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Leading for Diversity Final Cross-Case Report

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Leading for Diversity:
A Study of How School Leaders Achieve Racial and Ethnic Harmony

FINAL CROSS-CASE REPORT

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ARC Associates
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# LEADING FOR DIVERSITY

A Study of How School Leaders Achieve Racial and Ethnic Harmony

Final Cross-Case Report

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We thank the funders — the Field Initiated Studies Program and CREDE — for deciding that this project was worthy of support, for the assistance and feedback they have provided, and for the reminders that helped us stay on track.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LEADING FOR DIVERSITY: A STUDY OF HOW SCHOOL LEADERS ACHIEVE RACIAL AND ETHNIC HARMONY
Executive Summary

People would like to see our race problem disappear. And the way they think it’s going to disappear is by not talking about it. But the real way you make it disappear is by talking about it, learning about it, and understanding it, and then you’ll see a change, not just by ignoring it.

— a 12th grade student

Background and Purpose of the Study

The Leading for Diversity Research Project grew out of a Principals’ Forum developed by ARC Associates in 1995. Participating principals expressed a need for strategies focused on dispelling racial tensions, class conflict and violence (particularly violence related to race or ethnicity); creating a vision that proactively includes all students; and working with staff members to increase understanding of cultural differences. In response to the needs expressed by principals, a five-year project was designed to improve the preparation of future school leaders so that they have a greater ability to address racial/ethnic tensions in schools and can apply a range of approaches for encouraging positive interethnic relations. This summary presents the key findings from three years of research which documented proactive approaches and practices existing school leaders use to address ethnic conflict and promote positive interethnic relations. The next phase of the project will develop a curriculum for future school leaders based on the cases we documented. The research was funded by two grants from the U.S. Department of Education; one from the Field Initiated Studies program, and the other from the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE).

Two key research questions guided our study:

1. How do school leaders or leadership teams address tensions and conflict that may be related to race or ethnicity?

2. How do school leaders or leadership teams bring about unity rather than division among different ethnic groups on campus?
Significance of the Study

The study indicates that schools and districts play a complex and uneasy role in changing race relations, both hindering more positive relations and fostering them as well, often at the same time. The proactive leaders involved in the study help us understand that, despite powerful constraints and barriers, school leaders do have the power to influence race relations in a positive direction. Proactive leadership in interethnic relations, as described in the study’s final report, resulted in numerous positive outcomes, such as improved interethnic relations among students; increased academic achievement among students; improved student behavior indicators; increased staff collaboration; increased staff awareness about interethnic relations and diversity; and increased involvement of diverse parents.

Theoretical Framework

Several theories informed our understandings of race/ethnic relations, leadership, and approaches for improving interethnic relations in schools. Allport’s equal status contact theory (1954), describes several necessary conditions that must be met in order for positive realtions to develop between different racial/ethnic groups; Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (1968) suggests that the basic needs of safety and security have to be addressed in order for growth needs such as community and belonging, self esteem, etc. to emerge as priorities. The theory of racial identity development, articulated by Helms (1990), Cross (1991), and Tatum (1997), suggests that individuals of majority and minority groups experience distinct and predictable stages of development where racial identity is concerned. Finally, multicultural inclusion theory, articulated by Banks (1993) and Grant and Sleeter (1989), indicates that schools’ approaches to multicultural education vary along a continuum from a strongly eurocentric stance to an ideal in which the entire school is reformed in order to be consistent with the goals of social justice.

Methods

This three-year study, which took place between 1996 and 1999, employed a qualitative, multiple case study design to describe approaches and processes used by school leaders in different contexts. Nine sites were located in the San Francisco Bay Area and twelve in
other parts of the U.S., for a total of 21 sites, including elementary, middle, and high schools. Sites were selected through a nomination and screening process. Altogether, we received 90 nominations, from which we selected 21 sites. In order to be considered for the study, schools had to have (1) an ethnically diverse student population, including at least three major groups; (2) a tangible history of interethnic conflict either in the school or the surrounding community; and (3) leadership that was implementing proactive approaches to address racial/ethnic conflict and improve interethnic relations. In selecting schools from among those nominated, we made an effort to ensure contextual variation in such features as size, geographic location, leadership structure, and the presence of certain ethnic groups.

Data collected at each site consisted of interviews with people in a variety of role groups (administrators, students, teachers, parents, instructional assistants, non-instructional staff, and community members); observations of classes and key events that illustrated the school’s approach to interethnic relations; and various documents and records pertaining to the study questions. The final data base for the study was very large for a qualitative study, including interviews with 1009 individuals and observations of 441 classes and other events. Case reports describing the approaches used at each school were then subjected to cross case analysis in order to discover differences, similarities, and patterns that helped us address our research questions.

**Overview of the Findings**

1. Each school leader steps into a different context and history which may have laid important groundwork for positive interethnic relations, created barriers that impede relationship building, or, more likely, some combination of these possibilities. Some schools and their leaders, because of pre-existing contexts, face more barriers and rely on fewer contextual supports in their quest to promote positive interethnic relations. For example, in schools where built-in segregated groupings of students cannot be changed because of district policies, leaders who wanted to promote positive interethnic relations had to develop structures to bring students together outside of class time. In schools where the physical site tended to keep people separate, compensating structures needed to be developed to encourage collaboration and informal sharing among staff and students. In schools where previous leaders had left a legacy of authoritarian rule or a culture of the “haves and have nots,” incoming leaders had to address these pre-existing problems as a first step. On the other hand, all schools in the study benefited from at least some contextual supports that made the development of positive intergroup relations more likely. For example, several schools benefited from strong parental and community support; others benefited from their small size, which made relationship building easier; others benefited from substantially larger per pupil allocations which allowed for program development in interethnic relations.
2. Districts, even though they are not directly involved in day-to-day contact with students, can play a critical role in creating support structures that enhance school-level efforts to build positive interethnic relations. Nine out of the 21 schools in the study benefited from substantial district supports, some of which directly affected interethnic relations (e.g., a district-wide diversity initiative), and others which were less direct but no less influential (e.g., the way school drawing areas were determined so as to maintain diversity in the schools; the transition time provided for incoming principals to be in a school before taking charge; or the weekly, paid collaboration time for teachers).

3. Leaders did not see it as their purpose to rid their schools of conflict, but rather to learn how best to use conflict as a source for further growth. Although the schools were selected for their proactive leadership in interethnic relations, they nonetheless continued to wrestle with conflicts of various kinds.

4. School leaders in the study informally assessed the status of conflict and tensions in their schools on an ongoing basis, and this, to a large extent, guided them in prioritizing where to focus their efforts. We found that conflicts in these schools and communities could be viewed along a continuum. At one end are the most overt conflicts, such as physical fights and racial namecalling and slurs; in the middle are underlying conflicts and tensions, such as avoidance or exclusion of certain groups and perceptions of unequal treatment. At the other end of the continuum are the root causes of racial/ethnic conflicts, including segregation, racism, and inequality – conditions which are endemic to the larger society but also, to some extent, amenable to local change efforts.

5. When school leaders operate from the assumption that overt kinds of conflict are the only ones to be concerned about, they place themselves in the role of reacting to conflict. The leaders in our study tended to reframe the problem, recognizing overt conflict as a “symptom”, and underlying tensions and root causes as the “illness”. This does not mean that they ignored overt conflict, and in fact several leaders made it their priority to address safety and security issues that had been brought on by overt conflicts. However, effective school leaders understand that by staying tuned to the more subtle or hidden tensions that may be related to race or ethnicity, they place themselves in a more proactive role. In this role, they not only react to racial conflicts, but also turn conflicts into opportunities for learning and create the foundation and structures that allow positive interethnic relations to flourish.

6. Conflicts and tensions that had a racial/ethnic dimension clustered into two types – those that were about the distribution of material or social resources, and those that were about values, beliefs, and cultural expressions. Conflicts over unequal distribution of resources centered on issues such as academic achievement, disciplinary consequences, staff positions, and assemblies and special events. Conflicts over values, beliefs, and cultural expressions centered on such issues as the disputed value of discussing racial issues openly, best instructional methods for diverse students, the relative value of staying within one’s own ethnic group, and the acceptability of terms like “nigga” among youth.
7. Conflicts involving race/ethnicity created a number of dilemmas for school leaders. In our final report, we identify ten kinds of dilemmas faced by the leaders in our study. These include, for example, the dilemma of reconciling the goal of integration with the goal of equitable access to curriculum, which in some primary language programs can result in ethnic segregation; or the dilemma of how to address staff who are not performing their jobs adequately, particularly when doing so can result in accusations of racism.

8. Leaders in this study worked in at least five different ways to create conditions for positive interethnic relations. These included:

- Identifying priority needs;
- Developing a shared vision;
- Serving as an initiator or facilitator of change;
- Making a contribution; and
- Supporting the development of other leaders.

9. Leaders in the study had set very different priorities depending on their contexts and the kinds of needs they had identified as most salient. Nine out of the 21 schools had distinct periods in their histories when safety and security were the priority needs that had to be addressed before other “growth needs” such as community and belonging, self esteem, and self actualization could become the main focus.

10. Leaders in the study were all active in developing a vision for the school that was shared by diverse stakeholders and that attended to diversity. In cases where the leadership had been in place long enough to see the vision develop and mature, we found that there was a strong connection between the abstract vision and concrete practice.

11. While the study included several principals who could be described as “charismatic,” leaders with more reserved communication styles and those who facilitate or enable rather than take the lead on change were also very effective. This may be particularly true of change that is related to diversity because part of making schools more responsive to diverse populations is making them inclusive. Leaders who are able to include diverse members of the school community in leadership roles have an advantage, as do principals who listen to others well.

12. The key contributions of the school leaders often did not appear at first glance to be related to reducing ethnic conflict or developing positive interethnic relations. For example, many leaders had created shared leadership structures. On the surface, this can appear to be a managerial process without direct impact on interethnic relations. However, when we consider that shared leadership allows more voices to be heard in decision making, and if we assume that some of those voices either belong to people of color or at least represent their views to some extent, then we see that shared decision making can help to create schools that are more inclusive of diverse perspectives.
13. The study demonstrated that many other role groups besides the principal can and do take the initiative to lead efforts to improve interethnic relations and human relations more generally. In addition to administrative leadership, the study includes documented cases of leadership by teachers, counselors, parents, students, community members, superintendents, and others. In schools where the administration was still largely Euro-American, we noted principals encouraging leadership among people of color and others who care deeply about achieving a more equitable, socially just, respectful environment. This not only paved the way for more diverse leaders to take on formal leadership roles in the future, but also ensured that efforts to improve human relations were not “owned” by any one individual or group. Thus they had a greater likelihood of being sustained if one or more individuals moved on.

14. The schools in this study employed a wide array of approaches which, when combined in meaningful clusters (see finding # 15), helped make the borders between ethnic groups more permeable and understandable, and thus more easily crossed by young people and adults alike.

Approaches that involve all members of the school community:

- **Data Based**: These approaches used data inquiry, especially disaggregated achievement results, as a starting point leading to various kinds of change.
- **School or District Vision**: These approaches used the school vision as a lever to keep goals such as social justice, unity, and respect in view.
- **Organizational**: These approaches changed physical or organizational structures in ways that encouraged relationships across lines of difference.
- **Diverse Staffing**: These approaches increased the ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of the staff as a path toward greater inclusion.
- **Professional Development**: These approaches sought to educate staff about interethnic relations.

Approaches designed to have a direct impact on students:

- **Curricular and Pedagogical**: These approaches embedded interethnic relations topics in curriculum or used instructional methods that encouraged interethnic cooperation.
- **Special Events**: These approaches provided special times to celebrate the diverse cultures of the school, build awareness of differences and similarities, or focus on intergroup relations.
- **Programmatic**: These approaches included conflict resolution, mentoring and tutoring, and after-school and extracurricular programs.
- **Behavioral Standards**: These approaches focused on developing consistent standards of behavior across all diverse groups of students.
Approaches designed to reach extended audiences:

- **Parent Involvement**: These approaches developed meaningful connections between diverse parents and schools.
- **Expanding School Community**: These approaches linked the school with local, national, or international communities.
- **Leveraging Resources**: These approaches garnered additional resources for the school’s efforts to improve interethnic relations.

15. Organizing themes such as personalization, non-violence, and community building serve as the “glue” that connects vision to concrete approaches. **Without such themes, school efforts to improve interethnic relations often lack coherence.** Each school exhibited a unique blend of multiple approaches, or what one principal called a “mosaic” of approaches. Themes such as non-violence and others tied each school’s different approaches to interethnic relations together, imbuing the approaches with meaning and values. In this way, leaders avoided the common pitfall of having a “hodgepodge” of unrelated approaches. The thematic cluster was much more than the sum of its functional parts. It reflected the vision of that particular school leadership, and was laced with particular values.

16. **Schools do not normally keep records that would allow one to track improvements in race/ethnic relations.** For example, many categories of disciplinary referrals, such as the term “defiant” in one school, are very subjective and do not lend themselves to valid monitoring of patterns even within the same school. In addition, students told us that many racial conflicts are never reported to any school authority. An even greater issue in measuring impact is that the phenomenon to be measured needs to be defined. If a reduction in racial conflict is the only goal, then behavioral indicators would suffice (assuming they could be consistently monitored). However, most of the efforts we documented went far beyond merely reducing racial conflict. Leaders in our study also used a multitude of approaches that were proactively designed to build more harmonious relations and to address the root causes of racial/ethnic conflict. The impact of such approaches, if they were working, would not be captured by a single measure of decrease in racial conflict. Rather, they would be reflected in other indicators of a more positive school environment, such as higher academic achievement, more collaboration among faculty, a better reputation of the school in the community, and other outcomes.

17. Nonetheless, our analysis suggests that the proactive leadership approaches we documented did have a powerful impact in several areas. Throughout the study, we gathered accounts of positive results and, when possible, the approaches they were attributed to. In some cases, these claims of impact are supported by quantitative data, and in other cases, by qualitative accounts triangulated across different interviews and observations. Areas of documented impact included:
• Improved interethnic relations among students;
• Increased academic achievement among students;
• Improved student behavior indicators;
• Increased diversity in student leadership;
• Increased staff collaboration and/or improved relationships among staff;
• Increased staff awareness about interethnic relations, diversity;
• Increased involvement of diverse parents;
• Improved school climate or maintained positive climate;
• Enhanced school’s or minority group’s reputation in community.

LESSONS LEARNED

If schools are to become more like the ones in the study – that is, safe and respectful environments where positive interethnic relations can flourish – key change agents need to decide that intergroup relations are a priority area in education and take actions appropriate to their role:

**School leaders need to:**
1. Identify the contextual barriers and supports that have an impact on interethnic relations at the school.
2. Assess the nature of conflicts that occur in the school, including overt racial conflicts as well as underlying tensions and root causes of these tensions. Include adult as well as student conflicts, and identify the key issues that trigger conflicts and tensions.
3. Based on this assessment of conflict, identify the school’s priority needs for the current year – e.g., creating a safe and secure environment; developing a sense of community and belonging; developing self esteem and esteem of others; developing students’ fullest potential.
4. Develop a vision for diversity in the school that is not merely a motto or statement, but a set of practices that take place daily in the school.
5. Involve diverse stakeholders in the development of this vision so that it becomes our vision, not the principal’s vision.
6. Identify their own preferred leadership style and communicate this to staff so that staff can more easily understand the role they need to adopt in working with administrators.
7. Seek out diverse perspectives on issues that affect the whole school, and listen actively even when they hear views with which they disagree.
8. Create an environment where people can openly and safely discuss topics and issues related to race and ethnicity.
9. Decide how their leadership will contribute to the development of positive interethnic relations at your school. Remember that underlying structures, such as shared decision making or the institution of regular collaboration time for teachers, often contribute
indirectly to more positive interethnic relations.

10. Encourage others to step up and take leadership roles in interethnic relations, and provide the supports they need to make their efforts fruitful.

11. Develop a plan for how the school will address racial/ethnic conflict and develop positive interethnic relations in the future. Include approaches designed to react to existing conflicts and those designed to proactively build a positive interethnic environment. The approaches should be tied to the school vision through meaningful clusters – for example, approaches designed to personalize the school experience, those designed to promote non-violence, etc.

12. Create a system that will allow the school’s progress in human relations to be measured.

Professional development programs for future school leaders:
Professional development programs, because they are responsible for preparing the new administrators who will lead our schools in the future, play a critical role in ensuring that these future leaders will have the necessary knowledge, experience, and skills to address ethnic or racial conflict and promote positive interethnic relations. Like the schools we documented in the study, professional development for future school leaders needs to have a vision that includes diversity. Programs need to be able to answer the question, Professional development for what? We believe a very practice-oriented approach is appropriate which relies heavily on field experiences, coaching and mentoring, and case methods curriculum, embedding theory explicitly in practice. The program should prepare future leaders in all of the twelve areas identified above.

District administrators and policymakers:
The districts in our study, whether they were aware of it or not, wielded a great deal of power over how interethnic relations were played out in the schools, and some district leaders had used that power in very conscious ways to craft supportive structures and policies that would encourage positive interethnic relations. District administrators need to be aware of this powerful role and use it to advantage. District-wide initiatives such as a focus on diversity and equity; regular, paid collaboration time for teachers; maintenance of diverse student populations in the schools; and transition time for incoming principals do have a positive impact on interethnic relations in schools. District administrators and policymakers should be encouraged by this study because it shows that wise allocation of resources to diversity-related initiatives does make a difference in the ability of school leaders to create safer, more respectful school communities.

State and federal policymakers:
Policymakers are currently seeking “ideas about how to handle the array of social problems that affect education” and want to learn from research “Which are the best strategies for improving school safety and discipline?” (NIEGPFM, 1998, pp.11-12). The Leading for Diversity study provides a wealth of information that answers these questions. Although we have not yet completed a thorough policy analysis of our data base, two policy implications stand out at this time:
Executive Summary

1. With the recent emphasis on raising academic achievement, schools are under increasing pressure to perform by showing gains in academic achievement. However, this study shows that creating a positive human relations environment is a necessary precursor to the higher academic learning we all want to see students achieve. Students and staff who fear for their safety or feel the school environment is hostile or disrespectful to them are not able to concentrate on teaching and learning.

Policymakers can assist schools in meeting their academic goals by creating and maintaining policies that support schools in developing positive intergroup relations, including race/ethnic relations. The study suggests that intergroup relations should be an explicit part of the required educational program in all schools, along with math, reading, and other subjects.

2. If schools, districts, and policymakers agree that one of the functions of school is to prepare young people to live cooperatively and respectfully in a diverse world, then systems need to be developed to measure progress in this area. No schools in the study had systems in place to track improvements in intergroup relations. The old adage “You are what you measure” is apt here. It is clear that a national agenda to support schools in promoting positive intergroup relations has yet to be set. In the absence of such an agenda, some schools, like the ones in this study, rise to the task anyway, and others flounder.

Policymakers can assist schools in making intergroup relations education a viable part of their mission by developing standards and progress indicators that will allow schools to monitor their progress. Just as the standards movement is now beginning to hold schools accountable for academic achievement, it can serve as a lever to hold schools accountable for achievement in intergroup relations.

❖ Conclusion

Most educators agree that one “need” is for all students to have access to academic success, and certainly the schools in the study all strive to make academic success attainable for all their students. However, many of the school leaders in the study questioned whether the basic purpose of formal education might go further than preparing all students for success in mainstream society. Should schools play a role in nurturing students’ sense of cultural or ethnic identity? Should schools play a role in developing positive intergroup relations? Should schools play a role in teaching students to be critical, to question and challenge inequities that schools and other institutions perpetuate? (Ladson Billings, 1995). We have become increasingly convinced, through this study and other work we have done with schools, that a focus on academics alone is not enough and that schools do have a responsibility to provide education in these other areas. There is a commonality linking all forms of intolerance and oppression, whether people are the subject of harassment because of race/
ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical disabilities, or any other kinds of “difference.” Given this commonality, we hope that the approaches documented in the study can serve as models that schools can adapt in addressing other forms of intolerance.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

- The background and purpose of the project
- Key definitions and assumptions
- Research methods
- An overview of the 21 schools in the study
Introduction

This report presents the key findings of the Leading for Diversity Project, a national research and curriculum development project which documented 21 cases in which school leaders proactively addressed racial and ethnic conflict and promoted improved relations among different racial/ethnic groups. The report is written primarily for funders, policy makers, site leaders, district leaders, and researchers. We have structured the report with practical aims in mind so that school and district leaders and policy-makers can make use of it. Thus, after we lay out some introductory information and our conceptual and theoretical framework, we focus on reporting findings by key questions. We conclude each of the findings sections with short discussions about what these findings might suggest for the professional development of administrators. For readers’ convenience, we have also collected these implications in summary form at the end of the report.

Background and purpose of the project

The study grew out of a Principals’ Forum developed by ARC Associates in 1995. Participating principals expressed a need for help and strategies focused on working with diverse student and parent populations. In particular, they asked for help in dispelling racial tension, class conflict and violence (particularly violence related to race or ethnicity); creating a vision that proactively includes all students; and working with staff members to increase understanding of cultural differences. These needs are also well documented in the literature on multicultural and anti-racist education (e.g. Sleeter, 1996; Banks, 1993; Delpit 1995; Noguera 1995) and school leadership (e.g., Murphy, 1992; Contreras, 1992; Fullan, 1993). Unfortunately, the recent spate of gun violence in schools has created an even more urgent call for school-wide approaches that develop a sense of safety and respect among all members of the school community.

Given the needs of this group of 40 school leaders in the San Francisco Bay Area, this research and curriculum development project was designed to improve the preparation of future school leaders so that they have a greater ability to address racial/ethnic tensions in schools and can apply a range of approaches for encouraging positive interethnic relations. Two related goals served to accomplish this purpose: The first goal was to document exemplary or proactive approaches and practices existing school leaders were using to address ethnic conflict and promote positive intergroup relations. This goal drove the research part of the project which is the subject of this report. The second goal, which drives the next phase of the project, is to develop a curriculum for future school leaders based on these cases. Information on this second goal is briefly outlined under “Next Steps” at the end of this report.

1 In addition to funding from the Field Initiated Studies Program (Grant #R308F960028), this project also has funding from CREDE (PR#306A60001). As a result, we were able to add nine school sites to the twelve that were funded through the Field Initiated grant, for a total of 21 sites. This report covers all 21 sites.
Key definitions and assumptions

• Some might think that since this study focused on exemplary or proactive approaches to dealing with racial conflict, all of the schools in our study were exemplary in every way. This was not the case, nor was it realistic. Like schools anywhere, the ones we report on were struggling day to day to put their vision for a better world into daily practice. Interviewees made it abundantly clear that they did not have all the answers and that in particular, academic achievement gains were not yet evident in many schools because the approaches had only recently been put in place and they faced various contextual barriers that made progress take place more slowly. Thus anyone hoping to find in this report the story of a completed journey will be disappointed; those hoping to find descriptions of the dilemmas school leaders have struggled with and how they have crafted a mosaic of approaches to build more positive interethnic relations will, on the other hand, be rewarded with rich possibilities for change.

• Determining which approaches qualified as proactive was at first a difficult enterprise since the research team had not developed an apriori definition but rather waited to see what kinds of approaches were present among the nominated schools, then developed an operational definition based on the initial data set. This operational definition included the following features:

1. School leaders articulate a consciousness that race or ethnicity may be a factor in some of the conflict in and around the school;

2. The school leadership takes concrete actions to not only quell immediate conflicts in a reactive mode, but also to anticipate trends and issues and promote a safe and respectful school environment in which interethnic relations can flourish;

3. There is coherence in the school’s approach to racial/ethnic conflict and other school practices. For example, policies and practices developed to achieve equity and respect in terms of race/ethnicity are consistent with policies and practices regarding gender, religious background, sexual orientation, different physical abilities, and other forms of diversity.

• Early in the study, we recognized that leadership in the area of ethnic relations can come from a variety of sources in addition to the traditional principal role. We purposefully designed our site selection process to be open to this possibility. Thus, when we speak in this report of school leaders, the term is meant to include administrators, teachers, students, parents, community members, and any others who played key roles in initiating or maintaining practices that promoted positive interethnic relations.
• The terms *race* and *ethnicity* are often used interchangeably in schools. However, we feel it is important to be more precise in explaining our meanings of these terms to better distinguish different dimensions of social identity. At one time it was believed that there were distinct human races, but physical anthropologists have shown that there is in fact more genetic variation within a supposed “race” than there is between races, and therefore the idea of separate human races has been discredited (Montagu, 1942/1997). However, as we all know, race as a socially constructed category has been used to justify discrimination against various groups of people, as exemplified in the history of Black-white relations in the U.S. People’s beliefs about race have major social consequences. Thus, while race as a biological category has been discredited, race and racism as social constructs do indeed exist. (American Anthropological Association, 1998). When we use the term *race* in this report, we do so in the sense of race as a social construct.

*Ethnicity*, on the other hand, is a term that is often preferred over race because it does not imply biological or genetic differences. Rather, it refers to a combination of common ancestral origin, with or without physical similarities, and cultural characteristics such as religion, language, and other acquired attributes. Thus there is a dimension of ethnicity that is learned — the cultural part — and a dimension that is a given by birth — the ancestral origin. It is possible, therefore, for a person to be of a certain ancestral origin — Jewish, for example — but not necessarily adopt any of the cultural characteristics (religion, language, etc.) that are shared by many Jews. When people claim to be of a particular ethnicity, they may be invoking either or both of these dimensions. (DeVos, 1995)

Throughout this report, we use various terms to refer to specific ethnic and racial groups, depending on the context. The group descriptors we selected reflect our respect for group members’ stated preferences, as well as the regional variation in preferred terms (for example, in Georgia, Hispanic is the preferred term whereas in California, it is Latino/a). In some cases, we have used broader terms that include more subgroups (such as Black rather than African American to include those from the Caribbean Islands as well as Americans of African origin). Occasionally, when referring to non-European origin people as a group, we use the term “people of color” rather than “minority” because in so many of our schools, they were actually the majority.

• Part of the study involved documenting the schools’ and nearby communities’ history of tensions and conflicts involving race and ethnicity. In doing so, we decided not to limit ourselves to documenting conflicts among students but rather to document all conflicts that were reported to us, including conflicts among adults. Our reasoning was that the adults are an integral part of the school and community environment, and because of their function in many cases as role models, the study would be incomplete without this documentation. Likewise, our documentation of approaches used in the 21 schools includes approaches that focus on adults as well as students.

• Finally, in this report and throughout the study, we assume that there is a *commonality* linking all forms of intolerance and oppression, whether people are the subject of harass-
ment because of race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical disabilities, or any other kinds of “difference.” Although the study focused on how school leaders addressed conflicts related to race/ethnicity, it is likely that many of the same approaches could be applied to addressing other forms of intolerance. By focusing this study on race/ethnicity, we do not in any way mean to imply that other forms of intolerance or oppression are not worthy of attention.

Research Methods

The study employed a qualitative, multiple case study design. This design was appropriate for a project in which the primary aim was to describe approaches and processes used by school leaders in different contexts. In developing our methods, we drew on the work of qualitative researchers such as Erickson (1986), Goetz and LeCompte (1984) Glesne and Peshkin (1992), Patton (1990), and Miles and Huberman (1994). Data collected during the three year research phase were used to create 21 case studies describing exemplary or proactive approaches and practices K-12 school leaders employed to address ethnic conflict and promote positive intergroup relations. The study was designed to address the following two research questions:

1. How do school leaders or leadership teams address tensions and conflict that may be related to race or ethnicity?

2. How do school leaders or leadership teams bring about unity rather than division among different ethnic groups on campus?

The study design was structured around two year-long cycles of data collection. The first cycle involved nine San Francisco Bay Area school sites; the second cycle added twelve sites throughout the U.S. for a total of 21 sites. Figure 1, below, illustrates these two overlapping cycles of data collection.

Figure 1: Cycles of data collection over three years
1. Site selection process

Sites were selected through a nomination, screening, and selection process. Although this was a very time consuming process, the results were well worth it as we were ultimately able to generate a wide range of nominations from which to choose and were thus able to be quite selective. Altogether, we received 90 nominations, from which we selected 21 sites. The process for local sites differed slightly from that used for national sites, as explained below.

Local sites

Nomination process: To locate leaders and schools engaged in effectively addressing interethnic and racial conflict, we contacted a variety of educators in areas serving diverse student populations. Nomination forms, selection criteria, a cover letter, and an abstract were mailed to approximately 110 San Francisco Bay Area educators, administrators, and community leaders, as well as to California State Department of Education staff. From this mailing, 33 nominations were received.

Screening process: The next step in the process involved phone screenings of sites that appeared to fit the criteria. Phone screenings were mainly designed to inform site leaders of the study, check or confirm information on the nomination form, and find out if they were interested in participating in the study should they be selected. Of the 33 sites that were nominated, 13 were eliminated either because they didn’t meet the selection criteria—for example, the student population was not as diverse as we wanted—or because they did not want to participate in the study.

Two-person teams visited each of the remaining 20 sites — six elementary schools, six middle schools, and eight high schools. Visits were approximately two hours long and included an interview with the principal and any other members of the leadership team he or she chose to include; a walk around the campus, observing students at lunch or breaks if possible; and brief conversations with a variety of other individuals who happened to be available, e.g., the conflict management coordinator, teachers, etc. During these visits, team members collected a few selected published documents, such as school report cards. In some cases, we also attended meetings that happened to coincide with our visit, such as a student meeting, a faculty meeting, and a leadership team meeting. After each visit, team members wrote fieldnotes and made oral reports of their visits at research team meetings.

Site selection process: Site selection meetings (one each for elementary, middle and high school levels) were held after all visits to potential sites were complete. Our discussions about the pros and cons of studying the different sites focused on what we would actually be able to learn from the sites, how useful that knowledge would be to practitioners, unique features, and contrasts based on school size, population, leadership structure of the school. All of the selected schools at local sites (three per level, nine total) were very diverse in terms of student population. They had tangible histories of interethnic conflict,
and appeared to be implementing proactive approaches to handle conflicts and interethnic tensions and improve intergroup relations. Contrasts such as size, leadership structure, and presence of certain ethnic groups provided interesting sources of variation. Selected sites were screened one final time in communication with the Office of Civil Rights and California Department of Education staff to learn whether any civil rights complaints had been filed for any of the selected sites within the past five years.

It should be noted that some non-selected schools were not included because, though they were doing interesting things to promote intergroup relations, they did not have a clear history of interethnic conflict and therefore did not fit one of the purposes of the study, which was to learn how schools manage this kind of conflict. Inherent in our selection process was the assumption that if a school has not had to deal with interethnic conflict, the approach to building positive group relations may look quite different than at a site where there has been a history of tension.

National Sites

Nomination process: Locating leaders and schools across the country presented certain logistical challenges to our nomination process. Initially, as with the local sites, we utilized existing contacts in regions throughout the US. Since we wanted to widen our coverage, we also placed an ad in *Education Week* and sent out the nomination form over several list serves. While the net was widened, little was caught. We received one nomination as a result of the ad and only a few from list serves. An additional strategy was to call school district and state education offices in selected areas known for diversity. Eventually, our efforts resulted in 57 nominations across 18 states.

Screening process: Once nominations were in, a leader, usually the principal, was contacted at each nominated school in order to set up a telephone screening interview to inform our selection process. The purposes of the screening interviews were to a) provide schools with information about our study, b) collect comparable baseline information about each of the nominated schools, and c) gather logistical information about such things as how to get district permission should the school be selected. Researchers took extensive notes on each interview and shared them with other members of the project team.

Selection process: Drawing on our experience with local sites, we developed a scoring system for the national sites. These criteria specified a maximum number of points for demographics (1 pt), leadership (2 pts), unique organizational structure (1 pt), history of tensions around race (4 pts), strategies or approaches (5 pts), impact (2 pts), and a “floating” point for schools fitting our needs in some way not fully captured by these criteria.

Nominated schools were grouped by level (elementary, middle, and high). In team meetings focused on one level at a time, team members read descriptions (based on the telephone interview) of each nominated school and listened to presentations by the team member who had conducted the telephone interview. Each project member assigned
points to each nominated school based on the scoring system. Taking into account the need for size and geographical variety, twelve schools were chosen as national sites.

2. Data Collection Process

The primary means of data collection was the same at both local and national sites. The process included semi-structured interviews with a range of stakeholders at each site including administrators, counselors, teachers, students, parents, and community members; observations of key events and activities such as classes, leadership meetings, and student activities; and collection of documents and records provided by the schools. We interviewed a total of 1009 individuals and did 441 observations across the 21 sites. Table 1 provides a summary of these data by site.

In selecting people to interview and classes or other activities to observe, we used a process known as purposive sampling (Miles and Huberman, 1994). We relied initially on recommendations from our contact person at the site —either the principal or someone assigned by the principal. We asked to interview people who were knowledgeable about the history of leadership at the school, and/or the approaches the school was using to address conflicts and improve interethnic relations. In many cases, these individuals were either part of the formal leadership structure or were responsible for initiating or running various programs that addressed racial/ethnic diversity. We sought to broaden our scope by asking early interviewees if they could recommend other people who were knowledgeable in these areas, as well as people who might have a different point of view than theirs. We sought people in different role groups, including not only school staff, but also students, parents, and community members. In selecting events and activities to observe, we sought activities that would show us leadership in action (e.g., faculty meetings, parent meetings, etc.) as well as how the identified approaches were enacted (e.g., conflict resolution, ethnic studies courses, assemblies, etc.).

3. Data Analysis Process

Coding and case reports

As we analyzed and reviewed data at each site, we developed a coding scheme for use across all the sites. The coding scheme included the following broad categories:

a. *the school context*, for example, demographic information, relevant characteristics of the community, physical layout, funding and resources, student achievement;

b. *leadership*, including the formal governance structure, history of leadership, vision or ideology, style, dilemmas the leadership has faced, contributions they have made, and other sources of leadership;

c. *the history of tensions or conflicts* around race or ethnicity as well as other conflict;
Table 1: DATA SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPES OF EVIDENCE</th>
<th>Allaneq</th>
<th>Blue Ridge</th>
<th>Buena Vista</th>
<th>Cornell</th>
<th>Crispus Attucks</th>
<th>Dolores Huerta</th>
<th>Ferguson</th>
<th>Fillmore</th>
<th>Greenlawn</th>
<th>Joshua Tree</th>
<th>Maya Lin</th>
<th>Midvale Township</th>
<th>Ohlone</th>
<th>Rancho Verde</th>
<th>Rosa Parks</th>
<th>Royal</th>
<th>Sojourner Truth</th>
<th>United Nations</th>
<th>Totals</th>
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<tr>
<td># of 1-1 interviews*</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
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<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of individuals interv'd in groups</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>43</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ROLE GROUPS INTERVIEWED**

| # of site administrators | 3       | 3          | 2          | 4       | 3             | 3             | 1         | 3        | 5         | 4          | 1          | 2          | 4       | 6         | 7         | 1        | 7         | 1        | 4        | 7         | 5        | 76       |
| # of teachers            | 25      | 11         | 17         | 11      | 12            | 12            | 17        | 20       | 22        | 6          | 8          | 9          | 25      | 15        | 31        | 11       | 28        | 15       | 19       | 19        | 13       | 346      |
| # of other instructional staff | 10     | 5          | 3          | 2       | 2             | 4             |           | 4        | 1         | 6          | 1          | 1          | 3        | 1        | 4         |          | 1        |          | 48       |          |            |          |          |
| # of counselors          | 3       | 1          | 1          | 2       | 1             | 2             |           | 1        | 1         | 1          | 2          | 1          | 2        | 2       | 1         | 1        | 1        | 9         | 1        | 1        | 3         | 34       | 48       |
| # of parents             | 6       | 6          | 10         | 4       | 4             | 11            | 4         | 4        | 3         | 4          | 16         | 2          | 3        | 2         | 4        | 5        | 4         | 6        | 4        | 3         | 105      |          |
| # of students            | 16      | 12         | 11         | 5       | 8             | 10            | 12        | 7        | 10        | 22         | 4          | 41         | 8       | 8         | 13        | 21       | 43        | 9        | 260      |          |          |
| # of non-instructional staff | 3      | 5          | 4          | 7       | 2             | 2             | 2         | 5        | 4         | 2          | 3          | 1          | 4       | 2         | 1         | 2        | 2         | 5        | 6        | 4         | 66       |          |
| # of community members   | 11      | 12         | 3          | 1       | 2             | 2             | 1         | 2        | 2         | 1          | 1          | 1          | 4       |          |           |          |          |           |          |          |           |        | 40       |
| # of district staff      | 1       | 3          | 3          | 1       | 2             | 1             | 2         | 5        | 3          | 2          | 3          | 1         | 1        | 2         |          |          |           |           |          |           |          | 28       |
| Other***                 | 1       |            |            |         |                |                |          |          |           |            |            |            |          |          |           |           |          |            |            |          |            |          | 6        |

Total # of individuals interviewed: 78, 47, 55, 40, 24, 35, 51, 46, 46, 32, 20, 38, 58, 37, 91, 28, 59, 40, 56, 90, 36, 1009

* May include multiple interviews with same individual

** Does not include any double counting of individuals

*** Other includes external consultants and outside researchers
d. *current issues* the school is facing re diversity, race, ethnicity, or language;

e. *approaches* the school is using to address racial or ethnic conflicts or tensions to build positive intergroup relations; and

f. *the impact* these approaches have had on students, staff, parents, or community.

We used a qualitative software package, QSR Nud.ist, to assist us in the coding process. Based on this coding, then, we were able to retrieve all the data about a particular category. Case reports for each school, organized in accordance with the coding scheme, framed the data we had collected.

**Feedback sessions**

The draft case reports formed the basis for feedback sessions at each site conducted at the midpoint of data collection. At these feedback sessions, we shared preliminary findings for the individual site as well as summary findings across all 21 sites; we also elicited input from the faculty through discussion. These sessions provided a structure within which staff could reflect on the positive approaches they were using, and also allowed us to receive feedback as to the validity of our preliminary findings. Final feedback was provided to all schools in the form of a case report, and in a few cases schools have planned additional follow up activities with us.

**Cross case analysis**

The individual case reports provided the basis for systematic cross-site analysis in which we looked at the same categories across all 21 sites to discover differences, similarities, and patterns that help us address our research questions. In cross case analysis, Miles and Huberman suggest that a key problem is,

\[
\ldots \text{how to draw well-founded conclusions from multiple networks [such as case studies of school interventions]. Each network is in some senses unique, a “narrative” of what happened over time.} \ldots \text{ We need a theory that explains what is happening — but a theory that does not forcibly smooth the diversity in front of us, but rather uses it to fully develop and test a well-grounded set of explanations. (1994, p. 207)}
\]

They provide several working principles to use in cross case analysis:

- Understand the case;
- Avoid aggregation;
- Preserve case configurations;
- Combine variable-oriented and case-oriented strategies;
- Inquire into deviant cases;
Guided by these principles as well as a rich array of suggestions for handling data display through a series of intermediate stages of data analysis, we have tried to develop cross site analyses that are rich, descriptive, explanatory, and of potential use to practitioners in later iterations. This report is the result of this cross site analysis. We do not consider it the only product to come out of this research, however, as there are further levels and types of analysis that are clearly needed, and others that may be suggested by those reading this report.

4. Limitations of the study

We have identified two limitations in our study which are important to note:

- In our wish to be as comprehensive as possible and not “miss” important sources of data, we probably became overzealous in data collection. The large number of interviews and observations presented us with a data base that was too large given our staff size (five part-time project staff) and time constraints. In retrospect, we should have limited our data collection efforts and allocated more time to the write up of the cases and to cross-site analysis.

- In documenting the various approaches schools were using to address interethnic conflict and build positive interethnic relations, it became clear that most schools have little systematic data on the effectiveness or impact of the various approaches. Most schools do not have systems in place that would enable them to monitor improvements in interethnic relations. Indicators that are available tend to be indirect — e.g., increases in student academic achievement, fewer suspensions, etc. Only a few schools in the study made use of disaggregated data on student outcomes (academic achievement, discipline referrals) in order to monitor patterns of achievement across different ethnic groups and spot disproportionate outcomes. As a result, in most cases we were unable to ascertain whether perceived benefits of the different programs were equally available to different kinds of students. Another complication related to impact or effectiveness is that, given the complex and interwoven nature of school features, it is not possible to disambiguate what configuration of approaches create an impact. Chapter VII presents the analysis of impact that we were able to accomplish given these limitations.
An overview of the 21 schools

The schools selected for the Leading for Diversity study include public elementary, middle and high schools in ten states. While all of the schools share certain characteristics (i.e., their diverse populations, their history of conflict or tensions related to race/ethnicity, and their proactive leadership) their contexts differed in important ways. In the selection process, described in the chapter on methods, we sought variation in the ethnic mix of the school, size of the school, socioeconomic status of the community, demographics, region of the country, and urban/suburban context. Table 2 presents an overview of these contextual variables for all 21 sites. All schools have been assigned pseudonyms.

As Table 2 illustrates, the sample of schools exemplifies a wide range of school contexts, from small (Rainbow Elementary School with 200 students) to large (Sojourner Truth High School with 4300 students); from higher SES (Forest Hills High School with only 9.5% of its students on AFDC) to lower (Buena Vista Elementary School with 100% of its students on a free and reduced lunch program). In selecting schools, we made sure that each of the major racial groups (African American, Asian, European American, Latino, and Native American) was the largest group in at least one school. These variations in context were thus built in to the design of the sample, enabling us to better understand, for example, how the size of a school might influence interethnic relations and the approaches taken.

For readers who want more detail about the sample of schools in the study, a one-page profile of each school is included in Appendix A.
### Table 2: Leading for Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th># of Ss</th>
<th>Low SES</th>
<th>Largest Racial/Ethnic Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sojourner Truth</td>
<td>urban, NY</td>
<td>4300</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>57% Latino, 48% White, 34% Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maya Liu</td>
<td>suburb, S. Cal</td>
<td>1550</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>39% White, 26% Latino, 20% Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Attucks</td>
<td>urban, MA</td>
<td>2550</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>90% White, 10% Latino, 5% African Am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations</td>
<td>suburb, S. Cal</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>27% Latino, 21% White, 18% Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sojourner Truth</td>
<td>urban, IL</td>
<td>2900</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30% White, 19% Latino, 17% Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Hill</td>
<td>suburb, N. Cal</td>
<td>2234</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0% Filipino, 0% Latina, 0% African Am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andando Verde</td>
<td>suburban, N. Cal</td>
<td>1732</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0% Filipino, 0% Latina, 0% African Am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriental</td>
<td>OH suburb, N. Cal</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0% Filipino, 0% Latina, 0% African Am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosa Parks</td>
<td>urban, FL</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>26% Latino, 25% White, 18% African Am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolores Huetas</td>
<td>DMH suburb, S. Cal</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0% Filipino, 0% Latina, 0% African Am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alianca</td>
<td>urban, AK</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>40% White, 22% Latino, 18% Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Dorado</td>
<td>urban, N. Cal</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0% Filipino, 0% Latina, 0% African Am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal</td>
<td>RM urban, N. Cal</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>36% White, 28% Latino, 14% Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Ridge</td>
<td>BREE urban, CA</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>66% Latino, 18% White, 13% Asian</td>
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<td>Brea Vista</td>
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<td>0% Filipino, 0% Latina, 0% African Am</td>
</tr>
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<td>Ferguson</td>
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<td>Joshua Free</td>
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<td>urban, N. Cal</td>
<td>2200</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>40% Latino, 30% White, 9% Asian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: All schools have been assigned pseudonyms to protect confidentiality.*
CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- Conceptual framework
- Equal status contact theory
- Maslow’s hierarchy of needs
- The development of racial identity
- Different levels of multicultural inclusion
Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the conceptual framework that we used to organize the study, as well as several theoretical frameworks that informed our understanding of these concepts.

Conceptual Framework

At the center of the study are five linked concepts:

- Contextual constraints & supports
- Tensions and conflicts related to race/ethnicity
- Leadership
- Approaches to addressing conflict and improving interethnic relations
- Impact of the approaches

Contextual constraints & supports: In order to understand what school leaders do to address ethnic conflict and promote more harmonious and respectful school environments, the study had to identify the contextual constraints and supports that undergird their actions. For example, a very large school population may tend to exacerbate tensions due to overcrowding and constrain the development of personal relations among students, teachers and students, etc. On the supportive side, a well funded school district may have resources which can be tapped for interethnic relations goals, resources not available to a less well funded school. The contextual factors we are referring to here are typically pre-existing or beyond the control of the school leadership.

Tensions and conflicts related to race/ethnicity: These arise in the surrounding community and society as well as in the school itself. Some of these tensions are related to the constraints within which schools operate, such as overcrowding. The study described and classified the various kinds of conflicts that were related to race and ethnicity.

Leadership: In addressing these tensions and conflicts and working to improve relations, various sources of leadership come forward — some within the school, some outside of it. The study described characteristics and processes of school leadership that helped create school climates where interethnic relations could flourish.

Approaches to addressing conflict and improving interethnic relations: These sources of leadership develop various approaches that lead toward a goal of a more harmonious school community, a more socially just one, etc. The study described and classified the various approaches school leaders were using.
Impact of the approaches: Finally, the approaches taken by leaders within and outside the school have certain impacts on students, teachers, parents, the school’s reputation, etc. Some of these impacts are amenable to quantitative measurement, and others are more aptly described in qualitative terms. The study attempted to identify the kinds of impact that resulted from the leadership approaches we documented.

In Chapters III through VII, we present an analysis of each of these conceptual areas. In carrying out these analyses, several theoretical frameworks have helped us explain and understand our findings. These are equal status contact theory (Allport, 1954); Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (1956); the development of racial identity (Tatum 1997; Helms 1990; and Cross 1991); and different levels of multicultural inclusion (Banks 1993; Grant & Sleeter, 1989). In the next sections, we briefly explain these theoretical frameworks and how they relate to this study.

Equal status contact theory

Equal status contact theory, developed by Gordon Allport (1954), has been drawn on in many studies of integration and race relations since that time. The theory posits that in order for positive relations to develop between different racial and ethnic groups, four necessary conditions must be met:

1. Equal status: The contact should occur in circumstances that place the two groups in an equal status.

2. Personal interaction: The contact should involve one-on-one interactions among individual members of the two groups.

3. Cooperative activities: Members of the two groups should join together in an effort to achieve superordinate goals.

4. Social norms: The social norms, defined in part by relevant authorities, should favor intergroup contact (Brehm & Kassim, 1996, p. 157)

When schools were first integrated, many assumed that all four of these conditions would be met, and that by simply placing students of vastly different backgrounds in the same schools, the goals of integration would be achieved. Unfortunately, such has not been the case, and in fact, many schools report there is even greater fragmentation along racial lines. In a recent article, Fine, Weis and Powell offer an incisive explanation for why “settings that are technically desegregated will corrode into sites of oppositional identities, racial tensions, and fractured group relations which simply mirror the larger society.” (1997, p. 249) They claim that there are critical conditions left out of equal status contact theory which
need to be addressed in order for multiracial youth relations to flourish. These are: “a sense of community; a commitment to a creative analysis of difference, power and privilege; and an enduring investment in democratic practice with youth.” (p. 249) They make the point, one we found strongly evident in our research, that setting students up as “equal” in the classroom cannot possibly make up for the great economic and social divides they bring with them when they enter the classroom. Thus, many of the approaches we documented are based on a social analysis of the root causes of racial conflict and intolerance — causes such as social and economic inequality. Trying to address racial conflict by raising the academic achievement of underachieving students (particularly poor, black and Latino) is one such strategy. Fine et. al. also point out the importance of building a sense of community, helping students (and adults) to analyze differences, and developing students’ leadership capacities for a more democratic society. We have found Allport’s four conditions, and Fine et. al.’s additional three conditions, present to varying degrees in the schools we studied.

There are many who would argue that schools, because of their history of segregating students and the inequalities perpetuated by tracking and other structures, are uniquely unqualified to serve as vehicles for improving race and ethnic relations. Phelan, Davidson and Yu (1997) suggest that the school’s role in race relations is more complex. They too have extended Allport’s hypothesis that cooperative activities can help dispel stereotypes students may have of “out-group” members. They have developed a model called “students multiple worlds” in which the concept of sociocultural and structural borders is explored. Their research with high school students indicates that some individuals within a particular minority group cross borders with relative ease, while others do not. In addition to exploring the family and peer norms that influence these students, they also suggest that schools can help young people become better border crossers by making the borders between groups more permeable and understandable, and thus more easily crossed. The idea that schools can, despite powerful constraints and barriers, influence race relations in a positive direction undergirds our study as well.

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs

One of the concerns we struggled with as we compared the different schools in our study was the question of why some schools seemed so much further along compared to others that still struggled with more “basic” issues. Why did some strategies and approaches seem to be of central importance at some schools and unnecessary at others?

In addressing this question, we expanded our notion of the importance of context. During our screening process we had in fact attempted to select as diverse a pool of schools as possible, considering, among other things, ethnic composition, size, urban/suburban setting, socioeconomic class, geographic location, and history. While our primary purpose
in selecting a variety of schools was to have as wide and representative a range of cases as possible, we had in fact selected schools that were effective in creating positive interethnic communities relative to their contexts.

Rather than reinvent the wheel, we found it useful to draw upon the well known developmental progression delineated by psychologist Abraham Maslow (1968), his Hierarchy of Needs, as a beginning frame of analysis (See Figure 2). Maslow’s hierarchy was developed to describe the different levels of need individuals satisfy on their pathway to becoming fully actualized beings. Levels 3-5 are non-hierarchical — that is, one can go from safety and security to any of the other levels.

![Figure 2: Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs](image)

Maslow differentiated between two broad categories of needs — basic needs and growth needs. Basic needs include the environmental preconditions necessary for need satisfaction (freedom, justice, orderliness), physiological needs (air, water, food, shelter, sleep, and sex), and the physical need for safety and security. Maslow submitted that once these basic needs have been satisfied, higher order needs unfold. These higher order needs include love and belonging, self esteem and esteem by others, and the need for a host of other experiences (truth, goodness, beauty, individuality, meaningfulness, justice, order, etc.) that result in “self-actualization”, the capacity to experience our full potential. Although the notion of self-actualization may seem a bit amorphous, most of us would not contest the educational ideal of helping people realize their full potential. As such, if we apply this framework not only to the individual, but also to the collective of individuals and conditions that comprise a school community, we can begin to define a progression of school contexts, contexts that suggest certain distinct needs and priorities, and through which schools must progress in the pursuit of realizing the full potential of all members of the school community.

In the chapter on leadership of this report, we apply Maslow’s framework in a modified form to the schools in the study as a way to shed light on how leaders assessed the priority needs at their schools and how they then used this assessment to determine the direction and focus of the coming years under their leadership.
School staff in the 21 schools frequently remarked on how students tend to group more and more by ethnicity as they grow older. Many educators are puzzled by this phenomenon, noting that the shift seems to begin around 6th grade, and then in high school, the groupings tend to become more fixed. High school students also told us they had noticed this change, many of them recalling a friend of another ethnicity they had had when they were younger, and the way they gradually grew more apart as they matured. One young African American man told us he and his Afghan friend had made a pact in middle school not to let ethnic differences divide them; so far, he said, they had been successful, but high school was just beginning for them.

This process is explained as part of the development of racial identity. Tatum (1997) identifies adolescence as the time when students of color start to question who they are racially and what meaning that has for how other people view them and interact with them. She points out that as young people start to notice others reacting to their race or ethnicity, they also feel a need to connect with others who are having similar experiences and pull away from those who have not had those experiences. Tatum also draws on the work of Helms (1990) and Cross (1991) who have outlined different but parallel stages of racial identity development among white and black adults.

While an explanation of these stages of development is too lengthy to attempt here, it is important to note that as schools begin to open up a dialogue about race and ethnicity, as many of the schools in our study have been doing, it is important for educators who work with these students to have an understanding of these stages of racial identity development. This understanding can help teachers make sense of the different responses students and adults have when talking about race and ethnicity — for example, the feeling of guilt a white student may experience when she becomes aware of the damage done by racism, or the active avoidance by a black student of anything associated with whiteness, or the openness of some students of color who, secure in their own ethnic identity, reach out to collaborate and learn from students of other ethnicities. The idea that students and adults move through stages of racial identity suggests that educators can help them with this process — if they themselves understand it.
Developing positive interethnic relations in schools is part of the larger endeavor known as multicultural education, and as such it is important to understand the various frameworks that have guided multicultural education. There has been a great deal of variation in models of what such curriculum should consist of and how it is to be structured. Banks (1993) posits four different “levels of integration of ethnic content.” These are

1. the contributions approach, which “focuses on heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements”;  
2. the additive approach, in which “content, concepts and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing its structure”;  
3. the transformation approach, in which the “structure of the curriculum is changed to enable students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspective of diverse ethnic and cultural groups”; and  
4. the social action approach, in which students make decisions on important social issues and take actions to help solve them (p. 26).

While Banks’ levels of integration are helpful in assessing the depth of change in the curriculum, they do not explain the processes through which such changes occur in schools. Schools are notoriously slow to change, and curriculum reform is often shortlived. “Innovations that win the battle of words prove indigestible within the supremely stable structure of schooling and are ultimately regurgitated. Only when the significance of institutional culture is recognized as a vital factor in curriculum reform can change be sustained.” (Kliebard, 1988, p. 32) Thus, it is critical to examine the way curricular and other innovations in interethnic relations are embedded within the institutional culture of the school. This requires school leaders who understand the complexities that make up their particular school environments and who are capable of guiding the change process, as described in Fullan (1999).

A somewhat different set of approaches to multicultural education is outlined by Grant and Sleeter, who identified five types:

1. teaching the exceptional or culturally different, in which the goal is to help these students acquire the cognitive skills and knowledge of the traditional curriculum;  
2. the human relations approach, which focuses on attitudes and feeling students have about themselves and each other;  
3. single group studies, which provides an in-depth study of specific groups and a critical examination of their oppression;
4. the multicultural education approach, which advocates reform of the whole school in order be consistent with its goals of social justice; and
5. education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist, which extends the multicultural education approach “by educating students to be analytical and critical thinkers” who can take action toward greater equity in race, class, gender, and handicap.” (1989, p. 54).

The approaches described by Banks and Grant & Sleeter, while they appear to be discrete, in practice are often mixed and blended in real school situations, making it likely that one will see a variety of approaches at different times in the same classroom or school.
CHAPTER III

HOW DO SCHOOL CONTEXTS INFLUENCE INTERGROUP RELATIONS?

- Contextual constraints that inhibit positive interethnic relations
- Contextual supports that lay a foundation for the development of positive interethnic relations
- The relationship between contextual supports and constraints
- History of previous leaders and their contributions
- Governance structures of the schools
- Discussion
How Do School Contexts Influence Intergroup Relations?

Throughout the study, we were reminded of how important it is to understand the context. Whenever we forgot this, people in the schools would draw our attention back to it. A particular approach worked well in one school because there were contextual supports for it; in another school, the same approach might be far less effective because that school lacked those supports, or faced certain contextual barriers that made it difficult to implement. For our purposes, we defined context as those features that influence what happens in schools but are not directly under the control of the school leadership. Thus context would include such things as the size of the school, the resources available to the school, the type of surrounding community and its relation to the school, state or district policies, a legacy left by a previous principal, etc.

In trying to understand how context influenced the 21 schools in our study, we also acknowledged aspects of the larger society that influence all schools. The continuing problems with race relations in US society and the history of racism are, of course, central features of the larger context that affected all schools in our study. The poor academic preparation of many low income students is another pervasive feature across most schools that serve poor students. Language barriers affect all students for whom English is not a native language. However, since these features affect all schools across the country, our analysis did not focus on these macro elements of context but rather on the more particular contextual features that affected some schools and not others. In this chapter, we begin with an analysis of the contextual constraints that inhibit positive interethnic relations. Next, we look at contextual supports that lay a foundation for the development of positive interethnic relations. Finally, we examine the history of previous leadership, and the governance structures of the schools, which are also “given” features of the context when a new principal steps into a school.

Contextual constraints that inhibit positive interethnic relations

In Table 3, contextual constraints have been identified by category and listed in descending order from those that affected the most schools to those that affected the fewest. (Please see next page.)
### Table 3: Number of Schools Reporting Particular Constraints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual Constraints</th>
<th>Elem. 7 schools</th>
<th>Middle 6 schools</th>
<th>High 8 schools</th>
<th>Total # of Schools Reporting this Constraint</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty of recruiting diverse staff</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segregation of students due to de facto tracking, grouping by language, etc.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large size of school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low income community w/high crime, gang presence</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students come from outside communities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divisions among staff, entrenched staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative perceptions of school in community</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problematic relationship with district</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical layout and/or poor condition of buildings</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low funding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapidly expanding school pop.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High mobility of students and/or staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New pressures from state, e.g., increasing graduation stds., new testing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students only spend two years at the school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental pressure against change in high achieving schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union constrains ability of principal to make changes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bipolar population of students by SES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union constrains Principal in making changes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many staff new to teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small size</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent teachers strike</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District policy of rotating administrators often</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of constraints by level</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average # of constraints per level</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the table indicates, the higher the level of schooling, the more school leaders were constrained in their efforts to develop positive interethnic relations. These constraints were beyond the control of the school leader. High schools faced almost twice as many contextual constraints as elementary schools. Below, we briefly explain how these contextual factors constrained the development of positive interethnic relations:

**Difficulty of recruiting diverse staff:** The importance of having a diverse staff that reflects the student population was acknowledged in every school, although none of the 21 schools had a staff that was truly reflective of the diversity of the student population. Diversity of staffing was said to influence intergroup relations in a number of ways, including (1) providing role models whom students see as similar to themselves, (2) building the school’s capacity to communicate with diverse students and parents, and (3) modeling positive interethnic relations among staff. In ten schools, the difficulty of finding diverse staff was reported to be a major impediment to building a more positive interethnic community. Among the eleven remaining schools, leaders felt that while more diverse staff were still needed, their efforts to recruit staff of color had made a significant difference and that, relative to other schools in their area, they were doing better in terms of staff diversity. Thus, school leaders’ reports about their need for a more diverse staff have to be understood in the context of the local region. A principal in a small city in the Southeast reported that only two of her certificated staff of 49 (or 4%) were non-white, whereas a principal in Northern California with a certificated staff that was 26% non-white also expressed concern about how difficult it is to find and recruit minority teachers. What was unsatisfactory for the Northern California principal would likely have been a welcome relief to the Principal in the Southeastern city, where it was much harder to attract minority teaching candidates. Only three schools in the study had what we considered to be relatively high percentages of non-European American certificated staff — 48% at an elementary school in Maryland, 30% at a high school in Illinois, and 30% at a high school in New York. We conjecture that this might be in part due to these districts having closer proximity and linkages to historically Black colleges which prepare teachers.

**Segregation of students due to de facto tracking or grouping by language:** De facto tracking was particularly problematic in the high schools and to a lesser extent at middle schools. For example, at one high school, ability grouping in math resulted in de facto sorting along ethnic lines, which then had repercussions for some of the other classes as well. The damage done by tracking practices has been well documented by Oakes, et. al. (1985). Though segregation was less problematic at the elementary level, it did come up at one elementary school because of the transitional bilingual program, which grouped Spanish speaking students in order to provide access to the core curriculum. This same school also had an added layer of grouping imposed by its year-round schedule, which grouped students into four tracks. In order to provide more effective language services, some groups (Cambodians, for example) were mostly on the same track. An unfortunate result of these segregated grouping patterns is that students have fewer opportunities to get to know one another across ethnic lines during classes, and thus opportunities for such interactions have to be found outside of regular class time. However, since interactions outside
of class are often built on connections developed in classes, the likelihood of students developing interethnic relationships is lessened. Schools which are constrained by segregated groupings such as these have to develop structured ways to bring students together outside of class time if they want to promote positive interethnic relations.

**Large size of school:** Seven of the schools in the study were considered by staff and students to have very large populations and in some cases not enough space, leading to overcrowding. The sheer numbers of students and staff in these large schools made it difficult to personalize relationships. The overcrowding in some cases added a layer of tension as students were pressed together into overflowing hallways during passing periods, or faculty were required to move from classroom to classroom to teach.

**Low income community with high crime, gang presence:** Seven of the schools were located in very low income communities with high crime and gang activity. In some schools, gang activity on or near the school campus was a constant problem requiring vigilance in order to keep the campus safe and secure. The poverty level of the students in these schools had various effects on interethnic relations. For example, in one school competition for scarce resources made conflict among parents more likely, and these conflicts often had a racial edge. In another, though the school itself was seen as an oasis, the poverty level of families — including several homeless families — made it necessary for the school to attend to basic issues like feeding and clothing students, providing laundry services, and providing transportation.

**Students come from outside communities:** In six schools, a significant percentage of the students came to the school daily from another neighborhood. At one of the elementary schools, for example, the district’s desegregation order required 40% of the students to be bussed in from a considerable distance. This greatly hampered community building efforts, especially parent involvement and after school activities. Although none of the other schools had required bussing, they did have portions of the student population that came from other areas either because the school boundaries included two or more neighborhoods, or because students voluntarily came from other districts.

**Divisions among staff:** Although some degree of division among staff is to be expected, six schools had serious problems with staff divisions. In most cases, it was a problem between newer staff and veteran staff who had conservative, “entrenched” approaches to teaching and curriculum and were seen as unwilling to change to meet the needs of a more diverse population. In one case, the division had an added racial dimension. Serious fractures like this among staff make it difficult for leadership to move forward on any change agenda, particularly one that asks faculty to infuse more multicultural perspectives in their curricula, teach in detracked classrooms, or teach in a more inclusive way.

**Negative perceptions of school in community:** In one case, parents had a perception that the school was a racist school because it was not serving African American and Latino students as well as other groups. In other cases, the school suffered a poor reputation due
to stereotypes in the larger community about the low income, non-white students who attended these schools. These stereotypes (of students as gang members, etc.) tended to cling to the school even after many years of work to counter such perceptions.

**Problematic relationship with district:** Four of the schools in the study had problematic relationships with their districts, resulting in less support for interethnic relations initiatives or fewer resources coming to the school. In three of these cases, the school served the lowest income area of the district and was therefore considered like a “stepchild” and somewhat of an embarrassment due to low test scores, high suspensions, etc. In another case, the district bureaucracy was so large that navigating it was a job in itself. Also, this district had not granted tenure to the principal after 6 years on the job even though he was clearly held up as a model of proactive leadership by the media.

**Low funding:** The range in per pupil funding among our schools was astonishingly large, from $3928 at an elementary school in California to $13,650 at a high school in the Midwest (1997-98 figures). These figures are a function not only of state funding formulas but also local funding. Those schools with the lowest per pupil funding levels obviously were constrained in what they were able to do, and additional activities to support interethnic community building required administrators to put time and energy into seeking outside funding, thus taking time away from their other leadership functions. In addition, one school had gone through a recent bankruptcy. Salaries were the lowest in the area and staff morale was low.

**Physical layout and/or poor condition of buildings:** The physical layout of several schools was reported to inhibit relationships and the formation of community. At one elementary school, the physical layout consisted of three separate buildings with a large concrete yard in the middle and several portables. The three buildings were viewed as almost separate schools in some senses, each with its own administrator. Because classes were self contained, faculty and students in the different buildings often didn’t see each other except at recess and assemblies. At one of the study’s high schools, the opposite was true — there was one large building which made the formation of smaller units (houses) logistically difficult. At another high school, the decaying physical condition the plant added to low morale for staff and students alike.

**Rapidly expanding school population:** In three cases, the school population was expanding so rapidly that it forced a redistribution of grade levels, causing organizational changes that disrupted the continuity of established programs that were beneficial for interethnic relations and also contributing to staff mobility.

**High mobility of students and/or staff:** Two of our schools had high student mobility rates, making it more difficult to establish continuity in the child’s education and inhibiting the growth of lasting relationships among students or between staff and students. In addition, one of these schools also had a high staff turnover rate.
New pressures from state to raise graduation standards: At two schools in the same district in Northern California, we were told about some of the side-effects of increased pressures from the state to raise graduation standards. While the goal of setting higher academic standards was shared by most staff, the emphasis on more academic coursework for graduation and raising test scores left even less time and energy for the human relations aspects of schooling.

Students only spend two years at the school: Two of the middle schools in our study served students for only two years. Staff at both schools told us that this is a very limited amount of time to build relationships compared to the usual 3-4 year time span in most schools.

Parental pressure against change in high achieving schools: Two of the schools in the study had a large number of influential white parents who were active in school decision making. These parents, because the schools had been successful thus far with children like theirs, tended to resist changes that might better meet the needs of a more diverse population.

Union constrains ability of principal to make changes: At two high schools, the principal’s relationship with the teachers union was said to be problematic. A teacher characterized the union as a “bunch of old white guys [who are] ... very rigid and have a 1950s model of teaching. It perpetuates the power structure as it is. When the Principal tries to do things, the union shoots him down at every opportunity.” At the other high school, teachers voted down a proposal for collaborative time at the urging of the union.

Bipolar population of students by SES: Two of the study’s schools served economically split populations, drawing from poor neighborhoods in the “flatlands” and wealthy areas in the hills. Thus ethnic differences in these schools tended to be overlaid with class differences as well, and these class differences embedded inequality in social relations among students.

Many staff new to teaching: Because of California’s recent legislation to reduce class size and the resulting need to hire many new teachers, we were told at one school that approximately 50% of the teaching staff had two years or less of teaching experience. We were told that faculty cohesion had suffered as a result.

Small size: Ironically, size can be problematic both ways. At a middle school with 670 students, small size was considered problematic in the sense that it allowed students fewer choices of classes in the master schedule, thus contributing to some de facto segregated grouping as described above.

Recent teachers strike: At an elementary school, a number of community health workers had been hired through a grant during a teachers’ strike. When teachers returned, they found new staff members in place and had not had any input into their hiring. This caused
some resentment and erosion of staff cohesion.

District policy of rotating administrators frequently: One district had a policy of rotating administrators every five years. At the high school in this district, the principal was moved after only three years because the district saw a need for him elsewhere. This forced teachers to adjust to new leadership frequently and hampered continuity.

Contextual supports that lay a foundation for the development of positive interethnic relations

In Table 4, contextual supports have been identified by category and listed in descending order from those that affected the most schools to those that affected the fewest. A separate table following this identifies various dimensions of district support.
Table 4: Number of Schools Reporting Particular Contextual Supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual Supports</th>
<th>Elem. 7 schools</th>
<th>Middle 6 schools</th>
<th>High 8 schools</th>
<th>Total # of Schools Reporting this Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional funding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical layout and/or good facilities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District supports of various kinds (see Table 5)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-existing collaborations w/outside agencies, local universities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small size</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive community takes pride in school/district</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community is relatively homogeneous in SES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence from district</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of community is very prosperous</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School participates in large reform initiative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-existing sense of community among staff and students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State foreign language requirement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low crime rate in community</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High per pupil funding level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Supports by Level</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Number of Supports per Level</strong></td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this table indicates, contextual supports were most available at the middle and high school levels and least available at the elementary level. Contextual supports came from a variety of sources, some of which are intentional and some of which are simply a result of demographic patterns or economic health in the community. None of these contextual supports by itself was sufficient to create a positive interethnic community; they worked in concert with other supports and with proactive efforts by school leaders. Brief explanations follow:

**Additional funding:** Funding in addition to the per pupil amount given by the state plus local revenues was often used to serve purposes that included support for underserved or at risk students, parent involvement, conflict mediation, and other interventions that helped build more positive relations among groups.
Physical layout and/or good facilities: This support was one of the most frequently mentioned by teachers and administrators. The way a building is designed has very powerful effects on who relates to whom on a school campus. Schools with circular or “pod” designs (as opposed to separate buildings or linear structures with long wings) had a natural advantage in relational work; teachers whose classrooms were centered around a common area, for example, could have a quick conversation with a colleague while still keeping an eye on the students, whereas in a linear structure this was not possible. In addition, well-maintained schools made faculty and students alike feel more valued and respected.

Pre-existing collaborations w/outside agencies, local universities: Eight of the schools had pre-existing collaborations with local universities or agencies that provided resources. For example, both Fillmore and Royal Middle Schools benefited from tutors and mentors provided by the local university.

District supports of various kinds: Some schools had very good district supports — these are described in more detail in Table 5.

Small size: Small size was said to make community building easier in several schools. For example, at Rainbow Elementary, with 220 students, the entire school could come together for a brief morning assembly every day, and this ritual helped build a more tightly knit, personalized community.

Supportive community takes pride in school/district: Four of the schools benefited from broad community support and pride in the local schools — Gladiola Middle and Ohlone High, for example, benefited from school bond issues that the local community had passed. All of these districts were known for having high expectations of students and good working conditions for teachers; thus they were able to attract more qualified teachers.

Independence from district: Two schools, Rosa Parks Middle and Crispus Attucks High, were small alternative schools that had a great deal of autonomy. Rosa Parks was an independent school for at-risk students from four feeder districts; Crispus Attucks was a district charter school with its own governance and budget autonomy. It had a Board of Directors like an independent school. Both schools were able to be more creative and flexible in designing curriculum and developing programming that was specific to the needs of the student population.

State foreign language requirement: One school, Ferguson Elementary in Oregon, benefited from Oregon’s statewide foreign language requirement for high school graduation, which made the all-school language program at the elementary level a more attractive option for parents of all backgrounds.

Prosperous community: Two schools, Blue Ridge and Forest Hills, were located in a district where one sector of the community was very wealthy. In the case of Blue Ridge, pro-
fessional and business leaders took active roles in district improvement; in the case of Forest Hills, parents from the wealthy hill community played a key role in setting up harmony engendering activities among students.

**Community is relatively homogeneous in SES:** In four schools, we were told that because the community did not have great economic divides between the haves and have nots, there was less tension in general. Three of these schools served working and middle class populations, and one served a working class and poor population.

**Low crime rate in community:** At Rancho Verde, a low crime rate in the community was cited as a support.

**School participates in large reform initiative:** Crispus Attucks was part of the Coalition for Essential Schools, and their participation in this large reform effort had brought many more human resources to the school in the form of coaches, consultants, etc. The fact that they were part of large reform also predisposed staff to be more open to change. The same could be said of Cornell Elementary, which participated in the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC).

**Pre-existing sense of community among staff and students:** One school, Maya Lin High, was said to have had a strong sense of community among staff and students for a long time. Teachers socialized together during free time, and this sense of community was said to filter down to students. At 100 year old Sojourner Truth, there was set of long-standing community traditions and norms called the “Sojourner Truth way”.

**High per pupil funding level:** Midvale Township had the highest per pupil funding level of any school in the study — $13,650. This money was used in a variety of ways to support and enhance programs that fostered interethnic relations and to raise academic achievement among Black and Latino students.

**District supports**

Many districts in the study played a special role in supporting positive interethnic relations, and it is important to understand not only that they were supportive, but exactly what it was they did that had an impact on the schools. Table 5 displays this information. (Please see next page.)
Table 5: Contextual Supports from the District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual Supports from District</th>
<th>Schools Reporting these District Supports</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Continuity of strong and progressive district leadership | • Gladiola Middle  
• Ohlone High | These 2 schools, both in the same district, had had 22 years with the same Sup't. |
| District-wide diversity initiative | • Greenlawn Elem. | The Sup't., a strong advocate for equal outcomes for all students, put in place a "diversity initiative" which mandated a "diversity team" at each school. The teams monitored student outcome data with regard to equity and organized professional development with an equity focus. |
| Largely positive relationship between district and school leadership | • Greenlawn Elem.  
• Blue Ridge Elem.  
• Gladiola Middle  
• Dolores Huerta Mid.  
• Ohlone High  
• Midvale High | In general, leaders in these schools were able to focus on supporting students rather than putting energy into fighting battles with their districts or dealing with district politics on an ongoing basis. |
| District maintained diversity in feeder schools | • Gladiola Middle  
• Ohlone High | The Sup't. had kept a small grade level spread (K-4, 5-8) in schools that fed into the HS. This had the effect of drawing in students from a wider catchment area, thus maintaining more diversity all the way through the system. |
| District-wide collaboration time for staff | • Gladiola Middle  
• Ohlone High | The HS had requested collaboration time for teachers to work on joint projects weekly. The district made this a policy for all schools. |
| District has high standards, good reputation in state | • Blue Ridge Elem.  
• Gladiola Middle  
• Ohlone High  
• Midvale High | These schools were in districts known statewide for having high standards. |
| One HS in district | • Ohlone High  
• Midvale High | By having only one HS in the district, the full diversity of the student population attends school together, and district resources for HSs can be concentrated at one site. |
| District-wide focus on discipline issues | • Gladiola Middle | The new principal at Gladiola was supported in her efforts to tighten discipline by a pre-existing district-wide discipline focus. |
| District name for school reflects social justice agenda | • Rainbow Elem.  
• Royal Middle  
• Gladiola Middle | These 3 schools were named after civil rights leaders, creating a context to link the school vision to that of these leaders. |
Table 5 (continued): Contextual Supports from the District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District provided transition time for incoming principal</th>
<th>• Allaneq Middle</th>
<th>District provided time in the Spring for the incoming Principal to spend at the school. This &quot;transition time&quot; enabled her to interview staff &amp; students &amp; identify safety, security, and more consistent discipline as priority needs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 districts support 1 alternative school for at-risk students</td>
<td>• Rosa Parks Middle</td>
<td>Rosa Parks receives its funding from four feeder districts. The superintendents all serve on the Board for the school and are very supportive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear from the analysis above that districts, even though they are not involved in the day-to-day life of the students, can play a critical role in creating support structures that enhance school level efforts to build positive interethnic relations. At Greenlawn, the impetus for attending more closely to interethnic relations came “top down” from the district itself, but each school had its own internal “diversity team” that was responsible for doing staff development on diversity two times a year and infusing diversity training in regular faculty meetings. Although there was some resistance to the initiative coming from above, the Principal had worked hard to adapt the initiative to make it work at his school. He especially worked with his largely white staff to gain their buy in.

In the district that included Gladiola and Ohlone, the Superintendent of 22 years had a clear vision that involved maintaining diverse populations in all the schools. He found structural ways to avoid the segregation that happens in so many school districts when they become more diverse. By keeping the grade level spread small, the schools drew on a wider swath of the community, and that meant that students from diverse neighborhoods were pulled in. Although there were opportunities in the 1970s and 80s to build a second high school, he recognized that this would have split the community; one high school would have been primarily Latino and the other Asian. Again, he avoided this by insisting on maintaining one large high school.

This district had also taken a progressive approach to teacher needs by creating a structure for weekly teacher collaboration time. According to both principals, this structure had more impact on the schools than any other single change. It encouraged the breakdown of rigid departmental “fiefdoms” that kept teachers segregated from other teachers; it fostered cross disciplinary collaboration; many new proposals for change emerged out of the collaboration groups, and several of these changes took root and became institutionalized. One of these changes will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter VII under “curricular approaches.”
The relationship between contextual supports and constraints

Thus far we have looked at the frequency of different contextual constraints and supports among schools in our study. We have seen that additional funding, a physical layout that is conducive to community building, facilities that are in good shape, pre-existing collaborations with outside agencies and local universities, and district supports of various kinds helped many of the schools in our study in their efforts to develop positive interethnic relations. We have also seen that many schools in the study were constrained by the difficulty of recruiting diverse staff, the segregation of students due to tracking or language grouping, the large size of the school, community factors such as high poverty and crime, students coming from outside the immediate community, and deep or longstanding divisions among staff.

While this provides a picture of which constraints and supports were the most common, it does not tell us how the individual schools varied in the extent or degree of constraints and supports they encountered. The relationship between contextual supports and constraints across individual schools can tell us a great deal about which schools and their leaders had a more difficult path. A comparison between Rancho Verde High School and Ohlone High School illustrates how wide the gap can be.

Rancho Verde faced at least six constraints over which the school leadership had no control. These included a physical structure that impeded community building by having many separate buildings, many of which were in need of repair; large size (1732 students); pre-existing divisions among staff, mainly along lines of veteran, more traditional staff versus newer staff; difficulty recruiting more diverse staff; recent district bankruptcy, which had demoralized many teachers; lower salary scale than other neighboring districts, making it hard to attract and retain teachers; an open enrollment policy, which meant that students from other communities coming to the school had less ownership over the school; and gang activity and crime in the neighborhood. Ohlone, on the other hand, faced only two major constraints – the large size (4100 students), and the existence of tracking in math, which tended to sort students by race.

On the supportive side, Ohlone benefited from seven identified supports, including additional funding from school bonds; a very well-respected superintendent who had been there 22 years; being the only high school in the district, thus all of the district’s diverse population was at one school; district-wide collaboration time every week for teachers; a community with relatively homogeneous SES; and a relatively positive relationship between the school and the district. Rancho Verde, on the other hand, benefited from two contextual supports that were reported to us — a relatively homogeneous community in terms of SES, and a low crime rate in the community.
While we cannot measure the weight of these supports and constraints nor assume that they are in any sense equal in their impact on the school, we can nonetheless conclude that some schools and their leaders, because of their pre-existing contexts, do face more real barriers and rely on fewer contextual supports in their quest to develop positive interethnic relations. Therefore, any assessment of what a school or a particular leader has accomplished in terms of interethnic relations must be relative to that school’s context. Such an analysis can be instructive for school leaders in charting their own pathways, making decisions, and determining priorities.

❖ History of previous leaders and their contributions

The dimension of time and the history of leadership at a school site were critical to our understanding of what present leaders had accomplished. Principals in these schools began their tenure under varying circumstances. In ten of our study’s schools, the principal walked into a school where the climate was well underway to becoming a harmonious environment. In eight schools, the principal found it necessary to muster significant resources to alter conditions so as to reduce violence and create conditions for respect among ethnic groups. Finally, three principals started their own schools or were the first and only leader in a new site, and thus were able to create these conditions without being hampered by a previous history that was negative.

Unless they start their own school, new school leaders always step into an existing lineage of former leaders, each of whom have made various contributions or in some cases allowed unhealthy school environments to develop. From the perspective of a new school leader seeking to make changes toward more positive interethnic relations, understanding this history of previous leadership is essential. New school leaders need to know “what they are stepping into” and what have been the key contributions of previous leaders. This knowledge, together with an understanding of the contextual constraints and supports, becomes part of the background when school leaders make decisions about current priorities and directions. This concept is best illustrated by an example in which we compare two schools with very different leadership histories, Cornell Elementary and Gladiola Middle.

Sarah Haas Garcia, the principal at Cornell Elementary during the time of the study, was able to build her human relations work on the work of previous principals rather than create structures and practices from the ground up. Prior to 1983, the school was apparently in considerable disarray, with several dysfunctional leaders and a lot of violence on campus. In the decade that followed, two principals laid the groundwork for Garcia’s efforts. From 1983-86, the Principal was a strict disciplinarian, suspended lots of students, and did a lot to clean up the school (putting lights in hallways, etc.). The Principal from...
1986-1993 used a softer approach, more “feminine pedagogy” and worked hard to build relations between the school and the community. During this time, both Conflict Resolution and Tribes programs were instituted to help develop more positive relations among all members of the school community, and they continued under Garcia’s leadership. Building on what these previous two administrators had accomplished, Garcia focused on site based management and developing more programs for students.

Gladiola Middle School provides a contrasting picture of leadership history. Unfortunately, we only have information about one previous principal, but this in itself is quite revealing. The previous principal was a European American man who was known for being very inconsistent in applying school policies regarding student discipline. Although he seemed to have had his favored few, most teachers did not feel supported by him and told us that he would easily over-rule teacher efforts to apply the discipline policy. In 1995-96, Gladiola had more suspensions and expulsions in one year than did the local high school which was nearly three times as large. Relations among faculty and administration were, as a result, distrustful and guarded. Faculty did not socialize together after school hours or during lunch, and there was little willingness to do anything that was perceived as extra work.

The new principal in 96-97, Arianna Castañeda, had her work cut out for her. Unlike the situation Principal Garcia encountered at Cornell, little groundwork had been laid in terms of social relations, and Castañeda, together with the almost all-new administrative team, had to create from the ground up conditions in which discipline was perceived as fair and faculty would be willing to collaborate. How she did this will be discussed in subsequent chapters. For now, we want to emphasize that this history of leadership, like the contextual constraints and supports, is something that new leaders do not control and yet it can have a powerful influence on the agenda that a new leader sets. New school leaders have to be able to assess this legacy and determine what previous groundwork in human relations development, if any, has been laid at the school.

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**Governance structures of the schools**

School leaders, in addition to inheriting a certain legacy left by previous principals, also inherit a particular governance structure which they may or may not attempt to change. These governance structures also become part of the context that can both constrain and support efforts to develop positive interethnic relations.

All schools had fairly traditional administrative structures with a Principal and at least one Assistant Principal. Exceptions to this were three elementary schools without an AP — Rainbow, Ferguson, and Greenlawn. As a small alternative middle school, Rosa Parks also had no AP. However the full-time counselor often served as an administrator. Middle and high schools, as a rule, had larger administrative structures depending on the size of the
school. Crispus Attucks High, a small charter school, had two administrators and all others had at least three. Sojourner Truth had the most complicated structure with eleven administrators, including three APs for administration and seven for supervision plus additional teaching deans who handled discipline.

While the administrative structures in these schools remained fairly traditional, the roles of these administrators had in many cases shifted from an authoritarian one in which they made all the policy decisions for the whole school, to one in which administrators were part of a larger team of decision makers. Most of the schools in the study had developed some form of collaborative decision making. In some cases, decisions were made by a “site based management team,” and in others by a “leadership council” “school site council” or a group with some other name. What these decision making groups were called did not seem to be meaningful for our analysis; different terms were used to describe the same functions, and the same terms were sometimes used to describe different functions.

The following observations about school governance are especially relevant to the analysis of interethnic relations efforts:

• **Some leaders created collaborative decision making structures at their schools, while others inherited them from previous leaders.** For example, the principals at Rainbow, Ferguson, Buena Vista, Greenlawn, Blue Ridge and Forest Hills had all created the collaborative structures during their tenure. The principal at Cornell, on the other hand, inherited the leadership team structure from the previous principal and, though she made some changes, did not have to develop collaborative decision making from scratch. The process of developing these structures takes a great deal of time and effort because, as Fullan notes, “conflict is brought out into the open” and at the same time “staff members must develop trust and compassion for each other.” (1999, p. 37) Thus, principals who initiate such structures can expect to spend considerable energy on them until collaboration becomes ingrained as part of the school culture.

• **Collaborative decision making structures in general were said to foster a more democratic kind of governance in which different stakeholders were included in the decision making about important things such as the budget, curriculum, hiring of teachers, staff development, etc.** This democratic process often resulted in more participation by role groups which, in a traditional structure, would not be involved in whole-school decisionmaking — e.g., classified staff, parents etc. It often resulted in more ethnic diversity among the decision making group as well. Thus adults were in many cases learning to work together across differences of role group, ethnicity, etc., creating a more positive model of such working relations for students. Adults who participated in collaborative decision making groups had to learn new skills in order to work effectively in these new structures. At Cornell, for example, all eighteen members of the Leadership Team were required to attend training in Facilitative Leadership.
• The benefits of greater inclusion and the modeling of a democratic process were accompanied by some drawbacks, such as the increased time it takes to make decisions collaboratively. We sometimes heard staff express frustration with this aspect. Another frustration we heard in one school was the sense that there was no clear individual in charge. This can make it difficult for staff to know where to go when one has a problem and who is responsible for helping resolve it.

• The process of developing these collaborative decision making structures was often far from smooth. Many school leaders and teachers described the resistance that emerged when staff were asked to change the way they had done things traditionally. At Ferguson Elementary, for example, a staff member said,

  The former principal would tell us what to do and everybody did it. So when [the new Principal] came in and wanted all this consensus, I thought, ‘Oh my God, just tell us what to do. I don’t want to do this six times.’

Ferguson’s Principal told us that in his second year, the union “basically tried to get me out of the building.” He characterized the first year as a very emotional and divisive one, with the faculty divided “a third for, a third against, and a third wishing the other two thirds would work together.” He brought in a mediator as a consultant to begin building bridges with his divided faculty on how to communicate and collaborate. From these meetings, a style of collaboration eventually emerged which was still used at Ferguson at the time of data collection.

• It is sometimes difficult to balance the role of participant in a shared democracy with the role of school leader. At one elementary school, the Principal sometimes found herself having to make quick decisions without consulting the leadership team or the committee charged with that area. This was particularly evident in planning some of the special events. Normally these were the duty of the multicultural committee (a group of teachers), but there were times when the Principal saw an opportunity to plan a special event quickly because of the contacts she had and because she wasn’t tied all day to a classroom and could make and receive phone calls much more easily.

• One high school in the study did not have any collaborative decision making structure (other than the traditional administration and site council) because the faculty voted down a proposal for site based decision making. This was also a school where we noted a high degree of faculty division and many other factors (low salaries, decaying physical structure, overcrowdedness, etc.) that contributed to low morale among staff.
Throughout the foregoing analyses of contextual factors, we have made a distinction between those dimensions of context over which school leaders have control, and those over which they do not. This chapter has focused on contextual factors which school leaders, by and large, do not control either because they are beyond the purview of the school site (e.g., community factors, district factors, local economy, etc.) or because they are associated with historical events that have set a precedent (e.g., a previous principal’s contributions, governance structures already in place). In speaking of corporate change, Fullan notes, “Your own organization has its own special combination of personalities and prehistories, and firm-specific realities.” (1999, p. 28). This is no less true in schools. Fullan goes on to say that because these contextual factors are specific to sites, “there is no single solution” or “silver bullet of change.” (p. 28). Yet schools are extremely vulnerable to packaged solutions “because the change process is so nerve-wracking.” (p. 28).

The schools in the Leading for Diversity study have demonstrated that each school leader steps into a different context and history which may have laid important groundwork for positive interethnic relations, created barriers that impede relationship building, or, more likely, some combination of these possibilities. For school leaders who want to create positive change in intergroup relations of any kind (not only among different ethnic groups), assessing their own context is a necessary first step. In that assessment, they need to identify contextual factors beyond their control which either constrain or support the development of intergroup relations. For example, are there built-in segregated groupings of students that cannot be changed because of district policies? Are some students bussed in from a different part of town? Is the physical site conducive to community building, or does it tend to keep people separate? Questions like these can help new school leaders understand what challenges they need to work with, as well as what resources and supports can be marshalled in the change process they envision. When school leaders understand their own particular set of contextual constraints and supports, they are also more likely to realize that ‘cookie cutter’ models for improving interethnic relations will not work, and that the change process must take place through the school’s own unique pathway, drawing on other models and insights from the literature, but always working out the details of implementation in site specific ways.

There is another message in this chapter that we want to reiterate because we think it is so important: It is clear from the analysis that districts, even though they are not involved in the day-to-day life of the students, can play a critical role in creating support structures that enhance school level efforts to build positive interethnic relations. Nine out of the 21 schools in the study benefited from substantial district supports, some of which were directly related to interethnic relations (e.g., a district-wide diversity initiative), and others which were less direct but no less impactful (e.g., the way school catchment zones were
determined so as to maintain diversity in the schools, or the transition time provided for incoming principals to be in a school before taking charge). The districts in our study, whether they were aware of it or not, wielded a great deal of power over how interethnic relations were played out in the schools, and some district leaders had used that power in very conscious ways to craft supportive structures and policies that would encourage positive relations. District leaders therefore need to (1) be aware of this power they have to influence interethnic relations in the schools, and (2) use this power wisely to create and maintain supportive structures such as the ones documented in this chapter.
WHAT TYPES OF ETHNIC OR RACIAL CONFLICT OCCUR IN SCHOOLS?

- Defining ethnic or racial conflict
- A typology of racial/ethnic conflict in 21 schools
- Facing dilemmas involving race/ethnicity
- Discussion
What Types of Ethnic or Racial Conflict Occur in Schools?

Although the purpose of our study was to document proactive approaches school leaders have used to address racial/ethnic conflicts and promote more positive interethnic relations, this documentation would not be meaningful without also documenting and analyzing the kinds of conflict to which these leaders were responding.

Defining ethnic or racial conflict

School staff defined conflict in a variety of ways. Some considered conflict to be only those acts that involved overt physical aggression; others included less physical, but often no less harmful, acts like name calling. Still others considered behaviors like avoidance and exclusion to be important signs that all was not right with intergroup relations. Kreisberg (1998) defines social conflict as follows: “A social conflict exists when two or more persons or groups manifest the belief that they have incompatible objectives.” (p. 2) A key word here is “manifest.” Kreisberg says people may manifest their belief that they have incompatible objectives “by attacking the other party, by proclaiming that an adversary must change, or by arousing and mobilizing other members of the group for the struggle.” (p. 2) He also points out that those involved must be conscious of having a conflict in order to exhibit these behaviors.

He goes on to explain that there are some situations in which the parties involved do not see themselves as having a conflict but an observer assesses the relationship as conflictual. Such is the case in a situation described by an administrator at one of our schools who saw potential or underlying conflict in the avoidance behaviors of some students who didn’t want to play with other groups. The students themselves may not have seen themselves as having a conflict, but the administrator believed that they were avoiding each other and that this avoidance may have been due to unconscious racial prejudice, among other factors.

However, to equate self-grouping by race as a manifestation of racism in a school setting is to miss the mark.

We need to understand that in racially mixed settings, racial grouping is a developmental process in response to an environmental stressor, racism. Joining with one’s peers for support in the face of stress is a positive coping strategy. (Tatum, 1997, pg. 62)

In addition, it can be postulated that language, customs and culture are powerful incentives
for students to cluster together in ethnically homogenous groups. Tatum views the self-grouping of students as a positive coping strategy, but it needs to be clarified that we are assuming the group does not engage in hostile acts against other groups or exclusion of other groups. In other words, a white supremacist group that sticks together represents more than a coping strategy for European American students; it represents a group that gathers partly for the purpose of asserting power over minority groups and engaging in hostile acts towards them. Thus we need to differentiate between racial grouping that is a normal, positive coping strategy and racial grouping that has exclusionary or hostile intentions.

In the remainder of this report, we will be assuming that there is a progression of racial ethnic conflict. Overt conflict (as defined by Kreisberg) lies at end point of this progression. Underlying, latent, or potential conflicts or tensions are in the middle. These underlying conflicts or tensions may not involve the awareness of those involved, and they may remain hidden indefinitely or surface later as overt conflicts. At beginning point of the progression are the root causes of racial/ethnic conflict, which are far too complex to be addressed here but which we understand to include such factors as segregation (which allows for the development and maintenance of stereotypes about other groups with whom one has little actual contact); racism, which can be both individual and institutional; socialization (in which parents and other adults consciously or unconsciously teach children negative things about other groups); and inequality (in which power, status, or access to desired goods and services are unequally distributed among groups). (Kreisberg, 1998, pp. 40-44)

**Figure 3: Progression of racial/ethnic conflict**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root causes of racial/ethnic conflicts, e.g.,</th>
<th>Underlying conflicts or tensions, e.g.,</th>
<th>Overt conflicts, e.g.,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>segregation, racism, socialization, inequality, etc.</td>
<td>avoiding certain groups, excluding certain groups, perceptions that treatment is unequal across groups, etc.</td>
<td>physical violence based on race or ethnicity, namecalling, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although many people believe conflict is always destructive and would like to eradicate it altogether, it is important to understand that conflict is part of the human social experience and we cannot rid ourselves of it. This is true for conflict in schools as much as any other arena of social life. On the other hand, conflict need not result in violent or destructive outcomes. Although there is much popular theorizing that points to “human nature” as the basis of violence, and even some who claim that certain groups are genetically more “prone” to violence than others, scientific evidence does not support this: “It is not scientifically correct to say that war or any other violent behavior is genetically programmed into our human nature.” (Elias & Turpin, 1994, p. 66) Thus, we will always have conflicts, but these conflicts need not result in violence. Conflicts can be waged constructively so that
there is a beneficial outcome, or at least not a destructive one. This study has helped us better understand how school leaders can turn conflicts into opportunities for learning. We found in our study, as did Fullan in his work on school change, that “Conflict, if respected, is positively associated with creative breakthroughs under complex, turbulent conditions.” (1999, p. 22)

Furthermore, it is not only students who have racial/ethnic conflicts in schools. Any role group in a school community can be involved in these conflicts or tensions. Thus, while our goal is to make schools more respectful environments for students, one of the ways to achieve that goal is to encourage the adults in the school to model respectful, culturally sensitive behaviors. In documenting the various conflicts and tensions in the 21 schools, therefore, we have given equal attention to adult and student conflicts.

One last point remains for clarification before we move on to examine the kinds of racial or ethnic conflict experienced in the 21 schools we studied. That is, how did we define conflicts or tensions as having a racial or ethnic component? Ethnicity and/or racial identity are only one part of the complex package that makes up a person’s social identity. Other components include such attributes as class, gender, family background, religion, birth order, and so forth. Individuals are not influenced by one of these factors at a time, and so deciding when a particular conflict has a racial component can be difficult. We tended to be fairly inclusive in our documentation.

Sometimes the racial or ethnic dimension was obvious — as for example when racial slurs were being used between two different ethnic groups, or when violence was directed at another group or individual because of race, culture, language, or ethnicity. Near one of the study’s schools, there was an incident in which a Sikh student who had recently immigrated to this country was taunted on a school bus and physically attacked and beaten after getting off. The attackers were African American and Samoan students. The taunting involved name calling that referred to his turban as a “diaperhead,” spraying him with cologne because the attackers said he “stinks” and other cruel behavior. In the fight, his turban was either pulled off or knocked off. When the victim recovered and returned to school, he had removed his turban and cut his hair, which in Sikh culture and religion is a sacred part of the human body. There were students (mainly friends of the attackers) who claimed this incident was not racially or ethnically based and that it took place because the Sikh student “acted big” and puffed up his chest. However, most students who were present clearly saw it as an attack that revolved around aspects of his culture — e.g., the turban, the long hair, the stereotypes about body odor.

There were other cases, however, which were more nebulous — for example, when a parent complained that his or her child had been given more stringent disciplinary consequences because he was Black. If the disciplinary consequences were actually reviewed across cases and found to be the same, would this incident still be a case of racial or ethnic conflict or tension? In our operational definition, we decided to include such incidents within our definition of racial or ethnic conflicts or tensions. Our reasoning is that “people act in
accord with their definition of the situation” (Kreisberg, 1998, p. 4) and if at least one party in the incident defines the situation as having something to do with race or ethnicity, then their actions are going to be based on that understanding. A school leader who has to address this situation must recognize it as having a racial/ethnic dimension; otherwise, he or she will miss the mark in terms of working out a resolution.

We also included, to a lesser extent, conflicts that appeared to be within traditionally identified racial groups (e.g., Latino, Asian, etc.). We believed that it was important to not assume that these conflicts (such as gang violence between rival Latino groups) had nothing to do with ethnicity or culture. Our suspicions were borne out when we interviewed students about these conflicts. For example, from an outsider’s perspective, a conflict may appear to be between people of the same ethnicity, but from an insider’s perspective, the groups in conflict may have different cultural and historical backgrounds. A classic example is gang conflict between Sureños (recent immigrants from Mexico) and Norteños (those of Mexican origin who have lived in the U.S. for a generation or more). In this case, it is not ethnicity per se that is the defining factor, but rather a combination of cultural and historical conditions that have led these two groups to perceive themselves as distinct. Intergroup conflict then reinforces this sense of separate identity and serves to strengthen the boundaries between the two groups (Grab, 1996).

A typology of racial/ethnic conflicts and tensions in 21 schools

This section describes the range of racial/ethnic conflicts and tensions we found in the 21 schools in this study. One might ask, why is such a typology needed? Why not just describe the approaches school leaders used to create more harmonious environments? Our reason for including a typology of conflicts is that it can teach us about where school leaders need to focus attention in their schools. Whereas the leaders in our study tended to be aware of a wide range of conflicts in their schools and very articulate in discussing them, leaders like those in the study are not common. Most school leaders have been taught to do their best to downplay conflict and make it go away as quickly as possible. These tactics ensure that nobody learns from the conflict, as well as virtually guaranteeing that it will recur because the underlying causes of the conflict have not been addressed. One of the characteristics of the leaders in the study is that they were constantly doing informal assessments of the status of conflict and tensions in their schools, and this to a large extent guided them in prioritizing where to focus their efforts. A typology of racial/ethnic conflicts can be of practical use to future school leaders in helping them understand what to look for as they assess the state of conflicts in their own school communities.
In describing the range of conflicts in the 21 schools, we have drawn on a framework provided by Kreisberg (1998) who identified six ways in which conflicts vary, including variation by:

1. the issues in contention (what the conflict is about or for);
2. the characteristics of the adversaries (ethnicity, gender, class, etc.);
3. the relationship between adversaries (role groups, relative power, etc.);
4. the social contexts in which the conflict occurs (community with recent influx of immigrants; low income community, etc.);
5. the means of carrying out the conflict (level of severity, degree of regulation, etc.);
6. the outcome of the conflict (resolution, continued conflict, etc.).

In Kreisberg’s framework, the examples are derived mainly from global conflicts involving different countries or political entities. Racial/ethnic conflicts in schools look very different, but the framework was nonetheless useful as we sought to describe the variation and nuances in school conflicts.

The information we were able to gather about conflicts in the schools was sometimes quite detailed, and at other times, very sketchy. Thus we are not able to describe every conflict we heard about fully, nor were we able to get accurate counts of frequencies due to the fact that monitoring of conflicts in schools is extremely unsystematic. No schools in the study had systems in place to track how many conflicts based on race or ethnicity occurred in the course of a year, and even if they had such a system, it would only measure those incidents that were reported. Students and teachers repeatedly told us that many racial incidents never reach an administrator’s desk. This typology, therefore, is an attempt to describe what was reported to us on the basis of the interviews and observations done during the study.

1. **Issues in contention**

The most interesting variation lies in the issues over which conflicts are waged. The issues can be classified as those that involve the distribution of material or social resources, and different values, beliefs, and cultural expressions (see Table 6). All of these issues involved a racial/ethnic dimension.
### Table 6: Issues in Contention across 21 Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues in contention</th>
<th>Number of schools reporting this issue as a source of conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Distribution of material or social resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of academic expectations; low academic achievement of African American and Latino males, or of students of color generally; tracking</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of staff positions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of disciplinary referrals or consequences; high referral rate for African American and Latino males</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control of territory on or off campus; gang related</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of power (decision-making, voice, etc) based on ethnicity or race</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of assemblies and other celebratory events</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of multicultural perspectives in curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of time/schedules</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of financial resources</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect is unevenly distributed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of sports opportunities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Values, beliefs, and cultural expressions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking about race/ethnicity versus belief that we should all be color-blind</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate or best instructional methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying within group versus mixing with others, (includes dating issues)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of the term &quot;nigga&quot; or &quot;nigger&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally appropriate ways to discipline students</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of non-English languages</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of religion in schools</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assuming preferences because of race</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences in clothing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of issues by level of schooling</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of issues per level</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this table indicates, racial/ethnic conflicts, besides being fundamentally about intolerance or discrimination, were triggered by a wide variety of issues. Certain issues seemed to be more endemic to the secondary level, such as gang related issues of territory, distribution of academic expectations and disciplinary consequences, issues about staying with one’s ethnic group or mixing with others, and use of the term ‘nigger’ or ‘nigga’. Some of this clustering of certain issues at the secondary level can be explained as a function of racial identity development. As Tatum (1997) and others have pointed out, adolescents of color go through a developmental process in which they question who they are racially and how others respond to their race/ethnicity. They also feel a need to connect with others...
who are having similar experiences. Disparities in academic achievement and disciplinary consequences also become more evident as students progress through school. At the same time, the stakes become higher as gatekeeping tests and college admissions make it evident that some students will not have as many future choices. Furthermore, though this table does not show it, later analyses will clarify that as students grow older and sense that they have more power, conflicts in schools tend to become more student centered, whereas in elementary schools, the conflicts that have racial/ethnic dimensions tend to be among adults more than students. Below, we provide brief examples of each issue as it was manifested in a particular school:

**Distribution of material or social resources:**

*Distribution of academic expectations and opportunities (tied to low academic achievement of African American and Latino males, or of students of color generally):* In its quest to find solutions for the problem of low academic performance among African-American and Latino students, particularly boys, one high school struggled with whether to continue tracking practices. Some faculty supported continued tracking by so-called “ability” while others felt it was discriminatory to continue this practice. The Principal eventually mandated detracking in English, which gave rise to much resistance from some teachers.

*Distribution of staff positions:* At one of the elementary schools, some staff and parents expressed dismay that local Hispanics had been largely overlooked when the district hired teachers from Mexico to help with the increasing Spanish speaking population.

*Distribution of disciplinary referrals or consequences; high referral rate for African American and Latino males:* At issue for one of the middle schools was the high rate of detention of African American and Latino males. At one summer retreat during the course of our study, there was much discussion of whether or not racism played a role in how students were disciplined.

*Control of territory on or off campus; gang related:* Another middle school experienced gang related activity both in and near the school, with certain territories belonging to certain gangs. This activity manifested itself in physical violence, rape, and death.

*Distribution of power (decision-making, voice, etc) based on ethnicity or race:* At a high school, the student leadership council was composed primarily of Asian-American students, fueling resentment among some students that other groups were not adequately represented.

*Distribution of assemblies and other celebratory events:* At another high school, some East Indian students were angered that their ethnic group was given less time in assemblies than other groups. The school had distributed assembly time on the basis of the relative size of each population.
Inclusion of multicultural perspectives in curriculum: At a small high school which offered coursework in African-American History, white students felt left out because of the emphasis on African Americans.

Distribution of time/schedules: At a middle school, tensions arose when a group of teachers argued that diversity training and instruction in social skills for students took away from core instructional time.

Distribution of financial resources: At an elementary school, white parents were initially distrustful of immigrant children and their potential effect on the way financial and other resources of the school would be used.

Uneven distribution of respect: During the previous principal’s tenure, African-American parents at an elementary school felt disrespected by the teaching staff, and because of this, calls to parents often received a hostile response.

Distribution of sports opportunities: At a middle school, many of the students of color did not participate in sports because they needed a grade point average of no less than 2.0, which many of them did not have. In addition, many of these students were in the lower socio-economic levels.

Values, beliefs, and cultural expressions

Talking about race/ethnicity versus belief that we should all be color-blind: At a high school, a parent on the site-based management team was mystified as to the need for teachers of color who could act as role models for students of color.

Appropriate or best instructional methods: At an elementary school, staff had concerns about instructional methods suitable for ESL students and incorporating a language component into the curriculum.

Staying within group versus mixing with others, (includes dating issues): African-American students at a high school reported being harassed by their peers when they developed relationships across racial lines.

Use of the term “nigga” or “nigger”: At a high school, some African-American students freely used the terms “nigga” or “nigger” among each other; when other groups began to use the term as well, conflicts arose over when the term was/ was not acceptable. (Similar conflicts were reported over the use of the term “bitch” among female friends versus between males and females).

Culturally appropriate ways to discipline children: A Latina parent at an elementary school objected to the way an African-American security guard yelled at her children when she was exercising discipline. She said the security guard’s style of discipline was culturally
inappropriate. The security guard responded that she disciplines all kids the same way.

Use of non-English languages: At an elementary school, a Cambodian student reported being harassed and mimicked by other students because of his language.

Expression of religion in schools: A faculty member at an elementary school brought a menorah to school to share Jewish culture. There was an objection raised by another staff member citing the law of separation of church and state.

Assuming preferences because of race: At a high school, the coordinators of a teacher internship program matched a young African American intern with an African American teacher, assuming that this would be his preference. The intern was angered by this assumption.

Cultural differences in clothing: Sikh students at a high school were targets of harassment (particularly boys) because they wore turbans, the traditional Sikh headwear for males, and other students were not tolerant of this difference.

2. Key characteristics of disputants

In trying to understand the range of conflicts involving race in schools, it was helpful to consider how participant characteristics varied. Below, we summarize characteristics that were reported to be important:

- Racial/ethnic background: This characteristic was clearly among the most important in the conflicts documented for this study because we were explicitly documenting conflicts in which race or ethnicity played a role. We documented conflicts or tensions involving all of the major “racial” groups in the schools and most of the ethnic groups; there were no groups that were immune to involvement in conflicts. However, as we will explain shortly, cultural characteristics did seem to play a role in how overt the conflicts were.

- Ethnic identity and perceptions of the ethnicity of others: Although racial/ethnic background functioned as a “given” category which people cannot change, it also functioned as a category that was mutable depending on how participants wanted to view themselves and how they viewed and were viewed by others. In other words, a girl could be Latina and choose to “act white” by not emphasizing her home culture in school, having more white friends than Latino friends, etc. Furthermore, we spoke with many students who had mixed ethnic backgrounds, and in some cases this posed a problem for them in terms of identifying with clubs that focused on a particular ethnicity. They felt they had to choose among aspects of themselves, and at times faced exclusionary tactics on the part of those who identified as fully one ethnicity, as one girl poignantly told us:

  My junior year, I was at this one meeting and some girl said something to me like “You’re not full Filipino. You really shouldn’t be here.” And I was all, “I belong here as much as you do.” But I still felt uncomfortable and I didn’t go
back. I was just like, whatever.

Thus, even with the givens of physical characteristics, there was still a great range in the degree to which people identified with one or another group.

The degree to which students clustered in groups of the same ethnicity was frequently mentioned as an indicator of positive or negative race relations. Student grouping patterns that were racially or ethnically based tended to increase as students got older, becoming more evident in middle and high school. This was not a new finding, having been well articulated by Beverly Tatum (1997) among others. Tatum explains this grouping in terms of the development of racial identity. Most students and staff in our study felt that students’ tendency to socialize with their own ethnic group was not a negative thing in itself, but could become negative if others felt excluded or unsafe stepping into a different group. Furthermore, rigid grouping patterns make it impossible for students to get to know one another across racial and ethnic lines. If their classes and extracurricular activities are similarly segregated, then chances for interethnic relations to become more fluid are practically nonexistent.

There is pressure in some student groups to look and act differently from other groups so as to highlight the boundaries between groups. If two parties view themselves as being greatly different, there is more likelihood for conflict to develop (Kreisberg, 1998). Gang markers such as red or blue bandanas present an extreme example of this, but students who are not in gangs also have ways of signaling their difference to other groups. Such boundaries, while they may not be salient to adults, provide important information about who and what one represents. The more the boundaries between groups are clear and distinct, the easier it is to identify who “belongs” and who doesn’t, making mobilization easier. When boundaries are less clear and potential shared interests exist, conflicts tend to escalate more slowly and resolution is quicker. (Kreisberg, 1998). Throughout the schools we found that even the perception of racial difference played a role in a conflict situation. For, example, if two students of different ethnicities were fighting and the fight had nothing to do (at first) with race, when their friends of the same ethnicities got involved then the fight quickly became characterized as a racial one.

• Nationality: In East Coast schools, students and staff reported conflicts among Puerto Rican and Dominican students, both of whom were Spanish speaking, as well as between Caribbean born Blacks and African Americans and among students of different Latin American countries.

• Language: In some cases, immigrants were targeted because of their use of the native language in school or because they didn’t speak English well.

• Recency of immigration: Many gang conflicts and other less overt conflicts took place between groups of the same ethnicity. Such within-group rivalries usually involved complex social dynamics that are hard for outsiders to comprehend. Many of the supposed
“within group” conflicts we heard about involved power struggles between groups with different immigration histories — e.g., more recent immigrants versus those with a longer history in the U.S. This was particularly prevalent among Latinos and Filipinos. While these conflicts may not directly involve different ethnic groups, they may be based on differences that mimic between-group inequities (e.g. among Filipinos, it is often the more assimilated “whitewashed” group fighting with the more recent “fresh off the boat” group). Also, studies of community violence show that when resources are scarce, people tend to fight with others they know rather than fighting outsiders who may in fact be more responsible for the scarcity.

- **Other cultural characteristics:** We found that cultural characteristics such as the tendency to be more direct or assertive versus less direct played a role in how and to what degree conflicts were manifested. In one school with a high Asian population, the school leader (who was Japanese American) reported that he saw many Asian students, rather than engaging in overt conflict, withdrawing from participation in activities involving other groups. This led him to suggest that the traditional definitions of racial conflict in schools — e.g., fighting or namecalling — may be too narrow to capture the kinds of conflict that are actually going on in some schools. A similar comment was made by a security guard who worked in a middle school with a high population of Native American students:

  It’s important to be aware of how each race handles situations, and to be sensitive to this. For example, native students might have an issue but will tend to be non-verbal. Pacific Islanders and Blacks might tend to be more up front and say there’s a problem.

- **Gender:** At the middle and high school levels in particular, we were informed that fights concerning relationships tended to involve girls fighting over boys more than the reverse. While many of these conflicts did not involve race/ethnicity, some did, especially when students dated students of a different race or ethnicity.

- **Sexual orientation:** Many of the school staff reported that issues of sexual orientation were receiving far more attention than issues of race/ethnicity lately. In at least one school, there had actually been an increase in incidents of conflict involving sexual orientation; in others, it might have been a matter of sexual orientation finally coming “out of the closet” as a topic for open discussion among staff. Several schools had only recently had their first in-service on how school staff should respond to sexual orientation issues, so this area was quite new. For those who had grown weary of “diversity in-services” that focused on culture or race, sexual orientation issues seemed fresh and interesting. One of the conflicts we heard about involving sexual orientation also had a racial/ethnic dimension.

- **Age and physical size:** We documented many conflicts among adults as well as students of all ages. Physical size became important in physical encounters between larger and smaller students, as well as in considering the way large black males were perceived in schools. One of our researchers labeled this “the cuteness factor”, noting that as long as little black
boys are little, they are perceived as cute and adorable. However, with the onset of adolescence, the same formerly "cute" boy becomes a source of fear who may be avoided by white female teachers, scrutinized more carefully by security guards, etc. We heard many reports of white female high school teachers who were intimidated by black males who towered over them and used their size to intimidate them. We were informed that many of these students were not held to the same academic standard as other students and were promoted without meeting the standards or disciplined more frequently than their non African-American counterparts. (see Tatum, 1998 for a discussion of this issue).

• Gang affiliation: Gang conflicts were clearly more of an issue on middle and high school campuses. Gang activity was not a factor on elementary school campuses most likely because of the age of the students although some elementary schools dealt with gangs in the neighborhoods surrounding the schools.

• Socioeconomic class: In the schools where there were vastly different economic levels, conflicts between students of different racial backgrounds tended to be overlaid with class differences as well.

3. Relationship between parties in conflict

Conflicts also varied in the relationship of the parties in conflict. People in schools who had conflicts were often members of different role groups role (e.g., student/teacher etc.) and had different degrees of power and status relative to each other (e.g. department head versus teacher in department). School based roles are quite clearly demarcated in a number of ways, leaving little doubt as to who is in what role. Spatial demarcations are made by classrooms with desks for students and a large desk for the teacher; and by special spaces designated as teachers’ lounge, administrative offices, etc.). Terms of address also signify the difference between students and staff, with students called by first names and adults referred to with a title and last name. Among students, roles that are salient include grade level (designated by different classrooms, curriculum, etc.) and participation in leadership. Among staff, status and role is also signified by salary scales.

In the 21 schools, we found that the role groups involved in conflicts varied somewhat depending on the level of schooling. Although we found all levels of schooling had conflicts among adults as well as among students, leaders of elementary schools experienced fewer racial conflicts among children and therefore, conflicts among adults took on more salience at this level. At the elementary level, children’s racial conflicts tended to be restricted to racial name calling and taunting of immigrants and their languages, usually without understanding the meaning of the hurtful terms they used. At the middle and high school levels, racial conflicts became more common among students, and there was a corresponding structural fragmentation taking place, including tracking, departments, etc, that reinforced segregated patterns of socializing.

We found no student to staff conflicts involving race/ethnicity at the elementary level. It
could be conjectured that the reason for this is the developmental immaturity of elementary students and their lack of power as children in an adult structured institution. As they become older, there is more of a likelihood that they will challenge authority and thus increase the likelihood of conflict with authority figures in the school.

4. Social Context of Conflicts:

All conflicts take place within a larger social system — for example, some conflicts are family conflicts; others are community, regional, or national. The conflicts we documented in this study all shared the context of taking place in schools or involving the school in some way. However, other aspects of the social context, such as the economic level of the surrounding community, how recently various immigrant groups had come to this country, what kinds of jobs were available in the community, all had a bearing on how the different groups interacted at school.

One school in the Southeastern U.S. contrasted sharply with most of the Northern California schools in terms of social context. Until about 1990, the community surrounding the school had consisted mainly of European Americans and a small number of African Americans. In the early 1990s, the industry for which this community is famous increased production dramatically and, in order to keep up with the demand, hired large numbers of workers from Mexico, who eventually brought their spouses and children. The schools in the low income part of the city were deeply impacted by the sudden increase in children who did not speak English, and they had little precedent for dealing with this change. For a few years, hostilities were expressed through the newspapers, with rancorous editorial pieces such as the one asking that “the last US citizen to leave [the community], please take the American flag with him.” Yet unlike some communities which experience a sudden surge in immigration, the professional and elite (many of whom were directly involved in the booming local industry that employed Mexican workers) began to champion the workers, doing everything they could to turn public opinion around in favor of the workers they needed in order to maintain high levels of production. Meanwhile, with so much attention being directed at relations between European Americans and Mexicans, African Americans became in a sense a “shadow” minority. They were small in number and had little power. As Mexicans were held up as the “model minority” who worked hard and did not complain, African Americans and low income whites became the unspoken contrast.

Communities in the San Francisco Bay Area, on the other hand, have received recent immigrants for many generations now. The demographic mix is more varied, and many of the students of non-European backgrounds were born in the U.S. of parents who had immigrated. The economic level of minority students was also more varied. Some schools had Filipino, African American, East Indian, and Mexican students who were from middle class homes.

Schools and communities also had unspoken social norms regarding when and to what degree adults talked openly about race and ethnicity. In some communities and schools, a
“color-blind” ethic prevailed, and people generally conformed by not talking about the race or ethnicity of other people. When someone violated this norm by saying something openly (such as questioning why black males are seen more often in the Assistant Principal’s office than other groups) there was often a quick reaction in which an assertion was made, such as “kids are kids” or “I don’t see color.” We found this color blind ethic in many of the schools in the study, even though these schools were chosen because they were taking proactive steps to address ethnic/racial issues more openly. The social norm to avoid talking about color or ethnicity created an interesting dilemma for leaders who chose to begin addressing conflicts or tensions involving race/ethnicity, in that opening up such discussions with staff tended to produce a “backlash” effect at first, creating what appeared to be more conflict in the process of addressing conflict.

5. Means of carrying out conflicts:

The conflicts we documented varied as well in the means used to carry out the conflict. The means included physical fighting and use of racial slurs, discussion, e-mail, local newspaper editorials, conflict resolution programs, and legal channels such as a complaint filed with the NAACP. While conflict resolution was a strategy schools used to address conflicts (see Chapter on Approaches), the process itself was also a means of carry out conflict that involved using words instead of fists or other weapons. Some means had more severe consequences than others; physical fighting involving guns or knives was the most severe means documented in this study. Some of the means involved long, ongoing conflict, some involved single incidents contained in a short time frame, and some involved a series of short incidents linked through the involvement of the same individuals or groups in conflict over the same issues again and again.

Understanding the means used in a conflict also helps us gauge the degree to which the conflict is regulated. For example, conflicts raised and addressed through a conflict resolution program or through legal channels such as the NAACP complaint had a high degree of regulation; disputants had to follow certain rules and procedures in the process of carrying out their conflict. Conflicts that are highly regulated are less likely to have severe consequences than unregulated ones (Kreisberg, 1998). The majority of conflicts we documented in this study were less regulated than the conflict resolution and NAACP processes; in other words, they did not follow a prescribed set of procedures and rules.

Another characteristic of the means of conflict is the location where it occurs. Location is particularly important in the case of one-time incidents or a series of linked incidents among students. We found that most conflicts among students took place in hallways during passing time, in cafeterias and lunch areas, in parking lots, and on the way to and from school on busses or other transportation. This finding is consistent with recent findings reported by Astor, Meyer, and Behre (1999), who note that violence in high schools typically occurs in “unowned” places where adults are not present or do not consider it their responsibility to monitor the space. This suggests that the location of conflicts in schools may be linked to the degree of regulation of those conflicts.
6. **Resolutions or outcomes of the conflict:**

The last way in which conflicts vary, according to Kreisberg, is in their resolutions or outcomes. Among the conflicts we were able to document most thoroughly, two types of outcomes were apparent: Some conflicts resulted in further polarization of the groups or individuals in conflict, whereas others ended with greater integration of the parties that were in conflict. At the high school where a teacher filed a complaint with the NAACP against the Principal, claiming she had been treated in a racist manner, the outcome was a split along racial lines. An example of a more integrative outcome was documented at a different high school, where an immigrant student was beaten up by African-American and Samoan students. The school’s response was to organize a process called “Days of Respect” which involved all members of the school community in planning a culminating event focused on creating more understanding and respect among the school’s ethnic groups. Although there were some students and teachers who boycotted the event, it was nonetheless deemed successful by most participants. In addition, some teachers at the school had long been working to develop a multicultural studies requirement for graduation; this effort received additional impetus as a result of the beating, and was eventually approved by the district.

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**Facing dilemmas involving race or ethnicity**

Our discussion of conflict as it arose in the 21 schools would not be complete without an examination of how school leaders perceived and experienced conflict. In their roles as school leaders and key decision makers, all principals face various dilemmas. A dilemma can be defined as a situation that requires a choice between two or more alternatives, each of which has some undesirable aspects. A dilemma can also be a predicament that apparently defies satisfactory solutions. (Webster’s dictionary). Working to address various needs and issues related to ethnic diversity in schools presents its own special set of dilemmas, and the principals at our schools had faced many of them. Below, we present a partial list of these dilemmas with brief descriptions or examples:

1. **The dilemma of unity/pluralism:**

In schools that provide opportunities for cultural celebratory events, there is often a question of whether such events should focus on particular ethnic groups one at a time or, instead, combine groups in some kind of multicultural celebration. The arguments for separate celebrations tend to emphasize the need for each group to have its own special time and place to shine. The arguments for multicultural celebrations tend to emphasize the need for unity.
The schools in our study varied in how they addressed this dilemma. Many schools offered both separate events and “multicultural” events. Several schools, including United Nations High, Blue Ridge Elementary, Rosa Parks Middle, and Rancho Verde High chose not to have separate events at all because they had found they tended to create more competition and led to greater separation of the different ethnic groups. (see Lustig, 1997 for an insightful study of this same issue).

Student clubs provide another manifestation where this dilemma plays itself out, with some schools (particularly at the high school level) offering many after school clubs focused on different ethnic groups, and other schools discouraging such clubs in favor of more mixed groupings.

2. The dilemma of reconciling segregation that results from some types of primary language program with the goals of integration:

Bilingual educators have been plagued with this dilemma throughout much of their history in U.S. schools. The problem is that in addressing English language learners’ needs for access to the core curriculum, providing instruction in the native language is often the most efficient and effective way to see that these students are receiving the same content as English speaking students. In transitional bilingual programs, primary language instruction is provided for the core subjects and students are therefore grouped by language for most of the day. Though federal law requires that students spend part of their day in mixed settings with native English speakers, this contact is still minimal.

An administrator at an elementary school struggled with this dilemma along with her staff. Although she was a strong supporter of the bilingual program because it was providing equitable access to the curriculum, she and many staff members recognized that as a result of the Spanish speaking students remaining together most of the day, they had few opportunities to mix with other students.

One of the limitations of a bilingual program is that some of the kids aren’t as integrated as one might hope, because of the language needs. We’ve done some things to remedy it, but there’s always a sense that it’s not enough and sort of a tension between the needs to do a bilingual program in the primary language and the need to integrate children. And probably the different people you talk to would line up on bilingual issues differently. And some might see it as a big problem and then it is a catch-22, because not having bilingual education is a racist stand too. Some people who aren’t in favor of it might not perceive it that way, but in my view bilingual education is an equity issue. So those things are juxtaposed.

We were told that Latino, African American, and Asian students in this school often harbored stereotypes about each other or fears of other ethnic groups that were aggravated by this segregated setting. The school leadership was working hard to create opportunities for
students to mix outside of core classrooms, and there was also a very effective teaming process between two classrooms with different ethnic groups.

Other kinds of bilingual programs do not produce this type of segregation, and can be considered whenever the school demographics allow it. There are various types of two-way or dual immersion programs which involve native and non-native speakers of two languages who learn each others’ languages. For an excellent overview of the various options, see Genesee, 1999.

3. The dilemma of how to give attention to different ethnic groups in a way that is perceived as equitable.

Related to the dilemma of unity/pluralism is the question of how to allocate time and attention to the different ethnic groups on campus in a way that is perceived as equitable. Again, assemblies and other special events focused on particular ethnic groups became a site for this particular struggle because the amount of time given for each group is measurable and therefore comparable. The administrators at one high school had settled on a structure that gave whole assemblies (45 minutes long) to the ethnic groups with the highest percentages of the school population, including Latino, African American, and Filipino, and gave shared assembly time to the smaller groups. Thus for example Punjabi students were encompassed within the larger “Asian American” assembly, where they were allocated a small portion of the total time along with Chinese American, Vietnamese, and other “Asian” students. However, despite the rationale for this structure, students identifying with the smaller groups still felt it was unfair.

4. The dilemma of how to address staff who are not performing their jobs adequately, particularly when doing so can result in accusations of racism.

At one high school, there was a math teacher who showed The Lion King in her math class and who also involved students as messengers during the school day to deliver the Mary Kay cosmetics she had sold to parents. There was no rationale given for how The Lion King was related to math, and the use of students as messengers for staff members’ own business was clearly against school district policy. When the principal, a white woman, called the teacher, who was African American, on these issues, the teacher accused the principal of racism and filed a complaint against the school with the NAACP. The situation was mediated by an African American consultant hired by the district. Afterwards, the district office advised the principal not to pursue any disciplinary action against the teacher.

Incidents like this, though they weren’t all carried to the point of an official complaint, were described to us in several schools, and the principals who faced these dilemmas were deeply troubled by them. While mediation was sometimes found to be helpful, it didn’t always work. It seems clear that this is an area that needs to be addressed in the professional development of school leaders. Tatum (1998) offers some insightful suggestions for
how leaders can respond to accusations of racism before they have reached legal channels. She advises leaders not to take up a defensive stance right away, and to consider the possibility that it might be true. Asking the person for more information can help clarify if there is a real basis for the accusation, for example,

‘I would appreciate it if you would tell me what I did that made you think so.’ Such a non-defensive response is immediately disarming and opens the way for communication rather than closing it off the way a defensive claim of complete innocence inevitably would. (Tatum, 1998, p. 48)

5. The dilemma of how to give fair disciplinary consequences to students when some parents have the power to change these consequences and others don’t.

At one high school, a disciplinary AP told us how he struggles to determine what is fair in meting out disciplinary consequences. He knew that some parents, either because of their level of education or their persuasiveness or both, had been able to argue for reduced consequences for their children’s behavior, and other parents, because of their discomfort with the school or their lack of educational savvy, never argued against a school disciplinary decision. As an AP, he knew his consequences could be overruled by higher authority (either the Principal or a District administrator) and thus he faced the dilemma of giving what he felt were proper consequences, or, to even the playing field, giving lighter consequences to those students whom he knew did not have parents who would fight for them.

Principals also face this dilemma when their decisions can be overruled by district administrators. Thus, even when principals achieve an agreed upon set of standards that everyone on staff will uphold, such standards can be subject to parental intervention unless the district is also willing to uphold what the school administrators have decided. Unless the entire “chain of command” is in alignment, parental intervention can result in more favorable treatment for some students, usually those of higher SES.

6. The dilemma of how to prioritize needs of different constituencies at the school.

This dilemma was shared by almost all the school leaders in the study. Different constituencies exhibit different needs at the same time, and administrators have to constantly make strategic decisions about which needs to address as their first priority. As the principal at one high school put it, “Everybody’s thing is the most important thing you should be doing.” Prioritizing some needs over others often means those who don’t receive immediate attention will at least feel disappointed or overlooked. At one of the middle schools, the principal told us that given the disciplinary breakdown that had preceded her tenure, faculty were adamant in demanding stricter and more consistent discipline for students. Students, naturally, did not see it this way; they complained about the lack of activities. The principal was able to see that the two needs were related — by tightening discipline, she addressed the faculty’s need for a safer, more orderly environment; by providing more activities for students to get involved during lunch and after school, she addressed many of
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the behavior problems, especially among those students who had been acting out because of boredom.

Another way to resolve dilemmas of competing constituency needs was to revisit the school’s vision. We saw this taking place at Blue Ridge Elementary School during a staff meeting in which staff duties at the beginning and end of the day were under discussion. The question on the table was whether to rotate posts such as getting kids to the busses, greeting parents who drop their kids off at the front, etc. Although some staff had complained that they were inconvenienced by their current posts, other staff members said it would be hard for kids and families (especially non-English speakers) to adjust to a change because they were used to the routine and it was working smoothly. By revisiting the school vision, which prominently placed student needs at the center, the group was able to reach a consensus that the needs of the students and their families should take precedence over staff needs, which in this case meant preserving staff’s before and after-school posts.

7. The dilemma of how to work with staff who are “entrenched” or not skilled at working with diverse students:

Most leaders in the study told us they had a few faculty who were unwilling to change along with the rest of the school — included in this group were teachers who were unwilling to change their teaching approach to be more student centered or less focused on rote memorization of facts; teachers who had “burned out” some time ago and were simply waiting their time out for retirement; and teachers who were used to teaching an all-white population and didn’t want to face the fact that they would have to change to meet the needs of different students. These teachers, while they may have been exhibiting cultural insensitivity, had not violated any formal policies and thus unlike the teacher in the earlier example (who used students as messengers to deliver Mary Kay cosmetics), were not subject to disciplinary proceedings. Yet they posed a serious problem for school leaders who sought shared decision making and consensus and wanted all teachers to be prepared to meet the needs of culturally diverse students. Should a principal patiently wait for such teachers to retire, or hope that they will choose to move on to a more compatible school environment, or request that they attend yet another series of workshops in the hope that they will change?

The principal of one middle school had found an innovative solution to this dilemma, which she dubbed the “walk a mile in my shoes” approach. She had an English teacher on staff who was close to retirement age and had been complaining about how many resources were going to the school’s ESL program. She decided to try to address this teacher’s resistance by giving her a new responsibility within the ESL program. When the teacher, after a few months in her new role, saw what was involved in providing services for English language learners, she “came around” and became an advocate for what she had initially been adamantly opposed to. This principal used the same approach with a teacher who had been complaining about administration, claiming that the school should just do without administrators. She assigned this person to a six-month slot as an assistant
What Types of Ethnic or Racial Conflict Occur in Schools?

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principal, and his resistance crumbled when he understood what administrators have to do to keep a school running.

8. The dilemma of “adding on” diversity innovations in a way that enriches students’ learning without taking time away from the “core curriculum”

Several school leaders reported that in adding events or activities to the school program to address human relations issues, they met resistance from faculty who wanted to safeguard the core curriculum. At a middle school, a group of veteran teachers were angered over the previous principal’s taking time out of their classes before lunchtime or at the end of the day when multicultural assemblies were scheduled. They felt this was “fluff” and not academic, and that the students would suffer academically from not putting enough time into core subjects. The principal of a high school expressed a similar dilemma and was trying to find a way to weave “diversity” issues more into the regular curriculum so that there would be less competition over time. So far, however, most of the diversity-related innovations at his school were taking place outside the regular curriculum. A group of teachers at Cornell Elementary School were working hard to do the same thing, using a model called SEED (Seeking Educational Equity in Diversity), which postulates five stages of inclusion of diverse groups in the curriculum — from being marginal to being in the center. As a teacher explained, “If everybody’s in the center, then there’s no need to do these special events to make sure nobody’s marginalized.”

In terms of embedding diversity topics in the regular curriculum, Ohlone High School had made great strides. The most powerful and impactful innovations at this school were those tied to curriculum, and in making curriculum the focus of their efforts in interethnic relations, they avoided some (though not all) of the dilemma of “add ons” taking time away from core curriculum. This curricular approach will be described in more detail in the “Approaches” chapter.

9. The dilemma of confidentiality versus openness:

Some conflicts that occur in schools, while they may be painful in the moment, have a brighter side in that they can be instructive for others, including staff, students and parents. Yet the policies that protect individuals’ confidentiality can make it difficult to share such situations. The leader of one of the high schools faced such a situation when a student and a teacher had a racial conflict. The situation would have provided an opportunity for others to learn how to handle similar problems, but the principal was unable to share it without violating the confidentiality of the participants:

I could not tell what he [the teacher] had done. I could never say that he cursed that girl out, called the girl white trash, hung up the phone on that girl. And that’s the burden of administration. There are confidentiality rules.

One way to get around this dilemma is to identify the underlying themes that caused the
problem, and then construct a made-up scenario that does not involve anyone at the school.

10. The dilemma of being caught between the agendas of the superintendent and the needs of the staff:

Sometimes a principal finds him- or herself caught between two masters. Such was the case at an elementary school where the principal was working to implement a very ambitious and progressive diversity and equity plan initiated by the Superintendent. While the principal was a strong supporter of the plan’s intent, he knew his staff well enough to realize that it would take considerable time and work to implement the plan fully. Had he implemented the plan as the Superintendent intended, he would have alienated most of his staff. He therefore took a slower, more gentle approach with his staff, working with them through a series of professional development days and listening carefully to the concerns they raised along the way. He used a model called “Culture of Power” training to raise staff sensitivities. As an example, he told the story of his secretary who, he observed, treated parents differently depending on race. She was perceived as a racist, and since she was a visible presence in the front office, was a key contributor to giving the school a racist reputation. The principal explained to her that when she is in her role in the front office, she is the person who has more power relative to the parents who come in — she controls their access to whatever questions they want answered, resources they need, etc. As the person with more power, she also has a responsibility to listen to their concerns and, if needed, elicit from them what they need. He reported that she now deals with parents more equitably, and people leave with a different impression than before. In particular, people of color feel more comfortable in the front office. The principal felt that by introducing her to the notion that she had power in this particular setting relative to the parents, she was able to hear his suggestion and take it in.

Discussion

What, then, are the professional development implications of the findings related to conflict? We think there are many, but paramount is a recognition that the preparation of school leaders must provide them with both practical and theoretical understandings of racial/ethnic conflict. Focusing on “solutions” to conflict is not enough because without an understanding of the conflict and its underlying causes, solutions will always be temporary and superficial. Thus the preparation of school leaders must help them analyze conflicts of all kinds among staff as well as students, including racial/ethnic conflicts, apply a framework for understanding them, and become as skilled at “problem posing” as they are at grabbing a quick solution. Our findings suggest that professional development time would be well spent in redefining what “counts” as conflict in order to recognize a variety of cultural manifestations, examining structures like tracking as contributing factors to segre-
gation and conflict among ethnic groups, and raising participants’ own awareness of their attitudes toward discussions of race/ethnicity and their roles as leaders in creating structures where these issues can be openly discussed.

One of the dilemmas we have faced in this project is that there is no agreed upon definition or boundary on what constitutes ethnic or racial conflict. Although in itself, lack of a definition may not seem to be a problem, it can lead to confusion or in some cases inaction. “Visions of what the problems and issues are and how they can be tackled often act as mental straightjackets that prevent us from seeing other ways of formulating our basic concerns and the alternative courses of action that are available.” (Morgan, 1986, p. 166). The approaches school leaders take in addressing racial and ethnic conflict depend in part on how they define the problem. For instance, what happens when a school leader operates from the assumption that overt kinds of conflict are the only types that she or he should be concerned about? When the problem is framed in this way, school leaders place themselves in the role of reacting to conflict, while the school continues to serve the function that schools have traditionally served; that is, it tends to reproduce or maintain societal relations, including race relations (Banks, 1993). Reframing the problem so that overt conflict is recognized as a symptom rather than the illness, effective school leaders can focus on trying to address the more subtle or hidden tensions that may be related to race or ethnicity. Working from this perspective, the school leader places herself or himself in the role of proactive agent and, if others at the school take a similar stance, the school can become a place where existing societal relations are challenged.
WHAT DID SCHOOL LEADERS DO TO CREATE CONDITIONS FOR POSITIVE INTERETHNIC RELATIONS?

- Identifying priority needs
- Developing a shared vision
- Serving as an initiator or facilitator of change
- Making a contribution
- Supporting the development of other leaders
What Did School Leaders Do To Create Conditions for Positive Interethnic Relations?

In this chapter, we will focus on five key functions that we found to be critical to the leadership efforts we documented in the 21 schools. Discussion sections follow each of the five topics.

Identifying priority needs

In Chapter III, we documented how the schools in this study varied in their contexts — in size, settings, histories, demographics, staffing, resources, etc. Early in the study, we were struck by the fact that schools had identified very different priority areas and taken different approaches depending on their contexts. It also became evident that, in order to provide useful tools for school leaders to assess what most needs to be addressed in a given school context, it would be important to have an organizing framework to differentiate among different areas of need. As noted in Chapter II, we have drawn from Maslow’s (1968) theoretical framework to begin delineating a progression of priority needs which can provide a conceptual tool for assessing priority needs within particular school contexts. Maslow outlined two broad categories of needs — basic needs and growth needs — asserting that growth needs emerge as priorities only after basic needs have been satisfied. Whereas Maslow focused on individual development, in our analysis we assume that there are corresponding needs at the group level. For the purposes of this study, where the unit of analysis is the school community as a whole, we are identifying the generalized need of the school community as an aggregate based on the dominant issues and priority needs that were reported to us and that we observed at different school sites. Although the unit of analysis in our study is the school site as a whole, it is essential that we at least distinguish between major role groups that comprise the school community — that is, students, faculty/staff, administration, and parents. because these different role groups sometimes demonstrate different priority needs within the same site. Identifying and addressing the priority needs of different constituencies was one of the dilemmas all school leaders in the study faced.

Figure 4 illustrates the progression of school needs we identified. Each area of need is explained in the text that follows, with examples of how the schools tried to address each need. (Please see the next page.)
Basic Needs

Level 1: *Physical needs*: The school is working primarily to establish and maintain funding, structures, programs and policies to ensure that all students’ physical needs are met, e.g., food, clothing, shelter, transportation to and from school, etc. Some schools in the study provided free lunch for needy students, and one school provided a laundry service for homeless students. However, none of the schools in this study identified physical needs as the priority area they were working on.

Level 2: *Need for safety & security*: Physical needs are being satisfied, and the school is working mainly to establish basic safety and security on campus. The school is making efforts to ensure that members of the school community feel safe and free from physical harm or threat, or from verbal harassment, including that based on race, ethnicity, or language. In relation to students, a typical response at this level could mean a school focus on establishing order by implementing a more strict or fair behavior policy. For school staff, in addition to better discipline this could mean having more campus security or securing entrances and exits to protect the school community from potential threats originating outside the school site.
Need for Social Connection

Level 3a. Need for a sense of community and belonging: Physical needs and the need for safety and security are being satisfied, and the school is working mainly to make sure all the different groups at the school feel a sense of inclusion & ownership (including different ethnic & role groups) and to establish personalized relationships among students, staff, and parents. A school focus on establishing an inclusive leadership team or involving diverse parents in more meaningful ways would be typical responses to this area of need. Providing opportunities for more personalized relationships to develop through breaking down the size of the school into smaller units would be another response. These approaches tend to focus on how we are all alike or how people in different role groups share a similar goal (e.g., student achievement).

Level 3b. Need for self esteem & esteem by and of others: Physical needs and the need for safety and security are being satisfied, and the school is working mainly on fostering students’ (and adults’) self esteem and appreciation for others. A school that has a clear mission of valuing multiculturalism and a focus on providing opportunities for students to learn about their own cultural background and that of others would be a typical response to this area of need. This might be done through various celebratory events, through curriculum in ethnic studies, and through school or district policy that is expressed in terms of mission statements, diversity training for staff, etc. These approaches tend to highlight how we are different and that these differences are valuable resources.

Self Actualization Needs

Level 3c. Need for reaching one’s fullest potential: The school is providing opportunities for all students to reach their fullest potential through thinking and acting creatively and making a difference in some arena, e.g., academics, social justice, arts, etc. For example, at one elementary school, all 6th graders worked on projects to solve community problems of their choice and presented them to an outside audience.

The progression of needs described above has been helpful as a way of explaining why certain school leaders wrestled with certain issues, and why doing so helped them to be more effective in creating more positive interethnic relations. Using the above framework, we identified those schools that had addressed or were addressing safety and security needs as a priority, either during the time of our study or recently enough so that there were still members of the school community who could recall and describe when this was a priority and how it was met. Nine of the schools in our pool of 21 had distinct periods in their histories when safety and security were the priority needs that had to be addressed before other “growth needs” emerged and were addressed in the process of building more

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2 Note that whereas levels 1, 2 and 3 are hierarchical, 3a, 3b, and 3c are not; schools can work on 3a, 3b, and 3c in any order or simultaneously, depending on how they identify the priority needs.
positive interethnic relations. The following two cases provide different scenarios for how schools moved through this progression of needs and also illustrate a few dimensions of the rich complexity we have observed at different sites.

Rainbow Elementary School

Rainbow Elementary is a small, diverse, urban elementary school of 220 students, nearly 80% of whom are on free and reduced lunch (an indicator of low-income households). Two years prior to participation in our study, the school was in disarray and rife with conflict. Student to student conflicts were a daily occurrence, and kicking, fighting and swearing at recess was the norm. In talking about this era, the current principal characterized the situation as a “breakdown in the management of child play and conflict.” Although Rainbow is an elementary school, staff did not feel safe either. As one teacher noted,

There was a fair degree of violence, bullying, aggression towards teachers, a very minimal amount of support from families and community. Teachers were basically feeling like they needed to move on for their health and well being . . . it was ridiculous.

Conflicts between parents and staff were also endemic, and fueled by feelings of mutual distrust and disrespect. Not surprisingly, given a context that was rampant with tensions and conflicts, the school showed very low academic performance as evidenced by scores on district exams.

While low test scores are one kind of information that can define the needs of a school, clearly it was not the lack of academic achievement that defined the most salient need of the Rainbow community during this period. It was clearly the need for safety and security that was most dominant in that context. A sense of community, belonging, self esteem, esteem of and by others, and self actualization (as reflected in academic achievement) could not emerge as priorities when the more basic need for feeling safe and secure was what dominated most people’s experience.

Fortunately, the district recognized that this was the case, and in the 1995-1996 school year brought in a new principal to restore order. This principal was characterized as “an ex-Marine, or a Green Beret”. With the support of the district (which renamed the school and designated it a “civil rights” academy — part of the district-wide civil-rights initiative) the principal took on the very tough challenges at the school by, as one staff member described it, “securing the perimeter” and cleaning house. When the school’s name changed, so did most of the staff. Faculty had to reapply to teach at the school, and the result was that eight of the 11 teachers at the school for the 1996-97 year were new. The interim principal interviewed and selected the new teachers using the criteria that they had to be team players and not object to the name of the school (named after a gay civil rights leader). In commenting on what had happened to make things different at Rainbow, one teacher described how this principal created change:
[He] seemed to be extremely good at choosing staff members. He had an eye for people who were very empathetic and involved and had a degree of skill, even though they were new in dealing with all sorts of kids . . . [these] teachers had been changing the atmosphere in classrooms one by one. And in that sense he was effective.

After the principal described above had spent a year sweeping through with these changes and made major headway in meeting the school community’s need for safety and security, the current principal at Rainbow came in and was able to begin the process of building community at the school. During the course of our study, the principal initiated several approaches aimed at building a sense of community, and increasing self-esteem and esteem of and by others. (Academic achievement, as one dimension of self actualization, was a constant, but not dominant priority at that time).

To build community and a sense of belonging, she created “Families” — cross-grade level groupings of students that meet weekly with an adult; she also instituted regular whole-school assemblies to bring students together so they have opportunities to see each other, interact harmoniously, and develop a sense of familiarity with each other; she encouraged teachers to use cooperative group structures and integrate the TRIBES process into the curriculum; she organized special events such as peace assemblies and women’s career day to address all students; and she started a conflict resolution program.

To focus on self esteem and esteem of and by others, she introduced teachers to a new curriculum called GALEF — “Different Ways of Knowing” which highlights multiple intelligences. All teachers were trained in this curriculum in summer 96-97 for implementation in that year. She also introduced “Beyond Our Walls”, a cross-cultural collaboration project with a Northern California Indian tribe. Sometimes a single program or approach can address multiple areas of need; such is the case with the conflict resolution program, which in addition to reducing violence and building a sense of community, also builds communication skills and self esteem among the students who are conflict managers. She also sought to retain and hire more classified and certificated staff who reflect the student population who can serve as role models and links to the community.

The current principal at Rainbow had the opportunity to focus on addressing the school community’s need for community, belonging, and self esteem because the previous principal had already expended a year’s worth of intensive effort at securing the perimeter and largely satisfying the need for safety and security. Had the new principal attempted to institute her community, belonging and self-esteem building approaches without the need for basic safety and security having been addressed, we would venture to guess that her efforts would have been a poor match for the contextual needs and would not have been successful.
Gladiola Middle School

Gladiola Middle School (GMS) is an attractive, well kept facility that was considered state-of-the-art when it opened in 1975. The school originally opened with 500 students and has always had a diverse student population that reflected the diversity of the community. While much of the demographic composition of that diversity has changed over the years, diversity itself has remained constant.

By 1996-97, the student population had grown to nearly 1,400. With the exception of one of the assistant principals who had been at GMS for the last six months of the previous school year, a whole new administrative team came in the same year we began our study of the school. The new principal, a Latina who had attended local schools as a student and started her career as a teacher in the same district, was assigned to the school by the Superintendent to help address the various problems the school had been experiencing in the past few years. The principal was given the opportunity to select the two new assistant principals who came with her to the school. As the staff of GMS was not notified of the change until only a few weeks prior to the beginning of the school year, one of the challenges facing the new administrative team was that of gaining credibility and developing rapport with the staff.

However, other problems at the school presented a greater challenge. These problems included student fights that were sometimes gang-related, truancies, defiance, etc. — all manifestations of a school not able to effectively manage student discipline. This resulted in extremely high suspension and expulsion rates — higher than the local high school that was three times as large. This was one of the primary motives for the district making the change in administration.

Another problem was staff morale. The teaching staff at GMS were generally very alienated from the previous administration and from each other. This was due in large part to the view of many teachers that the former principal did not support them. Many teachers felt that, in spite of the behavior policy in the school handbook, the principal did not consistently or fairly follow through on consequences when students were referred to them. Teachers also reported that there was little consistency in the enforcement of behavioral standards by the staff in general, but they blamed this on the lack of consistency by the school leadership, since some teachers adopted the attitude that it was pointless to send students to administrators since nothing would be done anyway.

In addition, teachers felt that the former principal played favorites among the staff. A few teachers who were on good terms with the principal reportedly received more favors, such as getting to choose how to spend certain grant monies, being allowed to keep in their own classrooms equipment that was supposed to be used by the entire subject area faculty, being allowed to take more field trips than other faculty, etc. One veteran staff member described it as being a culture of “the haves and the have nots”. One of the assistant princi-
pals noted the effect this situation had on the staff was that they would generally “punch out” at 3:15 when school was out, unwilling to put in any extra time at a place where they felt undervalued and disregarded. There was little sense of commitment and community among the staff.

These generally negative sentiments among staff also permeated relations between school staff and parents, since there were reports that some parents also received favorable treatment from the former principal. Parent inclusion was rather sparse and superficial, with the primary vehicle for involvement being the Parent/Teacher Club (composed of predominantly white, middle-class mothers). There were no formal vehicles specifically designed to attract and include parents from diverse cultures and ethnicities.

It is well documented in the literature on violence prevention and conflict resolution (see Noguera, 1995, for example) that hostile and violent behavior is a coping strategy for dealing with a hostile, violent environment. Violence and conflict then can be understood as resulting from an unmet need for a safe and secure environment. Given the nature of the school climate at GMS when the new administration came in, the efforts they made to turn the school around were appropriate and dramatic in their effect.

Consistent with the process described in the previous example where one principal began by “securing the perimeter”, the new principal at GMS undertook a major effort to address student behavior and security, including putting up a fence around the perimeter of the school to address the problem of outsiders coming on to campus and creating problems, and also to deal with the truancy issue. She had several meetings with staff and students where behavioral expectations were outlined, and it was clearly communicated to all students, teachers, and staff that they, with the support of the administration, were all expected to follow through on them. Apparently both students and staff were skeptical of this and initially had a “we’ll see” attitude. At first, disciplinary referrals went up dramatically with both students and teachers testing to see if the administration would follow through. They did.

Along with tightening up on the student discipline, the administration put in many hours developing a variety of opportunities for students to engage in positive involvement and receive rewards for good work. A series of multicultural assemblies were developed and held about every two months, each one focusing on a particular ethnic group (including European Americans) and involving students in the productions. Parents were also invited to watch evening performances of these assemblies. These assemblies were usually the culminating event to a month-long focus on a particular culture, and included visits by authors, events held by ethnic clubs, ethnic food sales, lunch-time music, etc. Since all of these events obviously required a good deal of time and energy to develop, the administration also worked hard to enlist the cooperation and participation of the faculty, to sponsor clubs, develop art and information projects for hallways and display cases, to release student volunteers, etc.
On this last point, it made a difference that the principal constantly communicated the message to the faculty that they were a community and that they needed to mutually support each other. The faculty began to become believers when the principal gave the existing Leadership Council of teachers more decision making responsibilities, including budgetary decisions. The administration also built trust and buy-in on the part of the staff by following the established policies for allocating funds and resources without bias or preference; inviting teacher ideas and projects for improving various aspects of school life and then supporting these projects whenever feasible; consulting and communicating with the faculty and staff on all major decisions that would have an impact on them and taking their input into consideration whenever possible; allowing them to vent when the issue was non-negotiable (such as state or district mandates); and creating a more socially appealing environment by celebrating staff birthdays in the teacher’s lounge and organizing “TGIF” type informal gatherings off campus to build rapport among staff who were willing and able to attend.

All of the above approaches helped to build a greater sense of community and belonging among faculty, a need that had previously gone unaddressed. Of particular significance was a move on the part of the principal that reassigned teachers of the same grade level to the same wings in the main building. Although there were some teachers who had not changed classrooms for many years who resisted and complained and disliked having to move, overall this was a tremendous improvement that allowed teachers to take advantage of the physical design of the school to work more closely and collaboratively. Now teachers were able to advise, assist, and support each other before, during, and after classes much more easily simply because they were more physically accessible.

Discussion

The comparison of Gladiola and Rainbow, as well as our data from the other schools, suggests strongly that schools which are making proactive efforts to build positive interethnic communities move through a “progression of needs” where basic needs of safety and security must first be satisfied to a significant degree before other developmental needs like community, self esteem, and self actualization can be fully engaged. A teacher describing another principal said, “I think he is smart enough to know that the basic human desires have to be met before we can start the education level.”

Differences in Rate of Progress: Given that Gladiola had many basic supports in place (e.g., more funding per pupil, a very supportive superintendent, a physical plant designed to foster community, etc.), it is not surprising that, when combined with the skills and vision of the leadership, Gladiola underwent dramatically positive improvements in the span of only one to two years, particularly with regard to interethnic relations, the development of a sense of community, and a dramatic drop in suspensions and expulsions. Other schools in the study have taken longer to move through this progression of needs, and this may be due largely to the fact that they had fewer resources and lacked other favorable contextual
conditions which are necessary for a higher rate of progress. At Rainbow, for example, fewer contextual supports were available to the principal, and several major constraints hindered progress, such as students coming from outside the community and very low per pupil funding ($3928 compared to $5050 for Gladiola). At another school in our study, Rancho Verde, constraints such as the lowest teacher salaries of any district in the area, recent district bankruptcy, and a physical plant in very poor condition have impeded progress. For these and other reasons, three years into the study Rainbow and Rancho Verde were both still working on fulfilling the needs for community and belonging and self esteem. This is an important finding in that it can help administrators understand what makes some school sites more challenging than others, as well as what kinds of support are needed to make more significant progress.

The necessary but not sufficient principle: The cases described above, particularly that of GMS, illustrate the principle of “necessary but not sufficient” supports that undergird the formation of positive interethnic school communities. At GMS for example, many of the supportive elements necessary for establishing a positive, healthy school environment were present before the current principal took over (e.g., the funding, the physical plant, parents willing to be meaningfully involved, etc.) but these supports were not sufficient to realize the potential that existed there. At GMS the leadership made a crucial difference in successfully bringing together all the essential elements to create a positive, inclusive, harmonious multicultural community. The necessary but not sufficient principle illustrates the importance of leadership in providing a coherent vision and understanding of all the essential elements, as well as how these elements must be orchestrated to create healthy and harmonious interethnic communities.

Different constituencies may have different needs: In the descriptions above it becomes apparent that different constituencies, or role groups, within the school community may have different needs. For example, while students may clearly be experiencing a need for safety and security, this may not be the priority need for teachers. As was noted with Gladiola, the priority need for teachers was developing a sense of belonging and community for the school culture to become more harmonious and cooperative. For many of the students at this school, the priority need was to feel safe and secure from physical or verbal attack. Yet it is interesting, but not surprising, to note that in the process of addressing the more basic needs (i.e., increased disciplinary follow through and more opportunities for positive student involvement and recognition), both students and staff became more engaged and involved and thus developed a greater sense of community. It seems likely then that it is possible to serve “higher order” needs in the process of serving basic needs, whereas it may not be effective, or may indeed be counterproductive, to attempt to address higher order needs when more basic needs have not been satisfied. This principle bears further testing and analysis, but if true, offers promising possibilities for designing approaches to building harmonious interethnic communities that address multiple needs through a coherent, integrated approach.
Thus far in our analysis of leadership, we have shown that principals who were successful in building more positive interethnic relations at their schools started by correctly identifying and addressing current needs. This included understanding and assessing the types of conflict that existed in the school and the surrounding community. However, these leaders did not limit themselves or their schools to addressing current needs. They also developed and articulated a vision of the future that went beyond meeting current priority needs.

Several prominent scholars of school reform and leadership have pointed out that the development of a vision is one of the most important tasks a school leader can undertake (e.g., Fullan, 1993, Murphy, 1992). Vision for school leaders has been variously defined as “a guiding set of academic and social values that can provide a rudder” (Wimpleberg, 1990, p. 177), a view of the leadership role as “more of a mission than a job” (Murphy, 1992, p. 133). It entails not only a strong commitment to students, but also the ability to model these commitments persuasively (Moorman, 1990, p. 101). Without a clear vision, a school leader is often merely a manager. While good management skills are necessary for school leaders (e.g., wise allocation of time and resources, organizational skills, etc.), we found that good management is not a sufficient quality for the kind of school leadership we saw among the 21 sites in our study. When school leaders held a clear and consistent vision in mind while dealing with the multitude of priorities they faced daily, the process and practice of leadership was imbued with coherence. Tasks and duties that might otherwise appear unrelated became connected; the vision organized and imparted meaning to everything a school leader did.

The school leaders in our study were at different stages in the process of developing and practicing a vision that was shared by other stakeholders in the school. Developing a shared vision takes time, and thus it is not surprising that the leaders who had carried the vision furthest had also been at their schools for a long time. Here we highlight two examples of vision building that had reached a mature level at the time we did the study:

**Ferguson Elementary School**

Mark Waters at Ferguson Elementary (FE) is an example of a principal who had developed a clear vision for the school and created buy-in to that vision over time. Ferguson was the only school in our study that served a predominantly white, middle class community, but that community was in transition as it grew to encompass more and more diverse families, including single parents, same sex parents, and immigrant parents who spoke Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, Russian, and Cambodian. However, neither Waters nor any previous leader at Ferguson had faced the kinds of safety and security issues that were described at Rainbow and Gladiola in the previous section. Ferguson provides insight into the early
stages of population shift and how a skillful leader develops a vision that will facilitate a school in responding to such a shift. When Ferguson became part of our study, the Principal had been there for ten years. The official school mission, printed in its School Improvement Plan for 1998-99, stated:

[Ferguson] is a diverse learning community of children and adults who: encourage family support and participation; value our differences and celebrate our commonalities; work together as creative, competent, compassionate learners; provide a safe, caring, and successful learning environment.

Waters came to the school with an extensive background in language—he spoke several languages, had an ESL background, and was the former bilingual director for the district. He said, “Because of my ESL background, I felt I had both a set of skills and a mission to incorporate those kids and their families into whatever else this school was going to do.” Thus, he saw the school as a bridge for families to participate in American culture. He fused his own background with the needs of the changing population to create a school vision characterized by

*Inclusion*: FE was a place where all families, all kids, no matter where they come from, no matter what their language is, could participate.

*Uniqueness*: Believing that schools cannot be “cloned” since each community served by a school is unique, Waters worked with the unique characteristics of the community and families around the school to create a school that was responsive to its diverse community.

*Language*: Drawing on the diversity of its students and his own linguistic background, Waters helped to shape a school in which all children are language learners. The centerpiece of the curriculum at Ferguson was that all students were (or would soon be) enrolled in second language instruction. The school had developed a variety of options to fulfill this mission, including a Spanish immersion program, a Mandarin Chinese as a second language program, and other options.

Having this vision is one thing, but developing buy-in among the different stakeholders and putting the vision into practice is another. Waters faced considerable resistance when, in his first year, he tried to institute collaborative decision making among faculty. In his second year, he stated that “The union came in and basically tried to get me out of the building.” He characterized the first years as very emotional and divisive, with the faculty divided a third for, a third against, and a third wishing the other two thirds would work together. He brought in a mediator as a consultant to begin building bridges with his divided faculty on how to communicate and collaborate. From these meetings emerged a style of collaboration still in operation at FE. “I was really moving toward a teaming concept, which we now have to a pretty good degree.” In describing the planning that went into the extension for the Chinese language program, for example, Waters noted how a team of parents and teachers worked together:
They reached some wonderful accommodations and plans that one brain could never come up with, but five brains could figure it out, and that’s one of the hallmarks of what happens here — that everybody gets their oar in the water and keeps paddling until we figure out how we’re going to get it going in the same direction, and it works.

Shared leadership and a shared vision didn’t just happen at FE. They were the result of careful planning on the part of Waters. Key components of the change process included:

- **An open door/open communication policy**: Waters encouraged communication with all members of the school community, both as a way of disseminating his ideas and gathering information from various stakeholders. Part of the open door policy involved keeping no secrets. We were told that Waters shared all decision-making and reasons for the decisions openly, and this information was available in other languages as well. This openness had contributed to the confidence people felt that there was nothing covert going on.

- **Equitable participation**: Waters worked hard to make sure that all members of the school community were part of all school events. Since it takes time to groom people to be on site council, so far there were no second language families in this group, but he felt certain that within three years there would be.

  When we do anything as a group, anybody is invited to be there — secretaries, custodians — all the non-classroom, non-instructional people. And I think they now feel and know that they are a part of what happens in this building and they do things that no one else can do and they do it really well. The school custodian is very important. So are the secretaries, because those are the first two people that any public person deals with.

Waters also made sure that this notion of sharing extended to all aspects of the school. So, for example, the Spanish immersion program was not set up as “a jewel” in FE’s array of programs. He felt such showcasing leads to a bifurcated community.

- **Extensive and careful planning**: When Waters began, he pictured the school not as it was 10 years ago but as it would be in five or ten years. He explained how he brought in new staff to gradually change the “chemistry”:

  The only way to change the chemistry is to bring people who have a different philosophy. We applied for Title 1 and I brought in 4 Title 1 people. We grew ESL from 2 people to 10 people. We grew the classrooms from 10 classrooms to 17 classrooms. And then involving staff in the selection of colleagues, it was clear what kind of philosophy we were looking for . . . . But we did it in such a way that the people who stayed feel their views are heard, that they can have a different opinion.
United Nations High School

Tom O’Reilly, the principal at United Nations High (UNH), had been at the school seven years at the time the study ended. His staff were well aware that his vision had powerfully shaped what the school had become, and they respected him for it. UNH is a medium sized high school in Southern California serving a working and middle class community. UNH was viewed by some as the “stepchild” among the district’s schools that serve more middle and upper middle class neighborhoods. O’Reilly told us that this “stepchild” status had allowed him to take more risks and be more innovative than would have been possible in a school with a more directive district administration. The district basically allowed him to do what he thought was best.

In describing his own views about vision, however, O’Reilly noted that he did not function totally outside of what the district or the state does. For example, in discussing the new testing in California, he reflected:

I don’t know what the governor’s motivation is, but my motivation is to make kids lives better and make their futures better. Let’s find a way to do it that is not punitive, that is collaborative, where we are moving toward something that is real, measuring something that is meaningful.

It would be easy to talk about O’Reilly’s vision as a function of his charisma. However, that analysis does not do justice to the real nuts and bolts of what made his leadership visionary.

• Focusing the vision on kids: The content of the vision was all about serving kids and providing them with the best resources and opportunities possible. He believed “A teacher is somebody who teaches kids subjects” (as opposed to teaching only kids or only subjects). He also observed, “When their parents send them to school every day, they are sending me their best kids to my school. They are giving me absolute responsibility for the health, welfare, care, and education of the best kids they have to offer.”

• Anticipating new trends: O’Reilly was particularly credited with anticipating new trends, positive as well as negative. UNH never reached the point of having gang related problems on campus or serious racial conflict because O’Reilly saw it coming in neighboring districts. One of the AP’s commented: “He’s on the forefront of change, he anticipates trends and issues, he reads up on them, he investigates, he gets the training, he provides the training for us.” Another staff member said,

If he sees certain things that might be a problem a couple of years down the road he works on it now before it becomes a problem. If you have a principal that’s putting out fires all the time, that’s not going to lead to a vision. You can prevent the fires by having a vision.
• **Prioritizing human relations as a focus for the school:** Rather than waiting for problems to arise on his campus, O’Reilly took proactive steps to prevent them, creating what he called a “mosaic” of programs, not just one, designed to maintain and develop positive human relations. These included a state-of-the-art conflict resolution program which was tailored specifically to fit this school; a human relations program in which students led other students in discussing prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination and how they could take action against these problems; a Link Crew program which linked incoming 9th graders and other new students with 11th and 12th graders to help 9th graders make a smoother transition and to provide peer resources for new students who were having behavioral problems; and the United Nations Area Network, which linked school, police, and other community service providers and parents so that students at risk could be identified, monitored, and provided with the services they needed to stay in school and stay out of trouble.

• **Encouraging professional development in targeted areas:** O’Reilly developed his staff to take the lead on these and other programs through a concerted effort in which he identified potential professional development opportunities that would benefit the school. But rather than using a top down approach to require teachers to implement new programs, he said he “enticed” teachers to take ownership. He did this by asking faculty members if they would like to participate in a conference or workshop that looked interesting. If the teacher agreed, he or she would usually come back excited about doing the program or new approach, and sell it to their department. “So he never demands without giving us a vehicle to learn what it is we’re expected to do.”

• **Reaching out to other schools and other local services:** Unlike many principals, O’Reilly did not confine his vision of change to UNH. He formed an informal collaboration group among principals of elementary and middle level feeder schools. The issues they discussed in these meetings did not include budget or the mechanics of running schools, but rather focused on diversity issues and the articulation process among the schools. “His attitude is that he wants to change the district to be a ‘lighthouse’ district. He makes his school a lighthouse so the district can become a lighthouse.”

**Discussion**

Ferguson and United Nations highlight the need for a leader’s vision to be not merely a motto or statement, but a set of practices that take place daily in the life of the school. They also highlight the need for the vision to belong to the various stakeholders at the school so that it is not viewed as “the principal’s vision” but as “our vision.” Gaining this buy in, as we have seen, can be a lengthy and cumbersome process of several years.

We have also been struck in this study by how the content of these leaders’ visions attends to diversity. It is common for schools to have visions that focus on meeting the learning needs of all students. This vision, while it is certainly part of what schools need to do, tends to wash out diversity in the simple word “all.” True, it implies that none will be ignored or
marginalized, but it fails to tell us how those needs are defined. Most educators agree at least in theory that one “need” is for all students to have access to academic success, and certainly the schools in the study all strive to make academic success achievable for all their students. However, like writers and scholars in multicultural education, these school leaders also questioned whether the basic purpose of formal education might go further than preparing students of all backgrounds for success in mainstream society. Should schools, for example, play any role in nurturing students’ sense of cultural or ethnic identity? Should schools play a role in developing positive human relations? Should schools play a role in teaching students to be critical, to question and challenge inequities that schools and other institutions perpetuate? (Ladson Billings, 1995). We have become increasingly convinced, through this study and other work we have done with schools, that a focus on academics alone is not enough and that schools do have a responsibility to take on education in these other areas.

Given that the development of a shared vision is so critical in leadership for diverse schools, it makes sense that this should be an area of concerted attention in the professional development for school leaders. In fact, professional development itself must also have a vision. Otherwise, we run the risk of doing professional development with no clear purpose in sight. We can have the most wonderfully inclusive, engaging, and challenging curriculum, but if we cannot answer the question, “Professional development for what?” then these processes stand as placeholders for a substance that is missing.

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*Serving as an initiator or facilitator of change*

As in the Rand Change Agent study (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978) the principals in our study were the “gatekeepers of change.” That study found that the sanction and active support of principals affected the implementation and continuation of change in innovative projects.

The more supportive the principal was perceived to be, the higher was the percentage of project goals achieved, the greater the improvement in student performance, and the more extensive the continuation of project methods and materials. The principal’s unique contribution to implementation lies not in “how to do it” ... but in giving moral support to the staff and in creating an organizational climate that gives the project “legitimacy.”

The principals in our study were central to changes that resulted in more harmonious school environments. Although the schools in this study were selected because they exemplified positive leadership in the area of race/ethnic relations, not all of the schools had what one might typically think of as the strong, charismatic principal who leads the schools’ diversity efforts in a very overt way. The principals in the study had very differ-
ent communication styles — some assertive and forceful in their expression of what was needed for the school, and others with more reserved and unassuming communication styles. It is sometimes stereotypically assumed that more assertive communicators initiate change, and less assertive communicators follow others or at least don’t initiate change themselves. However, we found that this was not always true.

Some of the principals with a more reserved communication style actually initiated a number of changes related to interethnic relations. For example, David Murakawa at Greenlawn Elementary tended to “hang back” and listen a lot in meetings, until he felt he had something to contribute, at which point he would voice his opinions. Despite this more reserved communication style, he was credited with initiating several key changes at Greenlawn.

We also found that there were principals who, rather than initiating change in interethnic relations, tended to provide enabling conditions and support the leadership efforts of others in their schools. Rick Sebastian, principal at Ohlone High, exemplified this enabling form of leadership. A teacher commented as follows:

They [the administration] provide the arena for us and we [teachers] go and provide the thing...We have a lot of ethnic classes, ethnic diversity. We’re talking about opening an ethnic studies department. They’ve given us the stage, the theater to work those things. Where I’ve seen big changes in the last 7 or 8 years is, you don’t get ‘no’ right away. You get: ‘Let’s see’. Where before, ‘No that will never work’, and that would be it. Yeah that’s been a big change. We used to live under a dictatorial experience here and anyone who knows the history of the place will know that’s true. The pendulum has gone the other way.

Many staff felt empowered by Sebastian’s style. One teacher said, “I think in this environment, teachers are empowered. We do have freedom to create curricula, and propose certain things in our departments and school-wide. So I think just the climate of [Ohlone] is conducive to teacher empowerment.”

As a result of Sebastian’s style, other groups emerged as the more driving forces in diversity efforts at Ohlone. Even administrators agreed, when asked where they thought the leadership was coming from in dealing with interethnic relations, that they were not the driving force. When we first began the study, we sought direction from the administrators as to where to focus our study, and they directed us to several teacher leaders who had made it a priority to embed the study of ethnicity, race, and human relations in curriculum.

Sometimes the conditions or needs of the school dictated the style of the principal (or the style was matched up by those doing the hiring). At Maya Lin High, the district policy of rotating principals every 3-5 years encouraged, indeed almost mandated, that principals
build strong leadership skills among their teachers if they wished to see programs continue after they left.

Discussion:

These findings have several implications. First, they show that while it might be an added bonus for a principal to be charismatic, it is not a requirement. People with more reserved communication styles and people who facilitate or enable rather than take the lead on change can be very effective. This may be particularly true of change that is related to diversity because a key dimension of making schools more responsive to diverse populations is the whole issue of inclusion. Principals who are good at including diverse members of the school community in leadership roles have an advantage, as do principals who listen to others well.

The findings also suggest that schools might benefit if principals were able to identify their own communication style and their preferred role and then share that with staff. In one school, a lack of clarity about who was expected to do what made relations between administrators and teachers unnecessarily tense. Teachers could benefit from knowing what kind of role they need to assume given the kind of leadership they have. Also, as more culturally and ethnically diverse administrators begin to fill the role of principal, cross-cultural issues of communication style become more important because the potential for miscommunication is greater. This is yet another reason for leaders to articulate to staff how they see their own style and role.

Making a contribution

Principals tend to be known for one or two major things that they contributed to the school. While many of these contributions have already been mentioned as we explained other aspects of leadership, this section provides a summary of what the principals were most credited with doing to improve interethnic relations at their school. While the following tables are in one sense very reductive (how can one reduce all the contributions of a good principal to only 1-3 things?) we have tried to identify areas where there was strong consensus; otherwise, we ran the risk of producing endless lists of discrete contributions that would not help us identify patterns across schools. Table 7 summarizes the contributions of the elementary level principals, and the following two tables summarize contributions of middle and high school level principals.
Table 7: Key contributions of elementary level principals toward improving interethnic relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>TENURE OF PRINCIPAL</th>
<th>1-3 KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF PRINCIPAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow Elem.</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>• Generated community among students through structures such as families;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Encouraged and increased parent involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cornell Elem.</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>• Implemented shared decision making as part of school reform plan;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Developed many more services and programs for students and their families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenlawn Elem.</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>• Provided professional dev't. for staff on diversity &amp; equity themes without alienating staff;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Worked with parents in SSC to identify &amp; address issues of equity and diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Tree Elem.</td>
<td>2.5 years</td>
<td>• Created linkages between school and community, particularly Native American resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferguson Elem.</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>• Developed shared leadership based on shared vision;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Leadership includes parents;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Created and implemented long term plan for approach in which all students learn a second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buena Vista Elem.</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>• Involved parents as collaborators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Developed parent competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reconfigured school structures to meet student needs (e.g., looping)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Ridge Elem.</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>• Developed staff competencies in working with English language learners;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Developed site-based management, shared leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Developed &amp; increased family involvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table, it is noteworthy that every principal at the elementary sites made at least one major contribution in the area of family and community involvement. It is also noteworthy that at three of the seven sites, principals were credited with creating or implementing shared leadership structures. Developing staff competencies to serve diverse students was another strong theme, as was creating structures to develop more of a sense of community and personalization among students.

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3 Tenure at the time the study ended.
### Table 8: Key contributions of middle level principals toward improving interethnic relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>TENURE OF PRINCIPAL</th>
<th>1-3 KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF PRINCIPAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royal Middle</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>• Embedded principles of MLK into the life of the school;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Disaggregated achievement and discipline data and encouraging open discussion of implications;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Empowered teachers in their efforts to raise achievement of students of color and promote positive intergroup relations;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gladiola Middle</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>• Made the school safe and established consistent behavioral standards for faculty and students;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased positive avenues for student involvement, especially in understanding &amp; appreciating ethnic diversity;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased collaboration among faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fillmore Middle</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>• Focused school goals on diversity issues, with ongoing professional development to support teachers in meeting these goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Supported heterogeneous grouping (detracking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Obtained additional funding &amp; allocated resources to support teachers' diversity efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allaneq Middle (study spanned 2 principals)</td>
<td>a. 4 years</td>
<td>• (a) Revised the stereotypes in the larger community about Allaneq students &amp; attracted more outside resources for the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 6 months</td>
<td>• (a) Restructured school into teams for greater personalization;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• (b) Focused on non-violence and provided more activities for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolores Huerta Middle</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>• Developed strong collaboration with local police to address violence;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Created opportunities for multicultural student involvement and leadership;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Developed staff capacity to serve culturally diverse students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosa Parks Middle</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>• Built a sense of community and personalized relationships;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Supported teachers in developing unique, innovative, high level curriculum;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Supported students who create &amp; enforce the discipline policy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 8, it is evident that principals at Gladiola, Dolores Huerta and Allaneq middle schools all made major contributions in addressing safety and security needs at their schools. These were schools where violence and lack of safety were serious problems when the principal took over, and they correctly identified that these needs must be addressed as

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4 Tenure at the time the study ended. In one case, there was a change of principal during the time of the study.
What Did School Leaders Do To Create Conditions for Positive Interethnic Relations?

... a first priority. It is worth noting that all three principals took a very similar two-pronged approach, addressing the violence through a more consistent disciplinary structure and other measures, and at the same time providing more positive opportunities for student involvement (leadership, after school activities, etc.) so that the atmosphere of the school was not focused on punitive measures and so that students with behavioral issues could channel their energy into more positive avenues.

It is also evident that at middle schools, differential levels of achievement based on race/ethnicity become a serious concern, and thus we see major contributions toward addressing the achievement gap by principals at Fillmore and Royal, both schools where basic safety and security needs had already been addressed. At Rosa Parks, an alternative school where all students were academically at risk, the entire school was structured to address the achievement gap as well as the social and emotional needs of students. At both Fillmore and Royal, the focus on raising the achievement of Black and Latino students was enhanced by principals who shared disaggregated data with staff and fostered open discussion about the role of race and ethnicity in differential school outcomes. Principals at the middle schools also worked on developing staff capacity to serve diverse students, developing leadership among staff, and creating structures such as teams to increase personalization and a sense of community among students.
Table 9: Key contributions of high school level principals toward improving interethnic relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>TENURE OF PRINCIPAL</th>
<th>1-3 KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF PRINCIPAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ohlone High</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>• Implemented more shared decision making and supported emerging leadership among staff;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Supported teacher collaboration groups to develop and improve curriculum;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rancho Verde High</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>• Reduced conflict, including gang conflict;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Restructured to create a 9th grade house and several academies, leading to greater personalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Began the detracking process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Hills High</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>• Developed mentoring &amp; support services for at-risk students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Facilitated and supported parent initiative on diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Developed site-based management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midvale Township High</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>• Instituted minority achievement reports that disaggregate achievement data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Established mentoring and support services;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Set high K-12 standards for all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations High</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>• Made human relations a priority for the school and developing a &quot;mosaic&quot; of programs to support this priority;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Established linkages with local police and parents to target support for at risk students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Enticed faculty to take leadership in key programs that address human relations issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crispus Attucks High</td>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>• Initiated the development of thematic curriculum focused on social justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Created house structure and looping model to increase personalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maya Lin High</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>• Supported teacher leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Created structures for emerging student leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Provided resources for staff development in diversity issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sojourner Truth High</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>• Built community by creating ten houses;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Raised academic standards and achievement to a high level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Publicized gains widely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the high school level, particularly at Sojourner Truth, Forest Hills, Midvale Township and Crispus Attucks, principals made contributions toward raising the achievement level of students of color. The focus on personalizing the school through structures such as houses continued to be a recurring theme, and supporting emerging teacher leadership also was a priority.

5 Tenure at the time the study ended.
Discussion:

The key contributions of these principals often do not appear at first glance to be related to reducing ethnic conflict or developing positive interethnic relations. For example, creating a shared leadership structure is a managerial process that does not have a direct impact on interethnic relations. However, when we consider that shared leadership allows more voices to be heard in decision making, and if we assume that some of those voices either belong to people of color or at least represent their views to some extent, then we see that shared decision making can help to create a school that is more inclusive of diverse perspectives. Fewer people are likely to be marginalized or disenfranchised in such a scenario, and relations among the different ethnic groups are likely to improve if other dimensions of school life are consistent with this greater inclusiveness. In other words, shared leadership may be a necessary but not sufficient condition for enabling more positive interethnic relations to emerge.

A similar case can be made for teacher collaboration groups at Ohlone. On the surface of it, one cannot say that this directly improves interethnic relations. However, in considering that several of these teacher collaboration groups focused on diversity and improving interethnic relations, then by supporting the collaboration groups (giving them paid time on a weekly basis to develop curriculum and engage in other activities), the principal indirectly supported their activities. The collaboration groups also provided a forum wherein teacher leadership emerged, and several teachers of color who were formerly not active in the leadership of the school had come forward as leaders as a result.

Thus, we see that a major role of these principals in the 21 schools was not so much directly acting to improve interethnic relations (only one principal, for example, actually led his staff in workshops on developing more positive interethnic relations) but rather creating conditions that led to such outcomes as a greater sense of safety and security; a greater sense of community; more personalized interactions among students and between students and staff; a more capable staff who understand the diverse learning needs of their students and show a greater respect and value for the diverse ethnic groups and cultures; improved relations with parents and community; and improved academic outcomes, especially for those students who had traditionally underachieved.

In the next section, we turn to an analysis of other leaders (besides the principals) who made major contributions toward more positive interethnic relations.
Supporting and allowing the development of other sources of leadership in interethnic relations

While the principal’s leadership remained key in creating and maintaining effective and harmonious schools, there were many others in the school communities we studied whose talents and leadership skills contributed in crucial ways. In laying out conditions for a community of leaders, Barth (1988) presents a vision of schools as “a community of leaders”, places that “ensure that students, parents, teachers, and principals all become school leaders in some ways and at some times”. In this study we found striking examples of leadership in interethnic relations coming from a range of people, including teachers, counselors, students, parents, other site administrators, and community members in addition to the principals. Table 10 displays these other sources of leadership and identifies some of their key contributions to building more positive interethnic relations.

Discussion

It is clear that many other role groups besides the principal can and do take initiative to lead efforts to improve interethnic relations or human relations more generally. In schools where the administration is still largely Euro-American, it is particularly important for principals to encourage leadership among people of color and others who care deeply about achieving a more equitable, socially just, respectful environment. This not only paves the way for more diverse leaders to take on formal leadership roles in the future, but also ensures that efforts to improve human relations are not “owned” by any one individual. Thus they have a greater likelihood of being sustained if one or more individuals move on.

The array of other sources of leadership in these schools suggests that future administrators need to develop skills for fostering the development of other leaders, particularly those of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This should be an important area for the professional development of future principals. Furthermore, there should be professional development programs for teacher leaders who do not necessarily want to become administrators but who do show interest in leading school changes. The teachers in our study who led or initiated change had to acquire their skills “by the seat of their pants.” A more structured professional development approach through which teacher leaders could obtain a credential in teacher leadership is needed.
### Table 10: Other sources of leadership and their contributions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Key contributions to improving interethnic relations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>* Multicultural collaboration group developed ethnic studies courses &amp; proposed multicultural studies graduation requirement which was accepted (OH)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> Teachers on leadership team maintained strong focus on embedding equity and social justice throughout the school (CE)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> Teachers led school in establishing &quot;Building Bridges&quot; program (MLH)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> Individual teachers embedded interethnic relations topics in curriculum (to some extent at all sites)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> School site diversity team led implementation of district diversity initiative (GE)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>* Students initiated &amp; led rally to protest beating of an immigrant student (OH)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> Students led other students in retreats/activities to improve human relations (UNH, MLH, OH, FHH)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> Students worked as leaders for social change (STH, ML)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>* Parents initiated &quot;diversity network&quot; across ethnic gps. to promote student interaction (FHH)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> Parent diversity group met regularly and influenced teachers in their choice of humanities curricula (FM)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> Multilingual parent group organized multicultural events (GM)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> Parents participated in school site diversity team (GE)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other site administrators</td>
<td>* Functioned as instructional leaders, initiated multicultural events, and aggressively pursued college scholarship opportunities for students of color (STH), CA*&lt;br&gt;* House Principal initiated &quot;Nordstrom approach to life&quot; within her house to improve staff sense of community (OH)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>* Maintained diversity in schools through strategic decisions re. size, grade level span, and catchment area; (OH, GM)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> Spearheaded &quot;Diversity Initiative&quot; throughout entire district to achieve equity (GE)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other district staff</td>
<td>* District diversity coordinator and ass't. sup't. helped lead district diversity initiative (GE)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselors</td>
<td>* Initiated curricular &amp; disciplinary interventions to improve human relations (BRE)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> Spearheaded &quot;Days of Respect&quot; process to increase awareness of interethnic relations (OH)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams or individuals connected with outside funding</td>
<td>* Healthy Start collaborative aligned Healthy Start goals re. diversity and equity with school goals (FM)<em>&lt;br&gt;</em> BASRC Coordinator &amp; after school coordinator led whole school retreats and leadership team retreats; created more mixed after-school programs (CE)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community leaders</td>
<td>* Local attorney &amp; business leaders spearheaded ambitious project to link city schools with a teacher training university in Mexico; brought Mexican teachers to the schools and sent local teachers to Mexico for summer training. (BRE)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT APPROACHES DID SCHOOLS IMPLEMENT TO ADDRESS CONFLICTS AND PROMOTE POSITIVE INTERETHNIC RELATIONS?

- Overview of the approaches
- Descriptive vignettes of each approach
- Implementation issues
- A thematic view of approaches
- Discussion
What Approaches Did Schools Implement To Address Conflicts And Promote Positive Interethnic Relations?

This chapter presents the “heart” of the Leading for Diversity project – the approaches that the school leaders described in the previous chapter used to address conflicts and promote more positive interethnic relations.

❖ Overview of the approaches

The approaches we documented have been grouped in twelve categories that correspond roughly to areas of school function. First we list those approaches that involve all members of the school community; next, we list those that are designed primarily to have a direct impact on students; and last, we list those that are designed to reach extended audiences beyond the school. It is important to note that in responding to conflict and building positive interethnic relations, each school leader actually utilized a rich mosaic of strategies. This will be discussed in more detail in the section called “a thematic view of approaches.”

APPROACHES THAT INVOLVE ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY:

Data Based
1. School disaggregates data by race/ethnicity
2. School uses disaggregated data to understand achievement and disciplinary patterns and to inform program development, school change
3. “Diversity audit” examines policies, structures, and practices with diversity and equity as a focus

School or District Vision
1. School vision and mission statement includes diversity, civil rights, social justice, etc., as a focus.
2. Policies, standards, or rules guide adults implementing this vision

Organizational
1. Organizational structures (houses, families, pods, academies, assemblies, etc.) lead to greater sense of community, more personalization, and/or reduction of conflict.
2. Physical structure reflects intention of building community.
3. Teaming of teachers to reduce segregation of students.
4. Coring of teachers that increases personalization. (Two teachers work collaboratively across disciplines, plan curriculum together, share a longer block of time to reduce fragmentation of disciplines and increase personalization.)
What Approaches Did Schools Implement To Address Conflicts and Promote Positive Interethnic Relations?

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5. Looping of teachers or classes to increase personalization. (Teacher(s) and students stay together for 2-3 years).
6. Detracking/heterogeneous grouping of students.
7. Regular paid time is provided for teachers to collaborate on work related to diversity.
8. Physical space allocated to celebration of cultural heritage and student achievement.

Diverse Staffing
1. Administrative staff comes from non-European ethnic/cultural backgrounds.
2. Teaching staff comes from ethnic/cultural backgrounds that reflect the student population.
3. Front office staff speaks language/can relate to parents of different ethnicities.
4. Campus security reflects the community population.
5. Other paid school staff reflect the demographics of community.
6. Actively seeking to increase administrative/teaching staff of color.

Professional Development
1. Individual staff (not the whole school) have had professional development in interethnic relations (within 5 years).
2. Some staff meet regularly on their own time to further their knowledge about interethnic relations.
3. School-wide professional development in the past 5 years has focused 1-2 times on interethnic relations.
4. School-wide professional development at least annually addresses interethnic relations.

APPROACHES DESIGNED TO HAVE A DIRECT IMPACT ON STUDENTS:

Curricular and Pedagogical
1. Interethnic relations topics are embedded in core curriculum.
2. School has special elective course(s) for students to learn about single ethnic groups (e.g., African American History).
3. School has special course(s) for students to learn about interethnic relations.
4. Cooperative learning structures are used to engage students of different ethnicities in accomplishing tasks together.
5. Language approach—everyone learns a second language.
6. Establishment of learning outcomes and content standards provides all students with access to all levels of the curriculum.

Special Events
1. Special events (e.g., assemblies) showcase a single ethnic group at a time.
2. Special events showcase several ethnicities or cultures at once.
3. Special events focus on race/ethnic relations.
Programmatic
1. Conflict Resolution program - No special component for race/ethnicity.
2. Conflict Resolution program - With special component for race/ethnicity.
3. Mentoring and tutoring programs seek to raise achievement of under-achieving students.
4. After school and extracurricular programs - mixed ethnicity - (Once a week or less).
5. After school and extracurricular programs - mixed ethnicity - (Twice a week or more).
6. After school and extracurricular programs - single ethnic group.

Behavioral Standards
1. Consistent standards of behavior and strict, fair disciplinary consequences are expected and applied across all diverse groups of students.
2. Most staff model the respectful behavior that is expected of students.
3. Security or campus police are present on campus to address fights, violence.
4. Security or campus police are used to build positive relationships with or among students.
5. Appropriate student behavior seen as a shared responsibility with parents.

APPROACHES DESIGNED TO REACH EXTENDED AUDIENCES

Parent Involvement
1. School hosts a variety of events designed to attract and involve diverse parents. School provides translators, transportation, childcare, etc., to make these events accessible.
2. Parent center with staff of different ethnicities provides a place on campus where parents can feel comfortable.
3. Teachers involve diverse parents in the classroom on a regular basis.
4. Teachers make home visits.
5. Multicultural parent group meets regularly to discuss diversity issues.
6. Parent groups of single ethnicity meet regularly to discuss issues of that group.
7. Off-site meetings are held to reach more parents.

Expanding School Community
1. School is used as a community resource – e.g., adult ESL and GED classes, open gym, etc.
2. Staff attend community meetings and events as representatives of the school.
3. Students go out into the community (i.e., service learning, community service).
4. School reaches out across international borders in order to serve diverse students.

Leveraging Resources
1. School has formal collaborations with CBOs and businesses (no $).
2. School leverages district and outside resources to better serve diverse students (involves $).
What Approaches Did Schools Implement To Address Conflicts and Promote Positive Interethnic Relations?

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Descriptive vignettes of each approach

Data Based

Schools using a data-based approach had learned how to collect and analyze data as a basis for making decisions related to race and ethnic relations on campus. With the amount of testing taking place in schools across the country, one would expect this approach to be commonplace. However, while much data does get collected, not all of it is used and not much of it is relevant to the kinds of issues around race and ethnicity that we have addressed in this study. Some schools in our study used the following strategies:

1. School disaggregates data by race/ethnicity.
2. School uses disaggregated data to understand achievement and disciplinary patterns and to inform program development, school change.
3. “Diversity audit” examines policies, structures, and practices with diversity and equity as a focus.

Examples of data-based approaches:

- Midvale Township High School invested a great deal of time and energy in both collecting and analyzing data on student participation and performance. Because they documented differential achievement by students of different ethnicities, Midvale developed a range of programs to improve outcomes for minority students. As new programs were implemented, the school continued to monitor the achievement of all students.

- Greenlawn Elementary School was the beneficiary of a district-wide initiative related to diversity. This district focus on diversity evolved over a 4-5 year period as schools throughout the district struggled with issues related to race and ethnicity. The district conducted a diversity audit that led to the establishment of the district wide Team Diversity initiative by the superintendent.

- At Fillmore Middle School, staff disaggregated data from a Healthy Start project to look at differing patterns of student achievement, participation in sports and disciplinary actions. As a result of this analysis, staff became aware of the diversity of the school community and began to work at issues of academic achievement and social success across student groups.

School or District Vision

All of the schools in the study subscribed to visions that were inclusive of the diversity represented by their students. Since we selected schools that were actively engaged in addressing issues around diversity, it is not surprising that our schools had crafted mission and vision statements as well as policies that focused on social justice issues related to
racial and ethnic diversity.

1. School vision and mission statement includes diversity, civil rights, social justice, etc., as a focus.
2. Policies, standards, or rules guide adults implementing this vision.

Examples of school or district vision as an approach:

- Until 1996, Rainbow Elementary School was a “traditional” elementary school designed to deliver a basics curriculum. The school was renamed for an assassinated civil rights leader and also designated a “civil rights” academy. The following were determined as focal areas for a civil rights academy: teacher tolerance and diversity, providing instruction in Pacific Rim languages—Spanish, Japanese and English, and acting as an elementary school version of an international high school.

- Royal Middle School was also named after a slain civil rights leader. The school culture was centered around his philosophy and ideals. Posters delineating his principles were placed throughout the school and in every classroom. These principles included: Equality, Academic Excellence, Community Action, Respect for Self and Others, Non-violence, and Leadership based on democratic principles.

- Sojourner Truth High School’s motto was “High expectations plus high standards yields high achievement. The motto was upheld through strict attention to attendance and student achievement; the pass rate for the rigorous NY State Regents exam continued to climb.

Organizational

Schools using organizational strategies committed resources to restructure the teaching and learning environments at their sites.

1. Organizational structures (houses, families, pods, academies, assemblies, etc.) lead to greater sense of community, more personalization, and/or reduction of conflict.
2. Physical structure reflects intention of building community.
3. Teaming of teachers to reduce segregation of students.
4. Coring of teachers that increases personalization. (Two teachers work collaboratively across disciplines, plan curriculum together, share a longer block of time to reduce fragmentation of disciplines and increase personalization.)
5. Looping of teachers or classes to increase personalization. (Teacher(s) and students stay together for 2/3 years).
6. Detracking/heterogeneous grouping of students.
7. Regular paid time is provided for teachers to collaborate on work related to diversity.
8. Physical space allocated to celebration of cultural heritage and student achievement.
What Approaches Did Schools Implement To Address Conflicts and Promote Positive Interethnic Relations?

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Examples of organizational approaches:

- Rainbow Elementary School implemented cross-age student groups called “families” in an effort to create a greater sense of community across classrooms. Families also provided teachers and other staff members more contact with a wider range of students.

- Although Sojourner Truth High School served 4,425 students, this large size was broken down through a “house” structure that grouped students into smaller units. Each of the 10 houses at Sojourner Truth had its own supervisor, guidance counselor, coordinator and family outreach assistant.

- At Cornell Elementary School, some teachers had chosen to try to break down the segregation of the students by teaming together, meaning that two classes (usually a bilingual, all Latino group with a sheltered group that was a mixture of ethnicities) blended their students and did project-based work where much of the time was spent in small groups of mixed ethnicities and language backgrounds.

- At Buena Vista Elementary School, instruction was structured around a looping model: students and teachers began together in 4th grade and stayed together through 5th and 6th grades. Although the mobility rate hovered around 50%, this grouping model fostered a sense of continuation and stability.

- Junior US history courses at Midvale Township High School had been detracked for years. Instead of sorting students into honors or regular sections, classes were composed of mixed ability students who had the option of taking the course for differing levels of credit.

- At Ohlone High School, the district provided faculty with a two-hour block every Wednesday morning to collaborate on curriculum. This structural change had given rise to a multicultural collaboration group which had assumed a strong leadership role in developing curriculum that addresses interethnic relations issues.

- At Rosa Parks, a small alternative middle school, students were not grouped by grade level or ability, and all classes were very diverse. Students could progress at different rates in different subjects. Curriculum changed each year, with teachers choosing the academic and cultural focus for the year.

Diverse Staffing

All schools in the study served highly diverse student populations. Yet as with most schools across the U.S., most staff at our schools were European American. A common strategy across our sites was to seek more diverse staff so as to reflect the diversity of the families coming to the schools. The following strategies illustrate the range of role groups within schools that were targeted by our sites for increasing diversity.
1. Administrative staff comes from non-European ethnic/cultural backgrounds.
2. Teaching staff comes from ethnic/cultural backgrounds that mirror the student population.
3. Front office staff speaks language/can relate to parents of different ethnicities.
4. Campus security reflects the community population.
5. Other paid school staff reflect the demographics of community.
6. Actively seeking to increase administrative/teaching staff of color.

**Examples of diverse staffing:**

- The four members of the administrative team at Gladiola Middle School reflected the four largest ethnic groups attending the school. The principal was Latina, one assistant principal was European American, another was African American and the third was Filipina. The diversity of the administrative team provided distinct benefits, including greater participation among diverse parents and modeling of interethnic cooperation.

- At Buena Vista Elementary School, supported by district policy that promotes diverse staff hiring, the teaching staff was one of the most diverse among our 21 sites. Out of 46 certificated teachers, 39% were African American, 9% were Hispanic and 52% were European American.

- The certified staff at Crispus Attucks High School was 50% non-white, and the administrative team was composed of a European American director and African American co-director. In hiring staff, the director had taken advantage of a pivotal moment several years earlier, when the school obtained “pilot status” from the district. This had allowed him to nearly double the size of the staff. In order to seek a larger pool of diverse candidates, he advertised and networked in other states and cities across the country. He made it clear to candidates that it was a very demanding job, and that the school was committed to finding, placing, and supporting teachers of color.

**Professional Development**

Professional development can be a key strategy for creating change among existing staff around issues related to interethnic relations. The following strategies illustrate the variety of ways in which staff can partake in professional development.

1. Individual staff (not the whole school) have had professional development in interethnic relations (within 5 years).
2. Some staff meet regularly on their own time to further their knowledge about interethnic relations.
3. School-wide professional development in the past 5 years has focused 1-2 times on interethnic relations.
4. School-wide professional development at least annually addresses interethnic relations.
What Approaches Did Schools Implement To Address Conflicts and Promote Positive Interethnic Relations?

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Examples of professional development in interethnic relations:

• Teachers at Blue Ridge Elementary School were acquiring firsthand knowledge of Mexican culture and Spanish language through the district’s summer program in Mexico. This helped teachers develop their understanding of immigrant children’s backgrounds, break away from stereotypes about Mexican or Hispanic people, and develop empathy for how hard it is to learn a second language.

• At Forest Hills High School parents initiated a professional development venture for the entire school. Organized by sets of parents from specific grade levels, the diversity initiative provided student-centered as well as staff-centered activities designed to create more harmonious interethnic relationships. At one point, the school devoted two days to an all-school event focused on diversity.

• At several schools, professional development in interethnic relations was embedded in teamwork settings in which diverse staff collaborated regularly to plan curriculum, monitor student progress, etc. These settings provided a natural environment in which teachers could learn from each other about diverse perspectives and the ways race/ethnicity can influence one’s worldview.

• SEED (seeking educational equity and diversity) was a nationally distributed model for teachers to create greater inclusion of diverse perspectives in their curriculum and pedagogy. At Cornell Elementary, a group of about 10 teachers voluntarily participated in SEED, meeting about once a month to discuss different topics related to equity, diversity, and interethnic relations. Most teachers in this group felt it had had a powerful impact on their teaching.

Curricular & Pedagogical

The schools in the study had developed a wide range of strategies to address interethnic relations through curriculum and teaching methods. The first three were particularly used in high schools. Curricular and pedagogical approaches were reported to be especially powerful because they involved continuous and regular exposure to ethnicity and ethnic relations as a subject. Banks (1993) and Grant and Sleeter (1989), among others, have pointed out that multicultural education efforts lie along a continuum from the most superficial to the most embedded in the daily functions of the school. When ethnicity and diversity are only touched on when there is a special event, it sends a message to students and families that attending to diversity is only an add on or afterthought, not part of the fabric of what the school does. When, on the other hand, diversity topics such as human relations and social justice are embedded in curriculum, and pedagogy is adapted to tap diverse students’ learning styles, students and families see that the school views diversity as a serious area of study.

1. Interethnic relations topics are embedded in regular curriculum.
2. School has special elective course(s) for students to learn about single ethnic groups (e.g., African American History).
3. School has special course(s) for students to learn about interethnic relations.
4. Cooperative learning structures are used to engage students of different ethnicities in accomplishing tasks together.

5. Language approach: Every student works at learning a second language.

6. Establishment of learning outcomes and content standards provides all students with access to all levels of the curriculum.

Examples of curricular and pedagogical approaches:

- At Ohlone High School, teacher leaders had developed four curricular approaches to address issues of ethnic relations: Ethnic focus classes such as African American History; infusion of interethnic relations topics in core English and Social Science courses; an introductory course called Ethnic and Women’s Studies; and individual teachers who on their own addressed interethnic relations in other courses. Students who had been exposed to these curricular approaches reported several important areas of learning related to improving ethnic relations – e.g., more respect for other peoples’ cultures, more understanding of the role history plays in current race relations, greater awareness of the differences within supposed ethnic groups, and other areas.

- Tribes is a nationally distributed curriculum designed for elementary school children to develop social skills and build positive relationships. It is designed to be integrated into the classroom on a regular basis. Tribes was used, for varying lengths of time, at several elementary schools in our study, including Cornell, Ferguson and Rainbow.

- Through a massive curricular change, Ferguson Elementary School was on its way to becoming a school where all children learn 2 languages. The school offered programs in 4 different languages and students and the wider school community had come to think it was “cool” to speak 2 languages.

- An all-school second language approach was also implemented at two other elementary sites. At Blue Ridge Elementary School, a pre-K - 2 school, language instruction in English and Spanish was provided to every child. At Joshua Tree Intermediate School, instruction in the local Native American language was provided for half an hour twice a week.

- Midvale Township High School, a high school district, had collaborated with its feeder elementary district to create K-12 standards as a means of creating clearer and more consistent articulation across grades and school levels. While the district was still in the beginning stages of this curricular initiative at the time of data collection, school personnel expected the project to provide greater access for all students to the curriculum.

- Maya Lin High School had a Freshman Focus course that was required of all 9th graders. This class dealt with interpersonal issues such as building understanding across race, ethnicity, and gender. The class seemed to be key to students’ orientation to the school and helped establish a standard that valued relationship building and understanding across differences.

- Crispus Attucks High School had a social justice theme that was integrated into all curricular areas. The specific topic changed yearly; in 97-98, the theme was “What does it mean to be human?”
Special Events

The most common approach to helping school communities become more aware of the richness brought to schools by diverse student populations is the one centered around special events. As noted earlier, none of the approaches we have documented can improve interethnic relations without being connected to a “mosaic” of other approaches. Some schools limit their “diversity” efforts to special events, which frequently has the effect of trivializing culture and ethnicity or turning it into an exotic once-a-year display. The schools in the study, though they all celebrated diverse cultures though a variety of special events, did not stop there. Special events supported and were supported by multiple other approaches.

1. Special events (e.g., assemblies) showcase a single ethnic group at a time.
2. Special events showcase several ethnicities or cultures at once.
3. Special events focus on race/ethnic relations.

Examples of special events:

- As part of its efforts to celebrate all the cultures of the students who attend, Cornell Elementary School held regular assemblies and festivals that highlighted one or several cultures or ethnic groups. The intent of these assemblies was to produce positive effects on cross cultural understanding, tolerance of differences, and respect for one’s own and other cultures. Cornell’s emphasis on interethnic cooperation (developed through Tribes curriculum and other approaches) was manifested in an assembly devoted to Southeast Asian cultures. Several Cambodian dances were performed by Cambodian, African American, and Latino students together. Students told the researcher afterwards that they had chosen to participate on their own.

- At Allaneq Middle School, a series of three after-school retreats during the year focused on cross-cultural storytelling. The retreats were voluntary and involved teachers, administrators, students, and parents. The personal storytelling focus was used because, “It’s hard to be enemies with someone you know. Prejudice is the way you judge someone when you don’t know their story.”

- At Ohlone High School, a recent interethnic conflict and other concerns prompted several counselors to engage the whole school in a process called “Days of Respect” in which students, faculty, and parents met numerous times to plan a culminating event that involved the whole school in activities, dialogue, and reflection about how respect among different ethnic groups could be improved.

Programmatic

Programmatic approaches are specific interventions that are added on to ongoing classroom curricula. These programs vary in length and targeted audience. As shown below, some are geared specifically to addressing diversity issues; others are designed for more general purposes.
1. Conflict Resolution program - No special component for race/ethnicity.
2. Conflict Resolution program - With special component for race/ethnicity.
3. Mentoring and tutoring seeks to raise achievement of under-achieving students.
4. After school and extracurricular programs - mixed ethnicity - low frequency (1 time per week or less).
5. After school and extracurricular programs - mixed ethnicity - high frequency (2 or more times per week).
6. After school and extracurricular programs - single group.

**Examples of programmatic approaches:**

- Cornell Elementary School began its Conflict Resolution program (CR) based on the Community Boards model in 1987. Every teacher at the school was trained in CR. Although the program was not explicit about racial and ethnic tensions as a potential source of conflict, it was credited, together with the Tribes curriculum, with a significant drop in physically violent conflicts and race-related conflicts.

- The Conflict Resolution program at Fillmore was started in 1997/98. The teacher who initiated the formation of this program examined a variety of CR curricula and training to find one that dealt specifically with issues of race and ethnicity. She located Conflict Resolution Unlimited in Seattle and also used parts of “The Peaceable Curriculum.”

- To address racial and economic disparities in academic achievement, Forest Hills High School invested a great deal of time, energy and resources into a set of academic tutoring and mentoring programs. The most ambitious was Compass, a program that focused on under-prepared students from the poorer feeder districts to help them develop the skills and confidence to do well in high school. After an intensive summer program, Compass students were provided with on-going year around support.

- Ohlone High School had a vast number of after-school clubs, many of which had an ethnic focus. Clubs were responsible for a wide range of activities, including putting on assemblies, doing community service, going on field trips to colleges, discussing problems students were having in school, learning more about their cultural heritage, and many others. Staff felt clubs played an important role in socializing kids; at times, clubs were a vehicle for students to discuss racial/ethnic issues they were confronting in school.

- At Maya Lin High School, students became an important part of leadership in interethnic relations through the POND program (Pioneer Outreach Network for Diversity), a local component of the county-wide Building Bridges program. A core group of teachers who were trained in Building Bridges in turn trained a group of students, who then became facilitators for retreats involving faculty and students. Students were thus provided a structure in which they were able to assume more responsibility and authority.
Behavioral Standards

As the list below illustrates, sites utilized a variety of strategies focused on student behavior. Some were more appropriate with older or younger students; for example, strategies utilizing campus police were found more frequently at the secondary level. Across our schools, student behavior was an important focal point for efforts at creating more harmonious environments, particularly in those schools which had identified safety and security as the priority need.

1. Consistent standards of behavior and strict, fair disciplinary consequences are expected and applied across all diverse groups of students.
2. Most staff model the respectful behavior that is expected of students.
3. Security or campus police are present on campus to address fights, violence.
4. Security or campus police are used to build positive relationships with or among students.
5. Appropriate student behavior is seen as a shared responsibility with parents.

(Please see next page)
Examples of behavioral standards:

• One staff member used the term “securing the perimeter” to describe the initial focus of efforts to create a safe, conflict-free school environment at Rainbow Elementary School. Specific strategies related to changing behavior included hiring student advisors to act as models for students while monitoring their behavior and reinforcing good behavior; and implementing consistent standards for behavior across classrooms and throughout the school.

• At Blue Ridge Elementary, a PreK – 2 school, a very knowledgeable counselor had implemented a comprehensive approach to student behavior and counseling based on choice theory. Included in this approach were periodic lessons in every classroom dealing with social relations, managing anger, etc.; a series of “30-second interventions” which consisted of short phrases in English and Spanish which teachers could use to intervene when children exhibited inappropriate behavior; a format for teachers to use to develop classroom behavior policies with their students and their parents; a planning process used when a child had been pulled out of a class because of behavioral problems; and a time out room where students could work individually with a counselor.

• At Allanq Middle School, the new principal stepped into a situation where both students and teachers feared for their safety. She quickly went about establishing a “violence-free campaign” which involved hiring increased security who would also provide counseling to students; closing additional entrances to the school so visitors could be more closely monitored; establishing consistent consequences for violent behavior coupled with rewards for positive, violence-free behavior; and through student input, creating more activities during lunch and after school. A hallmark of the new policy was the way students, even if they were being called on behavior problems, were respected: “The kids know they’re going to have to pay the consequences, but they’re going to be treated like human beings in the process.”

• In the focus on violence prevention at Rancho Verde High School, gang prevention/intervention was paramount—no graffiti, paraphernalia, colors, or gang signals were tolerated. Students with suspicious behavior were immediately confronted. These efforts were stepped up each spring when the weather changed and there was a higher possibility of trouble. This was a closed campus and attendance was closely monitored.

• At Rosa Parks, an accelerated alternative middle school for at risk students, students created and applied the discipline policy. All students served on a rotating basis on the discipline committee. Any student or staff member could make a referral to the committee, which met once a week. Referred students were required to appear before the committee to explain their actions and receive disciplinary consequences. The students themselves often applied stricter consequences than the teachers.

Parent Involvement

Involving parents in school activities is an approach traditionally utilized to a large extent at the elementary level and to a lesser extent at the secondary level. As the strategies below
What Approaches Did Schools Implement To Address Conflicts and Promote Positive Interethnic Relations?

illustrate, our schools had devised a range of ways to include parents in their children’s education.

1. School hosts a variety of events designed to attract and involve diverse parents. School provides translators, transportation, childcare, etc., to make these events accessible.
2. Parent center with staff of different ethnicities provides a place on campus where parents can feel comfortable.
3. Teachers involve diverse parents in the classroom on a regular basis.
4. Teachers make home visits.
5. Multicultural parent group meets regularly to discuss diversity issues.
6. Parent groups of single ethnicity meet regularly to discuss issues of that group.
7. Off-site meetings to reach more parents

Examples of parent involvement:

- Parent involvement was a key approach at Rainbow Elementary, primarily because of the history of adult racial tensions between parents and staff. The school worked actively to reach out to parents and encouraged them to be part of the school community. For example, the school had a parent club, family nights focused on specific curricular areas, a Spanish-speaking parent group; parents participated in the classroom by bringing food, making play dough, talking to students, helping with projects, and going on field trips.

- At Buena Vista Elementary School, parents were viewed as collaborators in their children’s education. One strategy used was for staff to work with parents to create joint plans of action related to student behavior. For example, a Contract for Optimal Learning, signed by parents or guardians, teachers, students and the principal affirmed each stakeholder interest in having the student achieve and set out the multiple steps each stakeholder agreed to take that would lead to this achievement.

- At Joshua Tree Intermediate School, parents had been involved from the beginning in planning and designing the school building. Thus this school, in its physical structure, reflected parent priorities and needs.

- At Gladiola Middle School the involvement of more diverse parents was achieved by instituting a multilingual parent group, increasing the number of school/community events and building a multicultural theme into the events, and proactively soliciting diverse parent involvement in school committees.

- At Sojourner Truth High School, the Parents’ Association maintained an office on campus and worked closely with administrators and teachers to support their efforts.

Expanding the School Community

Sites employing this approach view the relationship between the school and the community as a dynamic one. The school functions beyond the conventional purpose of providing
education to children. The school and community become resources for each other, enriching each other in the process.

1. School is used as a community resource – e.g., adult ESL and GED classes, health services, use of the gym or library.
2. School staff attend community meetings and events as representatives of the school.
3. Students go out into the community (i.e., service learning, community service).
4. School reaches out across international borders in order to serve diverse students.

**Examples of expanding the school community:**

- Blue Ridge’s approaches to building positive interethnic relations stretched far beyond the school itself. The cornerstone of their approach was a multifaceted partnership between the school district and a Mexican university. Initiated by a local attorney, this partnership brought Mexican teachers to the school district to work with local teachers in making instruction accessible and providing many other services. It also sent groups of local teachers to Mexico for summer study of Spanish language and Mexican culture.

- Joshua Tree Intermediate School was in the process of building a closer relationship with the Native American community which the school served. Students and staff frequently walked from the school to the reservation to participate in meetings and events there, and on the way they had constructed a pathway with native plants. Each plant had a story about its use and cultural meanings associated with it, and students were learning these aspects of culture from native community members.

- The principal at Dolores Huerta Middle School worked together with local Vietnamese community groups to create linkages between the school and the community. One result of this collaboration was that the school offered weekend classes in Vietnamese language; another result was that the Vietnamese community worked with the school to organize a large Tet Festival each year.

**Leveraging Resources**

Most of the schools in our study realized that making do with existing resources would prevent them from engaging in many of the approaches outlined above. To offer students the kinds of learning experiences that would lead to improved interethnic relations—the kind of learning experiences found outside of the traditional curriculum—required creative funding sources. The following strategies provided these funding sources.

1. School has formal collaborations with CBOs and businesses (no $).
2. School leverages district and outside resources to better serve diverse students (involves $).
Examples of leveraging resources:
- Buena Vista Elementary School recruited two major business partners to support ongoing efforts at the school. One of these partners, for example, underwrote field trips for students to multicultural events or attractions. Another partner supplied paper goods for monthly lunches to celebrate students with 100% attendance.

- Allaneq Middle School had no phone system in the classrooms when we first began the study. During the study, the school established a partnership with the phone company and received a very welcome donation of telephones in all classrooms and an intercom system, which helped alleviate teachers’ concerns about safety in their classrooms.

- In order to address the gang presence at Dolores Huerta Middle School, a partnership was established between the local police and the school. A multi-city gang task force was set up involving the schools, neighboring cities, and police department. At the middle school, a new program called the "Frontline Academy" was established to give special attention and structure to at-risk students. The academy courses were taught by a police officer who, in addition to the more structured environment he provided students, also attended to their social and emotional needs by providing counseling and support for them to achieve their goals.

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Implementation issues

This presentation of the approaches we documented only touches the surface of these practices. To really understand how these approaches were implemented in schools, we must turn to case studies of individual schools. In our case reports on the individual schools and in several papers we have presented at professional conferences, we have documented in much greater detail the implementation of the key approaches used by that school. Each approach was accompanied by various barriers and supports, and these influenced how effective the approach was at that particular school. The same approach used in a different school might be accompanied by a somewhat different set of barriers and supports, making it more or less effective.

A clear example of these differences in implementation is the use of Conflict Management at Cornell and at Rainbow Elementary schools. Both schools used the same Conflict Resolution Program developed by Community Boards of San Francisco. However, whereas staff and students at Cornell felt it was working very well as one of several interventions to reduce conflict and improve human relations, staff and students at Rainbow were less enthusiastic. One of the reasons for this difference is that Cornell had had the program in place since 1987, while Rainbow had just begun to implement it in 97-98 and staff were still ironing out the problems. At Cornell, supports for conflict resolution (CR) included:
1. The entire staff was trained in CR so that there was strong coherence across the school; new staff were trained each year.
2. Conflict managers reflected the diversity of the school in terms of ethnicity, GPA, English language proficiencies, and formal and informal leadership qualities.
3. Weekly debriefing sessions for conflict managers helped resolve issues that came up in implementation.
4. The principal and other administrators strongly supported CM.
5. The district supported CM; The Cornell administrator in charge of CM was also a district trainer for CM.
6. The developers supplied good materials for implementing CM —visually attractive, usable.
7. The program had been at Cornell for 13 years and thus was well embedded in everyday practice.
8. CM was integrated with Tribes; the two programs were mutually supportive.

At Rainbow, while supports 2, 4, 6 and 8 were present, other supports were not yet in place. Both Cornell and Rainbow faced barriers in implementing Conflict Resolution, as Table 11 shows. However, these barriers were quite different at the two schools:

Table 11: Barriers in implementing Conflict Resolution at two schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Cornell</th>
<th>Rainbow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language barrier: Even with conflict managers who spoke different languages, availability was sometimes an issue.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes CR is used as an excuse to get out of class.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM techniques do not always transfer well to contexts outside of school.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict managers say many of the conflicts they deal with are &quot;stupid&quot; or &quot;little&quot; so they get bored.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes the bigger kids won’t listen to the conflict managers</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes there is jealousy and fighting among conflict managers.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The area where conflict managers are trained is overcrowded</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program doesn’t take into account different developmental levels of kids at different ages.</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program isn’t incorporated into the curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One thing that is clear from this exploratory analysis of how two schools implemented Conflict Resolution is that there is very little in common. There were far more supports for the program at Cornell, and the barriers encountered at Rainbow were for the most part different from the barriers at Cornell. The fact that CR had been used at Cornell for so
much longer made it almost like comparing apples and oranges. It is also possible that because of Cornell’s long experience in implementing CR, they had identified more barriers in implementation. The comparison suggests that contextual factors play an even bigger role than we thought in how schools implement approaches that are purportedly the same. It also suggests that efforts to determine “which approaches work best” can be seriously misleading if they are disembodied from their contexts.

❖ A thematic view of approaches

There are many ways to categorize approaches to promoting positive interethnic relations. Our research team wrestled with a variety of different ways to present the wide variety of approaches we documented, and none of them were quite right. The categories we have used in this chapter are, as we said earlier, based on a functional understanding of schools – that is, schools operate in a variety of functional domains including hiring staff, providing professional development for the staff, teaching students curriculum, involving parents, etc. However, we found this listing quite dry and uninformative when we considered the richness of what we had seen and heard about in the schools we visited. It was clear to us that the soul of the approaches lay not in the discrete lists we had produced, but rather in the synergy of how each school created a coherent web or mosaic of approaches to accomplish certain purposes or to embody certain themes. For example, many schools used clusters of approaches to serve the progression of needs we have modified from Maslow (see chapter on leadership). Some approaches served to address the need for safety and security; others clustered together to serve the need for a sense of community; many schools also used approaches that, taken together, served to enhance self esteem and esteem by and for others (e.g., respect, appreciation for differences). When we tried to use these overarching themes as an organizing structure for the cross case analysis, however, we found ourselves forcing an analysis that could not be extended across every case without losing the uniqueness and integrity of each school’s culture. Miles and Huberman warned of this tendency in cross case analysis to create categories that fit some cases and not others, and then force the remaining cases to fit into the analytical scheme (1994, p. 208).

In order to give readers a glimpse of how schools used combinations of functional approaches to accomplish certain purposes or embody certain themes, we present an analysis of themes and functional approaches at Allaneq Middle School.

Allaneq is located in a very low income area of a city in Alaska. Violence in the community surrounding the school had repeatedly threatened the safety of students and staff, and there had been several tragic incidents involving Allaneq students as both perpetrators and victims of violence. Yet in many ways, the staff and students were proud of their school and its rich cultural diversity, which included a large number of Native Alaskans as well as Pacific Islanders, Latinos, Southeast Asians, African Americans, European Americans, and
others. The study actually spanned a change in principals, enabling us to see the carryover from one to the next. Table 12 illustrates the presence of three themes – personalization, storytelling, and non-violence – in Allaneq’s functional approaches to creating more positive interethnic relations. In this rendition, we have left out a few functional approaches that did not seem to connect to these larger themes.

Table 12: The Presence of Three Themes in Allaneq’s Functional Approaches to Building Positive Interethnic Relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Approaches</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Non-violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curricular &amp; pedagogical</td>
<td>Personalization</td>
<td>Storytelling as cross cultural sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Quarter-long,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interdisciplinary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Heritage unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Memoirs as a vehicle for improving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
<td>Retreats that focused on cross cultural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sharing of family stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmatic</td>
<td>Theatre program</td>
<td>Resolving Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>focused on development of students’</td>
<td>Creatively program,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>voices through telling own experience</td>
<td>non-violent means of resolving conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry-Based</td>
<td>Principal met with all teachers and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>students to identify needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Team structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>designed to cultivate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>more personal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse Staffing</td>
<td>Staff with similar cultural backgrounds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to students &amp; parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>made school more accessible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School or district vision</td>
<td>School vision in 1998-99 focused on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>making the school violence free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A strong theme in the previous principal’s tenure was *personalization*, which she developed through the creation of a team structure, by hiring diverse staff to communicate with students in their languages, and by making home visits a key element in the school’s outreach to parents. The new principal continued this theme, making some modifications to improve the team structure, and adding the element of inquiry. She met in focus groups with every staff member and every student at the beginning of her tenure in order to assess their needs and create personal connections with everyone on campus.

The theme of *storytelling* as a vehicle for cross cultural sharing probably has a strong resonance in Alaska because of the Native Alaskan storytelling traditions, which have been picked up and modified by various waves of immigrants. We found storytelling to be present in several interventions that were designed at least in part to enhance interethnic relations. These included storytelling retreats (described earlier in the section on special events), a quarter-long interdisciplinary unit for 8th graders on Family Heritages in which each student had to research his or her own family heritage and do a culminating presentation to the class and the whole school; a focus on memoirs as a vehicle for improving writing fluency; and an after school and summer theatre program focused on the development of student voice through telling one’s own experiences. Unfortunately, the retreats and the theatre program were ending as the new principal came in. The district had completed its plan for funding the retreats, and the theatre program was not refunded because of political skirmishes over the openly gay theatre directors. These fluctuations in funding emphasize the point made earlier, that many programs and interventions that address interethnic relations are not covered under the general funding formulas of schools, and thus are subject to the discontinuities of “soft” money.

The theme of *non-violence* had its origins during the previous principal’s tenure. A conflict resolution program was partially in place (students had been trained, but they had not yet been organized into a functioning conflict management team). The previous principal had also managed to get a large donation from the local phone company to put phones in every classroom, thus addressing the staff’s urgent need to communicate in cases of potential danger. This move followed an incident in which a 13-year old boy was found to have a

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**Table 12 (continued): The Presence of Three Themes in Allaneq’s Functional Approaches to Building Positive Interethnic Relations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral standards</th>
<th>Parent involvement</th>
<th>Comprehensive violence free policy and implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Home visits and outreach by bilingual staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leveraging resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Business partnership provided phones in classrooms to support safety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Chapter VI**
gun in the counselor’s office. When the new principal took over, however, safety concerns were still a major issue. She decided to make non-violence the focal point for her first year, and she instituted a broad spectrum of changes, including increased security coupled with counseling, strict and consistent consequences for violent behavior, and a system of individual and group rewards for positive, violence free behavior (see section on behavioral standards for more details).

**Discussion**

In each school, there were themes such as these that tied the different approaches together, imbuing the approaches with meaning and values. In a way, the connections among approaches can be likened to creating a symphony, in which the different approaches are the different instrumental scores and a theme is the symphony itself, which is a creative and unique construction of several instrumental scores brought together in a multidimensional but unified performance.

For future school leaders, these findings tell us that the goal of improving interethnic relations can be addressed through a broad spectrum of approaches, and that different areas of school functioning can all play a role in improving group relations – from staff hiring, to curriculum and pedagogy, to parent involvement, etc. However, the key learning is that proactive leaders bring these elements together in meaningful thematic clusters, so that the collection of functional approaches is not merely a hodgepodge of unrelated efforts. The thematic cluster is much more than the sum of its functional parts. It reflects the vision of that particular school leadership, and is laced with particular values. In discussing organizational leadership, Fullan states:

> Coherence doesn’t happen by accident, and doesn’t happen by pursuing everything under the sun. Effective organizations are not ones that innovate the most; they are not ones that send personnel on the most number of staff development conferences. No, they are organizations that selectively go about learning more. In all of their activities, even ones that foster diversity, they create mechanisms of integration. Moral purpose, communication, intense interaction, implementation plans, performance data all serve the purpose of coherence. In examining new policies or possibilities integrative organizations not only worry about the value of each opportunity, but they also ask how the new idea “connects” with what they are doing. Shared meaning and organizational connectedness are the long-term assets of high performance systems. (1999, p. 28)

How can future school leaders learn to create this kind of coherence? Leaders in this study tell us it comes back to vision. School leaders need to have a few organizing themes that
are the embodiment of their vision. They need to develop buy-in for this vision among the various stakeholders in the school, and this involves openly engaging conflicting perspectives and finding ways to develop common ground while still respecting the differences. The vision changes as more people become involved, but it has a better chance of surviving in this new form because it is owned by many, not only by an elite group. The cornerstone of a school’s vision is its practice. Many schools have lofty visions that are not born out in practice. They exhibit a dissonance between what they say they strive for, and what they actually do. The school leaders in this study had in effect “married” clusters of functional approaches (practice) with themes that gave coherence and meaning to these approaches, and these themes in turn were coherent with the overarching vision for the school. Thus there was a real connection between vision and practice, with organizing themes functioning as the mid-level “glue” that connected the more abstract vision with the concrete practices. In many cases, these organizing themes were related to the progression of needs, with clusters of approaches serving to embody the theme of a caring community, or to enhance self esteem and esteem by and for others. Figure 5 illustrates this relationship, using Allaneq as the example:

(Please see next page)
Figure 5: Organizing themes as the connection between vision and practice

VISION
What and how the school wants to be in the future; at Allaneq, part of this vision was that the school would be a safe place where students and staff were respected both individually and as groups.

ORGANIZING THEMES
These are the middle ground that links the vision to the functional approaches; at Allaneq, the themes we identified were:
• Personalization,
• Storytelling, and
• Non-violence.

FUNCTIONAL APPROACHES
These are clusters of practice that together embody a particular theme; at Allaneq, the theme of *personalization* was embodied through:
• Teaming,
• Diverse staffing,
• Parent involvement, and
• Inquiry based approach
CHAPTER VII

WHAT IMPACT DID THE APPROACHES HAVE?

- What we mean by “impact”
- Areas of impact
- Discussion
What Impact Did The Approaches Have?

Many of the approaches documented in the previous section have had a positive impact on the schools. This chapter identifies the various benefits the schools experienced which were attributed to or associated with certain approaches or clusters of approaches.

What we mean by “impact”

Before we examine the benefits of the various approaches, the term “impact” requires some discussion. Traditionally, when educators speak of impact they are looking at gains in measurable quantities such as achievement scores, grades, college acceptances, reduced drop out rate, etc. In the beginning of this study we envisioned impact in a similar way, assuming that we would be able to document a decrease in the number of physical fights or other conflicts during the period that the school had been implementing certain approaches. In several schools, we do in fact have evidence of this kind, for example at Rainbow, Buena Vista, and Cornell. However, we have also encountered a number of problems that complicate the analysis of impact.

The first of these is that schools do not normally keep records that would allow one to track improvements in race/ethnic relations. As an administrator in one of the high schools explained, discipline records for their school are recorded by the type of incident — e.g., assault with weapon, fight, etc. Records are also kept of the ethnicity of the students involved. However, there is no record of which incidents had a racial/ethnic dimension to them. One might be tempted to infer that if a fight occurred involving a Samoan student and an African American student, that fight had a racial dimension, but this may not be the case. Therefore, if anyone were to try to measure an increase or decrease in the number of racial fights, they would be on very shaky ground.

Furthermore, even if administrators know that 155 students were involved in fights during the past year, they still don’t know how many fights there were. If they assume only two students were involved in each fight, then that means there were 77 fights, but if more than two were involved in some fights, this number could be off by a considerable amount.

Another problem is that many categories of disciplinary referrals are very subjective, as the same administrator noted:

There’s a range of what gets defined as “defiant”. “Fight” and “defiant” could be the same behavior labeled differently by different people. We have 150 people defining “defiant.” There is agreement at the center, but not at the edges of the concept.
Problems such as these make it impossible, given current systems in place in most schools, to monitor changes in racial/ethnic conflict by any standard indicator.

An even greater issue in measuring impact is that the above analysis suggests that the only changes of interest are related to the number of racial conflicts. In other words, it suggests that reactive approaches in which leaders address conflict are the only phenomena to be measured. As we documented in Chapter VI, however, school leaders in our study also used a multitude of approaches that were proactively designed to build more harmonious relations and to address the root causes of racial/ethnic conflict. The impact of such approaches, if they were working, would presumably not be captured by a single measure of decrease in racial conflict. Rather, they would be reflected in other indicators of a more positive school environment, such as higher academic achievement, more collaboration among faculty, more cooperation among students, a better reputation of the school in the community, etc.

Throughout the study, we gathered accounts of these types of positive results. Most of these are also not measurable because schools have not yet set up systems to measure such outcomes. However, we believe there is strong qualitative evidence (in the form of triangulated accounts) that suggests beneficial outcomes in many of the schools we studied. The evidence we report is based either on our own observations at the school, or on reports gathered in interviews or school documents. The link between particular kinds of impact and approaches is made either because people at the school attributed the impact to a certain approach, or because as researchers we inferred from the data that certain improvements were associated with certain changes in approach. It should be noted that we are not claiming that particular approaches caused particular impacts through a one-to-one relationship. As in other attempts to measure educational outcomes, pinpointing the causes of those outcomes in a complex environment such as a school is impossible because schools are not controlled environments where one can isolate one variable at a time. Thus, while we can infer that certain approaches had beneficial outcomes, those approaches did not operate in isolation, but rather formed part of a cluster of approaches and support systems that functioned in concert to produce the beneficial outcome.

Areas of impact

What follows is a series of tables summarizing evidence that points to a positive impact and identifying which approaches were thought to be most closely associated with that impact. In order to be concise, we have selected examples of schools that show different kinds of evidence of impact; thus, the tables do not list all the schools that had a particular kind of impact.
Improved interethnic relations among students

Table 13 displays examples of schools that showed evidence of improved interethnic relations among students.

**Table 13: Examples of improved interethnic relations among students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Attributed to which approach(es)?</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students no longer group exclusively by ethnicity.</td>
<td>• Programmatic: Building Bridges/POND focus on diversity and unity</td>
<td>Maya Lin High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Curricular: Freshman focus class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children play together in multiethnic groups; students demonstrate open curiosity about each others' cultures and languages</td>
<td>• Curricular: Every child works at learning a second language</td>
<td>Blue Ridge Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Organizational: All classes are intentionally mixed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children across language groups are excited about learning a second language</td>
<td>• Curricular: Language learning for all students</td>
<td>Ferguson Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students report that they have a better understanding of other ethnic groups</td>
<td>• Curricular: Four types of courses address interethnic relations</td>
<td>Ohlone High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Special Events: Days of Respect Process, ethnic assemblies (to a lesser degree)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Curricular: Thematic curriculum with social justice theme that changes each yr.</td>
<td>Crispus Attucks High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students do not perceive racism in this school; there is a lack of intergroup conflict at this school</td>
<td>• Curricular: Humanities has a diversity focus each yr.</td>
<td>Fillmore Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Special Events: Academy Awards based on multiple intelligences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff report strong friendships developed between students of different ethnicities.</td>
<td>• Organizational: Teaming of classes with different ethnic composition</td>
<td>Cornell Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Programmatic: After school activities are mixed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Organizational: Looping associated with increased personalization of relationships</td>
<td>Crispus Attucks High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students get along well with each other across ethnic groups</td>
<td>• Organizational: Heterogeneous grouping</td>
<td>Rosa Parks Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Curricular: Infusion of interethnic relations topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic dances, singing etc. participated in by kids of different ethnic groups</td>
<td>• Curricular: Tribes</td>
<td>Cornell Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased respect among students for other languages &amp; cultures</td>
<td>• Curricular: Every child learns a second language</td>
<td>Ferguson Elem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In examining the previous table, it is clear that curricular, programmatic, organizational, and special events approaches were most often associated with improved interethnic relations among students. This is not surprising, given that these approaches are designed to have a direct impact on students in the classroom, in extracurricular activities, or during special events. Organizational approaches which bring about increased mixing of students from different cultural ethnic backgrounds are particularly interesting because they provide a context wherein students have the opportunity to get to know each other. However, staff frequently pointed out that this is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the improvement of interethnic relations. In order to see real improvements in interethnic relations, students not only need to have opportunities to be in the same schools and classrooms with students of different ethnic backgrounds, but they also need to be engaged in meaningful tasks or activities together so that they can develop shared experiences and get to know one another as individuals. Allport’s theory of equal status contact suggests this as well (Allport, 1954). In the schools in the study, organizational approaches that created mixed settings were most often combined with curricular and pedagogical approaches that provided meaningful tasks for students to work on together.

**Increased academic achievement among students**

Table 14 displays examples of schools that showed evidence of increased academic achievement among students.

(Please see next page.)
### Table 14: Examples of increased student academic achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Attributed to which approach(es)?</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Graduation rate increased by 47%, 1986-97</td>
<td>• Programmatic: High levels of mentoring and tutoring&lt;br&gt;• Vision: High standards and high expectations&lt;br&gt;• Organizational: House structure associated with more personalized relationships among students &amp; between students &amp; teachers</td>
<td>Sojourner Truth High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regents diplomas increased by 265% in 5 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regents exams increased by 146% in 5 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• AP enrollment increased by 322% in 5 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students testing out of bilingual program increased 514% in 5 yrs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96% of 2nd graders tested at or above expectancy level on ITBS (considerably higher than 2 yrs ago)</td>
<td>• Curricular: High expectations coupled with support in Spanish language&lt;br&gt;• Diverse staffing: More Spanish speaking staff</td>
<td>Blue Ridge Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improved math achievement of African American students&lt;br&gt;• Increased participation in science by underrepresented groups&lt;br&gt;• 93% of students complete college entrance requirements</td>
<td>• Curricular/pedagogical: Cooperative learning used in math classes; integrated science curriculum&lt;br&gt;• Vision: High expectations</td>
<td>United Nations High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers report higher achievement overall in heterogeneous classes. FMS students score above nat'l. average in Reading, Math, Language</td>
<td>• Organizational: Heterogeneous grouping&lt;br&gt;• Programmatic: Mentoring and support programs</td>
<td>Fillmore Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most students catch up and go to regular high schools</td>
<td>• Curricular: Accelerated curriculum</td>
<td>Rosa Parks Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved academic performance among some students in program</td>
<td>• Programmatic: Homework Clubs&lt;br&gt;• Programmatic: Mentoring and tutoring programs-- RISE, Compass, Target Success</td>
<td>Royal Middle&lt;br&gt;Forest Hills High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students from the school are admitted to Wheaton</td>
<td>• Curricular: Wheaton college class helps students prepare for college</td>
<td>Crispus Attucks High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 14 shows, some of the schools in the study were able to show gains in academic performance. It is interesting to note that in most of these of these schools, the principal had been there for a relatively long time (from 6 years to 14 years), suggesting that consistency of leadership is an important factor in realizing achievement gains. The approaches
that were most often associated with academic achievement gains were curricular, programmatic, organizational, and vision. Curricular approaches typically focused on delivering high level content; programmatic approaches supported the students’ achievement through a variety of mentoring programs, providing scaffolding for less prepared students to achieve to the high standards that were set for coursework. Organizational approaches such as heterogeneous grouping (detracking) contributed to higher achievement at Fillmore by placing students who were previously in “low track”, less demanding classes in regular classes with high level curriculum. By providing mentoring and support for these students, many of them were able to raise their academic achievement, though there remained a wide gap between the achievement of Black and Latino students and white and Asian students. At Sojourner Truth, the organizational approach of houses broke down the large size of the school into manageable units which afforded a much more personalized environment for learning. Teachers and counselors were able to monitor student progress much more closely and, when combined with the principal’s very strong vision of high standards, plus high levels of mentoring and tutoring, produced a very high achieving school. This school demonstrates that it is possible, given appropriate schooling conditions, for low income students of color to achieve to high standards.

Not all of the schools in our study had shown gains in academic achievement yet, though all were hopeful that such gains would be realized in time. Many of these schools had only recently had a change of leadership and were still working on addressing basic safety and security needs (that is, level 1 and 2 priority needs as discussed in Chapter V), building a sense of community and belonging, and developing self esteem and esteem of others. Although these schools were also seeking to raise academic achievement, they had to work hard on fulfilling these other needs and this required time and energy on the part of leaders and staff. Schools that had already met basic safety and security needs, had developed a strong sense of community, and were fulfilling the need for self esteem and esteem of others, had more time and energy to devote to academic goals (see Chapter V).

Although academic achievement is not directly linked to interethnic relations, raising the academic achievement of students of color who have been underachieving can have dramatic implications for their status in the school and in the larger society and workplace. Equal status contact theory (Allport 1954) suggests that in order for children of different backgrounds to interact in ways that produce positive interpersonal relations, the contact should occur in circumstances that place the two groups in equal status. However, Fine et. al. (1997) argue that even if classroom contact is based on equality of status in the classroom, status outside the classroom remains profoundly unequal in terms of the history of economic and social disparities students bring with them to the classrooms. Such histories, Fine et. al. write, cannot simply be “erased” or “bracketed” when student step into the “equal status” classroom. Schools that address the historic underachievement of black, Latino, and other students of color are thus not only addressing equity goals; they are simultaneously addressing one of the most persistent underlying causes of racial/ethnic conflict — inequality based on race/ethnicity. Raising the academic achievement of historically underachieving students raises their status in society, both individually and as a
group. It changes their economic prospects and it has the power to change stereotypes about them.

**Improved student behavior indicators**

Many schools reported improvements in student behavior and discipline as exemplified in Table 15:

**Table 15: Examples of improved student behavior indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Attributed to which approach(es)?</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Attendance went from 74.7% to 91.4% in 9 yrs.</td>
<td>• Programmatic: High levels of mentoring and tutoring</td>
<td>Sojourner Truth High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dropout rate decreased from 11.4% to 2.9%, 89/90-96/97</td>
<td>• Vision: High standards and high expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organizational: House structure</td>
<td>• Organizational: House structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspensions dropped 24% between 95/96 &amp; 97/98</td>
<td>• Behavioral Standards: More consistent discipline</td>
<td>Gladiola Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Behavioral Standards: More consistent discipline</td>
<td>• Programmatic: More after school and lunchtime activities, positive opportunities for student involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Truancy was reduced by 40%;</td>
<td>• Leveraging resources: Collaboration with local police and parents to target at risk students</td>
<td>United Nations High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Staff report decrease in violence and racial conflict</td>
<td>• Programmatic: Conflict Resolution, Human Relations Program, and Link Crew</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students and teachers reported school was safer</td>
<td>• Behavioral standards: Nonviolence campaign, tighter discipline</td>
<td>Allaneq Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discipline referrals tapering off</td>
<td>• Programmatic: More after school and lunch time activities for Ss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers felt more supported by administration</td>
<td>• Leveraging resources: Bringing in district Human Relations staff</td>
<td>Rancho Verde High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence has been reduced; very little evidence of gang presence on campus; gang activity also down in the community</td>
<td>• Programmatic: Conflict Resol’n, Peer Counseling, Care Team</td>
<td>Dolores Huerta Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Leveraging resources: Partnership with Police Dep’t.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15 (continued): Examples of improved student behavior indicators

| Drop in level of conflict & violence | • Programmatic: Conflict Resolution, Tribes  
• Curricular: Strong counseling approach using "Quality Schools" framework  
• Behavioral Standards: Consistent standards for behavior  
• Organizational: Family structures set up to increase personalization | Cornell Elem.  
Blue Ridge Elem.  
Rainbow Elem. |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 9th grade discipline referrals have been decreased. | • Curricular: Making the Peace Curriculum  
• Organizational: 9th grade house system | Rancho Verde High |
| Very few discipline needs on campus -- mainly tardies and unexcused absences, not violence | • Behavioral standards: Assertive discipline policy | Maya Lin High |
| Most students buy in to discipline policy | • Behavioral standards: Students help create discipline policy  
• Programmatic: Peer mediation and conflict resolution | Rosa Parks Middle |

As one might expect, the approach most often associated with improved student behavior involved creating or refining behavioral standards so that they were clear, shared by all staff as well as parents and students, and then upheld consistently by those who were responsible for discipline. One of the biggest problems for school leaders, especially in larger schools, is “getting everyone on the same page” in terms of behavioral standards. As we mentioned earlier, defining what is meant by a category such as “defiant” is critical if schools are to give equal consequences for the same behavioral violations across different student groups. It appears that at Gladiola, Allaneq, and Rainbow, three schools that had serious problems with behavior just prior to the study’s beginning, the time and effort devoted to establishing consistent and fair behavioral standards was well worth it as these schools did succeed in creating much safer, more secure environments. At Rancho Verde, the other school that faced serious issues of violence just prior to the beginning of the study, the violence was linked to gang activity more so than general discipline and behavior problems; thus the approach at that school was to address the gang conflict by reaching out to a local resource, the human relations staff from the district, and through their help, bringing the gangs together to construct a peaceful resolution.

Other approaches that were credited with creating an impact on student behavior included programs such as conflict resolution and peer mediation, which taught skills for preventing violence and resolving conflicts peacefully; curricular interventions such as Tribes and
Making the Peace; and a counseling approach in which consistent ways of handling student behavior issues were taught to all teachers and the counselor visited all classrooms regularly to teach social skills to children. Improvements in student behavior were also attributed to family and house structures that broke down the size of the school into smaller units to create a more personalized educational experience.

**Increased diversity in student leadership**

Another way in which an impact on students was evident was that some schools had seen the emergence of more diverse student leadership. Table 16 provides some examples:

**Table 16: Examples of increased diversity in student leadership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Attributed to which approach(es)?</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| More diverse students play leadership roles | • Programmatic: Student ethnic clubs  
• Programmatic: Conflict Resolution  
• Programmatic: Building Bridges  
• Organizational: Principal’s Advisory Council | Ohlone High; Rancho Verde  
Cornell Elem.  
Maya Lin High  
Allaneq Middle |

These increases in the diversity of student leadership were largely attributed to programmatic efforts such as student clubs with an ethnic focus at the high school level. These clubs each had leaders, and these leaders often participated in other student leadership forums as well, or faculty tended to select club leaders for special opportunities. Another program that had developed diverse student leaders was the Building Bridges program at Maya Lin, in which students were trained in human relations activities and then led workshops with their peers and also for faculty. At Cornell Elementary, the Conflict Resolution program was credited with developing a very diverse group of student leaders. Some schools, such as Midvale High and Sojourner Truth High, had had diverse student leadership for several years and it was not clear what approaches had created this condition. Others, such as Allaneq, had created new organizational structures that would foster more diverse student leadership. The new principal at Allaneq had instituted a “Principal’s Advisory Council” composed of elected students from each homeroom. This very diverse group of students appeared thrilled to have the opportunity to advise the principal, and the principal was taking their role very seriously and mentoring them in how to be good leaders. During the first three months of the council, they had already made some changes toward increasing the number of student after school and lunchtime activities.
At several high schools, despite efforts over several years to develop more diverse student leadership, the student government persisted in being less diverse than the school as a whole. At three high schools, for example, the student government was primarily Filipino or Asian. Students at one school explained that it was perceived as a “Filipino thing” to be in leadership and this perception acted as a deterrent to other students who might be interested otherwise.

The emergence of more diverse student leadership is an important outcome to track if schools are serious about achieving equitable outcomes across the different groups of students and improving interethnic relations. When student leadership is diverse, it sends a message to other students that they, too can take on leadership roles in the school and in society. It also helps to guard against elitism and the divisiveness that results when one ethnic or social group has all the power.

**Increased staff collaboration and/or improved relationships among staff**

Several schools reported that collaborations among teachers had developed or that staff relations had improved, and these improvements among staff were linked with various positive impacts on students, such as greater personalization, more modeling of intergroup cooperation, etc. Table 17 provides several examples of schools where staff relations had improved:

**Table 17: Examples of increased staff collaboration/improved staff relations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Attributed to which approach(es)?</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher collaboration has produced greater infusion of multicultural perspectives in curriculum, which in turn has had a positive impact on students. There is also less departmental fragmentation</td>
<td>• Organizational: Paid collaboration time and coring</td>
<td>Ohlone High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers work together more easily than before team structure; resulted in more personalized relationships among teachers; less departmental fragmentation</td>
<td>• Organizational: Team structure for all students and teachers</td>
<td>Allaneq Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly team meetings in which teachers collaborate have resulted in remarkable consistency across classrooms.</td>
<td>• Organizational: Weekly team meetings</td>
<td>Buena Vista Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff serving diverse students are included in regular planning (not marginalized)</td>
<td>• Organizational: Weekly team meetings include language teachers</td>
<td>Ferguson Elem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter VII

It is interesting to note that in all the examples, organizational changes were considered responsible for improved staff collaboration and relationships. These organizational changes mainly involved paid time for staff to meet together for curricular planning, student monitoring, and a variety of other reasons. Increasing collegiality and creating productive, positive working relationships among staff, while it did not directly improve interethnic relations among students, was important in setting a positive tone at the school and creating structures from which other innovations could flow. Collaborations among faculty provided visible examples through which students could see the value of working together across various lines of difference — disciplinary, ethnic, and role group. The Multicultural Collaboration Group at Ohlone, for example, provided a powerful illustration of interethnic cooperation and solidarity among teachers which was not lost on students.

Furthermore, increasing collegiality among staff had tangible results in terms of staff members’ ability to monitor student progress. When groups of teachers shared responsibility for the same students, as the teams at Allaneq did, students were more closely monitored and those who were in danger of falling behind or dropping out could more easily be brought back. Team meeting time at this school was often used to check in with each other about how a particular student was doing in everyone’s classes, or to ask what had happened to a student who hadn’t shown up for several days and to assign somebody the responsibility of calling home.

Finally, collaboration among staff had in many cases produced products such as curriculum that employed multicultural perspectives, which were then used in fostering greater awareness of ethnicity and social justice issues among students.

**Increased staff awareness about interethnic relations, diversity**

Not surprisingly, an important outcome of many schools’ efforts to improve interethnic relations was a heightened awareness on the part of staff members about the diverse students they served and the dynamics of intergroup relations. Table 18 provides examples of these increases:
Table 18: Examples of increased staff awareness about interethnic relations, diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Attributed to which approach(es)?</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff became more aware of disparities in achievement.</td>
<td>• Professional dev't: Healthy Start planning process and annual diversity focus</td>
<td>Fillmore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers who were trained shared training with students.</td>
<td>• Professional dev't: Visions training</td>
<td>Crispus Attucks High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several teachers reported this activity changed the way they teach, made them more responsive to diverse students.</td>
<td>• Professional dev't: Monthly SEED meetings.</td>
<td>Cornell Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers have stronger knowledge base and skills to work with Spanish speaking students.</td>
<td>• Professional Dev't: In second language acquisition, Spanish language &amp; Mexican culture</td>
<td>Blue Ridge Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are well versed in theory &amp; practice of up-to-date teaching methods. Observations show that well planned classes are a constant across grade levels &amp; teachers.</td>
<td>• Professional Dev't: Peer coaching, teacher portfolios, book clubs, outside experts</td>
<td>Buena Vista Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff, students, parents, and school administrators are aware that different ethnic groups at MTHS have differential achievement patterns.</td>
<td>• Data-based: District creates Minority student Achievement Reports so that progress in achieving equity goals can be measured.</td>
<td>Midvale Township HS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table shows, increased staff awareness about interethnic relations and diversity was attributed mainly to well-planned professional development opportunities. In every case, these professional development opportunities were long term or recurrent, not “one shot” workshops. Staff who had attended one shot trainings or trainings with poor follow up complained to us that these were a waste of time and had done little to improve their own knowledge or practice or to improve student outcomes. In fact, these negative experiences tended to have a “spill over” effect, making staff wary of attending other “diversity” trainings.

Professional development opportunities need not be called “professional development” to be effective. At Buena Vista Elementary, peer coaching and team meetings functioned for faculty as a professional development opportunity in which other teachers coached each other informally, sharing resources and skills informally that enhanced each others’ ability to work with diverse students. At Fillmore, staff involved in planning for a Healthy Start grant proposal engaged in intensive professional development as they developed their shared vision for the school and sought viable ways to implement it. Part of this process involved looking closely at disaggregated data on student achievement and discussing the
disparities these data made evident. Similarly, at Midvale Township High, the Minority Student Achievement Reports functioned as a vehicle that led to in-depth explorations of how staff could improve minority student achievement.

Our study suggests strongly that developing positive interethnic relations at a school is a process that adults must be involved in as learners just as much — if not more than — students. Adults come to schools with a mixed bag of good intentions, love of children, skills, and resources, as well as long held attitudes and perceptions that influence the ways they teach, the ways they discipline students, etc. Thus many staff, whether they are aware of it or not, are under-prepared to work effectively with students of different ethnic backgrounds and do not have much experience with building positive interethnic relations themselves. In order to be good role models and teachers for students, they too need to develop skills and understandings that will help them develop positive relations with people of different ethnic backgrounds.

Increased involvement of diverse parents

Our study shows that when schools place an emphasis on involving parents of diverse backgrounds in meaningful ways, there are tangible and direct outcomes that can be measured in terms of the number of parents of different ethnic groups who come to the school for various purposes. Table 19 provides examples of some of these outcomes.

Table 19: Examples of increased involvement of diverse parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Attributed to which approach(es)?</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design of school building reflects parent input</td>
<td>• Parent involvement: Focus groups of parents met to inform building design.</td>
<td>Joshua Tree Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent diversity committee includes active parents of color</td>
<td>• Parent involvement</td>
<td>Fillmore Middle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| School is used more as a resource by diverse parents | • Leveraging resources: Healthy Start funding used to create Family Resource Center  
• Leveraging Resources: FEMA food distribution site; Governor's Wellmobile provides basic health needs for families  
• Extending the school community: Collaboration with Vietnamese organizations | Cornell Elem.  
Rainbow Elem.  
Dolores Huerta Middle |
### Table 19 (continued): Examples of increased involvement of diverse parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent leadership is becoming more diverse</th>
<th>• Parent involvement: Parent Center, parent education program, • Diverse staffing: Parent Center coordinators are Latina &amp; African American; academic mentors • Parent involvement: Parents take leadership in program development and curriculum change</th>
<th>Cornell Elem. Ferguson Elem.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents of different ethnicities report that they feel welcome at the school</td>
<td>• Diverse staffing: Bilingual front office staff, other multicultural or bilingual staff or administrative team • Parent involvement: Events such as family literacy night, etc.</td>
<td>Blue Ridge Elem. Cornell Elem. Gladiola Middle Ferguson Elem. Buena Vista Elem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are more involved with parents</td>
<td>• Organizational: Looping -- Ss stay with same T for 3 yrs. • Organizational: Teaming -- T’s share same group of students, meet daily to share info, monitor progress. • Parent involvement: Home visits</td>
<td>Buena Vista Elem. Allaneq Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant parents have a viable place to volunteer in classes</td>
<td>• Curricular: Second language learning for all students</td>
<td>Ferguson Elem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 19 indicates, increased involvement of diverse parents was noted at the elementary and middle school levels only. The approaches that were said to have helped included various direct parent involvement efforts such as evening classes for parents in areas of their interest or need; or special events such as a Family Literacy Night at Blue Ridge, a very well-attended event in which classrooms were set up with different literacy activities for parents and children, all of which were either conducted bilingually or included bilingual support. However, less direct approaches also made a big difference in how welcome parents felt at the school. Parents told us that having bilingual or culturally appropriate...
staff in the front office, where parents first entered the school, made a big difference in their comfort level on campus. Having other culturally diverse and bilingual staff available to talk with parents, translate, etc., was also considered very important by parents, as was having diverse administrators. Organizational approaches such as looping, teaming, and houses also helped increase diverse parent involvement because they created closer relationships between teachers and parents.

A unique and powerful example of parent involvement was at Joshua Tree Intermediate, a new school that was created when the former K-5 school became too overcrowded and the district split the grade levels into two schools. Parents were invited to help in developing the design of the new intermediate school, and their input resulted in the creation of a parent center with a kitchen and a large meeting area located in the central hub of the school building. Thus parent involvement was reflected structurally in building itself.

Parents are key to children’s success in school. Thus the more schools are able to involve the parents of diverse students, the greater the chance of these students staying connected to school and succeeding in school though the combined support of their parents and teachers. Having diverse parents involved in leadership also creates a model for students, similar to seeing diverse teachers collaborating or diverse students playing leadership roles. Thus, we came to see diverse parent involvement as one of the subgoals that schools need to realize as they try to create more positive interethnic relations across all sectors of the school community.

**Improved school climate or maintained positive climate**

School climate is a particularly nebulous area to measure because it entails many aspects of school life that are subjective. In discussing school climate with students and staff members, they tended to refer to such features as the friendliness of staff and students, the degree to which students and staff feel valued both as individuals and as members of various ethnic and linguistic groups, and the extent to which there is fragmentation among staff. We provide some examples of these kinds of evidence in Table 20:
What Impact Did The Approaches Have?

Table 20: Examples showing improved school climate or maintenance of positive climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Attributed to which approach(es)?</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students and staff report extremely positive attitudes about learning and working at the school</td>
<td>• Programmatic: Counseling emphasis • Leveraging resources: Campus has health clinic, child care, etc.</td>
<td>Sojourner Truth High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations and interviews suggest harmonious climate and high inclusion for both staff and students</td>
<td>• Professional dev’t.: Focus on diversity issues • Special Events: Multicultural week • Programmatic: Human Relations, Conflict Resolution, Link Crew</td>
<td>Maya Lin High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Across role groups, there is great pride in the exhibition center which displays student academic work and examples of their home culture</td>
<td>• Organizational: Exhibition center provides physical space allocated to celebrating student cultures and achievement</td>
<td>United Nations High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students, staff and parents all feel the climate of the school has improved; faculty are more willing to participate in after-school activities and meetings because they feel more supported by administrators.</td>
<td>• Behavioral standards: Consistent standards • Special Events: More events that celebrate and value students individually and culturally</td>
<td>Gladiola Middle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The nebulous character of what gets defined as school climate is reflected in the variety of approaches that were credited with improving it. Special events that celebrate and value students’ cultures were key factors in creating a positive climate at several schools, as was the allocation of a special exhibit space for student work at Buena Vista. Providing for the emotional and physical needs of students’ through counseling and health services was deemed important at Sojourner Truth High. Programs that focus on human relations, resolving conflict, and linking 9th graders with older students as mentors were credited with improving the climate at United Nations High. At Gladiola, establishing more consistent behavioral standards made faculty feel more supported by administrators.

Improved or enhanced school’s or minority group’s reputation in community

At some schools, a “spin off” benefit of efforts to improve interethnic relations was that the larger community came to hold a more positive perception of the school and/or the minority students who attend that school. Thus, not only were interethnic relations improving at
the school, but the school efforts were having a wider impact on the community. Table 21 provides some examples:

**Table 21: Examples showing improved or enhanced reputation of school or minority group in the community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Attributed to which approach(es)?</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Substitute teachers used to avoid the school; now they ask dispatcher to send them there;  
  • Number of "zone outs" to other schools has dropped; # of "zone ins" increased.  
  • More local resources have donated services/funds to school. | • Leveraging resources: Public relations efforts in the community  
  • Organizational: Team approach                                    | Allaneq Middle                |
| Parents vie to get their children into the Spanish immersion program; enhanced an already positive school reputation | • Curricular: Language learning for all children                                                 | Ferguson Elem.                |
| School has garnered substantial support for programs from local businesses | • Leveraging resources: Business partnerships and Title 1 and other grants.                      | Buena Vista Elem.             |
| School has more volunteers in classrooms and more money for special activities | • Expanding the school community through partnerships and by making site available to neighborhood groups | Rainbow Elem.                |
| Mexicans are seen as a valued resource, good workers, whereas earlier they were looked upon as a burden | Expanding the school community: Collaboration between school district, industry, and a Mexican university for teacher exchange | Blue Ridge Elem.             |

At Allaneq, Buena Vista, and Rainbow, the improved reputation came about largely through the school leaders’ efforts to leverage more resources for the school. At Allaneq, the principal also spoke out in the community to dispel racist notions about the school as a gang school, pointing out in a much quoted sound byte that Allaneq was “the poorest school in the district economically but the richest school culturally.” She also publicly protested negative stories that appeared in the local news media, pushing the media to report positive stories as well. At Ferguson, the Spanish immersion program became an attractive option that drew much positive attention to a school that already had a good reputation.
Blue Ridge was a unique case in which the societal stereotypes of Mexicans as lazy or criminally inclined were profoundly challenged by an intervention that involved the entire community. In this community in the Southeast, professionals and business leaders in the community, together with the school district, developed an exchange program between a Mexican teacher training university and the school district. Through this project and the public relations efforts that accompanied it, attitudes in the community toward Latino workers began to shift from negative stereotypes to what Suarez Oroszco (1998) calls a “good immigrant script.” That is, Mexican workers were portrayed as good workers, loyal, family oriented, etc. While this has had a largely positive impact on race relations between Mexicans and European Americans in the community, it must be added that we felt these positive stereotypes were fragile, dependent as they were on the economic health of the community. They also tended to cast other laborers (especially low income African Americans and whites) in an implicit contrast to the Mexican workers, thus possibly highlighting negative perceptions of these groups. To their credit, several of the leaders in this community recognized these concerns and were working to build more permanent avenues for cooperation and to develop leadership among the new immigrants.

Discussion

This analysis of impact in the study’s 21 schools suggests that school leaders can become better at measuring their schools’ progress in human relations. If improving human relations is indeed an important goal of a school leader, then ways to measure progress systematically need to be put into place. The old adage “You are what you measure” is apt here. Leaders need to consider questions such as the following: What are the areas where their human relations efforts are likely to have an impact? What indicators could the school monitor in order to chart their progress in meeting their human relations goals? How much time do they expect it will take to see the beginning of a positive impact? How much time will it take before a deeper impact might be seen? We hope that the above analysis of areas of impact can provide some beginning ideas about how schools in the future might measure human relations progress.
WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE ADMINISTRATORS?

- Implications related to school context
- Implications related to interethnic conflicts and tensions
- Implications related to leadership roles in interethnic relations
- Implications related to approaches for developing positive interethnic relations
- Implications related to measuring the impact of interethnic relations efforts
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What Are The Implications Of This Study For The Professional Development Of Future Administrators?

Throughout this report, we have discussed implications of the findings for the professional development of future school leaders. These implications are a key piece of the research project because in our next two years, we will be focusing on developing a curriculum for future administrators. This curriculum will draw directly from the research findings, and will use a case methods or problem-based approach adapted from the work of Shulman & Mesa-Bains (1993), Bridges (1992) and others.

In order to move ahead to this next phase of the project, however, the core learnings of the research have to be identified and framed in terms of what school leaders need to know and be able to do in order to “lead for diversity” – that is, in order to guide and facilitate school communities in addressing issues of ethnic conflict and building positive interethnic relations. This final chapter, then, accomplishes several purposes at once: It provides a summary of the implications of this research for the professional development of future school leaders; in doing so, it also develops the conceptual base of the curriculum and serves as the bridge to the next phases of the project, curriculum development.

- Implications related to school context

Professional development for school leaders needs to provide tools for assessing school contexts in order to identify supports and constraints that have an effect on interethnic relations.

The schools in the Leading for Diversity study have demonstrated that each school leader steps into a different context and history which may have laid important groundwork for positive interethnic relations, created barriers that impede relationship building, or, more likely, some combination of these possibilities. For school leaders who want to create positive change in intergroup relations of any kind (not only among different ethnic groups), assessing their own context is a necessary first step. Our findings from this study show that some schools and their leaders, because of their pre-existing contexts, do face more real barriers and rely on fewer contextual supports in their quest to develop positive interethnic relations. Such an analysis should be a part of the planning process every school leader and leadership team goes through in charting their own goals and determining priorities. Also, any assessment of what a school or a particular leader has accomplished in terms of interethnic relations must be made relative to that school’s pre-existing context as schools will have different rates of progress depending their context.

For example, are there built-in segregated groupings of students that cannot be changed in
What Are the Implications of This Study for the Professional Development of Future Administrators?

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the short term because of district policies? If so, leaders will have to develop structured ways to bring students together outside of class time if they want to promote positive interethnic relations. Are some students bussed in from a different part of town? If so, the school will have to find ways to make parents feel like they are a community in spite of their disparate home neighborhoods. Is the physical site conducive to community building, or does it tend to keep people separate? If the building structure tends to keep people apart, then compensating structures need to be developed to encourage collaboration and informal sharing among staff and students.

Questions like these can help new school leaders understand what challenges they need to work with, as well as what resources and supports can be marshaled in the change process they envision. When school leaders understand their own particular set of contextual constraints and supports, they are also more likely to realize that ‘cookie cutter’ models for improving interethnic relations will not work, and that the change process must take place through the school’s own unique pathway, drawing on other models and insights from the literature, but always working out the details of implementation in site specific ways.

Professional development for school leaders should help them understand what their school has control over and can therefore change.

There are many contextual features of schools which are not under the immediate control of those within the school. These include, for example, community factors such as high gang presence or a community with a very wide income range; district factors such as low district salaries compared to other neighboring district; and historical events that have set some kind of precedent, such as a previous principal’s contributions, or a school governance structure that has been in place for many years and has made rigid authoritarian decision making a deeply embedded part of school culture. Identifying those aspects of school context which are beyond the control of the school or so deeply embedded that they will take several years to change can assist leaders in planning and prevent resources and energy from flowing in directions that will ultimately prove unproductive. On the other hand, there are many areas over which school leadership does have control and can make a difference, such as the safety and security of the school, the degree of community students and staff feel, the types of professional development opportunities staff have, etc. Leaders can learn to identify short-range, mid-range and long-range goals for change. Short-term plans can target areas where the school has a high degree of control and can see results of change relatively quickly (i.e., in a year or two). Mid-range plans can target areas where the school has slightly less control, but results could be seen within five years. Long-range plans can identify those changes that will require mobilization of others beyond the school, and results may not be evident until six to ten years later.
Professional development for school leaders needs to recognize the powerful role played by districts in shaping interethnic relations at the school level.

The study demonstrates that districts, even though they are not involved in the day-to-day life of the students, can play a critical role in creating support structures that enhance school level efforts to build positive interethnic relations. Nine out of the 21 schools in the study benefited from substantial district supports, some of which were directly related to interethnic relations (e.g., a district-wide diversity initiative), and others which were less direct but no less impactful (e.g., the way school catchment zones were determined so as to maintain diversity in the schools; the transition time provided for incoming principals to be in a school before taking charge; or the weekly, paid collaboration time for teachers). The districts in our study, whether they were aware of it or not, wielded a great deal of power over how interethnic relations were played out in the schools, and some district leaders had used that power in very conscious ways to craft supportive structures and policies that would encourage positive relations.

Since school leaders serve as a vital communication link between schools and district offices, they need to become skilled not only at making the most of the district supports that are in place already, but also at speaking up about the needs of the school sites, including letting district officials know how certain district policies and practices act to constrain positive relations among ethnic groups. In this way, district administrators at least become aware of the effects of their policies and structures, and in the best scenario, they develop future district plans that will be more supportive of positive interethnic relations.

Professional development for future school leaders should prepare them to analyze the history of previous leadership.

Unless they start their own school, new school leaders always step into an existing lineage of former leaders, each of whom have made various contributions or in some cases allowed unhealthy school environments to develop. From the perspective of a new school leader seeking to make changes toward more positive interethnic relations, understanding this history of previous leadership is essential. New school leaders need to know “what they are stepping into” and what have been the key contributions of previous leaders. This knowledge, together with an understanding of the contextual constraints and supports, becomes part of the background when school leaders make decisions about current priorities and directions. For now, we want to emphasize that this history of leadership, like the contextual constraints and supports, is something that new leaders do not control and yet it can have a powerful influence on the agenda that a new leader sets. New school leaders have to be able to assess this legacy and determine what previous groundwork in human relations development, if any, has been laid at the school.
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What Are The Implications Of This Study For The Professional Development Of Future Administrators?

- **Implications related to interethnic conflicts and tensions**

Professional development for future school leaders should help them identify conflicts and tensions in the school environment.

One of the characteristics of the leaders in the study is that they were constantly doing informal assessments of the status of conflict and tensions in their schools, and this to a large extent guided them in prioritizing where to focus their efforts. A typology of racial/ethnic conflicts such as the one shared in this report can be of practical use to future school leaders in helping them understand what to look for as they assess the state of conflicts in their own school communities.

Professional development for future school leaders should help them recognize precursors of overt conflict, including underlying tensions and root causes of racial/ethnic conflict.

When school leaders operate from the assumption that overt kinds of conflict are the only ones to be concerned about, they place themselves in the role of reacting to conflict. Reframing the problem so that overt conflict is recognized as a symptom, effective school leaders can focus on addressing the more subtle or hidden tensions that may be related to race or ethnicity. Working from this perspective, the school leader places him or herself in a more proactive role. Our findings suggest that professional development time would be well spent in familiarizing leaders with the continuum of racial/ethnic conflict and how it can be applied to specific school settings. This continuum includes root causes of conflict, such as the inequalities produced by segregation, tracking, etc.; underlying tensions such as avoidance of certain groups; and overt conflict such as physical violence and namecalling.

Professional development for future school leaders should prepare them to address adult conflict as well as student conflict.

People who are not familiar with schools often make the mistake of assuming that interethnic conflict in schools takes place only among students. Quite to the contrary, we found that any role group in a school community can be involved in these conflicts or tensions. Thus, while our goal is to make schools more respectful environments for students, one of the ways to achieve that goal is to encourage the adults in the school to model respectful, culturally sensitive behaviors. School leaders therefore need professional development that will assist them in developing structures and policies to address adult conflicts and promote positive interethnic relations among adults.
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Professional development for school leaders should assist them in determining when conflicts or tensions have a racial or ethnic component.

Ethnicity and / or racial identity are only one part of the complex package that makes up a person’s social identity. Other aspects of social identity include class, gender, family background, religion, birth order, and so forth. Individuals are not influenced by one of these factors at a time, making it difficult sometimes to decide when a particular conflict has a racial component. We found that school leaders who were successful in addressing conflicts of various kinds were good listeners who understood that “People act in accord with their definition of the situation” (Kreisberg, 1998, p. 4) and if at least one party in the incident defines the situation as racial or ethnic, then their actions are going to be based on that understanding. A school leader who has to address this situation must recognize it as having a racial/ethnic dimension; otherwise, he or she will miss the mark in terms of working out a resolution.

Professional development for school leaders should familiarize them with theories that explain interethnic relations, stages and types of conflict, and multicultural education.

School leadership is an inherently action-oriented role, and as such reflection and analysis is often missing because, as one leader noted, “We tend to be changing the tire while driving down the freeway.” Leaders who spend all their time theorizing about action will never actually act, and will consequently be viewed as weak and ineffective leaders. On the other hand, leaders in our study who were able to draw on theories to make sense of their actions were often better able to communicate the reasons for their actions to the various school constituencies – students, teachers, parents, school board, etc. In the area of ethnic relations, we have found several theoretical frameworks to be particularly useful. These include the theory of equal status contact (Allport, 1954, and others who have extended or challenged this theory); Kreisberg’s (1998) typology of conflicts; the work on the development of racial identity done by Tatum (1997), Helms (1990), and Cross (1991); and the work on different levels of multicultural inclusion done by Banks (1993) and Grant and Sleeter (1989).

A brief example will help illustrate how theoretical knowledge can inform leadership in interethnic relations. Teachers in the study’s schools often commented that they were perplexed at the way some students seemed to cluster by ethnicity, while others seemed to be much more open to having friendships with students of different ethnic groups. We often heard teachers comparing elementary, middle and high school students in terms of how rigid the ethnic group clusters were, and many noted that ethnic grouping became much more solidified in middle and high school. An understanding of the stages of racial identity development can help educators make sense of these observations. The idea that students and adults move through different stages of racial identity, and that the stages look somewhat different for white students and for students of color, suggests that educators can help them with this process — if they themselves understand it.
Professional development for future school leaders should view leadership as the crucial agent in bringing together different elements to create a positive interethnic community.

Oftentimes, schools have a number of elements already in place to support meaningful interethnic relations, but unless these elements are brought together as a meaningful whole, they fail to create an impact. They are “necessary but not sufficient.” At Gladiola Middle School for example, many of the supportive elements necessary for establishing a positive, healthy school environment were present before the current principal took over (e.g., the funding, the physical plant, parents willing to be meaningfully involved, etc.) but these supports were not sufficient to realize the potential that existed there because leadership was lacking. The new leadership provided the coherent vision as well as an understanding of how the various elements must be orchestrated to create a healthy and diverse community.

Professional development for future school leaders should familiarize them with the “progression of needs” as a tool for prioritizing what the school needs to work on next and mapping out future goals.

The study suggests strongly that schools which are making proactive efforts to build positive interethnic communities move through a “progression of needs” where basic needs of safety and security must be satisfied to a significant degree, and that higher order needs such as the need for community, self esteem, and self actualization can only be fully engaged when safety and security are being addressed.

Professional development for future school leaders should help them identify the needs of different constituencies.

The study clearly shows that in identifying priority needs at a school, the leadership cannot assume that different constituencies have the same needs. For example, while teachers may be experiencing a need for a stronger sense of community, students may be more focused on a need to feel safe and secure in the school environment. Yet it is interesting, but not surprising, to note that in the process of addressing the more basic safety and security needs (i.e., increased disciplinary follow through and more opportunities for positive student involvement and recognition), both students and staff became more engaged and involved and thus developed a greater sense of community. It seems likely then that it is possible to serve “higher order” needs in the process of serving basic needs, whereas it may not be effective, or may indeed be counterproductive, to attempt to address higher order
needs when more basic needs have not been satisfied. This principle bears further testing and analysis, but if true, offers promising possibilities for designing approaches to building harmonious interethnic communities that address multiple needs through a coherent, integrated approach.

Professional development for future school leaders should enable them to develop a vision of social relations that is not merely a motto or statement, but a set of practices that take place daily in the life of the school.

The vision has to go beyond rhetoric and become embedded in the daily practice of the school. In order to move the vision to the level of action, school leaders need to be provided with examples that illustrate how this “translation” from abstract to concrete was accomplished in other schools. Many of the leaders in our study had developed intermediate themes (such as personalization, non-violence, etc.) which linked the vision to more concrete practice. This will be discussed in more detail shortly in the section on “approaches.”

Professional development for future school leaders should provide them with strategies for involving other stakeholders in the development of a school vision.

Key to the development of a vision is the process of gaining buy in among various stakeholders so that the vision is not viewed as “the principal’s vision” but as “our vision.” Gaining this buy in, as we have seen in the study, can be a lengthy and cumbersome process of several years, and future leaders could benefit from explicit guidance that focuses on how to meaningfully involve diverse stakeholders in the development of this vision.

Professional development for school leaders should help them develop a vision that attends to diversity.

It is common for schools to have visions that focus on “meeting the learning needs of all students”. This vision, while it is certainly part of what schools need to do, tends to wash out diversity in the simple word “all.” While it implies that none will be ignored or marginalized, it fails to tell us how those needs are defined. Most educators agree at least in theory that one “need” is for all students to have access to academic success, and certainly the schools in the study all strive to make academic success achievable for all their students. However, many of the school leaders in the study questioned whether the basic purpose of formal education might go further than preparing students of all backgrounds for success in mainstream society. Should schools, for example, play any role in nurturing students’ sense of cultural or ethnic identity? Should schools play a role in developing positive human relations? Should schools play a role in teaching students to be critical, to question and challenge inequities that schools and other institutions perpetuate? (Ladson Billings, 1995). We have become increasingly convinced, through this study and other work we have done with schools, that a focus on academics alone is not enough and that schools do have a responsibility to take on education in these other areas.
Professional development for future school leaders should have a vision for diversity.

The institutions, curricula, and instructional practices that together make up the professional development sphere cannot stand apart from the vision of diversity we suggest schools need to develop. Professional development itself must also have a vision. Otherwise, we run the risk of doing professional development with no clear purpose in sight, and the various activities along the way become merely a collection of managerial information and strategies. We can have the most wonderfully inclusive, engaging, and challenging curriculum, but if we cannot answer the question, “Professional development for what?” then these processes stand as placeholders for a substance that is missing.

Professional development for future school leaders should enable them to articulate to staff how they see their own communication style and role.

While the study included several principals who had characteristics one could describe as “charismatic,” we found that leaders with more reserved communication styles and those who facilitate or enable rather than take the lead on change can also be very effective. This may be particularly true of change that is related to diversity because a key dimension of making schools more responsive to diverse populations is the whole issue of inclusion. Principals who are good at including diverse members of the school community in leadership roles have an advantage, as do principals who listen to others well. The findings also suggest that schools might benefit if principals were able to identify their own communication style and their preferred role and then share that with staff. Teachers could benefit from knowing what kind of role they need to assume given the kind of leadership they have. Also, as more culturally and ethnically diverse administrators begin to fill the role of principal, cross-cultural issues of communication style become more important because the potential for miscommunication is greater.

Professional development for future school leaders should prepare leaders to create conditions in which interethnic relations can grow and flourish.

The key contributions of the leaders in the study often did not appear at first glance to be related to reducing ethnic conflict or developing positive interethnic relations. For example, creating a shared leadership structure is a managerial process that does not have a direct impact on interethnic relations. However, when we consider that shared leadership allows more voices to be heard in decision making, and if we assume that some of those voices either belong to people of color or at least represent their views to some extent, then we see that shared decision making can help to create a school that is more inclusive of diverse perspectives. Fewer people are likely to be marginalized or disenfranchised in such a scenario, and relations among the different ethnic groups are likely to improve if other dimensions of school life are consistent with this greater inclusiveness. In other words, shared leadership may be a necessary but not sufficient condition for enabling more positive interethnic relations to emerge.
We found that a major role of these principals in the 21 schools was not so much directly acting to improve interethnic relations (only one principal, for example, actually led his staff in workshops on developing more positive interethnic relations) but rather creating conditions that led to such outcomes as a greater sense of safety and security; a greater sense of community; more personalized interactions among students and between students and staff; a more capable staff who understand the diverse learning needs of their students and show a greater respect and value for the diverse ethnic groups and cultures; improved relations with parents and community; and improved academic outcomes, especially for those students who had traditionally underachieved.

Professional development for future school leaders should provide them with skills for fostering leadership among others.

The study indicates that many other role groups besides the principal can and do take initiative to lead efforts to improve interethnic relations or human relations more generally. In schools where the administration is still largely Euro-American, it is particularly important for principals to encourage leadership among people of color and others who care deeply about achieving a more equitable, socially just, respectful environment. This not only paves the way for more diverse leaders to take on formal leadership roles in the future, but also ensures that efforts to improve human relations are not “owned” by any one individual or group. Thus they have a greater likelihood of being sustained if one or more individuals move on. The study suggests that future administrators need to develop skills for fostering the development of other leaders who can spearhead interethnic relations efforts, and that fostering the development of leaders with diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds is especially important.

We also found that the teachers and others who took on leadership roles in interethnic relations had done so more or less “by the seat of their pants.” A more structured professional development approach through which teacher leaders could obtain a credential in teacher leadership would help create a new cadre of leaders who do not necessarily want to become administrators but who do show interest in leading school changes.

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**Implications related to approaches for developing positive interethnic relations**

Professional development for future school leaders should familiarize them with a range of approaches for addressing overt cases of racial or ethnic conflict among students.

Leaders in the study had developed a number of ways to deal with immediate problems involving race or ethnicity. Most of these approaches involved setting and maintaining consistent behavioral standards and having structures in place to deal with overt conflict.
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should it arise – e.g., well trained APs or counselors who can mediate conflicts having a racial dimension; conflict resolution programs in which students are trained as conflict managers; and security or campus police who are trained not only to address fights and violence but also to build positive relationships with young people. Many of the leaders in our study also used incidents of overt conflict as “teachable moments” through which to engage staff and students in learning how to develop more positive interethnic relations.

Professional development for future school leaders should provide them with strategies for responding to racial or ethnic conflicts among adults.

School leaders in our study did not view conflict as something that only happens among students. They sometimes found themselves in the role of mediating or resolving racial/ethnic conflicts among staff or between staff and parents. Specific preparation for school leaders should focus on ways of responding that will not only restore respect and peace but also allow learning to take place. For example, several school leaders described incidents in which they or other staff members had been accused of racism. They were deeply troubled by these incidents, and while mediation was sometimes found to be helpful, it didn’t always work. Professional development focusing on opening up communication about race and ethnicity rather than closing it off can pave the way for these incidents to become learning experiences for both parties.

Professional development for future school leaders should enable them to go beyond reactive approaches to interethnic relations by developing their capacity to be proactive in creating a positive interethnic environment.

Many schools in our study had few incidents of overt conflict. Rather, leaders had created a climate in which positive interethnic relations could flourish. They did this in a variety of ways that touched on almost every aspect of school functioning – from staff hiring, professional development for staff, and data inquiry to curriculum and pedagogy, special events, behavioral standards, and parental involvement. These approaches had the net effect of building people’s capacity for understanding and respecting each other, structuring time and appropriate space for communication among different groups, and creating meaningful links with diverse parents and community organizations. The schools in this study provide future school leaders with a wide array of approaches which, when combined in meaningful clusters, can help make the borders between groups more permeable and understandable, and thus more easily crossed by young people and adults alike.

Professional development for future school leaders should recognize that “off the shelf” programs must always be adapted to fit the needs of the school site.

While there were many model programs in the schools we studied, no school had taken a program “off the shelf” without modifying it. Schools that used nationally distributed programs such as Tribes, Conflict Resolution, Link Crew, and others always changed the program somewhat to fit the school’s needs and constituencies. By assessing their particu-
lar school context and the nature of interethnic relations at their site, and by allowing a trial period for new programs in which adjustments can be made, leaders ensure that externally developed programs are tailored to the school and thus more likely to be accepted and used by members of the school community. The preparation of school leaders should also clarify that efforts to determine “which approaches work best” can be seriously misleading if they are disembodied from their contexts.

**Professional development for future school leaders should enable them to develop organizing themes that serve as the “glue” binding the vision of interethnic relations to the concrete approaches.**

In each school, there were themes such as non-violence, community building, personalization, etc., which tied the different approaches to interethnic relations together, imbuing the approaches with meaning and values. In this way, leaders avoided the common pitfall of having a “hodgepodge” of unrelated approaches. The thematic cluster was much more than the sum of its functional parts. It reflected the vision of that particular school leadership, and was laced with particular values. For example, in one elementary school, the theme of personalization was embodied in several approaches, including the following: A vision of a school that cares for and respects children; morning assemblies where the entire student body could gather as one; a family structure in which small groups of K-5th graders met with an adult once a week; the use of student advisors as brokers for changing the tenor of relationships; encouraging parents to come to school and training parents to take leadership positions; and encouraging teachers to make home visits. Preparation for future school leaders should include experience in linking abstract vision with concrete practice. This study suggests that organizing themes function as a connecting point between vision and concrete approaches, and that without such themes school efforts to improve interethnic relations often lack coherence.

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**Implications related to measuring the impact of interethnic relations efforts**

Professional development for future school leaders should enable them to measure their schools’ progress in human relations.

School leaders in the study admitted that, with a few exceptions, their credential programs and other professional training had left them woefully unprepared to measure their progress in interethnic relations and social relations more generally. However, if improving human relations is indeed an important goal of a school leader, then ways to measure progress systematically need to be put into place. The old adage “You are what you measure” is apt here. Although increasing emphasis is being placed on standards these days,
this emphasis centers almost exclusively on academic achievement, leaving other desirable school outcomes such as improved social relations unmonitored and therefore more likely to be ignored. Leaders need to consider questions such as the following: What are the areas where their human relations efforts are likely to have an impact? What indicators could the school monitor in order to chart their progress in meeting their human relations goals? How much time do they expect it will take to see the beginning of a positive impact? How much time will it take before a deeper impact might be seen?

Although most of the schools in the study needed more systematic ways of measuring progress in interethnic relations, we did nonetheless gather various kinds of evidence that suggested improvements had been made. In addition to traditional quantitative measures such as scores on achievement tests, suspensions and expulsions, etc., we also gathered qualitative evidence such as triangulated accounts of changes in the school environment – e.g., diverse parents feeling more welcome in the school, teachers more willing to collaborate with each other, etc. School leaders need to learn how to set up some simple but reliable ways of gathering data that can be linked to improvements in interethnic relations.

**Professional development for future school leaders should prepare them to make meaningful use of student achievement data that has been disaggregated by race/ethnicity and other categories.**

Several schools in the study were already using disaggregated achievement data to examine their progress in raising the achievement of low achieving students. Part of this process involved discussing the disparities these data made evident, and using this information as a catalyst for in-depth explorations of how staff could improve minority student achievement. Many school leaders, however, were reluctant to present data to their staff or parents that shows minority students achieving less than students in the dominant culture. Several leaders expressed concerns that sharing data like these could incite a lot of anger and guilt, feelings they were not prepared to deal with. Professional development focusing on how to share disaggregated data in productive, positive ways could assist future leaders in making the most of this opportunity rather than avoiding it.

**Professional development for future school leaders should provide them with tools for establishing agreed upon definitions of student behaviors they want to measure.**

The study indicated that one of the biggest problems for school leaders, especially in larger schools, is “getting everyone on the same page” in terms of behavioral standards. Confusion over what teachers and administrators expect in terms of student behavior also led to problems in measuring behavioral improvements. For example, one high school had a category they called “defiant” listed among the disciplinary problems that could be referred to an AP. Yet there was wide divergence in the types of behavior teachers would label as “defiant,” and thus the category could not be used meaningfully to assess progress.
Professional development for future school leaders should enable them to measure improvements in staff collegiality and collaboration.

In many of the study’s schools, increases in collegiality and the creation of productive, positive working relationships among staff were seen as key to the development of more harmonious student relations. While they did not directly improve interethnic relations among students, they were important in setting a positive tone at the school and creating structures from which other innovations could flow. Collaborations among faculty provided visible examples through which students could see the value of working together across various lines of difference — disciplinary, ethnic, and role group. Furthermore, increasing collegiality among staff had tangible results in terms of staff members’ ability to monitor student progress. When groups of teachers shared responsibility for the same students, students were more closely monitored and those who were in danger of falling behind or dropping out could more easily be brought back. Finally, collaboration among staff had in many cases produced products such as curriculum that employed multicultural perspectives, which were then used in fostering greater awareness of ethnicity and social justice issues among students. If, as the study suggests, collaborative relationships among staff members are an important condition for the development of positive interethnic relations among students, then future administrators should be able to document increases in collaborative activity among staff.

Professional development for future school leaders should enable them to chart improvements in staff awareness and expertise in interethnic relations.

Our study suggests strongly that developing positive interethnic relations at a school is a process that adults must be involved in as learners just as much — if not more than — students. Adults come to schools with a mixed bag of good intentions, love of children, skills, and resources, as well as long held attitudes and perceptions that influence the ways they teach, the ways they discipline students, etc. Thus many staff, whether they are aware of it or not, are underprepared to work effectively with students of different ethnic backgrounds and do not have much experience with building positive interethnic relations themselves. In order to be good role models and teachers for students, they too need to develop skills and understandings that will help them develop positive relations with people of different ethnic backgrounds.

The study shows that increased staff awareness about interethnic relations and diversity was attributed mainly to well planned professional development opportunities. In every case, these professional development opportunities were long term or recurrent, not “one shot” workshops. Activities that promoted greater awareness or expertise in interethnic relations did not have to be called “professional development” for them to be effective. Often, staff had gained insights from colleagues during regular collaboration meetings which involved diverse staff in sharing their knowledge or strategies with each other. Thus, measuring the number of professional development conferences staff attend would
not necessarily provide a meaningful picture of the growth in staff awareness or expertise. It would be more meaningful to gather evidence of this kind of growth through a survey or focus group meetings with staff, combined with observations of their work with students over time.

**Professional development for future school leaders should enable them to measure improvements in parent involvement using measures that do not depend on conventional forms of parent participation.**

Most schools measure their success in parent involvement by the number of parents who come to meetings. However, we found that the schools in the study had developed many other, less conventional ways of creating connections between parents and schools, such as the development of diverse parent leadership teams, the creation of parent centers offering a physical location where parents could meet and share concerns, home visits in which teachers and other staff learned about family resources and skills and other strategies. Particularly when parents come from diverse cultural backgrounds, forms of parent participation may not fit the conventional, mainstream notions of parent involvement. Professional development for school leaders therefore needs to broaden the notion of parent involvement so that more diverse parents can become meaningfully engaged with the school; it also needs to enable leaders to document progress in these efforts.
Develop and fieldtest a curriculum for future school leaders based on this research

Develop and fieldtest curricula for training other audiences in the development of improved race/ethnic relations

Conduct a policy analysis of the Leading for Diversity database

Conduct further research on intergroup relations

Conclusion
Next Steps

During the past three years, the Leading for Diversity study has documented how leaders in 21 schools addressed conflicts related to race and ethnicity and developed more positive interethnic relations among students as well as adults. This report has presented the findings from this study as well as the implications of the findings for future school leadership development. Although this is the final research report for our Field Initiated Studies funding, the work of this project is only partially complete. In concluding, we wish to briefly outline some next steps, some of which will require additional funding.

- **Develop and fieldtest a curriculum for future school leaders based on this research**

As outlined in our original proposal, we intend to develop a curriculum that will assist future school leaders to more effectively address conflicts that are related to race/ethnicity and to promote more positive interethnic relations in their schools. This curriculum will draw its content from the study as well as from other research and literature on race relations, leadership, and approaches for improving race relations in schools. A key feature of the curriculum will be its case-based or problem-based focus. Learners will be introduced to a wide variety of dilemmas, all involving race/ethnicity in some fashion, that school leaders in the study faced. They will work in groups to research and create alternative understandings of the problem and to come up with a variety of resolutions. In order to support their problem posing and problem solving work, both theoretical and practice-based resources will be provided. We anticipate that future school leaders who have experienced this curriculum will emerge as strong and proactive leaders who are confident of their ability to address racial/ethnic conflict and capable of creating school environments that allow and encourage the development of positive interethnic relations. This effort is partially funded by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence.

- **Develop and fieldtest curricula for training other audiences in the development of improved race/ethnic relations**

In addition to school leaders, other role groups such as teachers, parents, students, and community leaders could benefit from the results of this study. Modified versions of the curriculum for future school leaders could be created for these other audiences. This
would enable the study to have a broader impact on practice, but we currently have no funding to support this effort.

- **Conduct a policy analysis of the Leading for Diversity database.**

While preparing leaders more effectively is an important avenue for improving race relations in schools, we have realized that it is not sufficient. School leaders are strapped by policies and practices at the local, state, and federal levels which inhibit them from making human relations work a central part of what schools do. While this project has identified several avenues for positive change in our country’s educational system, we fear policy-makers will not be exposed to them. Policy-makers do not often read academic articles and might not realize the implications of this study unless the work is addressed specifically to them. For this reason, we would like to conduct a policy analysis and develop a document addressed to policymaker so that the impact of this project can be realized in federal, state, and local educational policy arenas. This effort will require funding.

- **Conduct further research on intergroup relations**

The Leading for Diversity study points toward several areas for further research:

- **What are effective practices in detracked classrooms?** One area that stood out to us was the difficulty schools are having in dismantling tracking, a practice that among other effects seems to resegregate different ethnic groups in schools that are technically supposed to be “desegregated.” Research on effective detracking practices is sorely needed, especially focusing on classroom practices that allow teachers to create high level learning environments in classes of mixed ability groups and diverse ethnic and class backgrounds.

- **How applicable are the findings of the Leading for Diversity study to other aspects of intergroup relations?** While the Leading for Diversity study focused on how leaders improve relations among different ethnic or racial groups, we hypothesize that similar approaches could be used to address issues of gender, sexual orientation, different physical abilities, class background, and other forms of difference and intolerance. However, this assumption remains unexamined and would benefit from further research.
• Can the Leading for Diversity model for improving interethnic relations be effectively implemented by leaders in schools that have severe conflicts? The current study, because it was designed to document approaches in many schools during a brief time period, was not able to capture the change process in depth. An action research project in which schools implement the Leading for Diversity model over time could shed light on the dynamics of the change process, and could help us verify and extend our findings. For example, many school leaders in the study operated from the assumption that schools, like individuals, exhibit different needs depending on their contexts (i.e., safety and security; community and belonging; self esteem and esteem of and by others; self actualization), and that it is the role of the school leadership to identify, prioritize, and act upon these needs. However, the leaders in the study were all selected because they were already known for being proactive in the area of interethnic relations. We still do not know whether this model can be useful for other school leaders in different circumstances. We also do not know the extent to which “higher order” needs (e.g., self actualization) can be addressed while focusing on “lower order” needs such as safety and security, and under what conditions it may be warranted to address higher order needs without first attending to safety and security.

• What is the relationship between positive interethnic relations and improved academic achievement? Since schools are under increasing pressure to show improvement in academic achievement, especially among underachieving students, it is vital from a policy standpoint to relate other areas of school effort to academic achievement; otherwise the public will be unlikely to support school resources going toward interethnic relations efforts and other “social” programs. This research project makes the assumption that improving interethnic relations in schools, besides being intrinsically worth doing, also creates conditions such as a peaceful, safe, and respectful school which allow students to concentrate on learning, thus enabling these schools to show gains in academic achievement. This assumption, however, has not been tested as far as we know. Further research needs to be designed to systematically examine this question.

✿ Conclusion

We hope that this report contributes to national and international conversations and programs that seek to better understand human diversity, ethnic relations, and the potential role of schools in improving ethnic relations. Although it is clear that schools as currently constituted do have limitations that restrict their ability to make a positive difference in ethnic relations, it is equally clear that within these limitations, there is much room for school leaders to make changes and support efforts of others that can lead to more opportunities for students and adults alike to step across real — or imagined ethnic borders.
References


References


APPENDIX A

PROFILES OF THE SCHOOLS
ALLANEQ MIDDLE SCHOOL *

Allaneq, located in one of Alaska’s cities, serves 7th and 8th grade students in the economically poorest area. The surrounding community has its share of drug problems, gangs, and related violence, but it is also, as the previous principal put it, “the wealthiest area culturally.” Many different immigrant groups, Native Alaskans, and African Americans have moved to this area for jobs in the service industry and military. We selected this school in part because its diversity included a sizable native population, a group not often represented in studies of urban schools, and also because the leadership was working hard to tackle issues of violence and safety in order to make the school a respectful place for learning.

Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students: 98-99: 819</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students, 98-99 :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.5% Caucasian; 25.15% Native Alaskan; 17.7% African American; 17.46% Asian/Pacific Islander; 5.49% Hispanic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP: 20% Free &amp; reduced lunch: 52.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stability rate: 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98: 64 certified teachers 110 total staff</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Leadership: The previous principal, who retired at the end of 97-98, was at Allaneq for four years and set in place a team structure designed to personalize the school experience. Part of this structure was the interdisciplinary faculty teams, which met together daily for an hour and a half to collaborate on curriculum and to monitor student progress. This structure was credited with the growth of teacher leadership. 1998-99 saw a big change in leadership at Allaneq, with a new principal, a new AP, and several new office staff. By her third month, the new principal had made a strong positive impression on faculty and students by declaring her intention to address violence head on, and then following up with a series of actions to embody her words.

Approaches: Allaneq’s approaches to interethnic relations clustered into three broad areas: One set of approaches was targeted toward making the school violence free, and to this end the administrators had stepped up security, developed more consistent guidelines for discipline, provided reward assemblies for students who remained violence free, and increased the number and variety of after-school and lunch time activities. Another set of approaches aimed to create a more personalized world for students and teachers through the team structures mentioned above, and also through an emphasis on cross cultural sharing that used storytelling and family heritage projects as a way for adults as well as students to learn about each other. Thirdly, the previous principal did much to enhance the public image of the school through various public relations efforts that challenged the dominant stereotypes about students from this poor and “culturally different” side of town.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared. The pseudonym Allaneq is a Yup’ik word meaning “stranger who becomes a permanent friend.”
BLUE RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL *

Blue Ridge is a Pre-K - 2 school located in a southeastern city of about 100,000. This community had experienced a dramatic population shift in the past 7 years, with a large number of immigrant families coming from Mexico in order to work in the expanding industry for which this city is famous. We selected the school because it provided an opportunity to understand how growing community tensions between longtime residents and newcomers from another country can be mediated and reduced through proactive school leadership and early intervention by well-connected members of the business and professional community.

Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students: 725</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students, from SACS renewal, 9/98:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69.9% Hispanic; 14.4% African American; 13.4% White; 2.04% other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP: 65% Free &amp; reduced lunch: 84% Stability rate: 55.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98: 49 certified teachers 115 total staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership: The principal was ending her 7th year at the time the study ended, and the other two site administrators had likewise been at the school for 6-7 years. Together they provided a strong consistency of leadership. The principal, who was very knowledgeable about the staff development needs of schools that are multicultural and multilingual, had made language acquisition and cultural adjustment a top priority for staff development over the past years, and this focus had resulted in a high degree of awareness among the mostly European American staff about newcomer students and their needs. The school has also instituted Site-Based Management (SBM), thus giving teachers more control over decision making at the school. In explaining the interplay between SBM and her own role, the principal said, “There are times when I have to take charge and make a decision ... but in order to do this, I have to make sure my value system is in place.”

Approaches: Blue Ridge’s approaches to building positive interethnic relations stretched far beyond the school itself. The cornerstone of their approach was a multifaceted partnership between the school district and a Mexican university. This partnership brought Mexican teachers to the school district to work with local teachers in making instruction accessible and providing many other services. It also sent groups of local teachers to Mexico for summer study of Spanish language and Mexican culture. In addition, classrooms at Blue Ridge were intentionally integrated, and every child received second language instruction. Another proactive approach was the counseling program, based on Glasser’s choice theory, which stressed human relations work, consistent behavioral standards, and age-appropriate understanding of conflict.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
BUENA VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL*

Located outside of Washington D.C., Buena Vista Elementary School is a 4-5-6 grade school serving students most frequently described as “high risk,” poor children from gang-ridden neighborhoods, immigrant children from Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia, children of color. Yet this school created an oasis for these children and their families — providing safety in a clean and well-maintained facility and offering a challenging academic curriculum. Instruction was structured around a looping model: students and teachers began together in 4th grade and stayed together through 5th and 6th grades. An “exhibition” center displayed student work and highlighted different cultures. This site illustrates how a community school worked against the odds to serve its children and their families, and to serve them well.

### Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students:</th>
<th>689</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52% Hispanic; 42% Black; 4% Asian; 2% White; 1% American Indian.</td>
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</table>

Student population represented 36 countries, 21 languages; many of the black families had emigrated from the Caribbean or Africa.

Other student demographics:

| LEP: | 23% |
| Free & reduced lunch: | 100% |
| Mobility rate: | 50% |

Faculty demographics:

1997-98: 46 certificated staff — 39% African American, 9% Hispanic, 52% White

### Leadership:

Buena Vista’s principal was in her ninth year at the school. The key members of her staff were: the counselor who worked on improving attendance, communicating with parents, and supporting the principal’s initiatives; and the principal’s assistant who dealt with about 75% of the disciplinary issues and arranged for substitutes. Other significant leadership was provided through a school leadership team composed of the principal, grade level chairs, another teacher from each grade level, a parent, the school nurse, the reading teacher, library, guidance counselor, computer specialist and math specialist. They met twice a month and were responsible for school-wide decisions.

### Approaches:

The well being of children and families was central to Buena Vista’s vision for creating a positive school climate. The school was involved in several initiatives to ensure students were fed and clothed and had access to health care. As part of their focus on academic achievement, attendance was stressed — Buena Vista routinely boasted 97% and higher attendance rates. In addition, the school had created a variety of support systems — tutoring programs, mentoring — to help students master the academic demands of the curriculum. Classrooms throughout the school exhibited a high level of consistency in expectations, techniques and strategies for instruction and discipline. This consistency extended beyond the classrooms — parental involvement was a key component of Buena Vista’s site plan.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
CORNELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL *

Cornell is a large, K-5 year-round school located in a busy urban neighborhood in the San Francisco Bay Area. Many immigrants from Spanish speaking countries and Southeast Asia live in this low income neighborhood, as well African American residents who have been there for many years. We selected Cornell because of its diversity, its large size, and the fact that the school had been successful in reducing conflict. It also provided a unique opportunity to learn how a school can create structures that encourage students to mix across ethnic groups while still retaining a strong transitional bilingual program. In addition, the school demonstrated a variety of approaches to involve diverse parents in a community where there was often tension over scarce resources.

Demographic Information

Total number of students: 1400

Ethnic breakdown of students, from CBEDS 1995-96:
65.7% Hispanic; 14.6% Asian (includes Cambodian, Lao, Vietnamese, Mien, Cantonese); 13.7% African American; 2.3% Filipino; 1.9% American Indian; 1.0% White (includes some Bosnians); .8% Pac. Islander.

Other student demographics:
LEP: 60% Free & reduced lunch: 90% Stability rate: 90%

Faculty demographics:
1997-98: 75 certified teachers 160 total staff

Leadership: The principal was in her 6th year at the time the study ended. The main decision-making body at Cornell was the leadership team, composed of the administrators, program directors, representatives from the grade level circuits, parent coordinators, and a representative for classified staff. This team was also known as the “keeper of the vision.” Cornell’s motto was “Respect, literacy and lifelong learning”, and much of the school’s work in interethnic relations could be traced to the concept of respect. According to the principal, “We basically put respect first as the condition that we would like to create around us, ... like the air we breathe.”

Approaches: Many staff attributed the decline in student conflict to the combination of Conflict Resolution and Tribes programs, which had been implemented for many years and not only addressed conflict on the playground but also built students’ social skills within the classroom. But the school’s approach to interethnic relations was much broader than these two programs. It included a wide range of after-school activities in which students of different ethnic backgrounds interacted; many vehicles for parent involvement including a parent center, ESL and GED classes, and a Family Resource Center that provided an array of health services; special events that celebrated the cultures of the school; a pair of teachers who team taught their Spanish bilingual and sheltered classes in order to foster more positive interethnic relations; and a SEED discussion group in which teachers met monthly to work on equity issues.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
CRISPUS ATTUCKS HIGH SCHOOL*

Crispus Attucks High School (grades 9-12) is a small charter school located in the heart of an urban area in New England. The fact that it operated as a charter school gave the administration a great deal of freedom with respect to the school’s operation, from hiring staff to designing and implementing curriculum. The school was chosen for the study not only because of its demographics but also because of its thematic, inquiry-driven curriculum geared to fostering social justice and improving racial/ethnic relations and its participation in a large school reform initiative.

### Demographic Information

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<th>Total number of students: 240</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56% African American; 21% Latino 19 % White;, 5% Asian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% free or reduced lunch 12% LEP 40% Language minority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98: 1 Director, 1 Co-director, 27 teachers 3 Counselors</td>
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**Leadership:** Crispus Attucks’ Director was also its founder. He began the school 16 years ago and was seen by faculty as an integral part of the school’s success. A large part of the school’s vision focused on creating a caring community for students, even if it meant taking on a “co-parenting” function. The flexible structure of a charter school allowed many opportunities to address students’ social and affective needs as well as academic needs. The Director also exhibited a willingness to learn from others, especially in areas of racial/ethnic sensitivity. Leadership in interethnic relations also came from the interim co-director, an African American woman, who was credited with helping classroom teachers work with students on communicating in respectful ways.

**Approaches:** Crispus Attucks had the feel of a college prep high school. There was a strong emphasis on academics but also a strong sense that administration and staff genuinely cared about the students and their success as human beings. The curricular theme for 98-99 was “What does it mean to be human?” When students entered the school as ninth graders they were taken to an island for an outward bound experience. Students who had gone through the outward bound experience said that they felt a bond with each other. The school used looping (that is, each class had the same teachers throughout their time at the school). Also contributing to the sense of community was a three-house system, sponsored by three corporate entities. Each house was staffed by a coordinator, a student support person and two faculty members. In order to assist staff in addressing issues related to diversity, a group called Visions was brought in. For students, 40-minute “advisories” provided a structured time when they could discuss issues they might not discuss in a larger group setting. Teachers often used the Visions processes in this setting.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
DOLORES HUERTA MIDDLE SCHOOL*

DHM School is a 6-8 grade school in Southern California serving a student population that has changed dramatically over the past dozen or so years. About a mile away from DHMS is the commercial and social hub of the continually growing Vietnamese community. The Latino community has also been growing, though less dramatically. When the school opened in 1951 the community was largely white and suburban, still surrounded by the orchards. The community demographics are now majority “minority”, and of relatively lower socioeconomic status. DHMS has faced a multitude of challenges, including dealing with a strong gang presence in the local community and making the campus safe and secure; managing a staff that is predominantly white, veteran, and used to teaching white, middle-class, English-speaking students; leveraging resources through developing collaborative relationships with outside agencies; and finding ways to meaningfully involve diverse students and parents with the school.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Demographic Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students: 850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students: 53% Asian; 28% Hispanic; 18% White.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP: 70%  NEP: 12%  EO: 18%  Free &amp; reduced lunch: 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics: 30 classified staff; 34 certificated staff —1 Asian American, 1 So.East Asian; 32 white. Part-time itinerant staff include: a nurse, psychologist, counselor, and speech therapist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership: The principal had been at the school for five years at the time of the study. The high energy, charismatic leadership style of this principal were instrumental in developing the structures and relationships necessary to achieve two primary goals: 1) to create a safe and secure school environment, and 2) to develop the capacity of the teaching staff to successfully address the needs of diverse students and families. The administrative staff included the principal, an assistant principal, and a teacher on special assignment who coordinated student activities.

Approaches: Several features of DHMS contributed to creating a safer, more respectful, harmonious climate. One very significant feature was the relationship that was developed between the school and the police. Through a concerted, both informal and formal relationship building process initiated by the principal, the police and the school developed a mutually beneficial collaboration that changed the way the school and community saw the police presence on campus, and changed the way the police understood the needs and goals of the school. This, along with clear and consistent standards of behavior based on Safety, Courtesy, and Respect, and consistent application of consequences, resulted in a much greater sense of safety and harmony. Another important feature was student leadership in running a Student Conference in which students conducted the training for peers and students from feeder schools. The school was also opened up for use by diverse segments of the community through hosting ESL classes, a Vietnamese language Sunday school, cultural celebrations for the community, and, importantly, by employing bilingual Vietnamese and Spanish community liaisons.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
FERGUSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL*

Ferguson Elementary School is a K-5 school undergoing rapid demographic shift, moving from serving a predominately white and English-speaking population to serving a more ethnically and linguistically diverse group of students. Another wrinkle to the diversity at this school in the Pacific Northwest is the unexpected element of religion. One of the immigrant groups consists of Russian Pentecostal children and their families. We selected Ferguson Elementary because it provided an opportunity to study a school that has turned ethnic differences into rich resources available to the whole school community. Ferguson celebrated diversity through language programs involving all children, both native speakers of English as well as immigrant students. The development of these programs also showcased the principal’s vision of how to create sustained change through long range, short step planning to achieve goals and by involving all stakeholders in the school community.

### Demographic Information

Total number of students: 533  
Ethnic breakdown of students:  
53.5% European American, 13% Chinese, 11% Latino, 10% Russian, 7% Vietnamese, 4.5% African American, 1% Native American  
Other student demographics:  
LEP: 34%  
Free & reduced lunch: 52%  
Federal demographics:  
60 staff members: 3 African American, 3 Asian, 7 Hispanic, rest white; 38% bilingual

**Leadership:** Ferguson’s principal was in his 11th year at the school at the time of the study. His interest in language programs sprang, no doubt, from his own extensive background in language—he spoke several, including Farsi, Croatian and Spanish, had an ESL background, and was formerly the bilingual director for the district. Leadership was shared and decentralized so that teams of parents and teachers provided school leadership. For example, the Spanish Immersion program was developed by parent and teacher volunteers. However, the principal demonstrated forward thinking by hiring people who were bilingual and would want to step up when the opportunity arose to offer second language programs. All major curricular issues, structural plans, and staff development went through the site council composed of the principal, 6 parents, 6 teachers, 1 secretary, and 1 community member from a local college.

**Approaches:** The heart of Ferguson’s proactive approach to the ethnic and linguistic diversity of its changing student population centered on creating an environment that celebrated diversity through language learning. At Ferguson, eventually, all children would learn a second language. Six languages were taught here: English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Russian and Vietnamese. Key to ensuring the support of the school community was the fact that Ferguson operated as a result of shared responsibility. All stakeholders were involved in decision making bodies and were part of all school events. In addition, students participated in a peer mediator program focused on using problem solving techniques to address conflict.

*Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.*
Appendix A: Profiles of the Schools

FILLMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL*

Fillmore, an urban middle school in the San Francisco Bay Area, draws students from the flatlands (median income $18,816) to the more affluent hills (median income $61,535). This economic disparity of the student body presented an ongoing challenge to teachers. We selected Fillmore because of the diverse student population, the myriad approaches the school was using to work with the diverse student body, and the fact that there seemed to be significant and open dialogue among staff about issues of race/ethnicity. The principal recognized the existence of racial conflicts and worked to address problems from a systemic standpoint.

**Demographic Information - 1996/97 data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students: 656</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students, 42% African American, 30% European American, 13% Asian/Pacific Islander, 11% Latino, 4% Bicultural (mainly White and Black)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free &amp; reduced lunch: 43.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFDC: 20.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/97: 3 administrators, 35 teachers, 3 Student Services supervisors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership:** After being at the school for 13 years, the principal left during the Spring, 1998, to accept a position as Deputy Superintendent at the district office. She was credited with creating an open atmosphere for discussions of race and encouraging innovation in teaching. The two Assistant Principals became co-principals for the remainder of the year and a new principal was hired in 1998/99. In addition to the administrative team, there was a leadership team made up of department heads.

**Approaches:** Fillmore was the first school in California to pioneer detracking in 1982. Students were heterogeneously grouped and all received the core curriculum. The Healthy Start project used data disaggregated by ethnicity in order to recognize the diversity of the school community and work on issues of academic achievement and social success for all students. There were a plethora of mentoring and tutoring opportunities with additional after-school tutoring in connection with sports programs. Latino/Chicano seminar was a proactive measure to prevent high school gang problems. Rewarding achievement in many areas based on Multiple Intelligences was an attempt to honor more than the predominantly white and Asian academic achievers. There was an annual Culture Fair where students celebrated their own ethnic backgrounds. The active Parent Diversity Committee met regularly and worked with teachers to focus on diversity and integrate it into the curriculum. Parents and teachers included issues of sexual orientation in their diversity efforts. Teachers worked to open up issues of race and racism both in classes and staff meetings so that it was not a silent issue. Through Healthy Start and the Parent Diversity Committee, efforts to involve parents of color in the school had been stepped up.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
FOREST HILLS HIGH SCHOOL*

Forest Hills High School is located in an affluent, mostly white, suburban community in the San Francisco Bay area. The students, however, come from 17 feeder schools, public and private. Given the ethnic and economic disparity of sending communities, students fall into two main groups: affluent white students and poor students of color. While the school had a history of racial unrest from the 70s-80s, its issues in 97-98 stemmed more from racial and economic divisions that resulted in tracking and a tendency for students to stay in their own groups. Exacerbating the lack of connections between students of different ethnicities was a visible police presence on campus that tended to underscore any conflict. We chose Forest Hills primarily because it was a case of parents who led the effort to promote interethnic relationships among students.

### Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students:</th>
<th>1921</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students:</td>
<td>38% White, 38% Latino, 14% African American, 5% Pacific Islander, 4% Asian, .05% Filipino, .05% American Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
<td>LEP: 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
<td>Title 1 served: 17% Mobility rate:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 principal, 1 instructional vp, 2 assistant vps, 103 faculty, 3 guidance counselors, 1 librarian, 1 psychologist, 1 nurse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Leadership:
The principal, three vice principals and the student activity director formed the administrative team. In addition, a site-based management team provided communication links with all faculty; this group also established priorities for school wide improvements in educational areas and followed through with recommendations for action and means to evaluate improvements. The school’s main initiative on diversity emerged from and was sustained by parent leaders. In addition, the principal advocated bringing diversity initiatives into the core curriculum because he believed these issues could be addressed more meaningfully in such a context.

### Approaches:
Concerned that students were not tapping into the rich diversity present in the student population, parents came together and developed a diversity training program called Networking. The goal of the program was to bring students together to understand that although there are differences, there is a richness in the differences that students bring to one another. Parents had established Networking groups at each grade level, allowing each parent group to define its goals and plan how to achieve them. Forest Hills had also invested a great deal of time, energy and resources into a set of academic tutoring and mentoring programs. The most ambitious was Compass, a program that focused on underprepared students from the poorer districts to help them develop the skills and confidence to do well in school. After an intensive summer program, Compass students were provided with on-going year around support. As a result of its first year of success at Forest Hills, the district adopted the model for other high schools in the district.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
GLADIOLA MIDDLE SCHOOL *

Gladiola Middle School, located in a suburban area of Northern California, sits on land that once was used for growing gladiolas. The community, once composed primarily of Latino farmworkers, is now multiethnic and increasingly middle class. Part of the school’s history involved a struggle in which the school district insisted that the school be named after the district rather than using a name that honored the community. Several years ago, the name was finally changed. According to the principal, “This school building and the land it sits on represent conflict.” We selected Gladiola because of this history, the diversity of its student population, and the multiethnic administrative staff which had set a strong agenda for social justice.

### Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students: 97-98: 1,367</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students, 97-98:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26% White, 23% Latino, 18% Filipino, 17% Asian, 14% African American, 1.3% Pacific Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP: 19% Free &amp; reduced lunch: 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98: 64 certified teachers 110 total staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership**: The multiethnic administrative team included the principal and three APs, all of whom had been at the school for 3-4 years by the time the study ended. The administrators stressed their closely aligned teamwork as a key to the school’s effective functioning. When they began, inconsistently applied discipline and poor teacher morale were egregious problems. They stepped in to address these problems head on, and worked hard to model teamwork and to draw diverse parents into more participatory roles. The principal noted, “This business of schooling is not that complicated; there’s no magic to it. It just takes a lot of work. [That’s why it] works better as a team... I really want to share the power.” In addition to the administrators, there was a leadership council and three parent leadership groups.

**Approaches**: Gladiola’s team approach to leadership involved early and periodic day-long retreats which helped them develop shared vision and language; the faculty came to understand that, unlike the previous administration, the new team was united and consistent in their policies and approaches. The fact that this team reflected the four largest ethnic groups attending the school also provided distinct benefits, including greater participation among diverse parents and modeling of interethnic cooperation. Another set of approaches focused on fair and consistent discipline coupled with affirming activities such as award assemblies, dances, a large array of after-school clubs, and conflict resolution training. The number of discipline referrals and suspensions was dramatically reduced as a result of these actions. Lastly, the involvement of more diverse parents was achieved by instituting a multilingual parent group, increasing the number of school/community events, and proactively soliciting diverse parent involvement in school committees.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
GREENLAWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL*

In the 1980s and 90s, the San Francisco Bay Area community that Greenlawn Elementary (K-5) serves underwent a change in its demographics, most notably in terms of ethnic and socioeconomic diversity. For decades this community had been predominantly white, middle class, and “stable”. Tensions and conflict accompanied the ethnic and socio-economic changes in the city’s demographics. To illustrate the racial tension in the community, the principal reported that a few years earlier, the local police broadcast racial slurs over their police bands. During this same time period, one of the local high schools also experienced major interracial fights that drew much public attention. While the political power in the community remained in the hands of white males, the school demographics made it a majority “minority” district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students: 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38% White; 25% Asian; 14% Black; 11% Latino; 8% Filipino; 3% Pacific Is. 1% American Indian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP: 30% Free &amp; reduced lunch: 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics: 1997-98: 22 certificated staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 European American females &amp; 1 male; 2 Asian (1 Chinese, 1 Japanese),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Japanese/African American</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership:** The principal had been at Greenlawn for four years at the time of the study. While the principal was the only administrator, he worked closely with his school leadership team. At Greenlawn, a Diversity Committee was instituted in the 1995-1996 school year as part of the district-wide Team Diversity initiative, and was composed of six members, including the principal, three teachers, the itinerant ESL teacher, and the speech teacher. The district’s new superintendent was also a major force in establishing the Team Diversity structure and pushing all schools to demonstrate the capacity to serve all students.

**Approaches:** Over the last 4-5 years, the district focus had evolved as the schools struggled with issues of diversity. The district first conducted a “diversity audit” which led to the establishment of the district wide Team Diversity initiative by the superintendent. In 1995 the district hired the current principal for Greenlawn and enlisted him to also assist with the district-wide Diversity Initiative. The principal and the diversity committee faced the task of working with the predominantly white, veteran teaching staff and pushing for substantive change in teaching that would result in higher achievement for traditionally under-performing students, while attempting not to alienate and cause a backlash among the staff.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
JOSHUA TREE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL*

On the rural fringe of a Southwestern U.S. city, surrounded by high desert fields and an array of weathered mobile homes and single family houses that make up this high-poverty, predominantly Native American Indian community, like a desert citadel sits a new 5.2 million dollar intermediate school, the result of a concerted parent/school collaboration. Joshua Tree Intermediate school provides a case of how parents, principals, and community agencies came together to create a partnership for providing a high quality, culturally congruent educational experience for their students, in spite of being located in the district’s highest poverty area. This case looks at how the school principal contributed to the development of meaningful community involvement, helped establish high quality and culturally congruent curriculum and instruction, and created relationships with outside agencies that support school efforts.

Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students:</th>
<th>464</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55% Native American Indian; 34% Latino; 10% White; 1% African American.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free &amp; reduced lunch: 95%</td>
<td>LEP: 29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics: 1997-98: 21 certificated staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 European American females &amp; 2 males; 5 Latinas and 2 Latinos; 1 Native American/Latina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership: When we began this study the principal was in her 5th year at JTI. She had a doctorate in education and her dissertation topic was on the tribe that the school serves. The district provided the services of a previously retired principal two days a week who assisted primarily by dealing with parent and student issues so that the principal had time to work with teachers, outside agencies, and grant writing to secure funding for projects. The principal had established the Accelerated Schools model that included cadres of children, teachers, and families. A steering committee included representatives from each cadre and was central in the school decision making process. Beyond this formal structure, parents were instrumental in getting the district to build a new school facility that included a Parent Center they helped design, as well as getting district approval for school uniforms.

Approaches: A major approach to improving school/community relationships was the inclusion of a well-equipped Parent Center into the design of the school facility. A school-wide self-esteem building/conflict resolution program, along with the adoption of school uniforms, had significantly improved the school climate. Counselors taught a counseling curriculum to all students and also ran small crisis-intervention groups. Other approaches included: building strong culturally congruent elements into the curriculum (daily Native Language instruction for all students, a school/community garden Project that utilizes native plants and techniques, and recitation of the pledge of allegiance trilingually, for examples); weekly Parent Chats; and the development of close working relationships between school staff and both the Tribal leadership and the local university museum that supports and involves the Native American Indian community.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
MAYA LIN HIGH SCHOOL*

Maya Lin High School, located in a suburban area of Southern California, received an award as the most outstanding high school program in the state in the category of proactive work in diversity, school safety and positive human relations. Students and teachers alike reflected on the school climate as one of harmony and inclusion. We selected this school because it afforded the opportunity to study a high school with a balanced population - 1/3 Latino/a, 1/3 European American, 1/3 other ethnicities, as well as to study the strong role of teacher leadership, and the ways the school has structured opportunities for students to develop leadership and positive interethnic relationships.

### Demographic Information - 1997/98

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Students</td>
<td>1,654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European American</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ethnicities</td>
<td>less than 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEP</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EO</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free &amp; reduced lunch</td>
<td>39.4% (increased by 10% over the last 4 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 principal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 assistant principals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 counselors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 classified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership:** The principal who was there during the study had been in place for three years. The following year, as the study was ending, he was moved to another school. School leadership structures included a School Site Council and a School Management and Resource Team (SMART). Teacher leadership through committees and other initiatives was substantial in this school, and was encouraged and supported by the principal.

**Approaches:** Teacher leaders at Maya Lin highly valued the freedom and support to innovate. The Pioneer Outreach Network for Diversity (POND), supported by a teacher, provided an opportunity for staff and students to deal with issues of difference and inclusion at a personal level. Staff and students were trained by the county Human Relations department and students exercised their leadership skills as they facilitated retreats for other students and staff members. POND also sponsored a Senior/Freshman mentoring program and ran Green Circle activities in elementary schools; these focused on multicultural understanding and relationship building. Multicultural week each spring involved speakers, workshops, dance and other performances, a food fair and cultural displays. At Maya Lin, all freshmen took a common focus class which oriented them to high school and dealt with interpersonal issues including building understanding across race, ethnicity, and gender. Teachers valued the assertive discipline and strict attendance policy which started as a faculty initiative 13 years ago with the intention of making the student discipline policy and enforcement consistent across the school.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
Midvale Township High School*

Midvale Township High School has a long and proud tradition in the Midwest community it serves. A great many of its students excel academically and the school has designed rigorous programs to meet and promote this academic promise. A few years ago, however, the school faced some ugly racial incidents around how white staff addressed African American students. Town meetings led to the formation of school committees to look at student achievement, especially how well Midvale was serving its African American students. These committees led to the creation of a School Improvement Team to implement many organizational and curricular recommendations and to a school-wide focus on minority student achievement. In 1995, the first Minority Student Achievement Report highlighted the differential achievement of students by race and led to a focus on developing better interventions to improve that achievement.

### Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students:</th>
<th>2900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students:</td>
<td>47% Caucasian, 42% African American, Caribbean and African, 7% Hispanic, 2% Asian and other; 2% multiracial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP:</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free and reduced lunch:</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>260 certificated staff (including teachers, counselors, psychologists and social workers); 30% are non-white</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership:** Midvale was a one-school district. Thus, the administrative structure was complex, consisting of the superintendent, two assistant superintendents (one for curriculum and instruction), two associate principals (one each for grades 9-10 and 11-12), and four deans, one for each grade. The superintendent had taken the lead in directing the school’s efforts to improve the achievement of all students at Midvale. All leadership groups—the School Improvement Team and the Curriculum Council were charged with developing plans to improve minority student achievement. Their work led to regularly-produced minority student achievement reports and plans.

**Approaches:** Midvale had invested a great deal of time and energy in both collecting and analyzing data on student participation and performance. In addition to documenting achievement, Midvale had developed a range of programs to improve outcomes for minority students. Some history and English courses had been detracked. K-12 standards across the curriculum had been developed with the K-8 feeder district. The school had also implemented a variety of mentoring programs targeting specific groups of underachieving students. Security was an issue, just as at any other large, diverse high school; however, here security guards tried to develop and nurture relationships with students while creating a safe environment. The former town police chief was head of school security. Per student expenditure was high, showing the community’s commitment to education.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
OHLONE HIGH SCHOOL *

Ohlone High School, serving students in grades 9-12, is located in a suburban area of Northern California. This community, once primarily composed of Latino farmworkers, is now very multiethnic and increasingly middle class. Ohlone is the only comprehensive high school in the district, and thus all of the district’s high school resources are funneled into this school, making it relatively rich in technology and other resources. Although most students faculty considered racial incidents rare at the time of the study, Ohlone used to have a reputation as a violent school with considerable gang activity. We selected this school because of its multiethnic population, its large size, its much improved reputation, and the variety of ways in which interethnic relations topics had been embedded in curriculum.

Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students:</th>
<th>4100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students, from 1/97 school data printout:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.42% Hispanic; 22.74% Asian; 20.59% European American; 17.42% Filipino; 13.53% African American; 98% Pacific Islander; .22% American Indian/Alaskan native.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP: 13% Free &amp; reduced lunch: 13.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997: 210 certificated staff (includes administrators) 355 total staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership: The principal was completing his 6th year at the time the study ended; curricular leadership was provided by an AP for curriculum. For administrative purposes, Ohlone was divided into three houses, each with its own house principal, AP, and counselors. In addition to this administrative structure, there was also a leadership council which included representatives of each department, student representatives, and members of each of the school-wide collaboration groups. The district provided faculty with a one and a half hour block every Wednesday morning to collaborate on curriculum. This structural change has given rise to a multicultural collaboration group which had assumed a strong leadership role in developing curriculum that addresses interethnic relations issues.

Approaches: Unlike many schools in which multiculturalism is primarily an add on, Ohlone’s main efforts in the area of interethnic relations were curricular. These curricular efforts fell into three categories -- (1) elective ethnic studies classes which focused on a particular racial or ethnic group; (2) a pilot ethnic & women’s studies class for 9th graders which introduced students to the study of ethnicity and gender; and (3) core courses such as language arts and social studies in which teachers had consciously embedded interethnic relations topics. Ohlone unfortunately experienced a racial incident in Fall 97 which shocked the community and spurred a group of counselors and faculty to invest in a process called “Days of Respect” in order to build community and prevent similar incidents in the future.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
RAINBOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL*

Rainbow is a small, traditional K-5 school located in an urban area in the San Francisco Bay Area. Because it is an assigned school, most of the students are bused in from a range of neighborhoods. Most of the students come from low-income households; many are also immigrants. We selected Rainbow because of its diversity and the fact that it had recently undergone major changes in leadership and staffing to address issues of conflict and tension. Because Rainbow’s efforts to improve the environment for learning were relatively recent, we were able to examine the beginning stages of this change process.

**Demographic Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students:</th>
<th>244</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.6% Hispanic; 30.9% African American; 12.0% Other White; 8.05% Other Non White; 4.1% Chinese; 3.2% Filipino; 1.8% American Indian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP: 24% Free &amp; reduced lunch: 77.42% Educationally disadvantaged youth: 44.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98: 1 principal; 11 teachers; 2 student advisors; 3 specialists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership:** Rainbow’s principal was currently in her third year at the school when the study ended. In addition to her leadership, there was a school leadership team composed of the principal, the two student advisors and four teachers, and a site council, made up of the principal, teachers, a paraprofessional, and parents.

**Approaches:** One staff member used the term “securing the perimeter” to describe the initial focus of efforts to create change at Rainbow. Specific strategies to create a safe, conflict-free school environment included training students in conflict resolution techniques; hiring student advisors to act as models for students while monitoring their behavior and reinforcing good behavior; and implementing consistent standards for behavior across classrooms and throughout the school. Another prong of the efforts to create change at Rainbow focused on creating a caring community. Specific strategies include providing daily opportunities for students to gather together as a community; implementing cross-age student groups called “families;” increasing efforts to encourage parental involvement; demonstrating affection through hugging and verbal reinforcement; and reaching out to the surrounding community through such initiatives as participating in a neighborhood homeless task force and opening up the facility to community groups. A third major effort for change focused on providing solid academic opportunities for all children. The school had adopted a curriculum based on a multiple intelligences framework and provided primary language support in Spanish.

* Pseudonyms have been used to protect the confidentiality of information shared.
RANCHO VERDE HIGH SCHOOL*

Rancho Verde is a four year, comprehensive suburban high school in one of the financially beleaguered districts in the San Francisco Bay Area. Teacher and administrator salaries were the lowest in the Bay Area with the result that new, young teachers and some administrators often left for higher paying districts. The school’s infrastructure was sorely in need of repair and remodeling, the school is overcrowded, and many classes were taught in portables. New teachers moved from room to room to teach their classes. We chose this school because it had managed to overcome notable violence and surmount financial difficulties with successes in academics, the arts and sports. Students from other district communities chose Rancho Verde because of its academic reputation.

Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students:</th>
<th>2,234</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students, from 1997/98 CBEDS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.3% European American, 16.5% African American, 16.5% Filipino, 15.7% Asian, 15% Hispanic, .37% Pacific Islander, .33% Native American.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
<td>ESL: 11% Free &amp; reduced lunch: 11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
<td>1 principal, 1 assistant principal, 3 deans, 99 teachers, 46 classified staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership: The principal, in her seventh year at the end of the study, was supported by an assistant principal and three deans. Her initial efforts focused on quelling violence and gang presence; she called on the district Human Relations department for help as well as worked with Todos Institute, Making the Peace, and Conflict Resolution. One marker of success was the signing of a gang truce in the school library. At the time of the study, this school was peaceful and had little gang presence. Students reported a high degree of harmony among racial/ethnic groups.

Approaches: In the focus on violence prevention, gang prevention/intervention was paramount — no graffiti, paraphernalia, colors, or gang signals were tolerated. Students with suspicious behavior were immediately confronted. This was a closed campus and attendance was closely monitored. Increased personalization was the goal of the developing House system, beginning with two 9th grade houses in 1996/97, adding an Environmental Science Academy the following year, and planning for an arts conservatory to open in 1999. Ninth grade English teachers incorporated the “Making the Peace Curriculum” into classes throughout the year. There was a Conflict Management and Peer Counseling program as well as a Care Team, giving extra assistance to students who needed some attention. There were six support groups on campus who met regularly with trained facilitators — a men’s group, a bi-sexual/lesbian group, two Filipino groups, a Latino group, and a substance abuse group. There were a multitude of co- and extracurricular activities that engaged diverse students in working together, including student clubs, music, art, drama, forensics, sports and planned lunchtime activities.

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ROSA PARKS ACCELERATED PROGRAM*

Rosa Parks Accelerated Middle School Program, located along the Eastern seaboard, is a small public alternative school (serving grades 7, 8, and 9) focused on success through academic acceleration for youth who bring an array of problems with them when they enter the school. Students came from four districts and from some of the region’s poorest and most violent neighborhoods. All had repeated at least one year of school and brought a history of truancy, suspensions, and low academic achievement. The goal of this school was to intervene in the education of these children and help them attain the academic and social skills that would allow them to succeed when placed back into traditional high schools by grade 10 or 11.

Demographic Information - 1997/98 data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number of Students:</th>
<th>135</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students:</td>
<td>26% Hispanic, 25% African American, 18% European American, 18% Mixed Ethnicity, 8% Native American, 5% Asian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP:</td>
<td>15-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
<td>1 Director, 1 full-time counselor, 8 teachers, 1 librarian, 1 computer assistant, several special part-time teachers, 2 instructional aides.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership: The director founded the school in 1989 with the intention of building community within the school. The school operated with a collaborative leadership structure which afforded significant autonomy to teachers. Teachers were involved in decisions affecting hiring, curriculum, instructional methods, budget, materials, use of resources, scheduling and the school calendar. Rosa Parks answered to a board of superintendents from the four participating school districts that met five times a year to make policy, approve budget and staff appointments.

Approaches: All students were heterogeneously grouped and received the same core curriculum regardless of age, race/ethnicity and skill level. Rather than have specific ethnic celebrations, aspects of race/ethnicity and culture were consciously woven into academic and elective classes. The curriculum was accelerated — this meant students could advance to the next grade level of course work whenever they met teacher-designed criteria. Cooperative learning was used extensively in all classes. A high level of personalization was achieved by assigning students to teams of four teachers (Math, Science, English, Social Studies) for their full two years in the program. The small size of the school also meant that all students and teachers, who were called by their first names, knew each other. Each day began with an all-school community meeting for sharing information and celebrating progress. Teachers met with students weekly in advisory groups. All students served on a rotating basis on the student-created Discipline Committee, which always had diverse ethnic representation. Referred students had to appear before the committee to explain their actions and receive discipline from their peers.

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ROYAL MIDDLE SCHOOL*

Royal Middle School is a well-respected 6-8 grade school located in the San Francisco Bay Area. It was the recipient of a California Distinguished Schools award and a Healthy Start Planning grant and boasted a community garden developed with the help of renowned chef, Alice Waters, and maintained by students. Its reputation for excellence came, however, after an earlier era when the school was desegregated and experienced inter-racial conflict. African American students were at times victims of violence; the faculty was divided between those who wanted to stick with teaching the three “R’s” and those who felt diversity issues should be addressed. Royal was chosen for our study because of its diverse student population and its attempts to proactively address that diversity in light of its history of conflict. It also provided an opportunity to learn how a diverse administrative staff might influence the school’s approach.

Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students:</th>
<th>900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38% African American; 39% White; 14% Latino, 9% Asian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP: 11% Free and reduced lunch: 36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
<td>1997-98: 1 principal; 3 assistant principals, 45 teachers; 1 counselor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership: Royal’s principal was in his 10th year at the school at the end of the study. In addition to his leadership, there was a school leadership team composed of the Principal and 3 Assistant Principals who had disciplinary responsibility for each of the three grades. Parent leadership came from the PTA, the School Advisory Council and the Bilingual Advisory Council. The principal’s vision was that every student should be treated fairly and given opportunities to learn.

Approaches: The school culture was very much centered around the philosophy and ideals of Martin Luther King. Posters delineating the principles of Dr. King were placed throughout the school and in every classroom. The principles include: Equality, Academic Excellence, Community Action, Respect for Self and Others, Non-violence and Leadership based on democratic principles. Strategies for implementing these principles included a peer mediation program for students; an awards assembly honoring students that best reflected the principles of Dr. King; and Homework Clubs before, during and after school. The school had identified raising the academic achievement of African American students as the focus for 1996-97 and 1998-99. To this end, staff worked in partnership with the University of California at Berkeley to address this issue through a pilot reading program and a special science program. The efforts to raise achievement among African American students were seen as powerful means to change societal stereotypes about who succeeds and fails in school.

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SOJOURNER TRUTH HIGH SCHOOL*

Sojourner Truth is a huge urban high school in a major metropolitan area in the Northeast. The school is un-zoned; 10,000 students from throughout the district apply each year for 1,000 slots. The school selects 1/3 of those students for special programs; the others are assigned by computer to assure heterogeneity. We selected this school because it went from almost being closed in the mid 1980s to currently being noted for outstanding success, high college going rate, and a harmonious school climate. It provided an opportunity to learn from a school that had demonstrated success with mostly students of color from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Information - 1996/97</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students: 4,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students: 57% Latino, 34% African descent, 7% Asian, 2% European American.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics: All students qualify for Title I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP: 12% (1997)  Free &amp; reduced lunch: 85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics: 1 principal, 3 administrative and 9 supervisory assistant principals, 14 counselors, 262 teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership:** The Principal, in his 5th year at the time the study ended, had an open door policy for both students and staff. He also taught a 7:15 a.m. class in Current Events using the *New York Times*. He had created an inclusive environment of shared leadership that involved all constituencies and stakeholders. The school’s motto, “High expectations plus high standards yields high achievement,” was upheld with strict attention to attendance and student achievement — the pass rate for the rigorous NY State Regents exam continued to climb. Administrators and teachers lived up to the high expectations in their own job performances. The site leadership team included teachers, students, parents and administrators, and it operated by consensus. AP’s, House coordinators and guidance counselors provided decentralized leadership to students and teachers.

**Approaches:** Despite the size, this school demonstrated a high level of personalization and embodied an ethic of care for students and staff. Size was broken down through a “House” structure — 10 houses, each with its own supervisor, guidance counselor, coordinator and family outreach assistant. Curriculum was rigorous and focused on academic achievement for college bound students. On campus, there was a health clinic and a program for teen mothers including daycare. Special programs included Conflict Resolution, drug intervention, literacy and math centers, intensive tutoring through Title I, bilingual and ESL classes, and a huge number of co- and extra-curricular activities. Assistant principals and the on-site Teacher Center provide ongoing staff development and training opportunities. The parents’ association maintained an office on campus and worked closely with administrators and teachers to support their efforts.

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UNITED NATIONS HIGH SCHOOL *

United Nations High School (grades 9-12) is a multiethnic school located in a predominately white Southern California district. Students and the police say that there are gangs in the neighborhood (particularly Asian gangs). In the past, groups used to disrespect each other while on campus and bring out-of-school alliances and issues back to the campus. It is one of four comprehensive high schools in the district and is also the most diverse. The closest neighboring districts tend to have significant ethnic strife. When they erupt, United Nations goes on alert. As the population shifted, from predominately white to minority majority, the principal felt that there was a need to get ahead of issues before they caused irreparable damage. We chose this school because of the mosaic of approaches used to encourage greater expression among students and to provide structures for inter-ethnic realtions to be honestly discussed.

### Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students:</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic breakdown of students:</td>
<td>35% Asian; 24% Latino, 29% white, 8% African-American and 4% other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other student demographics:</td>
<td>LEP: 13% AFDC 6.3% Free and reduced lunch: 23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty demographics:</td>
<td>1998-99: 1 Principal; 3 Assistant principals, 90 certified teachers, 34 classified staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership:** The Principal at United Nations was in his 10th year at the time the study ended, and was supported by two vice principals. There was also a leadership team composed of department heads. Leadership at United Nations treated diversity was treated as more than just a surface issue. Students and staff talked about issues of race and ethnicity with openness and worked to resolve them. The Principal was noted for his ability to encourage staff to take leadership in certain areas that related to interethnic realtions. He was also seen as a “visionary” in his ability to work on issues before they became problems.

**Approaches:** The school was very much centered on developing and nurturing positive interethnic relations. The school’s human relations committee, made up of teachers and students, received the County of Los Angeles Commission on Human Relations 1998 John Anson Ford award. United Nations also had a conflict resolution program and a program called Link Crew that links incoming freshmen with juniors and seniors. A multicultural week had replaced a previous system of separate assemblies for different ethnicities. The principal also had taken leadership in developing programs and bringing in new resources. The self-conscious intentional addressing of diversity issues clearly set a tone for affirming a multiracial student body.

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