to a common musical piece, an atonal piece, and a piece that had been changed from its original arrangement. The brain activity of the subjects who listened to the common musical piece all matched. "We found that music synchronizes brain responses across listeners in bilateral auditory midbrain and thalamus, primary auditory and auditory association cortex, right-lateralized structures in frontal and parietal cortex, and motor planning regions of the brain" (Levitin & Tirovolas, 2009, Abrams, 2013).

The brain activity of the participants was not synchronized when they listened to the atonal piece or the changed piece. This discovery indicates that apart from how people feel about music, the brain reacts to the hearing of the music the same way in all subjects (Abrams, 2013). Even iTunes advertises the benefits of music and learning, returning thousands of responses to

the query for study music. The following is just one example of the results obtained: Study Music - Help with Exams, Increase Brain Focus to Help with Learning and Concentration (iTunes, 2014).

Music supporters often mention "The Mozart Effect" (Rauscher, Shaw, & Ky,1993) to support their claims that music increases intelligence (Telesco, 2010). However, the broad claim of "increasing intelligence" is not supported in the original study that specifically researched college students' ability to execute "spatial-temporal tasks as evidenced by IQ scores after passively listening to 10 minutes of Mozart's sonata K. 448" (Rauscher et al, 1993). Concluding that college students who listen to a specific Mozart's Sonata for a precise amount of time and complete particular spatial temporal tasks specifically is quite different from saying that if you listen to classical music while you study, you will be more intelligent, which is how some music enthusiasts have watered down the Mozart Effect. In their article, "Does music make you smarter?" Steven Demorest and Steven Morrison attempt to answer this question. The overwhelming answer is "yes." However, the only solid conclusion they express is that music education increases student intelligence in music (Demorest & Morrison, 2000).

What many proponents of music education infer with the statement "Music makes you smarter" is that it makes students smarter at something other than music (Demorest & Morrison, 2000). This conclusion is so widely hyped, it has even influenced politics. Consider Georgia's Governor, Zell Miller, who requested over $105,000 from the state legislature, for classical music for Georgia's newborns (Kirchner, 1998). According to a January 14, 1998 Associated Press article, "Gov. Zell Miller, an avid country music buff, wants all Georgia newborns to have the chance to listen to soothing classical music. His hope is to boost baby brain power" (Kirchner, 1998, para. 1). When asked how he thought of this idea, Gov. Miller responded, "from a seminar

on early childhood education touting the benefits of music in making babies smarter" (Kirchner, 1998, para. 6).

Considering the neurological research suggesting the positive effects of music on brain development (Weinberger, 1995; Kirchner, 1998; Demorest & Morrison, 2000; Jensen, 2000; Schlaug et.al, 2005; Bennet & Bennet, 2009; Levitin & Tirovolas, 2009; Hodges, 2000; Landau, 2013; Abrams, 2013), it seems that schools would investigate ways to incorporate more and more music into schools. However, as resources in schools become scarce, the arts are often the first area shaved off the budget. Therefore, it is not enough to simply explain that music is beneficial to brain development, but it is also imperative to prove a connection specifically between music and academic achievement.

Arts education and the transfer of knowledge.

The concept that arts education leads to increased understanding in the traditional academic subjects is referred to as transfer (Hetland & Winner, 2004). Deasy (2002) suggested that students exposed to arts education transfer aesthetic knowledge to other academic realms. Specifically to music instruction and/ or performance, in only a handful of studies, the concept of transfer was evident between music and the following areas: Cognitive Development, Spatial reasoning, Spatial temporal reasoning, Quality of writing, Prolixity of writing, Mathematics proficiency, Spatial reasoning, Long-term spatial temporal reasoning, Self-efficacy, Self-concept, SAT verbal scores (Deasy, 2002). There is considerable literature (UNESCO, 2003; Hetland & Winner, 2004; Deasy, 2002; Spelke, 2000, Bennet & Bennet, 2009) discussing spatial reasoning that substantiates that mathematical skills and language realize a direct benefit from spatial reasoning skills. In mathematics, for example, proportions and fractions possess innately spatial qualities. The connection between language development and spatial reasoning is more indirect;

however "what we write, what we read, and what we hear involve words that are used and understood in specific contexts" (Deasy, 2002, p.168). Spelke (2000) echoes the theory of transfer between music instruction and spatial ability (p. 35) citing a moderately musically trained population of students. Teitelbaum and Fuerstner Gillis (2004) maintained that arts education transferred to increased academic achievement. Instruction in the arts such as music, visual arts, and drama was associated with increased test scores in objectively assessable subjects such as reading, vocabulary, comprehension, mathematics, and spatial reasoning in addition to boosting more intangible attributes including student motivation, tolerance, self-concept, and overall behavior (Amadio, Truong, Tschurenev, 2006).

Art for the sake of art.

Not all commentary on the topic of arts and academics strictly adheres to the mantra of transfer. Elliot Eisner, who authored several publications discussing art education, inquired "Have they ever thought about asking how reading and math courses contribute to higher performance in the arts?" (Eisner, 1998, p.32). The connection he makes is that if advocates for art education build their case on the foundation of the contribution of the arts on academic subjects, then when a different lure enters the arena, such as the internet or mobile devices, the supposed value of the arts will disintegrate. (Eisner, 1998). He contends that the value of arts education must stand on its own merit or else risk the threat of extinction with the appearance of the next course or device touting the effects of "transfer" between itself and academic achievement (Eisner, 1998). In her 2007 book, *Why our Schools need the Arts*, Jessica Davis reiterates Eisner's claims that art is valuable for its unique contributions and that it creates outcomes exclusive to only art education. Davis' book touts art for the sake of art and demonstrates that the attained results offer equilibrium "to a narrow, science based curriculum, by making it broad and bal-

anced" (Davis, 2007, p.51). She goes on to illustrate the valuable creations and talents realized through art education that are not easily measured through traditional educational assessments (Davis, 2007). Davis (2007) and Eisner (1998) assert that art education must be measured by art's own merit and contributions rather than how art education can increase gains in other subject areas.

Arts education increases student achievement in a multitude of areas.

The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) subscribes to the notion that arts education promotes skills that not only transfer from artistic to academic, but permeate across all subject areas in school and carry over into work and life (2013). The AEP (2013) claims that arts instruction and arts integrated instruction facilitate many skills that pervade other areas beyond school. In schools, art education increases both verbal and mathematics test scores, literacy engages the difficult to reach students and helps them connect in school, motivates students to learn, develops critical thinking, and improves school climate (Sousa, 2006). In the business sector, art education "Equips students to be creative, strengthens problem solving ability, builds collaboration and communication skills and increases capacity for leadership (AEP, 2013, p.4). In life, art education "teaches children to make good judgments about qualitative relationships, celebrates multiple perspectives, and fosters teamwork and problem solving" (Sousa, 2006). In the article, "Effects of music on the mind," Oak (2012) reiterates some of the same benefits between music and the brain referred to by Sousa as well as the AEP. He maintains that:

> Music fights depression by increasing the serotonin levels of the brain, relieves
>
> anxiety by calming the nerves and inducing sleep, improves learning abilities by
>
> promoting motivation and positive emotions, boosts confidence by increasing in-
>
> terpersonal skills, increases concentration levels and improves memory, increases

creativity and problem-solving skills, makes learning easier by combining music

with another task such as learning multiplication tables and speeds healing by se-

creting endorphins that help in speeding the process of healing. (Oak, 2007, p.16)

While some of these benefits are academic, there is a balance of aesthetic outcomes as

well. The approach of the Arts Education Partnership (AEP, 2013) can appeal to those who sub-

scribe to the notion that the skills learned through art education transfer to other disciplines and

affect student achievement as well as those who remain in the camp which supports art for its

own sake and the benefits that art education offers students.

The relationship between arts and accountability.

It is evident there are several opinions and multiple visions for how the arts fit into the

larger image of the place called school (Eisner 2002; Abril & Gault, 2006; Sousa, 2006; Davis

2007). Why so much research, time, and effort spent on the question of the value of art education

in schools? Some would say, for art educators, it is self-preservation (Sousa, 2006). To quote

Rodney Dangerfield's adage, it would indeed seem that the arts "get no respect" in the educa-

tional arena. In the 2004 article, "No subject left behind" the Arts Education Partnership (AEP,

2004) highlights the section of the NCLB law which defines the "core" subject areas and indi-

cates that the core subject areas will receive funding under the law located in "Title IX, Part A,

Section 9101 (1)(D)(11), Definitions: (11) The term `core academic subjects' means English,

reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, eco-

nomics, arts, history, and geography" (NCLB, 2003).

Whether those who make educational decisions failed to read the definition of 'Core Ac-

ademic Subjects' in its entirety, or simply ran out of money following the implementation of

standardized testing to measure reading and mathematics, is uncertain. However, what is abun-

dantly clear is that No Child Left Behind (NCLB) became law in 2003 and a decade later, art education is still deeply entrenched in the outskirts of the educational landscape. Although the words of Eisner (1995) were written close to 20 years ago, it seems they continue to resound in truthfulness regarding the marginalization of the arts:

> For both Plato and Descartes it was mathematics that was closest to God; to really know, one had to free one's self from the senses and, instead, address what is abstract, general, and timeless. The arts by contrast, are concrete, particular, and timely. And to make matters worse, they are emotional! Genuine understanding depends upon detached objectivity and it is such understanding for which the schools are responsible. In short, their contribution to enlightenment is marginal at best (Eisner, 1995, para.5).

Race to the Top accountability measures for the arts as well as traditionally tested subjects and grades sow new seeds of hope for the arts to move from marginal to mainstream (CEP 2010, Kearns, 2011). In order to better understand the hope arts advocates carry for arts education under RT3, it is necessary to look back at a brief history of how schools changed and what eventually lead to the accountability movement as well as the impact the accountability movement has had on the condition of schools.

Education and accountability in the United States.

Accountability is a term that previously applied more to students than teachers and schools. Nineteenth- century schools used tests to determine if students had mastered the information taught (Ravitch, 2002). If the student failed the test, or multiple tests throughout the year, the student failed or was retained. The student was responsible for passing the test. From the late-19th to mid-20th century, progressive educators, such as John Dewey, William Kilpatrick, and

Harold Rugg, shifted the focus to educating social beings (Wren, 1999). Social promotion be-

came acceptable and the responsibility for passing a test was shifted off of the student (Ravitch,

2002). The concept of students as social beings was forced to the background as the age of the

Cold War raged. In 1957, the Russians launched Sputnik, which simultaneously launched a pub-

lic and political onslaught against the American education system blaming public schools for the

fact that the United States was not first in space (Amrein & Berliner, 2002). In 1965, the Federal

government first enacted The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The ESEA in-

cluded Title I provisions which traditionally assist low income, disadvantaged students

(Standerfer, 2006). Before ESEA the federal government had respected states' rights to make

decisions regarding curriculum and the daily processes of schools (Standerfer, 2006). Approxi-

mately two decades later, in 1983, the National Commission on Education released A *Nation at*

Risk which maligned public schools in America, indicating that American students were falling

behind their counterparts in other countries and that educationally the nation was spiraling

downward (Amrein & Berliner, 2002). Although, A *Nation at Risk* was highly controversial, it

began circulating madly and soon became the guidebook for Educational Reform (Vinovskis,

1999). In 1989 the nation's governors met to create education goals for the country. Of those

goals, six applied to public schools:

> Creating a more highly professional teaching force; (b) strengthening school lead-
>
> ership and management; (c) promoting greater parent involvement and choice in
>
> their youngsters' education; (d) helping at-risk children and youth meet higher
>
> education standards; (e) making better and more effective use of new technologies
>
> in education; and (f) making better use of the resources invested in school facili-
>
> ties (Vinovskis, 1999, p17).

The ESEA was reauthorized in 1994 which ushered in high-stakes, standardized testing followed closely by high-stakes accountability. No Child Left Behind was actually a third reauthorization of ESEA (Manna, 2010). In 1998, President Bill Clinton commented on public education,

> That is why I have fought for excellence, competition, and accountability in our nation's public schools, with more parental involvement, greater choice, better teaching, and an end to social promotion. We cannot afford to let our children down when they need us the most. (President Bill Clinton, 1998).

The NCLB regarding reading education for students in America echoed his sentiments:

> Because President and Mrs. Bush know that reading is the foundation for all other learning, the administration has set the goal of making sure every child knows how to read at grade level by the third grade. Reading opens doors to children who otherwise would struggle through school, lacking the skills to succeed and grow. Literacy is a vital skill for a successful student. Children who learn to read well early in life are more likely to be engaged in school and experience academic success. A deficiency in reading skills impacts achievement in all other areas of education (DoE, 2004).

Regardless of political affiliation, it is difficult to find fault with the laudable goal of Presidents Clinton and Bush regarding the significance of reading and excellence in the nation's schools. The NCLB act of 2001, which became law in 2003, contains several elements such as; annual testing, academic progress for all, report cards for schools and districts, increased teacher qualifications, and funding to ensure implementation. However, the annual testing resulted in a "narrowing of the curriculum" in many schools (Bush, 2013; Golan, 1991, Kohn, 2001; Guzenhausen, 2003; Amrein, 2002). Report cards for schools and districts led to discontentment

of many stakeholders including teachers, parents, administrators, and students (Daly, 2009;

Kearns, 2011). All the funding that was promised never came to fruition leading to increased

frustration from the mandates of testing without the monetary support from the federal govern-

ment in many states across the nation (Bracey, 2005).

Rationale and goals for No Child Left Behind.

The insistence on all students having access to high quality education is the core of No

Child Left Behind (Daly, 2009; Borowski & Sneed, 2006; Haycock, 2006; USDOE, 2002, Sec-

tion 101; Bracey, 2001). However, the theory of the award and punishment structures which re-

ward high performing schools and supposedly motivate low performing schools are grounded in

business theory rather than pedagogical theory (Gelberg, 2007; Manna, 2006). Research actually

suggests that this type of threatening and sanction driven environment results in many damaging

effects such as decreased job satisfaction, increased intra- and interpersonal conflict, inability to

inventively problem-solve, and physical manifestations (Hansen & Sullivan, 2003; Hutchinson,

1998; Kyriacou, 2001; Wiley, 2000). Pre-NCLB, schools operated in a low stakes arena, mean-

ing that the students took tests and the belief was that teachers, administrators, and policy makers

would use the data derived from tests to adjust teaching practices and curriculum accordingly

(Heubert & Hauser, 1999). Conversely, high stakes testing operates under the concept that the

information gleaned from the tests is not enough to prompt educators to teach and students to

reach their academic potential. The suggestion is that teachers and students require the assurance

of incentives and penalties to guarantee change (Mintrop & Trujilo, 2005; Heubert & Hauser,

1999). This theory of school reform includes several surprising elements and results that are con-

trary to the initial purpose of NCLB.

The intention of No Child Left Behind was to use accountability in order to improve schools for all students while addressing inequities and social injustices in education (Daly, 2009; Borowski & Sneed, 2006; Haycock, 2006; USDOE, 2002, Section 101; Bracey, 2001). Advocates of No Child Left Behind and high-stakes testing operate within the philosophy that schools and teachers need high-stakes testing for several reasons. The tests guide teachers to know what is important to teach. Testing provides meaningful standards and scores for teachers, administrators, and schools to aspire to reach. High-stakes accountability motivates teachers, especially lazy teachers, to work harder (Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Golan, 1991; Mintrop & Trujillo, 2005). Policymakers assume positive educational change results from high-stakes testing and increased accountability (Heubert & Hauser, 1999; Pedulla, 2003). Lawmakers who support testing believe "testing drives much of what teachers do and so curricular and instructional change will occur if and when tests change" (Grant, 2000, p.2).

Supporters of high stakes testing claim that high-stakes accountability will inspire students to work harder and learn more (Blazer, 2011; Pedulla, 2003). Testing will encourage students to perform at their highest potential and score well on the tests. Testing advocates believe that when students score well on the test, they will feel successful and when students fail the tests they will be inspired to increase their effort to learn and succeed (Blazer, 2011; Amrein & Berliner, 2002). Supporters of high-stakes testing also presume that tests are good measures of school curriculum and instruction, provide an equitable arena for all students to exhibit their academic expertise, and supply an adequate gauge of student performance (Amrein & Berliner, 2002). The data gained from test results can then guide instruction. The tests measure student achievement that in turn, illustrates school effectiveness, which in turn highlights which schools should be rewarded and which schools need additional support (Blazer, 2011; Pedulla, 2003).

High-stakes testing advocates believe all stakeholders, teachers, administrators, and parents, will understand and use test results in a meaningful, productive manner (Amrein & Berliner, 2002). The assumption that led to the accountability measures in NCLB is that teachers and administrators use the test results as a guide for improving instruction, school improvement, and professional learning ultimately resulting in school reform nationwide (Golan, 1991). Promoters of high-stakes testing also subscribe to the thought that parents are able to look at their child's test scores objectively and with a critical eye (Golan, 1991). Testing supporters trust that tests are capable of all of these feats while being unaffected by disparity in students' motivation, social status, native language, and individuality (Amrein & Berliner, 2002).

Results and responses to No Child Left Behind.

While the ideals and goals for NCLB sound reasonable in theory, the reality in schools across the nation often reveals a drastically different depiction (Kohn, 2001; Kearns, 2011; Bush, 2013). The very inequities the law intended to fight, have grown in many schools. Kohn (2001) and Kearns (2011) both argue that high-stakes tests are extremely accurate predictors of socioeconomic status (SES) of the families that feed into a school;

> The truth of the matter is they [standardized tests] offer a remarkably precise method for gauging the size of the houses near the school where the test was administered. Every empirical investigation of this question has found that socioeconomic status (SES) in all its particulars accounts for an overwhelming proportion of the variance in test scores when different schools, towns, or states are compared (Kohn, 2001, p. 349).

Although there are schools that have improved under the sway of NCLB, those schools with traditionally underserved populations have seen "increased sanctions which negatively af-

fect instruction by decreasing collaboration and professional interaction" (Daly, 2009, p.172.)

Many underachieving schools consist of populations composed of high percentages of students

in a low socioeconomic bracket or a high percentage of minority students (Daly, 2009). As

NCLB became law, these low performing schools were labeled as Program Improvement (PI) or

Needs Improvement (NI) schools. Program Improvement (PI) schools failed to meet annual year-

ly progress (AYP) thus were labeled and faced the threat of sanctions. Under NCLB, sanctions

ranged from accreditation losses, funding losses, personnel shifts, and state take-overs (Quality

Counts, 2002). High stakes accountability and testing inherently include an emphasis on data that

can be measured quantitatively (Crotty, 1998).

On the other hand, encouraging pedagogical strategies proven to increase student en-

gagement, student learning, and authentic collaboration yield more qualitative results which are

difficult to measure on a multiple choice test or rank on a school report card. Often within the NI

schools the prescription of choice was one of "Teaching to the Test" resulting in "narrowing the

curriculum" (Bush, 2013; Golan, 1991, Kohn, 2001; Guzenhausen, 2003; Amrein, 2002). Nar-

rowing of the curriculum refers to using the majority of instructional time teaching the subjects

that will be tested. For example, some schools focus on instruction in reading, mathematics, and

writing leaving other subjects such as science, social studies, physical education, and the arts

fighting for the remaining time in the school day (Sousa, 2006; Gunzenhausen, 2003). Therefore,

large portions of the curriculum are often ignored. It may seem contradictory, but test scores in

these schools often increased as the depth and breadth of instruction decreased (Blazer, 2011;

Gunzenhausen, 2003). Therefore, the question begs: has the achievement gap in these schools

diminished or expanded? If one of the central aims of No Child Left Behind was to ensure edu-

cational equality then reducing the curriculum to reading and math for those who are in failing schools falls short of the goal.

Teaching for understanding and teaching to a test are two very different goals. Teaching for understanding encourages students to engage in the learning process by enhancing problem solving skills, higher order thinking strategies and critical analysis of subject matter (Buese, 2002). Many argue that if teachers "just teach well" then "the tests will take care of themselves" (Kohn, 2001, p.351) however, Kohn counters that this argument is a "convenient delusion" (p.351) and that to teach in a way that promotes student understanding and critical thinking may indeed decrease test results. Linda McNeil (2000) articulates that the decision between teaching to the test and teaching for understanding is a difficult choice and that effective teaching does not inevitably lead to solid test results:

> In fact, the transformation of the curriculum into received knowledge, to be as-
> sessed by students' selection of one answer among four provided on a computer-
> scored test, undermined both the quality and quantity that "good teachers" could
> present to their students. . . . [Thus,] teachers faced serious ethical dilemmas.
> They could teach to the proficiencies and assure high test scores for their students.
> Or they could teach the curricula they had been developing (and wanted to con-
> tinue to develop) and teach not only a richer subject matter but also one that was
> aimed at students' understanding and their long-term learning, not the short-term
> goals inherent in the district testing of memorized fragments (McNeil, p.?).

Not only does high-stakes testing reshape the way students are instructed, some argue it also transforms the philosophy of education and creates a Default Philosophy of Education (Gunzenhauser, 2003). A default philosophy is defined as "the vision of education that results

from a lack of reflective, engaged dialogue among educators and school communities about their goals and practices" (Gunzenhauser, 2003, p.51). In the current high stakes context, created by policymakers and politicians rather than educators, the default philosophy places tremendous significance on the test results rather on the accomplishment the results indicate (Gunzenhauser, 2003). Gunzenhauser (2003) and Eisner (2000) worry that high stakes accountability and testing which result in this default philosophy are leading further and further from the desired educational reform. In order to reach real school reform there are crucial questions that must be answered.

> We are not clear about what we are after. Aside from literacy and numeracy, what do we want to achieve? What are our aims? What is important? What kind of educational culture do we want our children to experience? In short, what kind of schools do we need? (Eisner, 2000, p. 577).

Not only is it essential to question the types of schools needed for positive educational reform, it is also necessary to question the types of adults created as a result of the current climate of high-stakes accountability.

> The questions are, "What kind of public does it [public schooling] create? A conglomerate of self-indulgent consumers? Angry, soulless, directionless masses? Indifferent, confused citizens? Or a public imbued with confidence, a sense of purpose, a respect for learning, and tolerance? (Postman, 1996, p. 18).

Another teacher queried, "What kind of learners is this [standardized testing] going to shape? Are we producing a nation of test-takers, and if so, are those test-taking techniques or skills what we need to produce lifelong learners that we talked about before" (Grant, 2000, p.18)?

Are schools creating adults who can think creatively, problem solve, analyze data, and intelligently discuss controversial topics? Or have the multiple choice tests, national report cards, and lists of rankings by schools, districts, and states reduced the output of schools to adults who are able to choose the best of fours possible responses and completely fill in their answer bubble? It seems contradictory that the same parents with the "everybody gets a trophy" mentality (Sigman, 2012), those who are so concerned about falsely bolstering the self-esteem and self-concept of their children, are simultaneously allowing their children to be ranked and labeled as passing or failing in school based on annual testing. (Sigman, 2012).

A 2004 RAND report, *The 21st Century at Work: Forces Shaping the Future Workforce and Workplace in the United States* answers this question with a resounding "no" indicating that the future workforce will "require high-level cognitive skills for managing, interpreting, validating, transforming, communicating, and acting on information. Valued skills include such non-routine analytic skills as abstract reasoning, problem solving, communication, and collaboration" (Karoly & Panis, 2004). Whether or not the tests prepare students for the workforce is doubtful, however what is certain is the research revealing what high-stakes testing does to the students who are involved.

Following standardized testing, many students are often surprised to find that they failed the test. Following the shock of failure, they report feeling "degraded, humiliated, stressed, and shamed by the test results" (Kearns, 2011, p.118). They further stated that they felt a "lack of care and concern for their well-being and that of their peers" (Kearns, 2011, p.118). Despite the reports that teachers do not care, many teachers share that they are concerned about a range of emotions in their students before tests which range from anxiety, panic, irritability, frustration, crying, headaches, and sleep deprivation to boredom and apathy (Triplett, Barksdale, Leftwich,

2003). The students are not the only ones suffering from emotional effects of testing. Teachers also report increased stress and decreased morale in light of testing (Pedulla et.al, 2003). The very exams intended to motivate teachers and students indeed have the opposite effect (Pedulla et.al, 2003). Many teachers described decreased job satisfaction, increased intra- and interpersonal professional conflict, inability to creatively problem solve, loss in productivity, and isolation as some of the results of high-stakes accountability and testing on their work environment (Daly, 2009; Hansen & Sullivan, 2003).

The manner in which the scores are used to judge student achievement, teacher performance, and school ranking has set students and teachers in a state of conflict (Grant, 2000). One study on tests and teacher perspective quoted several questions from teachers regarding the rationale of the tests such as, "Who is it assessing? Is it really assessing the students? Or is it assessing the teachers?" Another elementary teacher echoed this point: "What is the purpose of the state exams? Is it actually to assess the students or to push the teachers in a direction?" "Whose life is most affected by the tests?" (Grant, 2000, p.13). In the Unites States, the stakes of the tests are higher for the teachers than for the students (Wiliam, 2010). "Ironically, these effects of NCLB get in the way of achieving the very goals the law aims to promote" (Stipek, 2006). Consider this quote from Bobbit in 1913, "And finally, principals and other administrators should use tests to determine 'weak' and 'strong' teachers as well as rates of teacher pay or access to other privileges" (Bobbit, 1913, p. 52).

If the tests are really designed to assess student knowledge and learning, then it would make sense for students to receive feedback on the exams. The students spend so much time preparing for the tests and practicing the format of the test. The entire school schedule is altered to take the test. However, students have to wait until the beginning of the next school year to re-

ceive a score report informing them of their score and percentages. They are never really sure if they got the correct answer on the question that they were unsure of. They are never certain which questions were incorrect and composed the passing or failing score. They do not receive meaningful feedback from which they can grow and learn. For students the test is more of an exercise than a teaching tool. Currently termed "test security" Grant Wiggins (1993), in Assessing Student Performance referred to this lack of feedback as secrecy.

> Secrecy as to the questions that will be asked. Secrecy as to how the questions will be chosen. Secrecy as to how the results will be scored. Sometimes secrecy as to when we will be tested. Secrecy as to what the scores mean. Secrecy as to how the results will be used. What a paradoxical affair! Our aim is to educate, to prepare, to enlighten, yet our habits of testing are built upon procedures that continually keep students in the dark-procedures with roots in pre-modern traditions of legal proceedings and religious inquisitions (Wiggins, 1993, p.72).

Very often, teachers are the ones whose skills are judged as a result of the exams. How does the fact that teachers are judged on students' test scores affect the relationship between teachers and students? One teacher commented: "I never--it never crossed my mind before that a certain kid was going to lower my passing rate or not, and I actually started thinking about that this year. And I was so ashamed of myself about that" (Grant, 2000, p.19). A superintendent in Florida commented that, as a direct result of high-stakes testing, "When a low-performing child walks into a class room, instead of being seen as a challenge, or an opportunity for improvement, for the first time since I've been in education, teachers are seeing [him or her] as a liability" (Wilgoren, 2000).

Obviously, if educators resent children who are likely, for one reason or another, to perform poorly, they cannot establish the nurturing relationship with those children that will enable the children to trust them and incline the children to accept as their own the moral values required to create and sustain a just and humane democracy (Watson, 1998). Some research indicates that whether or not a school has passing test scores influences the relationship between teachers and students. For example, Golan (1991) found that in schools where standardized test scores were improving teachers reported instructional innovation, teacher involvement in school decision making, high expectations for student performance and pride in their profession. In schools with decreasing scores, teachers commented that the students are not capable of learning the material to pass the test or if the scores decrease they see it as a response to the population change within the school or community (Golan, 1991). Interestingly enough, the high-stakes tests used to judge students and teachers are designed so that a portion of students will fail (Kohn, 2004; Gibson, 2001). The tests are even reconfigured every few years, since more students are improving their scores on the test as a result of recognition of the format, to ensure that a percentage continue to fall short of the bar (Kohn, 2004).

Despite these shortcomings, states continued to spend millions on tests in order to comply with No Child Left Behind so that they could receive federal dollars. However, the funding authorized under NCLB was never realized completely (Bracey, 2005). The United States Department of Education did not have the personnel or the budget to ensure that all public schools maintained compliance with the complicated regulations of NCLB (Bracey, 2005). Department of Education spokespeople have stated from the start that the crucial element to enforcement would be parents who pressure schools to give their children the options provided by the federal law (GreatSchools.com, 2012). From the creation of the test, the administration of the test, and

the way the test results are used, high-stakes testing breaks down the relationships between educators, students, and their communities (Gibson, 2001).

Hopes for Race to the Top.

With each new venture, "hope springs eternal in the human breast" (Pope, 1733). As schools transitioned from No Child Left Behind to Race to the Top (RT3) schools found themselves laden with a mixture of hope for meaningful change and fear of the unknown. McGuinn indicates that RT3 is about two things: "creating political cover for state education reformers to innovate and helping states construct the administrative capacity to implement these innovations effectively" (2012). While NCLB envisioned a high level of education for all students, RT3 supports those states that have demonstrated educational strength, innovation, and a dedication to reform. Essentially, shifting the spotlight of federal law from the "laggards to the leaders" in education (McGuinn, 2012, p. 137). Race to the Top uses a competitive grant process focusing on incentives rather than on the threat of sanctions as under No Child Left Behind (McGuinn, 2012). In a 2010 White House Statement, President Obama expressed his hopes for Race to the Top:

> Because economic progress and educational achievement go hand in hand, educating every American student to graduate prepared for college and success in a new work force is a national imperative. Meeting this challenge requires that state standards reflect a level of teaching and learning needed for students to graduate ready for success in college and careers (Office of the Press Secretary, 2010).

Although, some have said that RT3 is basically NCLB on steroids (Wilson, 2013) others maintain hope in a new system of reform. Race to the Top claims a more comprehensive approach to school reform, encompassing data about school climate, career awareness, as well as test data

(GaDoE, 2013) However, only specific states are participating in Race to the Top. In 2010, there were 4.25 billion government dollars up for grabs through a competitive grant process intended to advance education and student achievement nationwide (Miller & Hanna, 2014). In phase I, Tennessee and Delaware were awarded funds. Phase II states included the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, and Rhode Island. In phase III, Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania started their Race to the Top journey (Miller & Hanna, 2014).The presence of Race to the Top funding, makes it more realistic for RT3 districts within RT3 states to increase student achievement and innovation in education. The term annual yearly progress (AYP) has been re-placed with the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) Supporters of arts education and other marginalized subjects under NCLB are hopeful to find more focus on mar-ginalized subjects with the dawn of CCRPI. The equation for determining CCRPI include points for Achievement, Student Growth Percentages (SGPs), closing the achievement gap, and chal-lenge points. Some examples of items in elementary schools to be measured in the state of Geor-gia under CCRPI Challenge Points include:

- Percent of students earning a passing score in world language courses

- Percent of students earning a passing score in fine arts courses.

- School has earned a Georgia Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Pro-gram Certification

- Percent of fifth grade students with a complete career portfolio by end of grade 5

- Percent of students in grades 1-5 with a fully documented *Fitnessgram* assessment (GaDoE, 2013).

Through Race to the Top, the hope is for a better-rounded, less punitive educational experience in schools around the country.

The influence of accountability and relationships.

The conversation about school climate originated in 1908 (Perry) and has continued since without the formation of a common definition of school climate (Shah, 2013; Johnson & Stevens, 2006). In 2009, Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, and Pickeral suggested a comprehensive definition of school climate that "refers to the quality and character of school life . . . based on patterns of people's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures" (p. 10). This definition speaks to the four areas most often sited in numerous reviews discussing school climate and include safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and institutional environment (Freiberg, 1999; Cohen, 2006; Blum, McNeely, & Rinehart, 2002; Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterie, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Furlong, M., Greif, J., Bates, M., Whipple, A., Jimenez, T., & Morrison, R., 2005; Griffith, 2000; Loukas, Suzuki, & Horton, 2006; Wilson, 2004; Whitlock, 2006). Within these four domains, the relationships were of particular interest for this review.

As stated previously, a positive school climate enhances academic achievement, teacher retention, and student success (Mitchell, M., Bradshaw, C., & Leaf, P., 2010; Cohen et al., 2009), increases student learning opportunities (Bryk & Schneider, 2003), and influences school effectiveness (Price, 2012; Goddard, LoGerfo, & Hoy, 2004). Positive school climate indicates various optimistic effects for students. Art education in schools also has the potential to affirmatively influence school climate and positively affect students (AEP, 2013; Sousa, 2006; Fiske, 1999). Students involved in the arts feel more invested in their education. Students who are often difficult to reach through traditional reading, writing, and arithmetic often excel in the arts (AEP,

2013; Sousa, 2006; Fiske, 1999). Arts classes often create environments of discovery, environments where "the very school culture is changed and the conditions for learning are improved" (Fiske, 1999, p.12). The arts have illustrated positive links to student motivation and engagement in school, which often translate to increased academic performance (AEP, 2013; Sousa, 2006). Students engaged in arts education are often more empathetic, open to new ideas, and have more of a sense of community all of which are attributes that assist in building positive school climate (AEP, 2013; Sousa, 2006; Fiske, 1999).

Various reviews regarding school climate examine the importance of positive student-teacher relationships, parent-teacher relationships, as well as principal-teacher relationships within school climate, however, very few of them consider the importance of positive teacher-teacher relationships. There are a small number of studies that investigated teacher-teacher relationships as part of school climate, however they were based primarily on case studies or anecdotal evidence (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008) Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) propose that the adult relationships within the school influence school climate and student learning as well. Factors such as, "teachers' job satisfaction, a sense of professionalism and influence, collegial trust, and opportunities to collaborate" (p. 460) affect student learning and school climate (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). Gersick, Bartunek, Dutton (2000) declare our relationships with individuals and groups constitute the environment in which we live our professional lives. Such environments can be nurturing sources of learning, inspiration, and enjoyment, or they can be destructive sources of frustration and injury. They send us powerful messages about who we are and how we are valued" (p.1026).

Whether a school is a place of inspiration or frustration is often influenced tremendously by the teachers who work side by side with one another. Stauffer and Mason (2013) found that

two significant stressors for teachers were accountability including standardized testing and relationships with other adults in the school, including fellow teachers who are adverse, competitive, or engage in adding drama to the school dynamics. One teacher commented that along with all the many responsibilities she has as a teacher, she struggles as well with her second class treatment as a special area teacher, "Added to my challenges is the fact that I teach a special area. … Since I teach a "special" I do not give a letter grade and students perceive that I do not have the authority over them to provide significant consequences for misbehavior the ways their classroom teacher does" (Stauffer & Mason, 2013, p.820). If it is true that a teacher's sense of satisfaction with her occupation, a feeling of professionalism and impact, a sense of shared trust with colleagues, and opportunities to work together (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008) affect her perception of school climate then the previous commentary from a special area teacher speaks to part of the tension between special area and homeroom teachers.

The sense of professionalism for a special area teacher is called into question when their content area is graded on a satisfactory or unsatisfactory grading scale instead of letter grades as in traditional subjects such as reading and math. Some critics attribute this marginalization of non-tested areas, such as the arts, on high stakes standardized testing and heightened accountability measures (Ravitch, 2010). Dee, Jacob, and Schwartz (2013) reveal that as a result of NCLB, time and resources in schools were funneled more towards tested areas, such as reading and math, rather than non-tested subjects. This study also illustrated that principals consider academic gains and raising basic skills when scheduling and allocating resources (Dee, et al, 2013). Abril and Gault (2006) suggest that principals consider academic results when scheduling time for non-tested subjects such as music, art, science, and social studies.

This emphasis on tested area subjects also effect areas such as resources available to special area teachers and even the inclination to hire academic teachers rather than teachers of non-tested areas (Abril & Gault, 2006). Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) advise that opportunities to collaborate with others can positively affect school climate. Very often, special area teachers are relatively isolated and unable to collaborate. There is usually one music teacher, one physical education teacher, one art teacher in an elementary school. Therefore, the opportunity to collaborate professionally with others is limited for special area teachers. Less time available for their subject area, fewer resources, marginalization, and isolation are all contributing factors for decreased teacher efficacy (Stauffer & Mason, 2013). These factors illustrate the friction and strain present between many special area teachers and homeroom teachers.

Therefore, in the end it seems to come full circle. Relationships in schools matter (Stipek, 2006). Arts education in schools matters (Seif, 2013). Standardized tests matter (Grant, 2000). School climate matters (Shah, 2013). Relationships, climate, and accountability are all interconnected in schools. The influence of the arts in education has the potential to influence all three of these areas. Arts education can encourage success in students who may not traditionally be successful (Hardiman, 2009). The arts can foster valuable relationships and positive culture in schools (AEP, 2013; Sousa, 2006; Fiske, 1999). The arts can also promote intellectual skills that can positively affect student learning (Stuht & Gates, 2007). If students reap such benefits from involvements in arts education, then educators eventually share similar benefits in the area of higher standardized test scores (Elpus, 2013).

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2 TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE BASED ON SUBJECT AREA (HOMEROOM OR SPECIAL AREA)

As Race to the Top (RT3) ushered in a new era of accountability and assessment in schools across the United States, it was imperative to look back at No Child Left Behind in order to understand both the benefits and detriments that resulted from the high states accountability movement nationwide. The core objective of No Child Left Behind was to provide a high quality education for all students regardless of the location of the school or the socioeconomic status or race of the children in the school (Daly, 2009; Borowski & Sneed, 2006; Haycock, 2006; USDOE, 2002, Section 101; Bracey, 2001). Through a series of award and sanction constructs, No Child Left Behind endeavored to use accountability to increase school performance while simultaneously rectifying the social injustices and inequities that exist in education (Daly, 2009; Borowski & Sneed, 2006; Haycock, 2006).

There were supporters and dissenters on both side of the NCLB issue. Supporters claimed the high stakes accountability would encourage students and teachers to work harder (Blazer, 2011; Pedulla, 2003). Advocates for high stakes testing accountability also assumed parents, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders would use the test results in order to guide instruction, provide meaningful professional learning, and improve schools in general (Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Golan, 1991). While these were laudable assumptions, the reality was much different in many schools and districts.

Often, the high stakes accountability arena became an environment for distrust and fear among educators, administrators, parents, and students (Bush, 2013; Kearns, 2011; Daly, 2009). Frequently, collaboration, professional dialogue, as well as depth and breadth of instruction decreased, even as test scores and the achievement gaps increased (Blazer, 2011; Daly, 2009). In

many areas where schools had limited resources, the threat of sanctions loomed overhead for school leaders and teachers. In order to avoid losing precious resources to sanctions, the decision to teach the material on the test or "narrow the curriculum" to only the tested subjects resulted in schools that could pass the test and avoid sanctions, but at the cost of narrowing the education for students who needed the most breadth and depth of instruction (Bush, 2013; Kohn, 2001, Gunzenhausen, 2003). Often the students with the fewest resources had very little exposure to science, social studies, music, art, physical education as a result of the pressure to pass the standardized tests to meet adequate yearly progress. Therefore, in many cases the inequities No Child Left Behind intended to remedy actually became worse instead of better.

The high-stakes testing systems that developed during No Child Left Behind focused on student performance in certain grades and specific subjects (Chingos & West, 2011). Consequently, the unspoken message was that some subjects and grade levels were important while others were not as essential. Chingos and West (2011) suggested that while it may be difficult for principals to counsel ineffective teachers out of the profession, it is much easier for them to "keep their most effective teachers in tested grades and subjects while reassigning their less effective teachers to positions in which they will less directly (or less immediately) influence a school's performance rating" (p.3). The indirect implication was that tested subjects such as math, reading, and language arts were vital while untested subjects, including but not limited to art, music, and physical education, were less significant. Grissom, Kalogrides, and Loeb (2013) indicate that principals and assistant principals were more involved with teachers of tested areas than those of non-tested areas. Principals were strategic about staffing decisions in order to create the most effective teams of teachers in those grades and subjects that were measured by standardized test scores (Vogel-Cohen, 2011; Grissom, Kalogrides & Loeb, 2011) Whether in-

tentionally or unintentionally, the message was conveyed that the most important teachers in the school were those in the measured areas. While it was reasonable for those teachers in untested grades to rationalize their work was important because they were building the solid academic foundation for the tested grades, it was far more difficult for teachers in non-tested subjects to articulate their importance in the school. The suggestion that certain teachers were more highly valued than others had the potential to produce feelings of resentment and distrust. If it is true that trust is the foundation to building and supporting organizational relationships (Bryk et al., 2010; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2004), then imagine the potential for damage from a lack of trust.

The chemistry between standardized testing and teacher accountability is a complicated dynamic. When one adds in the element of the relationships between teachers to the already complex formula, the result has the potential to be explosive. Stipek (2006) advised educators to focus on the relationships that affect student performance and avoid allowing high stakes testing and accountability measures to minimize the meaningful relationships built between teachers, students, parents, and administrators in schools. Barth (2006) reminded us that "the relationships among educators in a school define all relationships within that school's culture. Teachers and administrators demonstrate all too well the capacity to either enrich or diminish one another's lives and thereby enrich or diminish their schools (p.8). While the high stakes testing arena often created an atmosphere of competition, concern, and fear, the aesthetic realm, that values the arts, produced sentiments of cooperation, calm, and care often uncelebrated in the world of academia (Baker et al., 2010).

The value of the arts has been the focus of the research and writings of Elliot Eisner for over two decades. Eisner challenges readers to ponder the question "Given the fact that we build

palaces to house them, erect concert halls to hear them, construct theaters to see them, pay per-

formers of the arts fortunes to provide them, why the discrepancy between our out-of-school be-

havior and our in-school priorities" (Eisner, 1995, para. 1)? As the arts seemed to be pressed out

of schools more and more, supporters of aesthetic instruction brought to light more and more re-

search touting the benefits of arts instruction. Arts education can enhance students' fine motor

skills, social skills, student confidence, and cross curricular learning (Alter, Hays, O'Hara,

2009). The arts have discovered positive links to student engagement and motivation in school

(AEP, 2013; Sousa, 2006). Students involved in arts education are frequently more open to

unique ideas, more empathetic, and experience a greater sense of community (AEP, 2013; Sousa,

2006; Fiske, 1999). Many of the benefits of arts education are also attributes that can assist in

building positive relationships and a more positive school climate.

The relationships within schools, the effects of high stakes tests, and accountability

measures are all important elements in creating an overall positive or negative school climate.

While there is considerable research indicating the strong influence school climate has on student

achievement, there is substantially less research on the types of teacher to teacher relationships

within schools that influence school climate (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). Considering the power

of relationships within schools, the goal of this study was to discover how teachers perceive

school climate as it relates to their subject area (homeroom or special area) in an elementary

school setting. The elementary setting was that of one elementary school that reflected the de-

mographics of the school district in which the school was located. For the purpose of this study,

homeroom teachers included teachers of third, fourth, and fifth grades whose students are tested

with standardized tests. Special area teachers included teachers of art, music, and physical educa-

tion whose students are not tested with standardized tests.

Methodology

  Research design.

  For this study, one elementary school in a school district in northeast Georgia was pur-
posely selected. The school included a demographic composition that closely mirrored the de-
mographics of the county as a whole. One music teacher, one third grade teacher, one fifth grade
teacher, and one fourth grade teacher, who was previously a music teacher, were interviewed
from the selected school.

  Data collection.

  The data collected throughout the research consisted of a large survey, conducted by the
state of Georgia, a smaller in-district survey, and semi-structured interviews conducted with the
four teachers from one selected elementary school. The selected school was chosen because the
demographics of the school were similar to the demographic of the district as a whole. The dis-
trict consists of 26,411 students and includes eight high schools, eight middle schools, and 20
elementary schools. There are a total of 11 charter schools in the district; two of them high
schools, 2 middle schools, and 7 elementary schools. More than half of the students in the district
receive free and/ or reduced lunch and breakfast. When examining the demographics of the dis-
trict as a whole and the selected school, the two areas with the largest discrepancy include the
percentage of Hispanic students and the White/ Non-Hispanic groups. The district has 12% more
Hispanic students than the selected school. The selected school has 13% more White/Non-
Hispanic student than the district. However, in every other demographic factor, the percentages
vary by less than 4%.

Table 1

Demographics of the School District Compared to the Selected School

Identifying Information	School District	Selected School
Total Enrollment	26,411	611
Asian/ Pacific Islander	1%	1%
Black/African American	5%	5%
Hispanic	38%	26%
Multiracial	2%	2%
White/Non-Hispanic	54%	67%
Free/Reduced Lunch	62%	64%
Limited English Proficiency	20%	16%
Special Education	10%	11%
Migrant	1%	1%

Source: Information obtained from the Georgia School Council Institute

The large survey was the Georgia School Personnel Survey and was administrated via the Teacher Leader Effectiveness System (TLES). Teachers logged in to the TLE website via the internet and clicked on the yellow Anonymous Survey link tab. Teachers logged into the survey with an anonymous identification code and password in order to take the survey. The survey responses were used to create the teacher perception element of the larger CCRPI Climate Star Rating for the school.

Guiding questions.

1. How do the perceptions of homeroom teachers and special area teachers regarding school climate differ?

   The *alternate* hypothesis was that there was a difference in the way homeroom teachers and special area teachers perceive school connectedness. The *null* hypothesis was that there was no difference in the way homeroom teachers and special area teachers perceive school connectedness.

2. How or to what extent do administrators influence the working relationships between homeroom teachers and special area teachers?

Quantitatively, the overall climate of the school was measured using the results of the

Georgia School Personnel Survey used to determine the School Climate Perception data that is a

portion of the School Climate Star Ratings as part of College and Career Readiness Performance

Indicator (CCRPI) for the year school year 2013-2014. There was also a small survey completed

within the elementary schools in the school district where the research was conducted in the

Spring of 2014. As a Race to the Top state, Georgia is a pioneer in using school climate data as

part of the calculation for the state's accountability measure (Tio, 2014). The state drew on re-

search from the National School Climate Center in order to determine what domains to measure

and how to evaluate school climate. As indicated in Figure 3, the state considered four dimen-

sions of school climate. Each dimension was measured via the survey as well as other school da-

ta, such as attendance and discipline, collected by the state.

The Georgia School Personnel Survey was just one element of the whole equation that

Georgia used to measure school climate. There were three surveys used to measure school cli-

mate perception data: the Georgia Student Health Survey II (GSHS II), the Georgia School Per-

sonnel Survey (GSPS), and the Parent Survey (GaDOE, 2013). A 75% response rate was re-

quired in order for the Student Health survey and the Personnel survey to factor into the CCRPI

calculation for each school. There was no required response rate for the parent survey (GaDOE,

2013). Students and school personnel completed the anonymous surveys via computer. However,

the survey data compiled to form the School Climate Perception data was only 25% of the over-

all School Climate Star Rating. The other 75% consisted of school attendance data (25%), school

Safety	Relationships
Physical safety	Support from parents
Emotional safety	Support from faculty
Rules and Procedures	Respect for diversity
Teaching and Learning	**Institutional Environment**
Supportive teaching practices	Physical environment
Social and civic education	School connectivity and engagement
Positive and professional	

Figure 3: Four Dimensions of School Climate (National School Climate Center, 2014)

discipline data (25%), and a school's safe and substance free learning environment score (25%) (GaDOE, 2013). The chart below illustrates the division of the School Climate Star Rating Components. The overall CCRPI climate star ratings for 2013 have not been released by the state as of February 2015.

An additional small survey was distributed to special area teachers as well as third, fourth, and fifth grade homeroom teachers within the district of the selected school in the spring of 2014. The small survey included the School Connectedness questions from the Georgia School personnel survey to determine whether or not there was a difference in how homeroom teachers and special area teachers viewed the school connectedness portion of school climate. There were 100 surveys issued to homeroom teachers in third, fourth, and fifth grades within the district. Of the 100 surveys dispersed, 59 were returned. There were 60 surveys dispersed to teachers of special areas including art, music, and physical education. Of the 60 surveys issued, 43 were returned. Therefore, the surveys had a response rate of 59% and 72% respectively. The survey distributed is located in Appendix A.

Table 2

School Climate Star Rating Components

	School Climate Star Rating Components	
Component	**Effect on Total Score**	**Description**
School Climate Perceptions	25% of Total Score	Utilizes responses from three annual surveys of school climate: Georgia Student Health Survey II, Georgia School Personnel Survey, Parent Survey
Student Discipline	25% of Total Score	Utilizes student-level discipline data and school full-time equivalency (FTE) enrollment counts to determine a school's weighted suspension rate
Safe and Substance-Free Learning Environment	25% of Total Score	Utilizes survey and discipline data to determine the ratio of a school's Drugs and Alcohol, Bullying, and Dangerous Incidents to all reported incidents in the school
School-wide Attendance	25% of Total Score	Calculates a school's attendance rate based upon student, teacher, administrator, and staff attendance records and certified/classified personnel records (CPI records)
Additional Considerations	May increase or decrease overall rating	Points can be subtracted if a school is on the Unsafe School Choice Option list or demonstrates disciplinary disproportionality. Points can be added if a school implements a School Personalized Climate Evidence-Based Program or Practice with fidelity and shows improvement in one of the four dimensions of school climate.

Source: Georgia Department of Education, 2014.

Data collection, through qualitative responsive semi-structured interviewing, uncovered teacher perceptions and perspectives of the school's climate. Several authors (Schatz, 2012; Bryman, 2006; Charmaz, 2006) support the inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative methods in research. More specifically, the use of qualitative research added to the depth and under-

standing of quantitative research. Schatz (2012) promoted "nesting" a qualitative project within quantitative research in his work, *Rationale and procedures for nesting semi-structured interviews in surveys or censuses.* He contended that researchers added value to quantitative data collection, such as surveys, by including semi-structured interviews (Schatz, 2012).

In a 2006 study, Bryman examined 232 articles that combined qualitative and quantitative research methods and how the methods were combined in actual research. He explained several reasons for combining methods, two of which include "enhancement" and "diversity of views." (Bryman, 2006, p. 105). The practice of enhancement refers to adding onto or expanding findings in either a qualitative or quantitative study (Bryman, 2006). "Diversity of views" combined the perspectives of researchers and participants that revealed associations between variables in quantitative research and exposed the significance amid research subjects in qualitative research (Bryman, 2006). The process of "placing priority on the phenomena of study and seeing both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationships with participants and other sources" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 330) created a greater depth of understanding.

Several other studies, in various fields, included a methodology that was constructed with a quantitative element of surveys and a qualitative element of interviews. A 2011 Wellness study on childhood obesity included the results from a behavioral survey coupled with semi-structured interviews of the wellness coordinators at select schools that provided a "comprehensive perspective of the relationship between the school and the healthy schools liaison" (Goyert, 2011, p.28). In 2009, Dunlea studied various ways science textbooks were used in constructivist classrooms. The survey collected information on how teachers use the textbooks and the interviews "identified teachers' attitudes and beliefs around the use of the text" (Dunlea, 2009, p.2). Robert Moss' 2009 study in Dublin, about increasing the quality of life through community gardening,

contained a quantitative survey followed by qualitative interviews that revealed the attitudes, issues, and recommendations from the participants (Moss, 2009). Moss commented that it was "important that those being interviewed were able to expand upon their expertise and experience" (2009, p.126). Several of the words that resonate in the verbiage from different studies included expertise, experience, attitudes, beliefs, perspective and relationships. These words illustrated the expressiveness of the qualitative contribution to the study. The quantitative data provided a basis for constructing knowledge from which the qualitative data developed. Therefore, within this research, the quantitative data of the Climate survey and the district level survey provided a foundation for constructing knowledge from which the responsive interviewing developed.

Participants.

There were four participants from the purposefully selected school who were involved in the interviews. In order to maintain anonymity, the researcher assigned a letter to each participant. Participant A was a third grade teacher in her eighth year of teaching. Participant B was a fourth year music teacher. Participant C was a fifth grade teacher in her eighth year of teaching. Participant D was a fourth grade teacher who was previously a music teacher, currently in his tenth year of teaching. The participants met with the researcher at a time and location that was convenient for each of them. The ability to choose the location and time of the interview allowed the participants to be at ease and remain anonymous. Following each interview, participants were allowed to review the transcriptions of their interview in order to guarantee accuracy.

Conceptual Framework.

The research was framed in a constructionist epistemological paradigm. Constructionism allowed for meaning to be "constructed, not discovered" throughout the process (Crotty, 1998,

p.9). Within the constructionist epistemological understanding of knowledge, "different people construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon" (Crotty, 1998, p.9). Creswell (2003) echoes the design elements of Crotty's research indicating that the research design selected in a given study relies heavily on how one's interpretation of how knowledge is constructed (Creswell, 2003). This framework also allowed for construction of significance within teacher relationships in schools.

Within the Interpretive Constructionist Theory (Rubin & Rubin, 2011), the researcher learned how teachers viewed the school climate and which elements within the school influenced the climate based on these perceptions. The expectation was that teachers viewed events, routines, and goals of the school through "distinct lenses" (Rubin & Rubin, 2011, p.27) and individual "experiences, knowledge and opinions" (p.28) resulted in different understandings of the substance of school climate (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

Rubins' (2011) Interpretive Constructionist Theory naturally lends itself to "Responsive Interviewing" (p. 30). This interview model acknowledged that both the interviewer and the interviewee could not separate themselves from the "feelings, personality, interests and experiences" (p.30) that shape them as individuals. Responsive interviewing allowed the interviewee to elaborate on their perspective without the interviewer's views or opinions influencing or guiding the responses. Throughout this process, it was imperative the researcher engage in self-reflection in order to improve interview quality and remain aware of personal perspective and possibly bias throughout the interview process (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

Each participant met with the interviewer twice between August 2014 and November 2014 for approximately an hour. During the first interview, the questions were related to questions in the climate survey conducted by the state of Georgia and located in Appendix B (GaDOE, 2013).

1. Do you feel like you "fit in" with teachers in your grade level or special area (for special area teachers this would include teachers of music, art, and physical education)? If so, describe some experiences that make you feel that way. If not, briefly describe the barriers to fitting in on your team.

2. Do you feel like you connect with teachers in other grade levels in your school? If so, briefly describe the interaction process. How did that connection make you feel? Are there any barriers to building connections with teachers in other grade levels in your school?

3. Does the faculty at your school work collaboratively together? If so, please describe how the typical faculty member at your school interacts with colleagues.

4. Would you agree with the statement "Teachers at my school treat one another with respect."? Please describe any experiences that may have influenced your opinion.

5. Describe your observations and perceptions regarding professional relationships between teachers in your school. Do these same observations or perceptions apply to relationships between homeroom and special area teachers?

The researcher conducted one interview with each of the four participants around the preceding questions. The interview questions developed background as well as built rapport between the researcher and the interviewee. The interview process created a realm for "depth of understanding, rather than breadth" (Rubin & Rubin, 2011, p.30).

Following the first interviews, the researcher transcribed and coded the interviews in order to look for themes. Some themes such as climate and accountability were expected. Other themes such as staff connectedness, strong leadership, and healthy staff relationships, as well as barriers to working with others within the school, revealed themselves throughout the process.

The responses to the initial questions and the themes identified throughout the first interviews lead to the questions for subsequent interviews. The questions included:

1. What are some of the specific ways that you feel supported by (homeroom/ special area) teachers? Are there any ways that you do not feel supported by other teachers?

2. What are some specific activities or experiences that help you feel connected to (homeroom/ special area) teachers.

3. What are some processes or actions that administrators engage in or encourage that build connectedness among your staff?

4. Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of things administrators can do to encourage positive relationships between special area and homeroom teachers?

5. Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of things teachers can do to encourage positive relationships between special area and homeroom teachers?

 The second interview provided answers to the questions that developed from teachers' responses from the first interview.

Results

The survey administered by the State of Georgia as well as the small scale survey conducted within the district had responses on a Likert-type scale that included (a) Strongly Agree, (b) Somewhat Agree, (c) Somewhat Disagree, and (c) Strongly Disagree. The Georgia School Personnel survey requires a 75% response rate from staff members. Of the 30 certified teachers at the selected elementary school, 28 participated in the survey. The district survey was distributed to teachers at the 20 elementary schools within the district. There were 60 surveys dispersed to special area teachers including art, music, and physical education. Of the 60 dispersed, 43 were returned. The participants had the option to return a hard copy via the in-district courier or

to scan in their copy and send their response via e-mail. Either choice provided anonymity for the participant. There were 100 surveys issued within the district to homeroom teachers in third, fourth, and fifth grades. Of the 100 surveys issued, 59 were returned. Therefore, the selected school survey, the special area teacher survey, and the homeroom teacher survey had response rates of 93%, 72%, and 59% respectively.

The results from the Georgia School Personnel Survey were based on a Likert-type scale that included 1) Strongly agree 2) Somewhat agree 3) Somewhat disagree and 4) Strongly disagree. The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for the statistical results of the surveys. The responses overall indicated that the teachers in the selected school think highly of the school, students, teachers, leaders, and school climate. The actual survey is located in Appendix B.

The survey consisted of 43 questions concerning seven themes including orderliness, relations, acceptance of others, school connectedness, parent involvement, learning environment, and school safety. The overall responses for the selected school were favorable indicating a positive teacher perception of school climate. The responses for the selected elementary school suggested most respondents indicated agreement with the idea the school was orderly. In the area of relations between staff and students, the responses suggested the staff agreed that the relationships between students and teachers are positive. Regarding acceptance of others the staff reached consensus that the school is accepting of differences and diversity. The most consistent responses were in the area of school connectedness where the median and interquartile range were the same for all eight questions. The responses involving parent involvement indicated the staff is in agreement that parents are involved in their school. Teachers agree the school is well

Table 3

Survey Questions

Questions 1-7 Orderliness	Mdn	IQR
Teachers at my school treat all students with respect.	1	0
Teachers at my school frequently recognize students for good behavior	1	1
Teachers at my school have high standards for achievement.	1	0
Teachers at my school set clear rules for behavior.	1	1
Students at my school demonstrate behaviors that allow teachers to teach and students to learn.	2	1
Students at my school know what to do in case of emergency	1	1
My students feel successful at school.	1	1

Questions 8-15 Relations	Mdn	IQR
Students at my school would help another student who was being bullied.	2	1
Students at my school get along well with one another.	2	1
Students at my school get along well with the teachers and other adults.	1	1
Students at my school know a teacher or adult who they can talk to if they need academic help.	1	0
Students at my school feel the counselor would be helpful if they needed assistance.	1	0
Students at my school treat each other with respect.	2	1
My school promotes academic success for all students.	1	0
All students are treated fairly by the adults at my school.	1	0

Questions 16-19 Acceptance of Others	Mdn	IQR
Students at my school treat other students fairly regardless of race, ethnicity or culture.	1	1
Teachers at my school treat students fairly regardless of race, ethnicity or culture.	1	0
Students at my school show respect to other students regardless of their academic ability.	1	1
Teachers at my school talk about different races, ethnicities, and cultures during class lessons.	1.5	1

Questions 20-27 School Connectedness	Mdn	IQR
I like my school.	1	0
I feel supported by other teachers at my school.	1	0
I get along well with other staff members at my school.	1	0
I feel like I am important part of my school.	1	0
I enjoy working in teams (i.e. grade level content) at my school.	1	0
I feel like I fit in among other staff members at my school.	1	0
I feel connected to the students at my school.	1	0
I feel connected to the teachers at my school.	1	0

Table 3 (Continued)

Survey Questions

Questions 28-32 Parent Involvement	*Mdn*	*IQR*
Parents at my school attend PTA meetings or parent/teacher conferences.	2	1
At this school, parents frequently volunteer to help on special projects.	2	1
Parents at this school frequently attend school activities.	2	1
Parents at this school are engaged in the instructional process.	2	2
Parents at this school are engaged in the decision making process.	2	1

Questions 33-38 Learning Environment	*Mdn*	*IQR*
The faculty at my school works well together.	1	1
My school building is well maintained.	1.5	1
Instructional materials are up to date and in good condition.	1.5	1
Teachers at my school keep their classrooms clean and organized.	1	0
Teachers at my school work hard to make sure that students do well.	2	1
Students at my school take pride in keeping our school building in good condition.	2	1

Questions 39-43 School Safety	*Mdn*	*IQR*
I feel safe at my school.	1	0
Students at my school feel safe.	1	0
I have been concerned about my physical safety at work.	4	1
Students at my school fight often.	4	0
Teachers at my school often have to intervene during school fights.	4	0

maintained and the faculty works well together. The staff was in agreement the building is safe and free from harm.

The area of School Connectedness was the most consistent area of all seven surveyed areas. In studying the frequencies and percentages for the eight questions about school connectedness for the selected elementary school all the responses were either 1) Strongly agree or 2) Somewhat agree. For all of the questions regarding school connectedness, five or fewer of the 28 respondents indicated that they somewhat agreed instead of strongly agreed with any statement about school connectedness.

The school connectedness portion of the Georgia State Personnel Survey and the in-district survey included 8 statements for teachers to consider.

1. I like my school.

2. I feel supported by other teachers at my school.

3. I get along with other staff members at my school.

4. I feel like I am an important part of my school.

5. I enjoy working in teams (i.e. grade level, content) at my school.

6. I feel like I fit in among other staff members at my school.

7. I feel connected to the students at my school.

8. I feel connected to teachers at my school.

An independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the survey responses from special area teachers and homeroom teachers. There was no significant difference between the responses for questions one, three, four, five, six, and seven. However, there was a significant difference in the responses to question two that read "I feel supported by other staff members" for special area teachers (M = 1.93, SD = .704) and homeroom teachers (M = 1.34, SD = .512) conditions; t (100) = 4.914, p < .001. Cohen's effect size was valued at (d=.985). The results suggested there is a significant difference in how special area teachers and homeroom teachers feel regarding support from other teachers in their schools. There was also a significant difference in the responses to question eight that read "I feel connected to teachers at my school" for special area teachers (M = 1.93, SD = .704) and homeroom teachers (M = 1.39, SD = .704) conditions; t (100) = 4.441, p < .001. Cohen's d was valued at (d=.890). The results indicated there is a significant difference in how connected special area teachers and homeroom teachers feel in relation to

other teachers in their schools. These results suggested special area teachers feel less connected

to and less supported by other teachers in their schools.

Table 4

Results of Independent Sample t-test and Descriptive Statistics

	Special Area Teachers			Homeroom Teachers			95% CI for Difference			
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			t	df
Likeness to school	1.33	0.474	43	1.07	0.254	59	0.113	0.402	3.543	100
Support of teachers	1.93	0.704	43	1.34	0.512	59	0.353	0.83	4.914*	100
Cohesion of staff	1.49	0.506	43	1.1	0.305	59	0.227	0.546	4.801	100
Feelings of importance	1.86	0.743	43	1.25	0.544	59	0.227	0.546	4.76	100
Working in teams	1.49	0.592	43	1.27	0.485	59	0.005	0.429	2.032	100
"Fit in" with staff	1.86	0.861	43	1.31	0.5	59	0.287	0.824	4.099	100
Connectedness to students	1.4	0.495	43	1.08	0.281	59	0.157	0.464	4.019	100
Connectedness to teachers	1.93	0.704	43	1.39	0.526	59	0.299	0.782	4.441*	100

* $p < .001$

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the way homeroom teachers

and special area teachers perceive school connectedness. Further, Cohen's d valued at ($d = .985$)

and (d= .890) suggested a high practical significance.

Discussion.

Several statements within the semi-structured interviews supported these results. While

the results of the School Personnel Survey for the selected elementary school were very favora-

ble and suggested a very positive school climate, there were some comments that indicated the

relationship between special area teachers and homeroom teachers was not always positive.

I must admit that homeroom and special area teachers do not collaborate a whole
lot. The only time we hear from them is when our students misbehaved during
Connections.

I think as a homeroom teacher, viewing the other teachers in the building as 'real'
teachers and realizing that we are all here to help kids.

> Please drop off and pick up your students at the correct time. Our time (special area teachers) is limited with your students, and if you drop off or pick them up late, it messes with our students' time.

The previous statements illuminated the tension that can exist between special area teachers and homeroom teachers even in schools with a very positive school climate. The implication that special area teachers only communicate with homeroom teachers to share negative news about behavior, the suggestion that there needs to be added effort to view special area teachers as "real" teachers and the irritation of special area teachers regarding the lack of consideration from homeroom teachers to deliver and retrieve their classes on time were just some examples of the strain between homeroom and special area teachers. In order for a teacher to feel a sense of satisfaction at work, he needed to experience a feeling of impact and professionalism, a sense of shared collegial trust, and opportunities to work alongside colleagues (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). Feelings of disconnect and collegial strain, as in the preceding examples, can result in negative working relationships which can negatively affect school climate (Stauffer & Mason, 2013).

The semi-structured interviews offered insight on some of the practices of teachers and administrators in a school with positive school climate as well as some of the conflicts and barriers that exist even in schools with positive school climate. The four themes that were most often discussed included staff connectedness, healthy staff relationships, principal leadership, as well as barriers to working with others within the school.

Connectedness.

In the eight interview sessions with four different subjects, there were 32 specific times when the participants spoke directly to the value of connectedness within their school and how they benefit from that feeling. Some specific examples include,

I am very fortunate that I feel right at home in both grade levels I have taught. With my current grade level, we work perfectly together and have a lot of fun!

…we really are well-connected. It really is like a family here.

I like that you feel like you're part of a team, working together for the kids.

It sure feels good to be able to connect with other grade levels. This connection is especially important for me because I always believe I am teaching the 'whole' student, not just academics.

Everyone has a sense of connectedness.

We work extremely well together.

These comments were powerful examples of the connections this staff feels to other teachers and grade levels. Teachers have a sense of a connected community where they can collaborate with others in order to reach a common goal, the growth and development of their students. The sense of connection and collaboration can lead to increased job satisfaction which influences the relationships portion of school climate (National School Climate Center, 2014; Cohen et al., 2009; GaDOE, 2014). Collaboration and connectedness go hand in hand and there is a large amount of research that indicates improving student success and continuous student success require teacher collaboration (DelliCarpini, 2008; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008; Guiney, 2001). Therefore, the connection between teachers is vitally important and has the potential to positively or negatively affect student achievement (Leana, 2011).

Healthy school relationships.

The theme of healthy school relationships was mentioned in more than 20 instances during the interviews. Teachers discussed their feelings concerning the relationships in their school as well as concrete examples of what fosters the healthy relationships. The emphasis on relationships within schools makes sense based Brown's (2010) research that people have an intrinsic need to connect with others. She states, "We are social beings who thrive on healthy relation-

ships. And yet, the importance of positive relationships in our schools is often overlooked"

(Brown, 2010 p. 8).

> The sense of community, helping. I feel like we help each other out. Even on a more extreme note, if somebody's sick or if somebody has had something happen, we're real good to jump on it, do a gift card or something to help them get back on their feet. People are really caring, so it's really cool.

> I believe the professional relationships between teachers in the building are healthy. We always care and support one another.

> …it really is like a family here. I'm not kidding when I say I have built relationships that will last a lifetime over the years.

> We [school faculty] have tailgating nights before the local football games, we have a lot of runners from the school, so they will get together and do 5K's, we make sure we have time outside of the building. These people are my friends and I know I can call on them if I need to. It's great to get out of the building and not talk about school, but instead talk about people's families.

> I'll give you an example, the teacher across the hall was diagnosed with skin cancer on her head and had to shave her head for treatments. So, each grade level got together and collected hats for her so she had a different hat to wear every day for the rest of the year. When people travelled over spring break they would get her a hat. We had hats from England, Ireland, people just do it.

> It's more like a family environment rather than this is just where I come to work. We are involved in each other's personal lives as well.

These comments illustrated the sense of family felt by the teachers who work in the selected school. The remarks echod the results of the staff personnel survey that indicated the staff feels they have a positive school climate. The sense of family was fostered not only by the relationships within the school, but also the way the staff behaved outside of school. The staff carved out personal time to participate in activities, like tailgating and races, with colleagues. The personal connections and sense of family increased the positive feelings staff members had regarding their colleagues and their school.

Barriers to connectedness.

Even in schools with positive climates, there were still barriers to connecting with colleagues. Some identified barriers included time, communication, location within the school, and common ground across disciplines.

> The other 3rd grade teacher that's next to me, she and I collaborate more. Then we have two that are down the hill and they work together, too, but we are separate and it just… downsizing and losing teachers and trying to make the best of the room situations.

> We all get along…we can't discuss our curriculum with each other, there's just no common ground. I mean [special area teacher 1] and I have some overlap and I have some overlap with [special area teacher 2], other than that there's not much overlap. I think it's be neat or cool to be able to discuss what we're teaching at the time, you know how certain lessons are going.

> I believe the major barriers are time and responsibilities. Every one of us has so much on our plates already. We barely have enough time to do what is expected of us. Unless it is required by the administrators that they [special area teachers] need to collaborate…I don't know why they will go out of their way to have a relationship with us. We [homeroom teachers] do not have extra time to cultivate a closer relationship with the specials teachers.

> If he [music teacher] doesn't communicate with the parents then they come and ask us [homeroom teachers]. Kids lose their schedule, then parents ask us, so we asked him to give us a schedule in case parents ask us. They expect us to know, but if he doesn't tell us, how can we know? Communication. All this could have been solved with communication.

The preceding statements demonstrated the frustrations associated with the barriers of time, communication, location within the building, and lack of common ground across the special area disciplines. Teachers have too much to accomplish with too little time to accomplish everything, therefore the pursuit of a relationship with a colleague who was not close in location or subject area was not a priority. As illustrated in the previous remarks, a breakdown in communication between teachers can damage working relationships and cause strain between teachers. The absence of common standards between special area teachers often left them with feelings of isolation and few opportunities' to collaborate professionally with their colleagues.

Leadership.

The final theme that emerged was the influence of the leadership of the principal and how

his leadership style affected the school climate. The impact of leadership on the positive school

climate was not surprising. Research revealed that positive school climate was often affected by

the atmosphere of trust a principal established (Bryk et al., 2010; Bryk & Schneider, 2003;

Tschannen-Moran, 2004). The principal often set the tone for the expectation of how to treat oth-

ers within the school.

> I think when you give people that respect and make it a team effort people feel
> like they own the building and they have ownership of the school. Care about
> people. When you take care of your staff, they are gonna take care of the kids. He
> has that sense of respect, he doesn't have to be breathing down your neck all the
> time. We aren't afraid, but we respect him enough to do our job and do it well. He
> doesn't micromanage. When you micromanage, you're not trusting those who are
> working with you. If you don't show people you trust them, they won't trust you.

> I feel like there's a lot of trust in his decisions to hire good people and I feel like
> he trusts us. There's a lot of good rapport, respect.

> Our administration is really good at making time for the teachers just to get to-
> gether, not just for faculty meetings, but to have social times.
> The administrators are a team. They are big on appreciation days, we appreciate
> people, bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria employees. They are big about not leav-
> ing people out, they include everyone.

> We went from everything in every direction and he brought back order. Our mo-
> rale has increased since he got here.

> I feel like everyone is included in decisions…every opinion is valued.

According to teachers, their administrator treated others with respect, cultivated an atmosphere

of trust, built rapport, created opportunities for the staff to work as teams, demonstrated appre-

ciation, valued shared leadership, and restored order to the school. Based on their description of

him, he embodied the characteristics of a transformational leader. McCarley, Peters, and Decman

(2014) suggested that transformational leaders participate in activities that "distribute power be-

tween the leaders and followers, while, at the same time, create a shared expectation of high performance (p. 2). Additionally, Stewart (2006) defined a transformational leader as one who held high expectations connected to performance, enthused stakeholders, and built teams. Urick and Bowers (2014) added that transformational leaders provided teachers a "climate with a mission, professional growth, and a sense of community" (p.100). Burns (1978), Bass (1985), and Bass and Avolio (1993) were the pioneers of literature concerning transformational leadership that was originally developed to address transformational practices within businesses (Urick & Bowers, 2014). However, as more and more educational researcher's investigated transformational leadership, the more prevalent the concept became in educational research.

Bulach, Boothe, and Pickett (2006) asserted that a school administrator's leadership style is a predictor of a school's climate. Moolenaar, Daly, and Sleegars (2010) as well as Sarros, Cooper, and Santora (2008) all determined that transformational leadership was positively connected with innovative school climates. Therefore, it stands to reason that a school with a positive school climate, such as the selected school in this study, would be led by a transformational leader, such as the one described by the teachers throughout the interviews.

Limitations and contributions.

While the research offered insight into the perceptions and experiences of teachers related to school climate, there were limitations of the study. First, the inquiry only considered teacher's perceptions. The perceptions of students and administrators were not included or discussed. The interview portion of the study investigated perceptions of teachers at one school, in one county, in Northeast Georgia. While the school demographics mirrored the district as a whole, the district was not representative of the state demographics. The data collected in this study applied to the perceptions of teachers in one county and were not widely generalizable to other schools within

the state. Therefore, the findings may or may not transfer to the schools in other areas of the state or other states in the country.

This research added depth of knowledge to existing research about school climate and teacher professional relationships. This research had the potential to provide the school district with a deeper understanding of the nuances of the relationships between subject areas and the influence teacher perceptions have on school climate. While the school climate of one school within one school district was not generally transferable to the district as a whole, based on the similarity of the demographics between the school and the district, the research had the potential to offer an understanding of how school leaders can better meet the needs of teachers in these different positions. Because the climate survey was a new College and Career Readiness Performance Indicator (CCRPI) tool, this research offered a better understanding of the accuracy of the results of the survey. The teachers, or subjects, benefited from the opportunity to reflect on their position within the school and the relationships within their school. Subjects had occasion to examine their own perceptions with other educators in the same climate. Special Area teachers and homeroom teachers had the ability to recognize their import and value regarding school climate. The researcher grew as a professional leader through the following:

1. Discerning teacher perceptions of school climate and how their individual subject areas influence their perceptions.

2. Understanding how administrators can improve the professional relationships between homeroom teachers and special area teachers. (Scheduling, team building activities, job swaps, professional learning)

The findings of this study could be of interest to school administrators as they examine and assess their leadership practices regarding the structures they establish within a school that affect

professional relationships. Furthermore, this inquiry supplemented existing literature that usually focused on the importance of positive student-teacher relationships, parent-teacher relationships, or principal-teacher relationships within school climate. However, very limited literature considered the importance of positive teacher-teacher relationships by providing a depiction of teacher experiences that enhance school climate as well as practices that create barriers within schools. Through this inquiry, the quantitative data and teachers' perceptions merged in order to provide a unique vision of what affects school climate and professional relationships within schools.

Conclusions

The NCLB accountability measures often resulted in increased instructional time for subjects tested via standardized tests and the marginalization of untested subjects such as art, music, and physical education. (Cohen, Pickeral, & McCloskey, 2009; Ravitch, 2010). However, even as the arts were pushed aside, there were still supporters of the arts who continued to promote the positive effects of arts in schools, several of which include positive links between the arts and student motivation, increased engagement, and heightened academic achievement (AEP, 2013; Sousa, 2006). Students engaged in arts in school display more empathy, are more invested in their education, are more receptive to new ideas, and display more of a sense of community (AEP, 2013; Sousa, 2006; Fiske, 1999). Even as arts supporters tout the many benefits of arts education, the relationship between homeroom teachers, who are held accountable with standardized tests, and special area teachers, who lack the same type of high stakes accountability, often struggle with friction and strain within their professional relationships (Abril & Gault, 2006; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008).

As a result of the marginalization of the arts, fewer resources available for arts programs, additional time constraints as a result of heightened accountability, and teacher feelings of isola-

tion are all factors that can result in special area teachers reporting feeling less connected and less supported by their colleagues than homeroom teachers report (Dee, et al, 2013; Stauffer & Mason, 2013, Ravitch, 2010; Abril & Gault, 2006; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). However, research suggested school leaders have a tremendous amount of influence over school climate and the relationships cultivated between adults in schools. Transformational leaders engage in shared leadership, shared power, high expectations, building a sense of community, professional growth, and a school climate with a clearly articulated vision (McCarley et al., 2014; Urick & Bowers, 2014; Stewart, 2006). Transformational leaders focused on finding common ground and building relationships often consider more out of the box ways to approach interpersonal conflict. These leaders are the ones who would be most likely to attempt solutions such as the ones teachers recommended including structuring time within the school day for special area teachers to teach in a homeroom class or facilitating job swaps between teachers, so special area teachers teach in a homeroom for a week or two and homeroom teachers teach in a special area classroom for a couple of weeks. Therefore, we look to school leaders and teacher leaders to compose an inclusive vision that will create an atmosphere where all teachers feel connected and supported. A vision that will create a space for arts education alongside the tested subject areas lest we forget, "Art is a nation's most precious heritage. For it is in our works of art that we reveal to ourselves and to others the inner vision which guides us as a nation. And where there is no vision, the people perish" (Johnson, 1965).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Georgia State University

Department of Educational Policy Studies

Arts and Academics: An Investigation of how Teachers Perceive School Climate

Relating to subject area (homeroom or special area) in an Elementary Setting.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jami Berry   **Student Principal Investigator:** Mrs. Tracie Brack

You are being invited to participate in the above titled research study. The purpose of this study is to examine teachers' perceptions of school climate as it relates to their subject area (homeroom or special area) in an elementary school setting. You are being invited to participate because you are either a special area teacher or a homeroom teacher. Please return the survey via courier to Tracie Brack at Sugar Hill Elementary or scanned in via e-mail to tracie.brack@hallco.org

Thank you for taking part in this survey. Participation should take less than 5 minutes.

Primary Grade Taught: [   ]   ◯ Special area Teacher ◯ Homeroom Teacher

Teaching Experience: ◯ 0-5 years ◯ 6-10 years ◯ 11-15 years ◯ 15+ years

School Connectedness				
I like my school.	◯ Strongly Disagree	◯ Somewhat Disagree	◯ Somewhat Agree	◯ Strongly Agree
I feel supported by other teachers at my school.	◯ Strongly Disagree	◯ Somewhat Disagree	◯ Somewhat Agree	◯ Strongly Agree
I get along well with other staff members at my school.	◯ Strongly Disagree	◯ Somewhat Disagree	◯ Somewhat Agree	◯ Strongly Agree
I feel like I am an important part of my school.	◯ Strongly Disagree	◯ Somewhat Disagree	◯ Somewhat Agree	◯ Strongly Agree
I enjoy working in teams (i.e. grade level, content) at my school.	◯ Strongly Disagree	◯ Somewhat Disagree	◯ Somewhat Agree	◯ Strongly Agree
I feel like I fit in among other staff members at my school.	◯ Strongly Disagree	◯ Somewhat Disagree	◯ Somewhat Agree	◯ Strongly Agree
I feel connected to the students at my school.	◯ Strongly Disagree	◯ Somewhat Disagree	◯ Somewhat Agree	◯ Strongly Agree
I feel connected to the teachers at my school.	◯ Strongly Disagree	◯ Somewhat Disagree	◯ Somewhat Agree	◯ Strongly Agree

The preceding questions used with permission and taken from the Georgia School Personnel Survey http://admin.doe.k12.ga.us/gadoe/sla/gsps.nsf/SurveyAlt.xsp

Appendix B

Georgia Department of Education

Georgia School Personnel Survey

Thank you for taking the Georgia School Personnel Survey.

The survey should only take five to ten minutes. Required questions are marked with a (!) .

About You

District:	
School:School:	
Primary Job Classification:	○ Teacher ○ Administrator ○ Certified Staff Member ○ Classified/Other Staff Member
Primary Grade Taught:	
Area(s) Taught:	Science Social Studies Math ELA Connections (art, P.E., band, music) Administrator Other: please specify
School Work Experience:	○ 0-5 years ○ 6-10 years ○ 11-15 years ○ More than 15 years
Highest Degree:	○ Bachelor's Degree ○ Master's Degree ○ Educational Specialist Degree ○ Doctoral Degree ○ Other: please list

Orderliness

Teachers at my school treat all students with respect.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Teachers at my school frequently recognize students for good behavior.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Teachers at my school have high standards for achievement.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Teachers at my school set clear rules for behavior.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Students at my school demonstrate behaviors that allow teachers to teach and students to learn.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Students at my school know what to do in the case of a school emergency.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
My students feel successful at school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree

Relations

Students at my school would help another student who was being bullied.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Students at my school get along well with one another.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Students at my school get along well with the teachers and other adults.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree

Students at my school know a teacher or adult who they can talk to if they need help (i.e. homework, class assignments).	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Students at my school feel the counselor would be helpful if they needed assistance.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Students at my school treat each other with respect.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
My school promotes academic success for all students.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
All students are treated fairly by the adults at my school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree

Acceptance of Others

Students at my school treat other students fairly regardless of race, ethnicity or culture.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Teachers at my school treat students fairly regardless of race, ethnicity or culture.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Students at my school show respect to other students regardless of their academic ability.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Teachers at my school talk about different races, ethnicities, and cultures during class lessons.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree

School Connectedness

I like my school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
I feel supported by other teachers at my school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
I get along well with other staff members at my school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
I feel like I am an important part of my school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
I enjoy working in teams (i.e. grade level, content) at my school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
I feel like I fit in among other staff members at my school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
I feel connected to the students at my school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
I feel connected to the teachers at my school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree

Parent Involvement

Parents at my school attend PTA meetings or parent/teacher conferences.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
At this school, parents frequently volunteer to help on special projects.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Parents at this school frequently attend school activities.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Parents at this school are engaged in the instructional process.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
Parents at this school are engaged in the decision making process.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree

Learning Environment

The faculty at my school works well together.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree
My school building is well maintained.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree

Instructional materials are up to date and in good condition.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree	*
Teachers at my school keep their classrooms clean and organized.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree	*
Teachers at my school work hard to make sure that students do well.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree	*
Students at my school take pride in keeping our school building (bathrooms, classrooms, lockers) in good condition.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree	*
School Safety		
I feel safe at my school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree	*
Students at my school feel safe.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree	*
I have been concerned about my physical safety at school.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree	*
Students at my school fight often.	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree	*
Teachers at my school often have to intervene during school fights .	○ Strongly Disagree ○ Somewhat Disagree ○ Somewhat Agree ○ Strongly Agree	*
		Finished!

Appendix C

Initial Interview Protocol

1. Do you feel like you "fit in" with teachers in your grade level or special area (for special area teachers this would include teachers of music, art, and physical education)? If so, describe some experiences that make you feel that way. If not, briefly describe the barriers to fitting in on your team.

2. Do you feel like you connect with teachers in other grade levels in your school? If so, briefly describe the interaction process. How did that connection make you feel? Are there any barriers to building connections with teachers in other grade levels in your school?

3. Does the faculty at your school work collaboratively together? If so, please describe how the typical faculty member at your school interacts with colleagues.

4. Would you agree with the statement "Teachers at my school treat one another with respect."? Please describe any experiences that may have influenced your opinion.

5. Describe your observations and perceptions regarding professional relationships between teachers in your school. Do these same observations or perceptions apply to relationships between homeroom and special area teachers?

Appendix D

Second Interview Protocol

1. What are some of the specific ways that you feel supported by (homeroom/ special area) teachers? Are there any ways that you do not feel supported by other teachers?

2. What are some specific activities or experiences that help you feel connected to (home-room/ special area) teachers.

3. What are some processes or actions that administrators engage in or encourage that build connectedness among your staff?

4. Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of things that administrators can do to encourage positive relationships between special area and homeroom teachers?

5. Do you have any suggestions or recommendations of things that teacher can do to encourage positive relationships between special area and homeroom teachers?