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Pastoral aspects of educational leadership: a phenomenological approach

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PASTORAL ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP:
A Phenomenological Approach

by
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ABSTRACT

This phenomenological study has sought to discover the types of behaviors school principals engage in that could be considered pastoral in nature. Four practicing principals were interviewed with this in mind. The participants were selected for their experiences, according to their superintendents, of having dealt effectively with crises. Their actions and responses to the needs of staff, students, evidenced pastoral aspects of educational leadership. It is the conclusion of this study that their work in this regard is an ongoing and intentional practice worthy of future study.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

During the last decade, American educational leaders have had to contend with an ever-changing landscape of educational reform (Helen, 2008). They have been left reeling from a barrage of school improvement initiatives focused on academic achievement. For example, state and federal policy-makers have begun to regard punitive accountability measures, such as high stakes testing with the potential for economic sanctions and merit pay for teachers, as acceptable means of getting results. To make matters worse, influential voices from outside of education have long contended that the primary aim of education is economic gain (Beck, 1992). More recently, the No Child Left Behind Act has shifted the focus of instruction to preparation for highly competitive standardized achievement tests. This change has put pressure on public school administrators to adopt practices aimed exclusively at improving students' academic performance. Although academic performance is an important means of assessing the overall effectiveness of education in America, the measures that have so far been implemented fail to take into account the diversity of giftedness and ability in the average student population. In this context, leaders face the challenge of introducing change and maintaining rigorous academic standards, while at the same time building shared vision, gaining the confidence of stakeholders, and fostering a strong sense of commitment among staff. Educational leadership is, above all, a relational enterprise.

Parker Palmer believes that the emotions should be taken as seriously as the intellect in professional formation (P. Palmer, 2007). In their efforts to improve student outcomes, school

administrators must often respond to traumatic events, such as death, loss, and other personal crises that force them to transcend their prescribed academic roles. Here leaders have the opportunity to engage in what has been called the “artful affect” of leadership (Newman, Guy, & Mastracci, 2009, p. p. 14) which is the focus of the present study.

Although incidents of violence in schools attract the attention of the media, they occur far less frequently than other crises, such as the accidental death of a student, the untimely passing of a teacher, life-threatening illness, the death of a staff member’s parents, divorce, losing one’s home, conviction of a crime such as DUI, dismissal from employment, or significant changes in workplace expectations and obligations—all of which have a dramatic and lasting impact on the daily life of both staff and students. Proactive educational leaders will know how to express concern and care in the wake of such traumatic events, but they should also be able to provide affirmation to both students and teachers and to respond appropriately to their needs whatever the circumstances.

In recent years, the concept of caring has figured prominently in the discussion of school leadership in the United States. However, in Australia, Great Britain, and Canada the discussion of care has moved to a deeper level through the introduction of the term “pastoral.” Although American scholars rarely use this term, they have nonetheless paid significant attention both to caring and to the relational nature of school leadership. Most of the care-based initiatives in American schools do not include pastoral care as part of their mandate, but they have much in common with formal school-based programs of pastoral care in other countries (Bouchard, 1987).

Scholars have yet to arrive at a precise definition of pastoral care, despite the fact that it forms part of the working vocabulary of fields as diverse as nursing, hospital chaplaincy,

education, and church work. All participants in the discussion do agree, however, that the concept has to do with concern for the well-being of the individual, issues of justice, community building, and moral and ethical considerations. For example, *The Journal of Pastoral Care in Education*, which is international in scope, concerns itself with the personal, social, and emotional development of pupils. However, the journal distinguishes between pastoral care and counseling as specific practices unto themselves and articles are separately dedicated to each topic. The inclusion of both concepts would lead one to conclude that each are complimentary practices and have to do with fostering individual and collective well-being within schools as a means of initiating and sustaining positive change within schools. Janet McWilliams Calvert, in her dissertation, *The Principal as Minister: A Reflective Study of the Prophetic and Pastoral Components of the Principalship*, conducted a self-reflective study that examined her experience in the role of the principal as related to ministry. In it she identified four primary functions to reflect upon the pastoral, prophetic, priestly, and pedagogic (Calvert, 1996). This dissertation is related to my study in that it serves as an indicator of two important themes of particular interest in my study; the existence of professional reflection on such a theme, and second, the realization of the similarities between ministry and school leadership. However, this is a reflective study of the experiences of one person and therefore very narrow in its scope. The primary relevance of the study is that it identifies the parallels of ministerial work with educational leadership.

I have used Joseph R. Bouchard's dissertation, *The Nature and Extent of the Pastoral Role of the Secondary School Principal in the State of Victoria, Australia*, (1992) as a point of departure for this study, since his research interests are similar to mine in that he attempts to understand better the pastoral nature of educational leadership. Bouchard has focused his study on the role of the principal and has based his research on surveys he administered in 12 public

and private schools. He has taken care to distinguish between pastoral care, pastoral role, and pastoral behavior, since the various definitions of these terms in the literature tend to be ambiguous. Bouchard has also concentrated intentionally on pastoral behavior and pastoral role but restricted his treatment of pastoral care to definition only.

Pastoral behavior, according to Bouchard, involves specific action taken to provide pastoral care. Administrative action differs from pastoral behavior in that it is devoted to maintaining the institution, whereas pastoral action has the well-being of individual subordinates as its focus. Indeed, the people that constitute the organization are more than human resources, or instruments of organizational effectiveness, or "role occupants"; they are human beings. With this in mind, Bouchard designed his survey questions to elicit responses that would enable him to measure the perceptions of students, faculty, and community members with respect to the pastoral behavior of principals.

Bouchard has defined pastoral role as a set of expectations, prescriptions, and perceptions that inform principals about the nature of the care they need to provide in their schools. His discussion of role is centered on what a principal ought to be doing by way of care-giving. He has delineated the external and internal dynamics of such care-giving by citing job descriptions and by describing the perceptions and expectations of participants within the organization. However, I believe that his descriptions are deficient because they have failed to take sufficient account of the tension between the expectations of stakeholders and job-related constraints, such as legal licensing board requirements and position descriptions.

Bouchard's study has defined pastoral care as any expression of concern on the part of the school and any action taken by the school for the good of the individual student or staff member. A unique feature of his discussion of pastoral care is its emphasis on the relationship

between the student and the school. The nature of this relationship is shaped by the initial interactions between the two parties: for the student, it begins with registration; for the teacher it begins with the first set of assignments. However, Bouchard does not pay sufficient attention to these initial interactions.

Bouchard has pointed out that church-affiliated schools in the British and Australian systems are more closely linked to state-run schools than are their counterparts in the American system. He believes that the greater involvement of the church in public institutions in Australia and Great Britain may have contributed to their having a more person-centered pastoral ethos than American schools. However, he has acknowledged that American researchers have advocated similar person-centered administrative approaches, albeit without finding wide acceptance for their views (Bouchard, 1992).

More recently, Noddings (2006) has brought to light the extensive national and international academic discourse on caring in schools and on how leaders exemplify the role of care-giver. Since research on pastoral care in schools is for the most part conducted outside the United States, and since it is my belief that all schools everywhere are relational communities that share the same characteristics, this study will review the research on pastoral care, the ethics of care, and emotional intelligence, with a view to discussing the pastoral aspects of school leadership and applying them to the American situation. More specifically, it will concern itself with the demands that the workplace makes on educational leaders (demands that most formal administrative training programs fail to address) and how these leaders ought to respond thoughtfully to them.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to discover the types of behaviors school principals engage in that could be considered pastoral in nature. To this end, I will interview four principals who have, according to their superintendents, dealt effectively with crises, so as to determine the actions they took before, during, and after a crisis. My objective is to discover whether these principals currently do pastoral care and, if so, whether they engage in it as an ongoing and intentional practice.

Research Questions

This qualitative study uses a phenomenological approach and will endeavor to answer the following questions:

- 1) What approaches have the principals used in responding to staff members during staff-related crises?
- 2) Which of the actions that occurred in response to the crises they encountered would the principals consider to be pastoral in nature?
- 3) How have crisis events within their schools influenced their professional practices in regards to pastoral care?

Definition of terms

Care in education. Caring in the context of education has to do with both moral instruction and the relationships in which such instruction occurs (Noddings, 2007). It includes the roles of the “carers,” i.e., the adults within the school, such as modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation.

Emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand, interpret, and manage one's emotions (Goleman, 1995).

Pastoral care. For the purposes of this study I will use Bouchard's definition of pastoral care, namely, "an expression of concern for the well-being of each student or member of the staff" (Bouchard, 1992, p. 20). Bouchard distinguishes pastoral care from pastoral behavior and pastoral role. Pastoral behavior, according to Bouchard, involves specific action taken to provide pastoral care. He defined pastoral role as a set of expectations, prescriptions, and perceptions that inform principals about the nature of the care they need to provide in their schools. As previously stated, Bouchard has concentrated intentionally on pastoral behavior and role and has restricted his treatment of pastoral care to definition only, whereas this study will focus specifically on this aspect where his study falls silent.

Limitations and Delimitations

A primary limitation of this study lies in the choice of methodology: Phenomenological inquiry. Phenomenological research is based on a person's lived experience and not measured by empirical means. The rigor of this type of study is dependent upon the ability of the researcher to bracket his or her own philosophical biases and relies heavily upon the researcher's adherence and commitment to this element of phenomenological research. The value in this type of research is not in theory building or answering specific questions, but rather, in adding to the collective understanding of lived experience.

A second limitation of this study is the generalizability of this study to other populations. An intentionally narrow focus was selected to learn about the experiences of four principals serving in public schools in rural Oregon and may not be applicable to other settings such as

large urban settings or other regional locations. A third limitation of this study lies in the context of each school and community; each one having a unique set of circumstances, history and demographic.

The delimitation of this study is imposed by virtue of the convenience selection of the participants in one region and known by the researcher to have dealt with similar crisis events within their schools. Selecting four participants further delimits this study to those individuals' experiences which are relevant only unto themselves and those whom they serve as educational leaders. Last, a relevant delimitation of the study is the timing of the interviews. Each was conducted at the end of the work day and lasted approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours. The participants' fatigue, emotional load, and pressing commitments are all factors affecting how they told their stories.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

It is the opinion of this researcher that public education is beginning to buckle under federal and state “test and measure” policies, which have as their goal the restoration to global prominence of the American economy. To achieve this end, educational leaders have tried to guarantee specific learning outcomes. This has led administrators like Michelle Rhee, chancellor of Washington D.C. public schools from 2007 to 2010, to adopt stringent, prescriptive measures. Her methods have been described as “slash and burn” by local teachers and union leaders. Proponents of the new mentality have begun to evaluate, reassign, and dismiss teachers on the basis of the academic performance of their students. According to their mechanistic understanding of the situation, these upper-level administrators need merely to dismantle and reassemble the schools in their jurisdiction, to replace their defective parts, in order to bring about a radical improvement in the product.

Some observers have suggested that this approach is the least effective way to achieve the desired end, and that it represents an acute misunderstanding of both human interaction theory and change theory (De Pree, 1989). To be sure, one must educate toward specific outcomes, but educational theorists disagree on how to achieve change in an organization that is driven almost exclusively by human interactions. They do agree, however, that measurement alone will not bring about the necessary qualitative changes. Bringing about educational change is a multidimensional undertaking that requires more skills than any individual leader can exercise at any given moment (Fullan, 2005; Marzano, McNulty, & Waters, 2004).

The centrality of relationships emerges as a recurrent theme in discussions about leading for change in schools (Gerstl-Pepin, Killeen, & Hasazi, 2006; Noddings, 1988, 2006). However,

as Fenwick English points out, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards for school administrators neglect to include the relational attributes of empathy, compassion, and social justice as essential qualities of educational leaders (English, 2007). To set the stage for my examination of the pastoral nature of educational leadership, I have reviewed the educational literature on care, emotional intelligence, and pastoral care.

Care

In the last twenty years, public administration managers and leaders have begun to regard the ability to provide care as an essential leadership skill. They have come to the realization that the effectiveness of an organization is largely dependent upon the emotional wellbeing of its employees as directly related to a leaders' expression of caring (Newman, Guy, & Mastracci, 2009). A lack of emotional wellbeing often results in higher absentee rates, medical claims, and losses in productivity, efficiency, and morale. One superintendent specifically referred to caring as a "quality tool" that competent leaders use to increase the effectiveness of their staff (Scarnati, 1998, p. 145). Knowing their employees' interests and personal attributes allows leaders to affirm their strengths. Cangemi, Burga, Lazarus, Miller, and Fitzgerald (2008), found that effective leaders perform eight specific roles; change agent, collaborative developer, creator of a humanistic work environment, developer of people, initiator of communication, role model of emotional intelligence, user of strategic data, and risk taker, and have in common a singular focus on how they interact with the people under their authority. The authors did not consider factors such as production and financial outcomes as relevant to their discussion of what leaders actually do. Instead, they emphasized the need for leaders to create a humane work environment that does not humiliate, intimidate, or produce fear. Although they did not refer specifically to care, they stressed roles that imply a caring attitude, such as developing people, casting vision,

and emphasizing core values and organization-wide communication. They also carefully distinguished between the roles of managers, whose duties include the measurement of outcomes, and those of leaders, whose primary concerns are relational.

Caring finds perhaps its best personal expression in the health care professions. Nursing, for example, involves a continuous and intensely personal expression of care; and nursing programs devote much instructional time to the specifics of care for patients. Nursing programs have, moreover, begun to emphasize care throughout the curriculum as a means of introducing care into every aspect of the profession itself. Bankert and Kozel (2005) have examined a nursing formation initiative in the course of which future nurses were both involved in providing care and engaging in critical reflection on practice and the principles of adult learning. The authors concluded that the program increased the participants' ability to engage deeply with their learning in the context of a caring environment, and that the participants were, as a result, more likely to apply their intensified understanding of care to their professional practice. In another study, Bent, Burke, Eckman, Hottman, McCabe, and Williams (2005) developed a model of clinical practice grounded in caring theory. They concluded that the main difference between their model and disease-guided practice, was its emphasis on relationships. Palmer (2008), in reflecting on a physician's comment that he is conflicted weekly within the healthcare system as to whether or not he can uphold his Hippocratic Oath, also came to relationally-oriented conclusions. He emphasized the need for caring, compassion, and a concern for social justice, suggesting that leaders, when faced with ethical dilemmas, need a deeper level of understanding than data points can provide, because working for social change is both a relational and a spiritual endeavor.

The centrality of relationships as a component of effective leadership also figures prominently in discussions outside the realms of public service and health care. Indeed, even the military and the industrial sector are concerned about the relational aspects of organizational management. A case in point involves a crisis in the Alberta oil industry caused in part by Shell Oil's insensitive business practices. Shell's actions resulted in a breakdown in relations between workers and the community and led to widespread discontent that expressed itself in sabotage and, ultimately, physical violence. Shell, recognizing its failure, established the Sunde Petroleum Operators Group (SPOG) as a means of restoring trust by building healthy, transparent relationships. This move, which may have been influenced by the principles set forth in Stephen Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, was one of the key elements in the company's successful response to the crisis. Shell now regards maintaining positive relationships with the community as being essential to its continued presence in Canada (Jahansoozi, 2006).

As far as the discussion of the role of care in education is concerned, Gilligan's introduction of a feminist ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982) stimulated a growth in research that continues to this day. The work of Noddings has been particularly influential. It revolves around three recurrent themes: the aims of education, the centrality of relationships, and the importance of motivation. Noddings (2007) believes that the primary aim of education is to develop persons. The teacher must educate the whole person—not just the intellect—with respect to morality, ethics, and civic responsibility. Education plays a crucial role in creating contributing members of society. According to Noddings (2006), motivation operates as a function of invitation rather than punishment, an idea that underscores the extent to which expressions of practical caring figure in Noddings's theory of education. Noddings's unique contribution to the discussion is the use of the functional nuclear family as a metaphor for the application of care in

schools and refers to this familial approach as “natural caring.” Educators express such care through modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation; and by emphasizing the centrality of relationships and interactions (Noddings, 2007).

Smeyers (1999) has proposed an ethic of care for the educational setting that does not consist of a set of guiding principles, but rather, of acts that one performs in relation to another person. Care thus brings with it the obligation of commitment and the consequent capacity to promote social justice. Early on in the academic discussion of care in education, Chaskin and Rauner (1995) asked if caring could play a role in improving test scores and student learning outcomes. Undergirding their proposal, and much of the current discussion, is Noddings’s assertion that the ethic of care has feminist roots and that it should be applied to curriculum. Accordingly, the social studies curriculum should educate both boys and girls for care-giving (Noddings, 2001). When the ethic of care is applied to the classroom, pedagogical approaches are adjusted to allow for equitable instruction. According to Ross, Bondy, Galligane, and Hambacher (2008), teachers can create the conditions for success by insisting on academic performance in the context of caring and respectful relationships. Henderson and Fisher’s study of Australian high school vocational programs found that students who perceived their teachers as facilitators of helping and friendly relationships performed well both affectively and academically (Henderson & Fisher, 2008).

Students have long considered their most beloved teachers to have been those who consistently expressed care (Marshall, 2009). Likewise, students’ motives for becoming teachers themselves are intrinsically linked to the care they received from their teachers. For example, Marshall’s study of 18 first-year undergraduate pre-service teachers at a Catholic university found that most, whether or not they considered themselves to be religious, chose to pursue a

teaching career for altruistic and spiritual reasons having to do with a sense of higher calling (Marshall, 2009). McBee found that teachers conceptualize and actualize caring by intentionally getting to know students and by interacting with them in the classroom. Other researchers have discovered that teacher preparation programs are beginning to include the ethic of care as an essential field of study (McNay & Graham, 2007; Owens & Ennis, 2005; Paul, Finn Egil, & Chris, 2004). Indeed, care as it relates to the relationship between teachers and learners has long been a topic of discussion among educational theorists. Educational leaders, on the other hand, have not been as quick to regard the expression of care between themselves and the teachers they administer as a key element of effective service.

In November of 1996, the ISLLC adopted a set of six standards to facilitate the assessment of the performance of educational leaders. Each of the six standards was explicitly detailed in three content indices: knowledge, dispositions, and performances (Shipman & Murphy, 1996). However, the standards do not include the traits of empathy, compassion, and social justice (English, 2007). The ISLLC revised its standards in 2008, after taking to heart the criticisms of those who found them to be too restrictive (Flanary & Simpson, 2008). This updated document, which takes into account more than 100 research papers, incorporates research findings about educational leadership that the ISLLC did not have at its disposal during the writing of the first set of standards. Among other things, the new standards recognize the ability to set the organizational direction and culture of the school as a primary indicator of a leader's effectiveness. This broadening of the standards opens the door to defining indicators with respect to the level of support that principals provide to the teachers they administer. Care thus becomes a possible indicator. Significantly, the document also includes a statement to the effect that that successful leadership programs designed specifically for principals who are

willing to work in the most challenging schools should focus on clear goals and system-wide values (Flanary & Simpson, 2008). One successful principal, Anthony Smith, of Taft Information Technology High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, believes that these system-wide values ought to include care. Smith, who managed to bring about a remarkable improvement in the academic performance of his school's students, believes that the ability to care is an innate trait: one can teach teachers to teach, but that one cannot teach them to care (Clairborne & Patrick, 2011).

Two aspects of care that need to be stressed in the training of teachers are concern for social justice and the cultivation of community (Beck, 1992; Gerstl-Pepin, Killeen, & Hasazi, 2006; C. Marshall, 2004). Among the problems that educational leaders must deal with in this connection are the lack of administrators from visible minorities and the increasing achievement gap between Caucasian students and the growing number of students from racial minorities. The increasing number of students from minority groups and from families living below the poverty line provides ample challenges for leadership. Standard conceptualizations of core leadership practices, such as those of Leithwood and Jantzi—setting directions, developing people, and redesigning the organization—fail to account for the success of those principals who have overseen the revitalization of troubled schools (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). In analyzing the efforts of seven such principals, Jacobson, Johnson, Ylimaki, and Giles (2005) concluded that a new set of descriptors—accountability, caring, and learning how better to address the present reality—revealed more clearly the leadership traits that accounted for the principals' success. In each case, the expression of care was a common factor in the revitalization of trust among staff, students, parents, and school administrators.

Educational theorists have begun to object to the excessive expectations that governments and the general public have placed on educational leaders—especially with respect to improving students' performance. For example, Fullan (2005), in his aptly titled article, "Turnaround Leadership," challenges the current strategies educational administrators are expected to use to turn schools around by presenting evidence to the effect that such strategies produce only temporary improvement and do not lead to sustained systemic change. Administrators should instead concentrate on building capacity, and their efforts at closing the achievement gap should be driven by moral purpose. Here again, we see themes congruent with social justice and the ethic of care. According to Noddings (2006), caring leaders have within them the capacity to function as master teachers themselves by motivating teachers and by inviting them to the center of the discussion on student learning without prescribing the actions they should take. The question of how to balance care with the broader issue of student performance has moved to the forefront of the educational debate as states and school districts try to find humane ways of complying with standardized testing and national educational standards.

Emotional Intelligence

Early research into the factors that contribute to successful leadership concerned itself primarily with specific technical skill sets which, provided a given manager possessed them and applied them correctly, would produce positive and predictable outcomes. Subsequent research has developed more nuanced ways of determining these factors and has largely concluded that a combination of certain attributes and skills is a more reliable predictor of success. Howard Gardner's ground-breaking study of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983) paved the way for research into why managers with high IQ's, as measured by traditional instruments, struggle to find success, while others with apparently average IQ's seem to excel (Goleman, 1995). A

leader's ability as an organizational strategist is merely one element of the leadership equation. Successful leadership depends, rather, on skills related to implementation, which take into account the emotional aspects of the relationships that constitute a particular organization.

For the better part of a century, scholars have considered self-control, management of zeal, persistence, and motivation as factors that contribute to managerial success. John Mayer and Peter Salovey (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) focused the discussion by introducing the concept *emotional intelligence* (EI). Goleman (1995), building on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and the work of Howard Gardner, has posited that dealing effectively with one's emotions is essential to personal success and, ultimately, success as a leader. Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee's (2001) findings also suggested that the emotions of a leader have the capacity to be transferred to others within an organization and to produce resonance or dissonance within the community at large. The phenomenon of emotional transference within the context of an organization is commonly referred to as "feeling tone." Both the members of an organization and its broader constituency may consider the feeling tone as an indicator of the organization's effectiveness— which gives rise to the question of whether or not emotional intelligence can be taught (Groves, McEnrue, & Shen, 2008). In response to multiple requests from fellow scholars, Groves, McEnrue and Shen used a self-report instrument based on previously-designed EI assessments to measure the results of an eleven-week course designed to train 135 business students to develop skills related to emotional intelligence. The study found that the emotional intelligence of the participants increased significantly beyond that of the control group (Groves, McEnrue, & Shen, 2008). The ability to improve one's emotional understanding of oneself and subsequently focus responses toward a desired outcome is relevant to leadership at various levels across a wide range of settings. The development of an individual's EI is an important topic of

research with a wide range of implications and applications. It has been suggested that athletic programs provide a plethora of relevant learning opportunities to gain many of the foundational building blocks of EI (Bar-On, Maree, & Elias, 2007).

Highly structured organizations, such as the military, have begun to examine the interplay of emotions on decision-making and the implications of EI for leadership. In battle, military officers face constantly changing circumstances and must be able to respond quickly to crises, hence, the need to decentralize leadership and move decision-making to the point of contact. Moving leadership away from a centralized command to a more fluid and responsive team of decision-makers requires a more collaborative approach than does the traditional subordinate/commander relationship (Vogelaar, 2007). Simply following a prescribed set of protocols does not enable one to assess the immediate human needs of a particular situation. The emotional impact on decision making in the military was also studied by Reuven Bar-On to find that better matching recruits' EI to specific job requirements precipitated significant retention, success and, ultimately, financial savings (Bar-On, Maree, & Elias, 2007). By way of example, in March 2006 a group of soldiers collectively violated military protocol when one of their team members was hit by a rocket propelled grenade that lodged in his abdomen and failed to detonate. His companions provided emergency medical treatment for his trauma and radioed for transport. Military protocol prohibited transporting wounded soldiers with live explosives in their bodies because of the likelihood that an explosion could cause significant collateral damage. Yet the soldiers, surgeons, and pilots involved all agreed to abandon protocol, to transport the soldier, and to perform surgery (Reiss, 2011). However, had the grenade detonated, significantly more lives would have been lost. All participants in that event were well aware of the consequences of their actions and were subjected to intense emotional stress during and after

the event. Violating protocol is highly discouraged in the military, but as this story illustrates, intense emotion often overrides learned patterns of behavior. To investigate such phenomena, a military expert from the Netherlands Defense Academy undertook a study that used a three by three matrix to examine military leadership in terms of traits, behaviors, and attributions. The attribution portion of his framework introduced emotion and symbolic aspects of more recent research into the discussion of military structures. His research represents an important contribution to the current discussion on leadership (Vogelaar, 2007).

Leaders who work in public administration must deal with a wide variety of services, ranging from the police, to the fire department, to utilities, to care-oriented services such as mental health, welfare, and child protection. They must cultivate strong relationships within the organization, while at the same time ensuring that the necessary services are delivered; and they are held accountable for the performance of their department(s) in both measurable and non-measurable ways. Public leaders face their greatest tests during national disasters. In this connection, the lackluster response to Hurricane Katrina by officials in New Orleans has been cited as a failure, while New York mayor Giuliani's response to the September 11th terrorist attacks was considered a success. Both situations received great public scrutiny. The public judges leaders on the basis of their ability to face moral dilemmas with care and compassion. Those who work in public service use the phrase "emotional labor" to describe the expectation that employees will hide their emotions and exhibit the "mask" appropriate to their particular situation. Leaders in this context must possess affective skills and be attuned to the emotions of the labor force (Newman, Guy, & Mastracci, 2009). Employees' satisfaction in their jobs and the perceived effectiveness of the organization depend on the ability of leaders to create an environment whereby their subordinates exhibit predominately positive emotions. Employee

morale, organizational citizenship, and employee turnover rates have been correlated with impact emotional intelligence has in the workplace (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2007). Workers attribute the effectiveness of leaders to their ability to communicate concern for the wellbeing of their employees and to make an emotional connection with them (Newman, Guy, & Mastracci, 2009).

Researchers have begun to differentiate between the effect of emotions on personal success and their impact on organizational success. Leading organizational change is an emotionally-charged undertaking. Leaders often act as lightning rods for both the positive and the negative emotions of the participants. Emotions within the workplace have a collective bearing on the efficiency and ultimate success of the organization (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2001; Hackett & Hortman, 2008; Newman, Guy, & Mastracci, 2009). The detrimental effect of negative emotion on a leaders' effectiveness threatens the well-being of an organization. For example, factors impinging their personal health and wellness affect their ability to make decisions and lead effectively (Ginsberg & Davies, 2007). Moreover, during hard times, when leaders must cut jobs discipline their employees, and face the resulting hostility, they experience a sense of personal isolation that takes an emotional toll on them.

Leaders involved in introducing change in schools encounter an even wider range of emotional responses, for they must deal with licensed professionals (teachers), support staff, students, parents, members of the community, and multiple layers of administration. The complexity of systems in this arena is intensified by continual renewal and re-definition of purpose at local, state and national levels. As the level of complexity and ambiguity increases, leaders must pay greater attention to managing both their own emotional responses and those of the other members of the organization. Some theorists have suggested that emotional skills are

just as important as intellectual skills for those who hope to provide effective leadership in these circumstances (Palmer, 2007). Moreover, in the context of high-stakes change, the need for emotional intelligence increases (Newman, Guy, & Mastracci, 2009; P. Palmer, 2008). Leaders who work in unionized environments that require consistent compliance with laws and regulations about confidentiality tend to become emotionally isolated. By contrast, leaders of professional communities that regard themselves as being quasi-families find it almost impossible to maintain the requisite emotional distance. In any event, the other members of the organization tend to misconstrue as emotional withdrawal their leaders' attempts to maintain confidentiality. To make matters worse, the former may emulate the latter's perceived behavior in a response known as emotional contagion and spiral misconceived responses into a larger crisis than was merited by the initial interactions (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994, p. 4). The commentary that ignoring emotions is perilous for those engaged in negotiations is also relevant for those in positions of educational leadership (Fisher & Shapiro, 2005).

A growing body of research has confirmed that emotion plays a significant role in organizational success. Educational institutions have begun to include courses on emotional intelligence in their leadership preparation programs. Yet, licensure requirements for educators and educational leaders, as determined by university program approval for such, may or may not include program coursework for emotional competency despite the fact that theorists have advocated that standards for emotional competence be included in leadership preparation programs. Researchers have suggested that this type of preparation for appropriate emotional responses within the work setting, in anticipation of the need for thoughtful responses from leaders, creates a better overall working environment that may be more conducive to achieving higher standards (Ginsberg & Davies, 2007; Moore, 2009; Richard, Judith, & Richard, 2005).

The expression of emotions can have either a positive or a negative effect on a given educational setting. Understanding the subtleties of a broad range of communication for the purpose of managing involve an attention to detail that surpasses the mere management of a process, rather it involves expression and perception of small unnoticed details and significant situational awareness that every person in an organization carries with them the potential to help or hinder the effectiveness of the organization (Gardenswartz, Cherbosque, & Rowe, 2008). Appropriate displays of affect on the part of leaders, such as empathy or passion, can elicit trust and a sense of solidarity among staff members (Richard, Judith, & Richard, 2005). If leaders are able to understand why they respond in a certain way to a certain circumstance they can better understand what sorts of responses would have the greatest beneficial impact on the community. Such self-knowledge should also enable leaders to do a better job of managing and responding to the emotions of those they have been charged with leading. As I mentioned earlier, creating a school culture that embraces change requires self-control and a high degree of emotional intelligence. Good leaders also take advantage of their personal and collective emotional awareness to develop a “situational awareness” of emotional currents within the organization (Marzano, McNulty, & Waters, 2004; Moore, 2009). This awareness enables them to do a more effective job of meeting the needs of staff and building a common vision. This, in turn, increases the level of trust and respect among staff vis-à-vis leadership. Indeed, as one recent study has demonstrated, principals whom teachers, peers, and supervisors identified as outstanding exhibited greater emotional and social intelligence than those whom their co-workers considered typical (Helen, 2008). Leaders with a high degree of emotional intelligence are able to navigate the emotionally-charged waters of school reform by moving teachers from isolation to collaboration (Moore, 2009; B. Palmer, Gardner, & Stough, 2003).

Pastoral Care

The term “pastoral care” has its origin in the Judeo-Christian likening of the pastor of a congregation to a shepherd who oversees a flock of sheep. Jesus himself is the model shepherd. One of the earliest treatments of pastoral care is the sixteenth-century work *Cura Pastoralis* (*Pastoral Care*) of Pope Gregory I (Carroll, 2010), which the author intended as a handbook for clergy attempting to care for their parishioners’ spiritual, emotional, and physical needs. The term also came to describe the work of clergy who served as hospital and military chaplains. However, by virtue of its religious origin, pastoral care is associated in the American popular mind with the work of Christian ministers, thereby (because of the separation of church and state) precluding its use in other contexts, especially those with governmental ties such as education and social services. However, in England, Australia, and Canada, the term ‘pastoral care’ is used in the educational literature and even has a scholarly journal, *Pastoral Care in Education* (published in the UK) devoted to it. In addition, the term “pastoral” has appeared in the educational literature on philosophical discussions of postmodern thought regarding forms of control, specifically in contrast to functions of domination and resistance. Moreover, Michael Foucault’s work *Discipline and Punish* included the observation that privileged persons receive more “pastoral” forms of control, which rely on nurturing and coercive discourse, rather than punitive measures, to achieve compliance (Foucault, 1977). In a response to Foucault’s work, Schutz observed that the modern classroom is the best platform to observe the display of pastoral approaches versus those of domination and resistance (Schutz, 2004).

The influence of pastoral persuasion from a political perspective is evident in the activist movements in American culture and, specifically, in the Civil Rights movement. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. used his influence as a pastor to call on the government to change its policies.

More recently, with the ending of apartheid in South Africa, a discussion has begun as to the role of faith communities and pastoral leadership in the political arena (MacMaster, 2008).

As was mentioned above, pastoral care takes into account the whole person, including life in the workplace. This latter dimension has become increasingly important now that the demands of the workplace have begun to eat away significantly at employees' personal time (Wagner, 1992). Conversely, personal problems can have a negative impact on workers' effectiveness on the job. Employee assistance programs, which are often administered by the organization's human resources officer or an insurance company's case manager, can help to address significant concerns, such as substance abuse or mental illness. Such interventions have limited effectiveness. To address this deficiency, Corporate Chaplains of America was formed in 1996 to provide a wider range of confidential pastoral care for the corporate sector. At the same time, the increasing emphasis on holistic approaches to wellness and healing in the medical sector has led to a rejuvenation of medical chaplaincy and to an expansion of its role. To assess the impact that pastoral care was having on coping skills, Bay, Beckman, Trippi, Gunderman, and Terry (2008) conducted a survey of two groups of patients who had undergone cardiac bypass surgery. One group received pastoral care from the hospital's chaplains, the other did not. Patients in the former group had better religious coping outcomes such as fewer incidents of depression, and a more positive outlook than those in the control group.

The medical profession has drawn from the theory and practice of pastoral care in both formal and informal ways. Benner and Sutphen (2007) believe that nursing, in particular, has much to learn from training programs for clergy. They have contended that doctors and nurses must begin to use pastoral forms of reasoning and discernment because they are more fluid and dynamic than traditional formulaic stratagems. They used *Educating Clergy* (Foster, Dahill,

Golemon, & Tolentino, 2005) as a primary source for their claims. Foster, et al. have pointed out that professional education programs seek to inculcate in their students a certain philosophy of pastoral care and to develop in them a specific set of attributes. Clinical pastoral education programs, which prepare students for professional chaplaincy in medical settings, have demonstrated that students can enhance certain aspects of their emotional intelligence, such as empathy and self-reflection, by taking courses in those areas (Jankowski, Vanderwerker, Murphy, Montonye, & Ross, 2008). Indeed, in a recent qualitative study of pastors' learning with respect to church politics, the participants found that practica, coupled with intentional professional reflection, facilitated the development of their emotional intelligence (Burns & Cervero, 2002).

The pastoral role involves, above all, exercising caring and compassion. The interrogative approach presupposes caring inquiry and can be effectively used in both collective and individual contexts. Like the Socratic method, it is responsive rather than prescriptive in nature, and thereby encourages the church to become more reflective in its decision-making (Britton, 2009).

In the public sphere, pastoral care is most often used as a means of responding to crisis. Grief resulting from trauma can impede personal, academic, and social development in significant ways if left unresolved. Hence, when a traumatic crisis occurs in a school, educational leaders must address it in a methodical and proactive manner. With this in mind, they often call upon teams of qualified district personnel to create response plans to provide emotional and psychological support to those affected by the crisis. Such plans include counseling services and often involve clergy (Graefe, 1992).

Grief at the personal level invariably accompanies the loss of a loved one. Such grief, according to one study of middle school students, has a significant negative impact on academic performance (Hutchinson, 2004). Grief, however, can come from other forms of loss or trauma that occur in the educational setting, as McDevitt, Dosen, and Ryan (2006) discovered in their study of the deep sense of loss that accompanied the closing of certain Catholic schools. They recommended pastoral responses similar to those that would be used in helping the bereaved grieve the loss of a loved one. Responding to crisis is, however, merely one facet of pastoral care; and so to understand it as being applicable exclusively to this narrow context in an educational setting is to deprive the school community of the benefits of applying it more broadly.

In the United States, non-crisis-related pastoral care in schools often takes the form of guidance and counseling, and it is aimed almost exclusively at student populations. British theorists, however, believe that all members of a given institution should receive pastoral care, even though its benefits cannot easily be measured. They also lament the loss, reduction, and attenuation of programs of pastoral care in their own country (Best, 1999; Robson, Cohen, & McGuinness, 1999). An Australian study of teachers and their practice of pastoral care observed that the school “house system” contributed to the development of pastoral relationships between students and teachers (Chittenden & Lang, 1999). Of course, as Bouchard has indicated, pastoral care, by other names, also takes place in American schools (Bouchard, 1992). More recently, McNay and Graham (2007) have studied the pastoral role that mentor teachers play in the development of their protégés’ vision for education. They found that mentor teachers exerted an influence that extended beyond their ability to deliver content accurately and efficiently. Indeed,

they were even able to elicit responses at the ontological level and to facilitate discussions regarding matters of the heart.

Pastoral care requires interplay between the motivations of the carer and the cared-for. Those engaged in providing pastoral care attempt to promote the recipient's well-being within the constraints of the pastoral arrangement. However, the motivations of the person receiving care may not be congruent with the provider's motivation and at times may even be contrary. Legal, ethical, and moral dilemmas may arise which precipitate thoughtful responses on the part of the carer. Thus, issues of justice and community, already relevant topics within the educational context, become primary issues of care as well. The school leaders who provide such care find it to be a highly relational endeavor requiring both keen self-knowledge and an understanding of the subtle nuances of human behavior (Pellicer, 1999). They must, for example, manage a variety of motivations among their teaching staff such as allocating resources among disciplines so as to be equitable as well as their own motivations for increasing student performance in a just manner. Fortunately, as a recent study of pre-service teachers revealed, most teachers have entered the profession because of a sense of spiritual calling (Marshall, 2009). Fulfilling the expectations bound up in this sense of calling and heightened sense of professional duty poses a daunting task to those charged with leading the educational institutions. With the ever-widening demands on America's embattled educational system, the wisdom and discernment that the pastoral approach can provide may now be more relevant than ever.

Conclusion

The demands on educational leaders have continued to increase in complexity, while the means of assessing them have become more and more narrowly focused on the academic performance of their students. With these things in mind, theorists have been hard-pressed to

define what constitutes effective educational leadership. Politicians at the national and local levels have attempted to define effective schools according to student outcomes, and according to academic outcomes, in particular. Legislative reforms have focused purely on students' academic gains. They have left educators wondering how they are to address their students' social and emotional needs when they are required by law to focus so ardently on this one aspect of formation. Although educational theorists do not advocate emphasizing the academic to the exclusion of the social and emotional dimensions of learning, leaders faced with increasing demands and reduced funding and time inadvertently reset the telemetry of educational programs at the local level to this end. It is my hope that in investigating the functional interplay between caring, emotion, and pastoral approaches, I might make some discoveries that could contribute to finding a way out of this impasse.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

The purpose of this study was to discover what types of action school principals engage in that could be considered pastoral care. To this end I interviewed four principals who, according to their superintendents, have dealt effectively with crises, so as to determine what actions they took before, during, and after a crisis. My objective was to discover whether the four participants currently engage in pastoral care as a habitual and intentional practice.

Research Questions

This qualitative research study endeavored to answer the following questions:

- 1) What approaches have the principals used in responding to staff members during staff-related crises?
- 2) Which of the actions that occurred in response to the crises they encountered would the principals consider to be pastoral in nature?
- 3) How have crisis events within their schools influenced their professional practices in regards to pastoral care?

Setting

This study is situated in the southwestern region of Oregon. The southern portion of the state is much less populated than the northern region and considerably more rural. According to the 2010 census, the population of this particular county was 82,713, with approximately 34,000 of those residents living within the city limits of the largest city within that county. Each school district is geographically and economically distinct. The county school district is

disproportionately much larger in geographical area in comparison to the city district and serves approximately 5000 students. Of those students, 62.2% are on free or reduced lunch, and .6% are English language learners. Of their teachers, 62.8% hold master's degrees. A smaller, yet more densely populated city school district serves 5,838 students, of whom 58.7% are on free or reduced lunch and 1.5% are English Language Learners. Of their teachers, 59.3% have master's degrees. The county district serves three distinct communities, each of which has its own high school, middle school, and elementary feeder schools. The city school district is confined to the city limits and is home to six elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. While the districts are similar in the number of students they serve, they have very different socio-economic and geographic dynamics that have an impact on all aspects of the educational services they provide.

Research Design, Phenomenological Approach, and Participants

Design

Each of the participants has been vetted in a meeting with the superintendent of each district (appendix A). During these meetings I sought to understand the viability of each of these candidates for the study to see if they are suitable and approved by the superintendent. Once the participants were approved I contacted each of them individually to schedule a time to sit down and conduct the interviews. The interview setting was in each of their respective personal offices, except for P-1 which took place in my home. The initial contact involved my sharing a description of the nature of my study and the signing of the assurance of confidentiality forms (appendix C). During this time I attempted to establish a modicum of rapport with each of the participants. A very small digital recording device was used during the interview process so as not to be a distraction to the participants. The schedule of questions was used to guide the

interview while simultaneously allowing for deviation away from the questions if so directed by the participant (appendix B). As the researcher, I used follow-up and probing questions to identify and clarify themes.

The semi-structured process allowed me to pursue lines of thought expressed by the participants. Follow up questioning allowed for clarification of themes that emerged during the interview process. Further definition of the themes resulted as the participants elaborated on the examples and stories they shared. Interviewing in them in this manner created a richer body of research material to facilitate this study and get to the detail of experiences that are relevant to the study of pastoral care in educational leadership.

Upon completing the interviews, the digital recordings were dictated into transcript form. Transcripts were then read once by me and a second time by three reviewers. The meeting between me and the review committee took place at my school office whereby we attempted to identify common themes from the interview transcripts. Particular attention was given to individual themes as well as collective themes or differences in the context of the research questions 1) what approaches have the principals used in responding to staff members during staff-related crises? 2) Which of the actions that occurred in response the crises they encountered would the principals consider to be pastoral in nature? 3) How have crisis events within their schools influenced their professional practice with regard to pastoral care?

Once we reached consensus as to emergent themes, the findings were further refined and then reported in chapter four. The following chapter focuses on the discussion and analysis of the themes as identified by the vetting process of the committee and my refinement by further examination of the transcripts. The concluding chapter focuses on recommendations for future research or possible follow-up studies.

Phenomenological Approach

Phenomenological research is focused on people's lived experiences. This approach to research is focused on a philosophical, more so than the empirical, type of research. There are two primary approaches to phenomenological research; the hermeneutical approach, as espoused by van Manen (1990) and the transcendental approach as identified by Moustakas (1994). The hermeneutical approach to phenomenological research is primarily focused on reporting the lived experiences of the participants. In this approach less emphasis is made on the structure, or set of rules, that guide the research and more focus is given to re-counting the story of the participants. In transcendental phenomenological research the researcher interprets the lived experiences of the participants. In this approach researchers spend considerable time identifying their own philosophical presuppositions in an attempt to bracket them and, thereby, eliminate any influence they may have on the research (Moustakas, 1994).

A phenomenological approach was selected for this study, in part, due to the absence of other relevant research in the field. Only one other dissertation has been written on a similar topic in the United States and the appearance of the term pastoral care is largely absent from the literature on educational leadership, despite being commonly found in the European literature. Thus, it was determined appropriate to use a phenomenological approach to better understand the nature of educational leadership in American schools around such events as crisis, in which one might consider pastoral care as relevant.

Specifically, for the purposes of this study I selected a transcendental approach to be used in an attempt to bracket my own philosophical presuppositions. I have shared my personal educational and life journey in the section entitled: role of the researcher. While the participants will be aware of the title of this study, considerable care was given to refrain from sharing my

own personal beliefs or philosophical presuppositions with the participants. In the events that a participant asked for clarification of my topic or questions, a description of the literature review and research questions was shared.

During the interview process, I gave considerable care to not influence the participants' sharing of their experiences. Interpretation or commentary on the stories was strictly prohibited during the interview event. The overarching intent of the interview process was to discover the types of experiences that participants have had in the context of the study questions. Each participant was asked to share particular influences from their lived experiences that may have impacted how he/she responded in moments of crisis. The intent of this study was to gain a deep understanding of each participant's lived experience within the schools he/she serve.

Participants

This study used a convenience sample of school administrators known to me and confirmed as appropriate by each district's superintendent. The schedule of semi-standardized questions was developed to probe the experiences of the participants in relation to the research questions of this study. Specific attention was given to open-ended questioning to allow the participants to reveal their lived experiences as school leaders. In keeping with the accepted practices of phenomenological study, I was careful to allow the participants to steer the conversation and gave my utmost attention to the emerging themes.

The participants in this study were four school administrators, two from each district. I attempted to select my participants in such a way as to ensure that each school type—elementary, middle, and high school—was represented. The study utilized a convenience sampling strategy

as I personally knew, or had working knowledge, that each school administrator had dealt with significant school related crisis.

Role of the Researcher

As a doctoral student at George Fox University I chose to focus this study on a topic borne out my own observations and professional experiences gained as an educator and early, yet brief, career as a youth minister. Undoubtedly, my religious convictions, from the Judeo-Christian tradition, have had a substantial impact on my perspectives of leadership and influence how I function as a professional educator today. More importantly, for the purpose of this study, the following is a brief summary of my experiences and beliefs in order to aptly bracket my own perspectives.

My undergraduate work was conducted at Northwest Christian University, a private university whose historical affiliations are tied to Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Churches, and the Churches of Christ denominations. Though theologically diverse, these traditions fall within the mainline movement of Protestant Christianity. Specific scholarly coursework was dedicated to theology and biblical studies as well as weekly participation in chapel services. The culture and student life I encountered there focused my spiritual and academic pursuits through study and worship in a close-knit community of faith. Of particular influence was my participation in an ad-hoc study group of like-minded students who formed a covenanted community of faith which met several times a week for fellowship and study. This non-university-sanctioned group centered on service oriented expressions of faith and soon evolved into a full fledged church whereby members consolidated their possessions and lived communally. Considerable time was spent reading and studying theological works by authors such as Martin Buber, Reinhold Neibuhr, Paul Tillich, Dietrich Bonhoffer, and many others, with

a primary focus on the importance of relationships within the community of faith. While my wife and I chose to pursue a more traditional approach to our faith, the influence of this experience had a profound effect on my faith and theological perspective.

My first occupation as a college graduate was serving as a professional youth minister in a church setting. During this time I was exposed to a wide range of human experiences that celebrated life at all stages from birth to death. A critical component of this experience was the mentoring by a competent, seasoned, and well-educated senior minister. Relating to people who are experiencing grief and loss was a particular area of expertise that was shared with me through countless hours of visitation and conversation. On one occasion, an elderly couple discussed their advanced directives plan with him while I was present. Later that year, when the elderly man was rushed to the hospital, we were present in the ER when he died. We provided comfort to his widow during that moment and continued to support and visit with her in the following months. When a 16 year-old daughter of a church member was killed in an automobile accident, the minister was first with the family during their loss. The on-going dialog and teaching that took place during these events, and many others, held profound influence on my views of leadership in the context of community.

Upon entering the educational arena as a special education teacher, I quickly realized many similarities between the church and school setting. Meetings with parents regarding the educational needs of their children often mirrored parent meetings that I encountered within the church as they shared their concerns, and often fears, regarding their children's struggles to achieve success. As I made the transition to an administrative position, the similarities became even more apparent as I worked in tandem with the principal to support teachers and students in their "life-together" pursuit of academic excellence. Over the past thirteen years as a

professional educator in multiple leadership positions, I have encountered human tragedy as commonplace occurrences within schools. Divorce, life threatening illness, death, financial ruin, and many other personal crises, have all presented themselves in one form or another. Given my background, considerable attention was given to suspending personal bias, judgment and evaluation throughout the interview process.

Bracketing constituted a critical aspect during the interview process. As a fellow educational leader, my temptation was to share similar stories with the people whom I interviewed. Much effort was given to not commenting or sharing similar stories with the participants during the interview process. One specific way that I attempted to address this was to build the rapport and commonality of lived experience prior to the actual start of the interview process. Sharing common cordial greetings such as how things are going in our particular schools will be dealt with in the very first few minutes of the interview period as part of the setup. During the interview, the primary focus was on the interviewee and their story. All follow-up questions were relevant to dynamics or concepts alluded to by the participant.

Research Ethics

In an effort to insure the professional, personal, and emotional safety of the participants of this study, procedures adhered to the guidelines for the safeguarding of human participants as set forth by George Fox University throughout the study. I developed and used specific measures to ensure that all participants gave their informed consent prior to participating in the interviews. Furthermore, each participant was assigned an alpha-numeric code that I used in lieu of that person's name on all documents pertaining to this study. All other names have been stricken from the record, and all documentation, both hardcopy and digital, are being kept in a

locked file cabinet, the key to which is held exclusively by me. All data will be retained for three years, and then destroyed.

Prior to the commencement of this study, and prior to any collection of data, I read each participant a letter outlining the nature and purpose of the study. This letter specified that participation is by consent only, completely voluntary, and could be withdrawn at any time. I have kept the consent forms in a locking filing cabinet separate from the coded data collection documents. I did not initiate any form of contact with the participants until the Ethics Review Board of George Fox University granted its final approval and until the letters of cooperation were signed by the appropriate superintendents.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data for this study was collected by semi-standardized face-to-face interviews as defined by Berg (2007) using a pre-determined schedule of questions while allowing the addition or deletion of probes during the interview process. I developed the interview schedule of structured questions to adequately probe research questions while allowing for follow-up questioning with the hopes that alternate and unanticipated themes would voluntarily emerge. Interviews were digitally recorded for accuracy and later transcribed to text by myself with the aide of voice-to-text software. Transcripts were read twice, once by me as the researcher, and a second time by me and three other reviewers. The reviewers were required to sign confidentiality statements to safeguard participant's identity and interview content within this study. Each reading focused on finding significant themes or statements that best described the lived experiences of the participants and then sorted into collective unifying clusters.

Potential contribution of the research

The nomenclature of *pastoral care* is absent from American education and pastoral care in public schools has not been researched in any form. It is my hope that this study has broadened the current discussion of care in schools to include the term “pastoral” as a possible mode of leadership. It is my belief that schools are more akin to living organisms than machines and are better served by a pastoral approach than a mechanistic one. Further studies of pastoral care in the context of student achievement would appear to be a worthy and relevant topic of future research.

CHAPTER 4

Findings from Semi-structured Interviews

I have designated the four principals I interviewed for this study as P-1, P-2, P-3, and P-4. I interviewed three of them in their offices and one in another private setting and made digital recordings of each conversation. This chapter recounts the lived experiences of each of the four subjects; these accounts are analyzed in Chapter Five.

Principal 1

P-1 attended public elementary and high schools in Oregon and completed his higher education at a major university in the same state. During his formative years he attended Methodist, Presbyterian, Quaker, and Nazarene churches. As a teenager he made a personal commitment to Christ and, although he is a somewhat sporadic churchgoer, he has a deep and abiding faith and considers himself a Christian. His understanding of the role his faith plays in his philosophy of leadership could be summed up in the following statement by a pastor who mentored him as a teen: “be Jesus to your world.”

When I asked P-1 to recount a crisis that had had a formative influence on him during his career, he told me about the death of a student that had occurred during his tenure as the principal of a high school. The young man in question had collapsed during a P. E. class. Two teachers tried unsuccessfully to resuscitate him. With the arrival of the emergency response vehicles, news of the student’s death circulated quickly throughout the school. P-1 assembled a team of professionals composed of school counselors, ministers, youth ministers, and other administrators to help comfort those who had been affected by the loss. He made sure to provide

a specific place on campus—the library— where students and adults could talk with the team about the ways in which they were experiencing grief. P-1 had this to say about the death and its aftermath:

It was spring time when he died, and we were going into the track season. It was just shortly after his death that we had our first home track meet, and he was the anchor on the short relay team. His team members decided to go ahead and run the relay race without him, but they did not select a runner to replace him on the final leg. Instead, they ran their race, and [on] the last leg they dropped the baton at the very end. It was important for them to honor him this way. It was a tribute to the . . . the student even though it was weeks later . . . it was a huge memory of him

P-1 also mentioned that the school set up a scholarship in honor of the deceased. The first awarding of the scholarship was to occur at the school's graduation ceremonies that spring. Fearing that he would break down and not get through the ceremony, the father of the honoree asked P-1 to make the award. Every year since then the presentation of the scholarship has reminded student athletes of the tragic event and of the positive contributions the deceased had made to the school.

P-1 also made reference to three other crises that had made a lasting impact on the school, namely, the death of a teacher on a weekend trip to the coast, serious racial tensions that arose at an out-of-town athletic competition, and the strife that often accompanies the collective bargaining process. In the case of the racial tensions, the administrative team put together a plan to minimize the potential for future incidents.

When responding to a crisis, P-1 takes into account the feelings and potential reactions of each affected person. For example, loss and hurt each require a different sort of care. He cited

Stephen Covey's dictum that one should "seek first to understand" as a good rule to follow when responding to people in crisis, noting also that listening helps those affected process their emotions in a positive way. In addition, he finds that he is able to interact at a deeper level with parents or staff members who are fellow Christians. Even simple statements such as "I'll pray for you," or "blessings on you," are likely to have a greater potential for consolation if the parties in the conversation have a shared understanding of what those statements mean. The bond of faith enables the sufferer and the caregiver to work through suffering together. Throughout the crises P-1 kept reflecting on his guiding principle of caring, namely, "being Jesus to your world." He believes that the outworking of this principle involves, among other things, maintaining a non-judgmental perspective and working to bring the sufferer toward wholeness. He finds the attitude especially helpful in dealing with people of different faiths or life experiences, and the action essential when disciplining students or helping them respond to crises. He regards both as being uniquely Christian responses.

P-1 considers the building of relationships to be the most important groundwork for any action he might undertake to help his staff deal with a crisis:

It's building the relationship first. You know, it's about you'd better be making a few deposits before you have to make a withdrawal. And so it is when you're dealing with staff. All those things you use when you build a relationship: kindness, caring, and knowing the family. Try to know their children's names, ages, and what they're going through, or where their husband works.

P-1 believes that a principal can set the stage for relationship-building simply by showing kindness. If the principal exemplifies this virtue, staff members will feel comfortable in approaching him or her for help in dealing with whatever difficulties they may be encountering.

P-1 considers kindness to be one of his personality traits. Indeed, he expresses his faith through acts of kindness, such as treating staff members, students, and parents with respect and taking care not to pass judgment on them.

In determining the effectiveness of a particular action, P-1 considers the outcome of that action on the circumstance or how it is received by a particular individual. In one specific example, P-1 related a story of ineffective action on his part to improve a teacher's instruction. To help the teacher in question he did an evaluation and offered recommendations for improvement. His action was initiated without the benefit of having established a positive rapport with the teacher. As a result, the failure to build common ground at the beginning of the process the relationship became strained. His lack of investment in the relationship not only added to the strain but actually compromised the potential for a positive outcome. He had, for example, discovered too late that he and the teacher had differing philosophies of education and different worldviews. Had he tried to build a positive relationship with this teacher before making his recommendations the outcome might have been different.

Indeed, P-1 believes that principals tend to have fairly short tenures precisely because they alienate their staff by offering "constructive criticism" before they have had a chance to build the necessary relational foundation. Principals who have these sorts of interactions with 10% of their staff each year will end up, after five years, with strained relationships with half of them. To minimize relational strain, according to P-1, principals must be able to distinguish between persons and their actions. P-1 indicated that reflecting on his actions in light of his Christian faith had enabled him to gain this insight.

P-1 also mentioned that mentors had played a significant role in his development throughout his 29 years as a teacher and administrator. All but two of them were committed

Christians who taught him how to apply his faith in difficult relational circumstances. He considers himself lucky to have served under these exemplary leaders, because knowing how to relate to people is the most important aspect of leadership, and because one's core values determine how one interacts with people.

Principal 2

P-2 began his career as an elementary teacher after earning an M.A. in teaching at Oregon State University. After teaching elementary school for several years he completed an administrative licensure program, following which he became the vice-principal of a high school, a post he held for three years. He was then appointed to his present position as principal of an elementary school.

P-2 was raised in the Lutheran church. His mother was Lutheran, and father was Catholic. During his formative years they encouraged him to deepen his religious understanding and convictions, but without aligning himself too closely with any particular Christian tradition. He still attends a Lutheran church and considers himself to be a Christian. P-2 believes that his religious views have had an implicit influence on his philosophy of leadership. That is, whenever he interacts with students in his office, he relies on his faith over and over again to inform both his problem-solving and what he says about truth, accountability, and forgiveness. P-2 observed that most of the questions he has to answer have to do with how one defines truth. His own approach to leadership is rooted in his Christian faith and consists primarily in identifying the truth in a given situation and taking the appropriate corrective actions. He finds this approach relevant to the problems he encounters as a principal.

P-2 believes that many people exercise leadership without even knowing that they are doing so. Organizations have leadership at every level; leaders emerge even in the most informal social gatherings. He offers the following description of leaders:

We've got leaders in lots of different aspects, so I guess I would talk about what it takes, and whom I would look up to, and what their kind of lifestyle issues are. It has to do with how they project themselves; even more than just a lifestyle. Someone who others can admire and look up to and follow in whatever capacity it might be, such as a committee, or someone who was going to speak about something and they [staff] would listen and say yes, and all listen. And not only listen, but someone that they would follow, that would uphold those ideas; our ideals. Leaders are someone who project themselves in certain kinds of leadership and it doesn't have to do with the position because there are those [in certain positions] who do not project themselves in such a way that you would follow them.

To sum up, P-2 thinks that leaders ought to do more than merely listen to others; they need to show themselves to be worthy of being followed, to be upholders of the ideals of the organization.

As was mentioned above, P-2 described the influence of his religious views on his leadership as being more implicit than explicit. Yet, by his own admission, he is aware that his faith informs his attitudes and actions and that it is something that he relies upon daily. His implicit Christian perspective can be discerned from the following account of his interactions with students and staff around a conference table in his office:

It is about truth, about accountability, about forgiveness, and about the whole process of what it takes to go through to be able to say 'it's going to get better when you're

able to say what we've done wrong.' It means that we can work past it. That doesn't mean it's necessarily going to get easier; there are some stumbling blocks along the way, but it's going to start to get better. And that's a piece I try to do.

P-2 believes that all crises can be reduced to two distinct concerns: those that others have and want their leaders to adopt as their own, and those that truly fall within the leader's scope of responsibility. Minor crises, such as chaos in the parking lot when parents are picking up their children, may not receive the principal's full attention. What one person perceives as an emergency another may regard as being inconsequential. An effective leader must constantly distinguish between mere concerns and real crises. Of course, some crises are obvious to all, e.g., the abduction of a child or the sighting of a cougar near a school bus stop. Principals must have well-developed policies and procedures in place to address issues of safety and to ensure timely communication with parents and the central school board office in the event of an emergency.

P-2 went on to describe the biggest crisis he has ever encountered: the deaths of two staff members and two students between May 2006 and September 2007. This series of losses profoundly affected every student and staff member in the school, as well as every family associated with the school. Some of these people remain traumatized to this day. The first of the staff deaths occurred during P-2's first year as principal. He received a phone call on the way to work to the effect that the staff member in question had been taken to the hospital and was not expected to live. Following is his description of what was going through his mind (as a leader) on hearing the news:

She was so upset she couldn't call me so she had her daughter call me. So here I was talking to a seventeen year old kid with my third grade daughter sitting in the truck with me asking 'what's going on dad?' and, as I'm trying to absorb all this, I'm thinking 'OK,

what am I going to say when they get into the building?’ I was thinking ‘How do I say that without being in earshot of my own daughter? What next steps are we making? How do I communicate something when I really don’t know what is going on right now, when we may have a staff member who died, and they are taking her by ambulance to the ER, trying to resuscitate her? We don’t know if she’s going to be resuscitated, then we think we need to get a sub in her room, don’t we? Then what?’ So we began gathering staff before the school hour started. I hadn’t thought about that one for quite awhile. You know, contacting the district office, coming up with a plan because someone had to say goodbye to her, and then we had to think of what will we do with the teachers’ kids who wanted to go to the hospital because they were very close? And then we had to ask ‘How will we tell her own kids in the room?’

In light of the emotional strain he was under and the difficulty of coming up with an appropriate plan of response to such a complex problem, P-2 had to rely on a team of professionals for support. As he put it:

There is no way you can cover it all. There is just too much need. It’s like triage in a hospital when you have a whole flood of people, man. We keep asking ourselves ‘How are we going to do this?’ And we needed to put a message out to every classroom, to all the parents, and we had to do it on the fly. It was a lot.

Personnel from the district office helped him with everything from answering phones to more complex processes, such as setting up a center for care-giving and counseling in the gymnasium for students and staff. P-2 continued:

You really need them when things like this happen. To have people show up and help like [the business manager] or [counselor], and everyone came to contribute what they

were able. Then you can think, 'I need to be detached a little bit' and that's OK . . . they can provide the care. Because you need to be [detached]. You don't think about that, but it needs to take place . . . you know it. Then there's all those everyday things that have to occur taking place right in the middle of the grieving crisis. Parents still were calling to say 'Johnny's late for school.'

P-2 went on to share several instances of poignant caring in this emotionally charged environment. He himself went to each classroom to tell students what had happened that morning. A trusted school counselor accompanied him to provide emotional support as he shared the tragic news. Whenever he was overcome with emotion, she would pick up the conversation while he regained his composure. As principal, P-2 had to devise a response to the crisis itself and then develop a plan for caring for grieving students and staff during the ensuing months. The school community also relied on him to coordinate communication between families, staff, students, clergy, hospitals, and the central office. In the course of our interview, P-2 repeatedly stressed the importance of relying on a team of leaders to implement the response plan.

Sixteen months later, another staff member died. This time the death occurred on a weekend. P-2 found it difficult to come to terms with the fact that the same sort of tragedy had struck his staff again. In planning his response P-2 came to the erroneous conclusion that those affected would be able to work through their grief more quickly because of what they had learned from the previous tragedy. For example, he decided initially not to close the school on the Monday after the teacher's passing. He shared his intention with a member of the teaching staff. The teacher replied that the staff needed that day off to grieve so that they would be able to do a better job of helping their students with their grieving the following day. This advice was reinforced by a follow-up call from the superintendent, who encouraged him to close the school

on Monday. The superintendent's exhortation gave him a sense of permission to slow down and allow his staff time to grieve. P-2 believes that both corrective comments illustrate the need for a principal to rely on a team of skilled leaders in times of crisis.

Factors that P-2 had not anticipated emerged in the weeks and months following the first teacher's death. For example, he found that holding a memorial service helped the school community process their grief, but that some students found that this event simply reopened wounds. P-2 kept this experience in mind in responding to the death of the second teacher:

We thought it was going to be a real positive thing, and it was, it's just that when kids are crying and you're taking pictures, it's not a real good thing! But we learned from that, so that when we did [teacher #2], we just had some music, [we] had one of our music teachers do that part. And we had his bike club guys show up with their bikes [dressed] in their yellow jerseys; there were 20 of them out there. His family was here. I prepared a little thing to speak about [teacher #2]. When you have 400 or 500 kids singing together, you can't miss! It was a little emotional, but it wasn't over the top. It was just enough on a bright and sunny day, and we dedicated the bike rack. One of the really difficult parts with [teacher #1's] death was that she had nobody to do the service. She had no family. They wanted to know what I was going to do for the memorial service. Her husband was absolutely totally overwhelmed with grief.

P-2 designed the two memorial services differently in keeping with the different circumstances of each case. The difficulties he had encountered in the first service also convinced him to keep the second brief and focused on the positive traits of the deceased. P-2 indicated that applying the learning from the first incident to the second one helped the planning of memorial events to go more smoothly and bring better closure for everyone involved.

P-2 was able to cope with these trying experiences of grief and loss by relying on both God and a trusted mentor and friend. The friend gave P-2 the opportunity to express his emotions in private so that he could continue to give leadership in public contexts in the aftermath of the loss. P-2's wife, who shares his religious views, also helped him process his grief. In addition, his administrative team supported him by sharing the burden of leadership—he could not have responded effectively to this crisis on his own. When I asked him what he would share with first year administrators from his experience, he had this to say:

There's so much you are not going to learn in a book. There's a wealth of experience around you in terms of the administrators in your district. There are so many people that have lived through losses on their staff, or the suicide of a staff member's child, or whatever it may be; things you can't even imagine. Draw from that . . . from the crisis team; you need each other. The whole thing is about relationships; it's not about that one leader at the top.

On multiple occasions, and in various ways, P-2 emphasized the importance of responding collectively to crises, that is, in concert with administrative staff at all levels of responsibility. The expertise of his colleagues allowed him to cope with his own grief and provide leadership to students and staff. Sharing the burden enabled P-2 to get through these very difficult situations.

Principal 3

P-3 was raised in a family of educators. Not wanting to pursue education, P-3 studied art in college and then worked in California as a graphic designer. After a few years, she married a teacher and soon began working as a substitute teacher herself. She then earned an M.A. in education with an emphasis in administration and has since worked in a variety of schools

reflecting various demographics. At one point during her career she worked as an educational consultant in 54 different school districts. Her atypical pathway into education was followed by a somewhat nontraditional entry into school administration, as supervisors and circumstances ushered her into leadership roles.

P-3 grew up in a family that considered itself Christian but did not attend church or teach her about faith. She became exposed to Christianity by attending church with neighbors. She herself believed in God from a very young age, and at 15 “accepted the Lord and really knew what it meant.” She considers herself a Christian but is not an official member of the church she attends.

P-3 describes her philosophy of leadership as “modeling the goals of the particular group that one is leading.” Hence to be a good leader one must believe in the tenets and goals of the organization of which one is a part, much as church leaders must have faith-based goals in order to be effective. Leadership also emerges in informal contexts, such as a gathering of friends on a shopping spree. In this situation the leader is the member of the group who focuses on a particular goal and helps the group to accomplish it. P-3 regards her role as a principal as “a mission” in which she is able to “touch the lives of staff and parents and kids for the Lord.” She hopes that people will see Jesus in her actions. By way of illustration, she related the story of a special needs student who told another student that she could “see Jesus in her teacher” (i.e., in P-3). She recounted the story with some emotion, for she regarded it as a culminating affirmation of her purpose in education, about which she also has this to say :

The highest honor would be to think of that some day that they sought in the something that they wanted and that something was God. I do, when I feel safe (with those on my

staff) or when I can—I'm not afraid to—say that I operate from my personal faith basis. I make the choices I make because that's my personal belief.

Having served in a wide variety of schools, P-3 has faced a number of different crises. For example, she once taught at a school on a military base in a desert “out in the middle of nowhere.” The building was substandard and did not have running water. In this situation, teachers also had to develop curriculum and programs on short notice as military personnel arrived and enrolled their children. To make matters worse, the school building was being renovated to bring it up to standard. As a result, during the first six weeks of school no water was available to flush the toilets. As if this were not enough, the school did not have air conditioning, and this at a time when the average high temperature ranged from 100 to 105°. P-3 saw her team of teachers through this adversity by concentrating on the needs of the students; and these needs increased as more and more children arrived. She soon had 31 students in her class, and they spoke five different languages. At one point the German-speaking students on the base outnumbered the English-speaking students. Every year brought new crises. The school grew quickly to 750 students, 250 of whom did not speak any English. Worst of all, principals were continually resigning.

P-3 also mentioned a leadership crisis in which she and another teacher added the principal's duties to their teaching loads because of the latter's illness:

She had breast cancer that was very serious and was only in school about 50 or 60 days that year. So another teacher and myself became team leaders. Mostly because we did not have admin or a district person on campus, except when there was an emergency or an evaluation, or those kinds of things.

One principal under whom P-3 taught was an alcoholic and, as a consequence, an ineffective leader (e.g., only two staff meetings were held that year). During this crisis, the teachers assumed the vacated leadership responsibilities.

The next crisis P-3 had to face occurred after she had returned to teach in the school district in which she was raised. While there, she and a friend earned administrative credentials in a prestigious invitation-only program at Chapman University. After they completed the program, the teenaged son of one of the teachers was caught fondling children in the school. The school board gave the principal an administrative leave, brought in a principal from another school to fill the vacancy, and asked P-3 to take over at that principal's school. She recalled that she filled the vacancy with some reluctance:

I didn't want to rush into being an administrator. I wanted to spend time becoming a good teacher. I wasn't feeling that that [administration] was where I really wanted to go. A lot of times I just wanted to be a really good teacher and work in that, period, which is what I did in my mentor teacher role as I got a lot of good training.

Her acceptance of that posting precipitated a crisis of a different nature: her close friend worked in the new school and was upset that she had been passed over for the position. To make matters worse, the staff of the school also wanted her friend to get the post. P-3 responded to the hurt and the perceived injustice by spending her entire first year building relationships with her staff and meeting their needs. By the end of the year the staff had become a cohesive team. However, the year took its toll on P-3; every night she would ask God why she had chosen to accept this role. P-3 also mentioned that she herself at one point had to take a leave in order to care for her son, who was struggling with personal problems.

P-3 joked that when faced with a crisis she is “kind of emotional so [she finds] a place to cry” and then proceeds to deal with the problem. She begins by seeking the counsel of a group of trusted advisors. Depending on the circumstances, she may instead start out by assessing the situation herself. A recent incident illustrates her response strategy. A fellow teacher’s son, an only child, who was like a member of the family to most of the staff, went missing and after three days was found dead. After the agonizing suspense of the three-day wait, it fell to her to break the news to the staff. In this case she prayed and tried to discern which of her co-workers she could trust to play a role in responding to this particular set of circumstances. The job was made easier by the fact that she always has in the back of her mind whom she would call on in a given emergency. At any rate, she then took into her confidence the teachers she had selected and shared with them her assessment of the situation, so that they could serve as a sounding board. She also drew on the skills of her superintendent and the local school board and sought out fellow believers in her school to pray with about the crisis. She has been able to find such a group in every school she has worked in.

I think you approach each one of them (crisis) differently. With prayer, and you look to yourself, and you look to other people around you...to who is most capable of taking on the load and (you) can take them into your confidence and ask them or talk to them about what you’re thinking and they can help be a sounding board for you. There’s always a trusted group you can rely on.

Of course, identifying support personnel within her school and throughout the district, took time. However, P-3 has found that her frequent changes of job across districts and schools have enabled her to broaden her relationships to the point where she has a large pool of support to draw on. Developing these relationships requires taking the time to get to know people:

If you spend a little time with people and get to know them on a personal level, it's not too hard to find out about people. I like to ask people questions about themselves. I'd try to find out a little bit about them and who they are, because then I can respond to their needs better. And I also know what riches they bring back to our kids and our staff.

Sometimes it makes you think 'wow, you used to do that?' Then you think [to yourself] you're the one I want to do the after school program. It's that kind of thing.

Of course, the cultivation of such relationships provides a talent pool that the principal can draw on to meet not only crises but whatever sort of chronic need may arise:

It's about knowing who might need someone else to access that [crisis] for those relationships. Maybe you have a teacher who's weak in an area of teaching. And knowing who they really are and who they would allow to come and mentor them, and who would be someone that they would close the door to. You can't promote leadership within your own building if you don't know that you are mentoring. Everyone in your school brings something to the plate. It's not just the title.

P-3 also had this to say by way of further illustration:

I was principal at an elementary school that was a really tough school in the sense that you have such differences. You have probably some of the most brilliant people in the whole state of Oregon and at the same time you have drug-impacted children from uneducated families; all of that from the same community. And you have right wing conservatives on one hand, and anything goes on the other. It is a tough community in which to be, but yet it's rich in many other ways. So those are not crises in the traditional sense, but in some other ways (it is a crisis) when a community is hard to break into and to meet their needs. It's difficult because when you start you have to build a trust first,

and it took me a while, there, to do that. I would say it took me two or three years to become the school leader.

P-3 tries to determine the success of a particular response to a crisis by leaving her office and talking to her co-workers. She will ask how well they are coping with a particular circumstance, unit of curriculum, schedule, or problem. In addition, she observes other staff closely; to see how they are interacting with peers and students. She will also frequently drop by for a second visit in order to understand how she might best support the person in question. She considers connecting, networking, and knowing her staff to be the keys to her success as a leader.

P-3 concluded her discussion about her responses to crises by describing the difficulties of her present situation. She currently serves as the principal of two schools, and has had difficulty in connecting with the staff of her new school and in sustaining her relationships at the first school. The dual role has spread her too thin, and she no longer has the time to devote to such gestures as leaving fresh cut flowers in a classroom or leaving notes of encouragement in staff mailboxes. Here also, in the midst of this chronic frustration, P-3's faith manifests itself as a vital component of her philosophy of leadership. In this case it takes the form of the conviction that she must "leave things in God's hands" when faced with such intractable problems. Of course, she is also grateful to have the caring support of her superintendent.

Principal 4

P-4 was raised in a small rural community in Washington State. He attended public school from kindergarten through 12th grade, graduating in the top third of his class. He then earned a B. A. in psychology and biblical studies from Biola University. Although he had wanted to become a high school counselor, he ended up teaching language arts instead. During his 20

years as a teacher he developed a peer counseling conflict management program and also acquired expertise in special education. In 1992, when gang activity at his school began to increase, he moved to Oregon to escape the violence. After three and a half years of teaching in that state he became an administrator.

P-4 indicated that he was raised by Christian parents, both of whom belonged to the Salvation Army. While still in primary school he committed his life to Christ at a Billy Graham crusade in Seattle. As a 4th grader he began to help his mother teach Sunday school, and he credits this experience with arousing in him a desire to become a teacher. His father wanted him to become a pastor, but he chose to pursue psychology instead. While in college in Los Angeles he developed his public speaking skills by doing street preaching. Sometime thereafter he and his wife divorced, and he left the church. He then remarried, moved to Oregon, and he and his wife began attending church, which they still do. He is an active churchman and has served in various ministry roles, including that of counselor.

P-4 is a proponent of servant leadership. That is, he believes that as principal he must not only manage the school but also serve as a mentor and coach so that he may help people improve their lives. He must both set an example and render a service. In its simplest form, this involves helping people rid their lives of clutter and busyness so that they may concentrate on their work. He describes his approach as follows:

In some cases it's what will it take to make your life as a teacher easier, or what will it take to make your life as a coach easier? Or if I see something going on in your life, what can I do to help you with that? I think my people here see me as if you need some counseling to get through, you can get it from [P-4]. I never take notes or anything like that. It's a steady support kind of thing.

P-4's religious faith has a significant impact on his approach to leadership. For example, each year he devises a vision statement that is covertly based on scripture. He does this to encourage his staff. Indeed, he sees himself as an encourager and tries to live out that role:

I've taken on that role; I wear those shoes. I think it's that idea that you are born for a purpose and created for a purpose. I believe that the Lord has put us [in] . . . places where we can be used most effectively; if we're willing. If an opportunity opens up, it's almost like the path of least resistance is the path I will take. So I talk a lot about being faithful in your role; being a servant to others. I don't know, I think I have a real hard time separating my religious views from how I do my job, or my faith and who I am as a leader of a school.

P-4 has had his share of crises. Indeed, the first student that he ever disciplined in his role as an administrator ended up being suspended and sent home for the rest of the day. The next day the same student was caught again and suspended again. Tragically, this time he went home and killed himself. In his third day as principal, he tried to bring the school community together to develop an intervention plan to support students who needed help processing their grief over the student's suicide. He set aside certain areas within the school and planned activities to enable students to express their feelings and thoughts in a safe and orderly environment.

A similar series of crises occurred when he moved on to another administrative position within the district. In a period of three weeks, four people associated with the school; two adults and two students, passed away. The first was a well-loved coach who died from a brain tumor; the second was a young man who hanged himself from a tree just down the road from the school; the third was a student body president who lost his life in a car wreck on the way to school; the fourth was another suicide: the husband of a popular teacher. Naturally, these

tragedies devastated the entire school. On the day on which the fourth death occurred, he and his team had planned a rather positive and up-beat staff development event in an attempt to help lift the mood and morale of the staff since they had already dealt with 3 deaths in such a short period of time. When he arrived at school at 6:15 that morning, he noticed a staff member's car in the parking lot. When he found her, she told him about her husband's suicide:

And so I had to walk into my faculty and say 'you guys are not going to believe this, but this is what we heard,' and the air just went out of the room. I just had to be in that moment. I feel like in those kinds of crises that's when one's faith really comes into play. Each of those weeks we had a teacher who was a leadership guy, and a drama teacher who helped build a sense of community with their kids, and then the third week it was with our teachers. People were a mess. Even though they are really hard moments, those are the moments for which I was prepared. I've dealt with a lot of crises like those.

In responding to these crises P-4 first tried to determine who was in need of immediate help. He then asked his team what they could do to support and strengthen the grief-stricken and give them the sense that someone cared for them. His purpose in so doing was to engender compassion and to ensure that his team expressed it. Here, all of the building, guiding, supporting, and encouraging that he had done prior to the crisis bore fruit in a trust that facilitated a sensitive response. As one can see from the following account of his reflection on his response to the death, P-4's psychology has been informed by his theology:

In fact, on the very first day of this fall, at our district-wide in service, we were getting ready to close up a session, and I get the call that said 'Hey, [teacher's name] just passed away' and I had to tell my staff. I think it's then that I might help in building and guiding and supporting and encouraging; that's what [how] I respond. I feel that I'm giving back

the grace that I was given. I guess that's how I would put that. I think I understand that since I've been given a lot of grace, that I've been a recipient of, I need to give back somehow. What is that phrase? 'Bought and paid for by precious blood'? That helps me know that I've got this inner capacity to deal with those situations.

This "inner capacity" expressed itself in P-4's ability to be present to the tragic circumstances, to understand what was taking place at any given moment, and to create a safe space where others could express their feelings to him. As far as the latter capacity is concerned, he found that even people who seemed very tough would break down and cry in his office because he had won their trust. P-4 makes reference to this "spiritual gift" in the following account:

I figure we have people that are hurting if they will tell you this thing that is really a private issue. I don't know if I have this thing like the guy that did my favorite Martian, but it's like I have some kind of thing that in crisis I'd tend to be able to understand what is going on in the moment. And I figure out how I can kind of get a grasp around that. Either by quietly listening, or asking a couple of probing questions, or coming in and standing near to the person. Sometimes it's as simple as coming up near to the person and asking 'what can I do?' in this situation. Whether it's a trauma room tragedy or just helping carry a burden, it's that kind of thing.

P-4 has faced other types of crises as well, such as the distraught parent who started uttering threats, and the student who brought a gun to school. In one case, he received a phone call, while he was at the central office, informing him of some students' plan to shoot up the school. On returning to the school, he initiated a lockdown, with the help of his staff and the police. P-4 summarizes his experience of responding to crises as follows:

It really gets your adrenaline pumping. Later that day, at about 12:30 p.m., I was like ‘golly I’m rained out!’ I think I am very attuned to the people in their radar. I go to the significant people when I think there are certain issues. If there’s a violence problem, or someone is pushing themselves too far, I can find that person and defuse it. We just had a parent go off on one of our teachers yesterday. My job was to get there.

In the latter situation the teacher felt supported, but P-4 still believed he needed to make a telephone call to follow up on the irate parent. During that conversation P-4 worked at being assertive without being confrontational, and managed to explain to the parent that he had crossed the line and to restate the school’s expectations with respect to interactions on campus.

P-4 believes that responses to crises should be team-based. He himself has a team of four or five staff members that he collaborates with. Other staff know who these people are and how P-4 might deploy them during an emergency. To make the connections required for team-building, P-4 invests in his staff’s well-being. He will, for example, visit staff members after the birth of a child or if their spouse has had surgery. He likens his work to that of a pastor who comes alongside members of his congregation and asks them how he can help. In one such instance P-4 ministered to a member of his staff who had been charged with DUI. His care giving included providing a written statement of support for use in the accused’s trial defense. Such gestures engender loyalty and “build up” the recipient to be “more solid” in their well-being. P-4 has this to say about the importance of providing this “human touch”:

When people are going to go through the death of a child, or the loss of a spouse, or divorce, or something dramatic in their family, or something like even a hard time with a baby being born, it is about knowing those people and touching on the human things that make them go ‘you know, when I’m in trouble I know I can go back and talk to [P-4]

because he's given me several different interactions and caring way outside the lines of just the professional world.'

To sum up, P-4 believes in cultivating a positive relationships with his co-workers by treating them not just as employees, but as friends.

P-4's 41 years as a teacher have given him a clear sense of purpose. In this connection he mentioned a class that he had taught in which six students had died over a short period of time. The surviving students began asking, cynically, 'Who's number seven?'" In response, P-4 had them discuss the purpose of life and then write about what they could do to help achieve that purpose. As one might expect, he has clarified his own sense of purpose by responding appropriately to his own personal crises:

I've had some things that have impacted me in that both of my parents are now gone, and I have a brother who is mentally retarded and never got beyond 4th grade. For the last eight or nine years of his life I was his conservator. I bailed him in and out of jails up and down the West Coast for several years. That's part of an element in your life that you don't really like, but it helps shape you, and to know that it's something that belongs. To continue in that condition with others.

P-4 also mentioned that these sorts of experiences have made him aware of his emotions to the point that he is not afraid to express them in front of others; and he finds that others respond with greater authenticity when he does. Not surprisingly, he derives his greatest satisfaction from helping people, people such as the woman he describes in the following vignette:

My target audience has always been those who were the hurting or the ones that could be better. I would capitalize on who needs help. That's really what's important to me. I think it's that collection of comments and cards and emails. I got one at Christmas time

from this Chinese gal that I taught English to. She said ‘I’m married and I have four kids now; seven to fourteen,’ and said that ‘I want you to know that I would not be the mom I am today if it wasn’t for the work you did through your counseling class.’ It’s real measurements that are not [quantitative] in nature. They are the things that come back to you that bring balance.

P-4 considers such expressions of appreciation to be the measure of his effectiveness, as a leader, in doing “the right thing, in the right moment.”

The stories of these four principals’ lived experiences have ranged a broad spectrum of leadership in the midst of crisis. Sharing these stories of leading staff and students through the death of a student, to one participant’s seemingly continual 16 month crisis after crisis ordeal of the death 2 staff members and 2 students, have shed light on some of the darkest moments a principal can encounter and how each of them responded. The following chapter will discuss how these events, and how each of the principals responded to them, demonstrate the pastoral aspects of educational leadership in the context of four principals’ lived experiences in rural Oregon.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion of Research

After reviewing the interview data presented in chapter four, the research review committee suggested six possible themes for consideration. They cited examples in support of their choices and made specific mention of the nuances in each participant's interview responses that the transcript may not have represented adequately. Following are the themes they initially selected: "modeling and example," "kindness / compassion / forgiveness," "team," "encourager / positive," "building relationships," and "guidance / responsiveness." Upon further examination of the transcripts they narrowed the themes down to four: "care and compassion," "reliance upon a team approach," "positive relationships," and "responding to emotional need."

Caring and Compassion

Each of the interview narratives of the four principals I interviewed included data that bespeak this theme. They expressed these virtues through meeting the needs of their staff and students during crises. P-4 described caring as a duty of his position as principal, as the product of an unspoken tenet of a social contract. Many of the instances that the subjects described involved practical expressions of concern, such as leaving gifts (e.g., fresh-cut flowers) in a teacher's room, leaving notes of encouragement, making face-to-face contact with someone so as to ask them about their welfare, and linking people with others who have the skills or resources to meet their needs. P-3 mentioned a specific example of the latter:

It might be a completely different person for two different things like that. They have different strengths, too. The one that can handle the emotional well-being of people, and at a personal level, are not or may not, be a person that is good in an 'I'm scared for my

life' situation. They may not be the person that is good at ferreting out how to move 300 people from point A to point B. They may not be the organizer to help evacuate the school, but they may be the right person to help figure out how to take care of the broken staff member whose kid has just died.

All four participants also defined caring and compassion as engaging in specific actions to give individuals or an entire staff the sense that someone was looking after them. They distinguished between actions of caring that benefited individuals and those directed to the welfare of the wider community of staff and students. In one interview, P-4's observations prompted me to ask a follow up question: "Do you think in terms of love?" His response indicates the level of his commitment to providing care:

Always! If I had to say what is the most important guiding point [or] purpose in your life, it would be that there is no greater thing but for a man to lay down his life for a friend. And so the question is, Who is my friend? Everyone is my friend. So that is a definition. I'm really willing to go to the point that if we were in a crisis and somebody was going to hurt one of our kids, they would hurt me before I would let them hurt one of our kids.

The respondents also mentioned that they provided "extramural" care to family members, both immediate and extended, and to other groups associated with the school, such as volunteers, former students, and staff members. These expressions took the form of memorial services and monuments or scholarships dedicated to the memory of a particular person. The four principals indicated that the purpose of the memorials was to enable staff and students to care for each other and for the family of the deceased. In several such instances the principal took on an essentially ministerial role by facilitating and officiating at these events. P-2 noted that the

memorial service held at his school was the only religious service for the deceased, because the bereaved family had no church affiliation. Indeed, his staff, and even the spouse of the deceased, looked to him for direction and expected that he would preside over the memorial service. In P-2's own words:

One of the really difficult parts with [this teacher's] death was that she had nobody to do the service. She had no [church] family. They wanted to know what I was going to do for the memorial service. Her husband was absolutely totally overwhelmed with grief. So I did very little leading, if you remember correctly, at that event. I had gone to their wedding the summer before. [My wife] had known her, and I had just been named principal. It was a small wedding on the jet boats, and they went down to the OK Corral, but I got a hold of that minister that married them. And I said, 'I've got a huge favor' and thankfully he agreed to it. I was still mourning myself, and I just didn't have the words at that time.

Realizing that the situation would be too emotionally taxing for him, he engaged others as caregivers. Even the re-telling of this event six years after the fact aroused intense emotion in P-2. He had to pause and regain his composure several times during the interview. At one such juncture he jokingly asked, "Why did I agree to do this?" as he wiped tears from his eyes.

Reliance on a Team Approach

All four principals made multiple references to the importance of teamwork to every aspect of effective school leadership. All four believed in using the ideas and intelligence of a close-knit group of four or five advisers, and especially when responding to a crisis. They also used the

term “team” to refer to the sense of shared purpose that can permeate an entire staff. According to P-3, cultivating a sense of team takes considerable time and effort:

It was a very complicated situation. But thankfully I had a wonderful superintendent and a caring staff that took it all in stride and made it work. It was an uphill battle but, by the end of the year, we were a team. That was a real crisis. Every day I would go home and say, ‘my God why did I do this!’

The particular incident to which she was referring had to do with a shift in leadership responsibilities that resulted in hurt feelings on the part of her best friend, who wanted the position P-3 was asked to fill. However, the crisis also had a significant effect on P-3 and the rest of her staff, because it interfered with their ability to function effectively as a team in meeting the needs of their students. P-2 indicated that one of the benefits of a team is that it provides the principal with the ability to think rationally in difficult circumstances.

But the key, I think, is that you bring your team of people together around you and you run things past each other, read your notes, and say, ‘How does this sound?’ And also you have quiet reflective time to look at yourself and say, ‘How does it feel?’ about your actions or your comments in a situation like that. And those things helped having those people there as a sounding board.

Two of the participants mentioned having a “crisis response team” in their district. These teams also collaborated with external organizations. P-1 explains:

One of the biggest groups to step up were the pastors and the youth pastors. We have different counselors and the Emergency Crisis Response Team that was there to come and hang out in the library for kids to process [emotions] for a couple of days. Just knowing that the ministers in the community step [up] to help, too, because they already

have relationships with kids – kids were questioning what happened to [the student who died]. They would ask, ‘Was he going to heaven?’ and those kinds of things. That was big.

All four principals relied on teams for support in a broad range of circumstances. They repeatedly mentioned that they used small groups of advisers to help them make decisions and that they took advantage of the strengths of each member in responding to the needs of staff and students. I tried to measure the importance of teamwork to the participants by counting the number of times each of them used the first person plural. P-1 used it 21 times; P-2, 159 times; P-3, 101 times; and P-4, 48 times. P-2, who used the first person plural more than any other participant, could justifiably say, “it’s not about that one leader at the top.” Along the same lines, P-4 mentioned the four or five colleagues he uses as an informal “go-to” group during crises. The other teachers know who his advisers are and which ones he will use as resources in a given circumstance. Both P-2 and P-4 used informal and fluid relational systems to address crises.

Positive Relationships

All four principals also spent considerable time creating and relying upon positive relationships. This practice, of course, aligns well with their emphasis on teamwork. All four respondents repeatedly mentioned their reliance on personal relationships for support whenever they had to lead their school communities through emotionally difficult circumstances. P-2 shared that he had followed a principal whose leadership had had a polarizing effect on the staff and caused considerable strain in relationships. However, when a teacher in the school died unexpectedly, the rest of the staff relied on P-2 to lead them through the crisis. Here is P-2’s summary of the staff’s response:

I gave teachers the option that they could share it or they can wait for me to come to their classrooms, and they all said we'll wait for [P-2]. And I think I needed it too; it was healthy for me to be able to connect with the kids and know what message was sent. I couldn't do it by myself; I had to have people with me, like [the counselor] and another teacher and counselor. So if I needed to take a minute she could continue with the message and that was good. Then [after I was composed] I could share more of the message and back and forth if needed. Emotionally that's how it had to work. It really helped.

Not only did the teachers rely on him, but he, too, had to rely on a group of trusted staff colleagues. By waiting for P-2 to come to their rooms to share the news of the teacher's death, the teachers signaled that they trusted and respected him and wanted his support in helping students deal with the emotions that the news would elicit.

P-3 also noticed a close connection between the themes of team work and building positive relationships:

There's always a trusted group that you know you can rely on in the worst moments to share the burden of leadership. I always take action and make decisions, but I like the reassurance of knowing that people felt comfortable with the decisions I'm making and have [had] an opportunity to offer a different viewpoint, because I'm not always right.

Her reliance upon a "trusted group" serves as an indication of the positive nature of her relationship with her staff. She had taken deliberate steps to cultivate this trust. Indeed, three of the four principals mentioned specific strategies they used to develop an understanding of their staff. They tried to go beyond merely gaining knowledge of their staff members' professional qualifications and skills. Indeed, they sought knowledge of a more personal nature, such as

talents, character, and stories of transformational experiences. Most of the principals indicated that they considered the acquisition of such personal knowledge to be the first step in building leadership capacity. To this P-1 added that principals can facilitate the development of the trust necessary for relationship-building by not asking staff to do something that they themselves would not do:

I'm not going to have you do something that I wouldn't do myself or something that I wasn't comfortable doing. It builds on the guiding principles by my example [so] I have a sense of service. Then it goes from there on how you build a sense of relationship with your staff. So, if I ask [them] to do something out of [their] comfort zone, they know that I would do it, too; and know who I am as a person, and understand why I'm asking them to do something.

Three of the four also indicated that they put considerable time and effort into cultivating the trust and increasing the morale of the teachers in their schools. P-2 mentioned that, during his first year as principal, he had had little time to do this sort of nurturing before crisis struck, and so he had had to forge personal bonds with his staff in the midst of coping with a tragedy. However, his prior positive relationships with support personnel within his district enabled him to draw on the expertise of these people at critical junctures in his management of the crisis.

Responding to Emotional Need

I spent a good portion of the interviews for this study asking the respondents about the ways in which they had responded to crises. All of them mentioned that they had made the staff members' and students' emotional well-being the focal point of their efforts. The progression of their thinking and actions was remarkably similar: they felt empathy for those affected by the tragedy and then drew together a support team to ask essential questions and plan the response.

The response itself largely involved personal interaction with staff and students. Finally, all four collaborated with their teams to plan and execute closure events, such as memorials. Of course, the precise nature of the response depended on the severity and nature of the crisis itself. One principal had to deal with a crisis involving imminent danger, and so the response team had to follow a precise plan. Yet even in this case the principal had the same sorts of concerns for the well-being of his charges as the other three had had in less constrained circumstances.

The effectiveness of the principals' responses depended on how those affected by a given tragedy responded to their actions. For this reason, all four principals constantly monitored the responses of their students and staff. P-4 mentioned that his approach to easing people's grief and pain is always somewhat pastoral in nature:

I have a real strong sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. I mean there are aspects of pastoral work in our profession that [are] very emotional, and I guess I'm not afraid to share my emotions with people. I think it comes back with true responses.

P-2 added that one cannot always predict how the grief-stricken will respond, citing as an example the case of a memorial event for a teacher who had died earlier in the year:

And we thought, 'surely it will be no problem,' and we didn't think about what kinds of responses could possibly come. Thinking through things, to look at how people [might] respond, so they can have a positive experience is key. And understanding the emotional pieces that may come up is important. While we're out there standing up on that rock somebody asked me [if we could] pray, and I said 'absolutely we can pray,' and that was fine. There was a lot of positive [feeling] but there were a lot of things with the emotional piece that we weren't expecting . . . and we had photographers here and all that.

His comment illustrates that the response team had intended above all to alleviate the suffering of the grief-stricken, and that they evaluated the effectiveness of their actions on the basis of the reactions of those whom they were trying to help. P-1 was the only participant who mentioned kindness and forgiveness as important elements in his responses to staff, since these virtues are a part of “being Jesus to your world.” He also spoke of the need for sensitivity:

We are in the people business, so you have to look at what are they feeling and what are the best ways to help them deal with it, whether it's hurt, loss, or anger. A little of that goes back to Stephen Covey's 'seek first to understand.' Try first to understand before you're understood, you know. But to understand what they're doing or feeling, dictates what I'm going to say [or] what I'm gonna do. [I have to ask myself] 'Is it time to do something, time to listen, or time to commiserate?'

All four respondents thought that the success of a particular intervention depends on giving the response team time for thoughtful reflection before sending it into action, and on paying attention to sufferers' emotional state before speaking to them. P-3 mentioned that she would occasionally ask the team for guidance before initiating a response to a particular difficulty. However, she would not do so unless she had already got to know her team well.

Crises evoke a broad spectrum of emotions in all affected parties, from the principal, to the staff, to the students, to the families of all three groups. For this reason, none of the principals believed in responding unilaterally to crises of any sort. Indeed, P-3 said that to provide emotional support in the context of a major tragic event was beyond her capacity as a leader. All four principals relied on the collective wisdom of their advisers in discerning how to provide the grieving with sufficient emotional release to enable them to return to normal life..

Conclusion and Future Directions

The lived experiences of the four principals I interviewed in this study illustrate the ways in which their development of positive relationships contributed to their success as educational leaders. They fostered such relationships by caring, showing compassion, and concerning themselves with the personal and professional success of their staff. Having developed close ties with their staff members, they were able to draw on them for support in even the most daunting crises. Small wonder, then, that all four considered the ability to develop positive relationships to be a prerequisite for effective leadership.

Pastoral care, as defined by Bouchard (1992) and used for the purpose of this study, was embodied within each interview. The presence of pastoral caring within each interview was pervasive in all aspects of their experiences. In several instances the principals functioned in pastoral roles such as officiating at memorial services, providing grief counseling, and more. All four recounted feeling a sense of responsibility for a broad range of needs amongst their staff and students that were beyond their professional training. Caring for the emotional well-being of their staff and students emerged as a recurrent theme in each of principals' accounts of their experiences of providing leadership during times of crisis. Each of the principals attributed their capacity to provide such pastoral care to the effort that they had made to develop and cultivate positive relationships prior to, during, and after the crises themselves.

The pastoral nature of educational leadership clearly emerged in the telling of these experiences. Each principal related thoughtful responses to crisis that he or she had crafted in consultation with formal and informal teams of caregivers. This team-driven approach seems to have been the normal way they went about meeting the needs of the members of the school community and providing for their well-being. All four principals repeatedly indicated that they

considered their actions to be much more than formulaic protocol dictated by job descriptions and far beyond the scope of any conceivable skill set obtained through administrative coursework. In multiple instances the intensity of the leadership demands placed upon these principals forced them to draw from the intimate depths of personal experience and spiritual understanding.

Future research should be conducted into the demands that responding to crises place on principals. Such superhuman demands simply fall to principals as part of their responsibilities, but cannot be articulated in any reasonable job description. Such research might provide insights that instructors could integrate into preparation programs for administrators. The findings of such investigations might also enable district-level administrators to help their districts develop a set of best practices for providing support to principals faced with the challenge of leading their schools through a crisis. Additional research of this nature might also help to introduce “pastoral care” into the nomenclature of American educational research as a descriptor for educational leadership centered on the total well-being of staff and students.

For some of the principals, the interview process peeled back edges of emotional bandages still tending to healing old wounds. Others in the group spoke of sorrows hidden deep with them but never forgotten. Their stories are not uncommon. Throughout my career quiet moments with principals walking from one wing to another, or sitting around a table sipping coffee, have elicited similar accounts of tragedies found along their way. More often than not these stories are whispered as if the refectation were a reprieve from the real business of the day and stolen from company time. In my personal opinion, the current effort to improve our educational system lacks authentic restorative power and reduces educational leadership to a simple paint-by-numbers approach that cannot begin to address the complexity of human

interaction and emotion that were shared by these four practicing principals. It is my hope that this research will begin a necessary and vital discussion about the pastoral aspects of educational leadership as an important element in achieving the improvement and renewal we are seeking for education in America.

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APPENDIX A

January 18, 2012

XXXXXXXXXX
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
 XXXXXXXX

Dear Mr. XXXXXXXXX,

Thank you for taking the time yesterday to speak with me about my dissertation. As you are already aware, I am completing my studies at George Fox University and am hoping, with your approval and theirs, to interview two administrators in your district as part of my study. Prior to interviewing any participant, I will provide them with an assurance of confidentiality letter which will delineate safeguard procedures as set forth and approved by the GFU Institutional Review Board (see attached).

I would be happy to meet with you at your convenience to determine who would be best suited to participate in the study as well as answer any questions you may have. Again, I appreciate your time and consideration in this matter and look forward to meeting with you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Smith

Study approved as presented:

XXXXXXXXXX XXXXX, Superintendent

Date

APPENDIX B

Interview schedule of questions

Pastoral Aspects of Educational leadership: A Phenomenological Study

Daniel P. Smith

Background information:

1. Please tell me about your educational and professional background.
2. Please describe your religious background.
3. Please share your thoughts of what it means to function in a leadership role.
4. Have your religious views influenced your leadership in schools? If so, how?

Responding to crisis:

5. Please describe the kinds of crisis you've encountered within schools.
6. When responding to crisis, what kinds of action do you consider?
7. How do you decide which actions/responses to pursue?
8. Are there particular techniques or processes you have found useful when helping a staff deal with crisis?

The leadership response:

9. Of those techniques, are there any you would consider more helpful than others?
10. Is there one event in particular in which you responded in particular mode, and if so, why did you choose this response?

Successful responses:

11. How do you determine whether or not your responses are helpful?
12. What parallels or analogies would you cite in regards to your leadership style?

APPENDIX C**ASSURANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

Date: _____

Dear participant,

By agreeing to participate in this doctoral dissertation study you are assured total anonymity and confidentiality. If at any time you wish to withdraw from participating in this study, you may do so without explanation and have all records destroyed at that time.

Your name, as associated with any part of the interview recording or transcript, will be known only to the researcher, Dan Smith. The content of your interview will be kept in strictest confidentiality. All subsequent readings will have your name removed and replaced with an alpha-numeric code. The recordings, written transcripts, and/or notes, will be kept by Dan Smith under lock and key for three years as required by accepted ethical research practices, and securely destroyed at the conclusion of that period of time. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the George Fox University Institutional Review Board as an ethical study to be conducted within the parameters of accepted research procedures.

Respectfully,

Daniel P. Smith

Agreed: _____ Date: _____