

THE SPIRITUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS AND THE IMPACT ON THEIR  
PERCEPTIONS ON STUDENT SUCCESS IN PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By

Frank McClard

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

in Education Leadership

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

August, 2012

The Spirituality of Educational Leaders and the Impact on their Perceptions on Student Success  
in Pennsylvania Public Schools

By

Frank M. McClard

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Signature:

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Frank M. McClard, Student

Date

Approvals:

---

Dr. Karen H. Larwin, Dissertation Advisor

Date

---

Dr. Robert J. Beebe, Committee Member

Date

---

Dr. Sylvia J. Imler, Committee Member

Date

---

Dr. Andrew J. Pushchak, Committee Member

Date

---

Peter J. Kasvinsky, Dean of School of Graduate Studies and Research

Date

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YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY, 2012

Dr. Karen H. Larwin, Chairperson

ABSTRACT

The focus on student achievement in America's public schools has increased dramatically over the past decade. The pressure to perform and show growth in student achievement has been placed squarely on educational leaders. Producing results through students that they are educating is critical to the success of educational leaders. Establishing ways to make this happen and sustaining this growth and success is no longer an option but is a demand that must be met. Failure to meet this demand not only impacts the futures of educational leaders but also, and most importantly, negatively impacts the futures of their students. To bring about meaningful change, leadership must find ways to positively influence student behavior in order to experience long-term growth. Through an administrator's influence on student behavior, sustainable change becomes a possibility. Assessing an educational leader's spirituality is an avenue to make this influence a reality.

This study was designed to consider the possibility that an educational leader's spirituality may be able to positively influence their perceptions on student success. These perceptions may then lead to the discovery of ways that will impact student behaviors and as a

result student achievement. The research questions define an individual's spirituality and examine the possibility of its existence in public education through the influence of the leadership of a public school on student behaviors. To determine if the principles of spirituality exist within the leadership style of public school administrators, the "Inventory on Spirituality", (Rayburn & Richmond, 2006) created and updated by Carole Rayburn and Lee Richmond, was utilized and amended to create the "Inventory on Spirituality/Morality." This instrument was used to measure the existence of spirituality within the lives of public school administrators. To eliminate confusion about the meaning of spirituality as it related to public school administrators, the word morality was used in this study.

Once this was discovered, steps were taken to determine if spirituality, through the administrator's leadership style, had an influence on public school administrators and if this influence had an impact on their perceptions on student success in Pennsylvania public schools. To address these areas, descriptive and inferential statistics were analyzed. This is the first study of this kind to examine the influence that spirituality has on a public school administrator and, then what, if any, influence this might have on student behavior in a public school setting.

The study will define spirituality and through research will determine if its existence in public education through the influence of public school administrators impacts their perception on student success. For public school administrators, would the terms spirituality and morality be synonymous, in other words could one be interchanged with the other and still convey similar meanings? If so then spirituality and morality, as seen through the perceptions of public school administrators, may have an impact on student's success in the public school setting.

Demographic information was collected to determine the make-up of this group of administrators. Administrators were also asked to define their leadership style. Once identified,

the study explored the possible influence that the administrators' spirituality had through their leadership style on student behaviors in the public school setting. School district data was collected and examined in relation to this potential influence.

Results were analyzed using SPSS version 18 to compute descriptive and inferential statistics. Significant findings and implications for public school administrators today, as well as ideas for future research, were presented.

## DEDICATIONS

I dedicate this work, most importantly, to my wife, Sharon. She was always there for me throughout every step of this work and encouraged and supported me with the unending and undying love that has characterized our marriage and relationship for over 35 years. Despite the fallout from this work professionally, she stood right beside me and insisted that this work continue, even when I thought it was hopeless to do so. I love you Sharon McClard!

I also need to thank and praise God for His presence and influence in this work. He led me to begin this work when many discouraged me from doing so. Words just cannot express my appreciation and love for our Lord God.

Thank you to our two sons, Matthew and Frank. Without family, we have nothing. Their love and encouragement was and is awesome and beautiful. I love you both so much.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank and commend Dr. Karen H. Larwin for agreeing to be my Committee Chair. Upon her arrival to Youngstown State University, she found me at her doorstep pleading for her to be my Chair. What a difference her decision made in my life. She was patient and persistent, demanding excellence throughout the process. I never ever thought I would understand the principles and intricacies of quantitative research but, because of Dr. Larwin, we were able to produce a research study that clearly demonstrates the impact that quantitative research can have. I cannot say thank you to Dr. Larwin enough. Words are just not enough.

I was also very fortunate to have on my committee three other individuals that truly were a blessing to me in this work. Each provided a unique level of support that clearly made a difference in what this final product would be. Dr. Robert Beebe provided a solid academic foundation for this work. His knowledge, expertise and words of wisdom resound throughout this study. Thank you to Dr. Sylvia Imler who I was so blessed to get to know and whose faith I leaned upon when I thought this work would never reach fruition. She was truly a source of light and inspiration and will continue to be for years after this work is done. Thank you to Dr. Andrew Pushchak who I was so very blessed to have as a professor at Edinboro University when I set my sights on becoming a Superintendent. If it weren't for Dr. Pushchak, I would not have made the decision to pursue this work. His recommendation to apply to Youngstown State University and the numerous pearls of wisdom that he provided prior to enduring this process made this work possible for me. I would also like to extend my thanks and appreciation to Mrs. Leslie Reedy for all of her assistance, prayers and support in making certain that I followed the most recent APA guidelines in completing this work. Leslie is a remarkable woman whose faith and professionalism provided much needed support in this process.



Without a doubt, God was responsible for putting these people in my life for this work. Without these people working in concert with me this study would not have been completed nor would it be what it is today. I will be forever grateful for the time, dedication and love that they unconditionally provided to me in this process.

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## CHAPTER I

## Introduction

Spirituality is “a reverence for life, a creative, self-guiding energy; an attitude or attitudes; the practice of suspending our original reality in order to stand in wonder and awe at that which unfolds and emerges beyond our conceptual groups.” (Miller, 2006, p.1). It is important to realize the emphasis on spirituality, as it relates to its place in American public education, does not necessarily “imply an endorsement of any specific religious tradition or practice hence holistic education does not threaten the important principles of separating church and state. Religious traditions have been the primary means for discovering and expressing spiritual experience.” (Miller, 2006, p.2).

Spirituality calls for an attitude of reverence towards life. “The role of the public educator then is to become fully conscious and present to the miraculously unfolding lives of the young people before them.” (p.2).

Miller discovered that trust must be present so that there is:

some spiritual discussion, some creative energy at work in the cosmos whose limitless imagination is far greater than anything that can be devised . . . a child’s destiny should not be foreordained by the Secretary of Education, or the CEO of IBM or Apple, or whatever elite bureaucrat happens to dictate public educational policy. (p.4).

Inviting and applying experiences, influences and principles found in spirituality, can be a consideration for implementation by public school administrators in the public school setting.

When used in examining the makeup of the leadership style of public school superintendents, central office administrators, and building level administrators, spirituality appears to be embedded in the style of those who rely on it. What is it about the word and

concepts meant by spirituality that inspire educational leaders to do what they do within the scope of their duties and within their leadership style related to their positions in general and its impact on students and their behavior? Furthermore, do the principles of spirituality found in educational leaders who profess to believe impact the educational system where they lead?

When asked how spirituality impacted their daily work, Paul Houston reported in *Spirituality in Educational Leadership* (2002) that public school superintendents, central office administrators, and building level administrators demonstrated strong feelings for and against these principles.

The word and perceived concepts surrounding spirituality within the public school environment brought about an immediate reaction. The decision was then made to include the use of the word morality in this research to determine if a difference could be found in what and how building level administrators, central office administrators, and superintendents in Pennsylvania public schools truly believed in this area, and how the beliefs in spirituality or morality defined and influenced their leadership style, and perceptions on student success in the public school where they worked.

The intent of this research was to gather survey responses from 200 Pennsylvania public school administrators who worked as superintendents, central office administrators, and building level administrators in school districts where overall student enrollment was 2,000 or below as determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education 2010-2011 Enrollment by LEA and School Report. In school districts where the student population is 2,000 or less, the administrative teams tended to be smaller. As a result, the impact that administrators had on the district tends to be greater. The influence of such an administrator might have a greater impact for the simple reason that fewer administrators were in place in public schools that were this size.

Each administrator was asked to respond to a variety of statements related to the ideals of spirituality and morality in the context of public education and student behavior and success within this setting. The results were then examined to determine if the spirituality or morality of public school administrators had an impact on their perceptions on student success in Pennsylvania public schools.

### Background of the Study

To determine if the principles of spirituality and morality impacted leadership styles and the perceptions on student success in Pennsylvania public schools, a quantitative survey was designed based on the work of clinical, consulting, and research psychologists, Carole Rayburn and Lee Richmond. Throughout the years, Rayburn and Richmond individually and collectively developed a number of inventories that measured certain influences on people's lives. The inventories included: religiousness, spirituality, clergy stress, body image and intimacy, peacefulness, leadership and life choices. In 1996, Rayburn and Richmond created an "Inventory on Spirituality." The inventory has been updated four times since 1996, most recently in 2006, and attempts to determine the level of influence that spirituality has on a person's life, including decision making. After communicating with Rayburn and Richmond, permission was granted to use their "Inventory on Spirituality." This instrument contained 25 statements. To be able to specifically target these statements to public school administrators and their perceptions on student success, five additional statements were created and added to the survey for this study. These statements involved specific references to areas that had significance to students, their behaviors and activities, and the potential influence of administrators on these behaviors and activities. The statements were worded in a similar manner as the other 25 items and also utilized the same five point Likert Scale. This amended



inventory was sent out to 400 public school superintendents, central office administrators, and building level administrators in the state of Pennsylvania, representing 220 school districts where the student enrollment was less than 2,000 students. The expectation was that at least 200 administrators would respond to the on-line survey. The results were analyzed as to how spirituality and morality influenced the perceptions of administrators on student success and conclusions were drawn as to what the results had to say about the leadership style of these administrative groups within their current role in public education.

An analysis of the results was done to determine if there was a clear difference in leadership styles when references to spirituality were clearly stated and when they were not. In addition, analyses were conducted to reveal whether there was a difference in response rates with and without the term spirituality included in the survey.

Information gathered from the results of these inventories would be used in an attempt to: (1) support the fact that public school educators are intentionally and semantically ignorant when it comes to ideas of spirituality; (2) provide empirical evidence if differences exist when responding to questions using the term spirituality versus morality; (3) provide empirical evidence between leadership style and depth of spirituality/morality (via score); (4) provide empirical evidence as to the relationship between student success and the influence of spirituality and morality found in administrative leadership. This would potentially support a discussion as to how spirituality and morality impact the perceptions of public school administrators, school districts, and student success in general.

#### Significance of the Study

Demonstrating that various factors and methods, other than what is currently employed in today's educational environment, would impact perceptions of student success and performance.

The recognition and influence of spirituality and morality within Pennsylvania public schools through Pennsylvania public school administrators might bring about measurable differences on the impact that spirituality has on the perceptions of student success in general. A study of this type is the first of its kind relating to the connection of spirituality and morality of public school administrators to students in the public school environment.

#### Methodology Overview

The impact of learning, understanding, and utilizing the concepts of spirituality and morality on students and their behavior was tested in this study. The “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality” and the “Inventory on Morality/Spirituality” were administered to a group of 400 Pennsylvania public school administrators in 220 Pennsylvania public school districts where the student enrollment was 2,000 or less. The statements in both surveys were the same although they were placed in a different order. A systematic random sampling was done with regard to who received which survey. The surveys were distributed via email following a search of each school district’s webpages to determine the names and email addresses of current administrators in each district identified for this survey.

Each survey contained a total of 41 items. The first 11 items asked for demographic information. The next 30 entries were statements based on spirituality or morality and required one response for each statement based on a five-point Likert Scale. For analysis purposes, the 30 statements were broken down into four sub-constructs. Three were based on the “Inventory on Spirituality.” The fourth was created specifically with public school concepts and references. Responses within each of these sub-constructs contained within the survey were analyzed. The consistency levels of the responses were then analyzed to determine if any possible influence existed as it related to spirituality or morality with regard to the perceptions of Pennsylvania

public school administrators on student success and if this influence impacted students in the schools where they worked.

### Population and Sample

400 Pennsylvania public school administrators were asked to respond to the survey in an attempt to gather over 200 responses. The “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality” was sent out electronically to 400 people who are currently employed as superintendents, central office administrators or building level administrators in a Pennsylvania public school where the student enrollment was less than 2,000 as identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education 2010-2011 Enrollment by LEA and School Report. This represented 220 total school districts. The decision was made to use only public school districts where the enrollments are 2,000 or less for this research due to the size of the administrative teams. In smaller districts, the administrative teams contained fewer members. As a result, the influence administrators had on their districts appeared to have greater significance. The findings revealed such individual influences. Information on the identification of current administrative staff was taken from an examination of each of the school districts’ websites that met the criteria for this study.

### Data Collection

Data was collected using the “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality” created for this work. The online survey program [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) was used as the response tool in this study. The respondents were asked ten general informational questions including a question on individual leadership styles. An additional open-ended question was asked with regard to what, if anything, was being done in the Pennsylvania public school where they worked that encouraged an awareness of spirituality or morality in the community. Participants were then asked to check one response to 30 statements based on five choices from “almost never” to

“almost always.” The results were tabulated through the use of the Survey Monkey online research instrument. The school districts that responded to this survey were identified based on the location of the I.P. address where the response originated. The I.P. address location software program Utrace was used for this purpose.

#### Limitations and Delimitations

The preconceived thoughts and ideas with regard to spirituality and morality of Pennsylvania public school administrators was the greatest limitation in this study. Those who possessed strong beliefs with regard to spirituality going into the study, positively or negatively, had difficulty in being open-minded when they responded to the statements. This impacted the overall interpretation of the results of the study and led to some outliers that were identified and isolated. The addition of statements where spirituality was not specifically mentioned assisted in bringing about consistency in the intended results.

Another limitation existed in how seriously those who responded to the survey answered the questions that were presented to them. Questions that were answered randomly, without thought, or left blank impacted the overall results of the study and had to be identified and isolated.

A third limitation was found in the overall number of school districts who were identified as responding. A total of 220 school districts had been identified with total student enrollment of fewer than 2,000 students. Of the 400 administrators asked to respond to this survey, would the number of administrators and/or school districts represented through the responses be significant enough for analysis?

As the survey did not ask administrators to identify themselves or their school districts, the I.P. addresses of the responders would be used to identify the individual school district. Identifying an I.P.

address that was not that of a school district and connecting it to a specific school district would present a challenge.

The original intent of this study was to use the data generated to demonstrate the influence of spirituality or morality on student achievement in the state of Pennsylvania. Student achievement data for Pennsylvania, however, was flat and therefore unreliable. Many of the school districts for example met AYP consistently over the years. The differences were not significant enough to show an impact that any influence would have on the results, including spirituality. Safe schools' data appeared to be equally as flat. Even the use of SAT test data was unreliable and problematic within each district and across districts.

Using the average SAT score of students within a school district did not take into account how many students actually took the SAT test. Some districts had only a few students taking the SATs whereas others had a significantly higher number of participants. An average score would appear for both no matter the size of the groups.

As a result, the reliability of performance indexes for Pennsylvania public schools was insignificant. Unlike states like Ohio, Pennsylvania did not have specific performance index numbers for each public school district. The failure of the existence of valid measurable achievement data for Pennsylvania public schools made its use in this study impossible.

#### Definition of Terms

The key definitions to the terms spirituality and morality must be universally agreed upon in this study. Spirituality, as defined for the purpose of this study, is “that part of our lives and community through which we make meaning and understanding of our world . . . and is the grounding for the values and principles people espouse that inform personal and professional behavior.” (Dantley, 2003, p. 274). It is described earlier in this writing as “a reverence for life,

a creative, self-guiding energy; an attitude or attitudes; the practice of suspending our original reality in order to stand in wonder and awe at that which unfolds and emerges beyond our conceptual groups.” (Miller, 2006, p.1). Spirituality is summarized as “a way of thinking, being, and doing that is life-sustaining and life-enhancing both for individuals and organizations. It is a habit of mind and soul that acts as a guidepost for the perilous and wonderful journey of life.” (Miller, 2006).

Spirituality helps to “align everyday practice with core values in ways that make a significant difference in people’s lives.” (Houston, Blankstein, & Cole, 2008, p.3).

Morality or moral leadership:

promotes trust, openness, ownership, vision and values. It is focused on distributing power rather than trying to willfully control it and is based on a profound commitment to powerfully educating all children. It is about doing what is right and good and in this case what is right and good for children through education. (pp. 153-154).

Understanding the meanings of spirituality and morality is critical to the impact that this study will have, especially how it relates to the leadership style of the individual administrator and the impact that this will have on public school students, and on someone who may read this study and be influenced by its contents.

### Summary

A great deal of pressure continues to be placed on public schools to raise the levels of achievement for all students. Millions of dollars have been spent and countless programs and initiatives have been proposed and implemented in an attempt to raise student achievement, yet the ultimate goal of having all students reach proficiency in major subject areas is still not close to a reality.

Understanding and leading by an influence of the concepts established through spirituality or morality may make a difference on public school administrators. At no cost and with no definitive changes in staff or time spent on the teaching of major subject areas that are tested, the concepts that spirituality represent may be used to create and sustain positive change in the public school environment through public school administrators especially on student success. Public school districts have the opportunity to build a foundation for success within its school community through the understanding and use of the principles of spirituality and morality by its administrative team.

## CHAPTER II

## Introduction

When it comes to reviewing current statistics related to public education in America the information is frightening. A 2011 study published by the Broad Foundation reports that:

- Sixty-eight percent of eighth graders cannot read at grade level;
- 1.2 million students drop out of school every year;
- Forty-four percent of dropouts under the age of 24 are jobless;
- By the end of eighth grade, students in the United States are two years behind in math compared to their peers in other countries;
- Seventy percent of all students nation-wide graduate on time;
- Fifty percent of all African American and Latino students graduate on time;
- A dropout is more than eight times as likely to be in jail or prison as a high school graduate. ([http://broadeducation.org/about/crisis\\_stats.html](http://broadeducation.org/about/crisis_stats.html)).

While student achievement remains stagnant, the cost of public education continues to rapidly escalate. The average cost per pupil for public education is \$11,000 per pupil. Twenty-seven cents of every tax dollar collected at the state or local level is “consumed” by K-12 public education systems (Schaeffer, 2010).

As student achievement declines nationally, the answer to the problem seems to be to increase spending or locate new sources of revenue to increase spending. Upon taking office in 2008, President Obama proposed a competitive federal grant program for states called “Race to the Top” to address the problems in public education, specifically student achievement. This program designated 4.35 billion dollars to improve public education nationally. It called for the extensive use of data to measure student progress and make future decisions about education.



Only 22 states and the District of Columbia have qualified thus far and been awarded “Race to the Top” funding. This leaves 28 other states with nothing. As states like Florida, who received \$700,000,000, and Hawaii, who received \$75,000,000 attempt to improve their state systems with millions of dollars of support from the federal government, other states like Indiana, Michigan, and Texas continue to wait for an opportunity to apply for funding. In this age where no child is to be left behind, millions of children find themselves just that: left behind (The Broad Foundation, 2011).

As revenue for education to these states rises and funding decreases or remains level funded for the others, the cold hard reality is that the results are not following. It appears that the more the nation spends, the more stagnant student achievement becomes.

Countless educational reforms have been attempted over the years. Efforts to create and implement a nationwide curriculum have failed. From school to school across the country, teachers teach a variety of programs in a variety of ways in varying amounts of time leading to inconsistencies in student achievement. Accountability has actually led to the teaching of fewer subjects such as physical education, art, and music. The consolidation of school districts has led to the elimination of neighborhood schools where a sense of community pride and local interest in education has been eroded (Schaeffer, 2010).

Ineffective teacher evaluation systems and the power of teachers’ unions make it extremely difficult to rid districts of poor and ineffective teachers. Studies have shown that tremendous growth can be found in students’ overall performance when they are exposed to quality teaching three years in a row. This has become increasingly difficult to achieve in today’s educational environment (Chapman, 2010).

The inequity in per pupil spending across the country has led to the creation of struggling student populations. Although studies do not clearly indicate that the more funding that is allocated the better a student will perform, studies do show that students from impoverished schools are more likely to fail than to succeed. School choice, vouchers, and charter schools have not been successful. Reducing class size has also done little to impact student achievement (Schaeffer, 2010).

From “A Nation at Risk” to “No Child Left Behind” to the newest “Race to the Top” initiative, students continue to fail or drop out in record numbers. Chapman (2010) writes:

What should be drawn from these experiences? Not that nothing works but that few if any remedies work consistently in different places with different populations. We should not expect that broad, one size fits all changes imposed by the government will pay off in student performance. (p. 2:1)

What can actually be done to reverse this catastrophic national trend? What about the use of spirituality? Beginning with public school leadership, what if spirituality, especially of the administrator, is identified and cultivated to influence student behaviors and student success in public schools?

“The more closely our intentions are aligned with our inner being and our life’s purposes, the happier and more fulfilled we are – and the more effective we are as educational leaders” (Sokolow & Houston, 2006, p.16).

Research in the area of spirituality and its impact on student success in public schools is somewhat limited. An emphasis on spirituality and its relationship to an impact on public school leadership can be found. Steven Sokolow and Paul Houston refer to this as “Enlightened Leadership.”

“Enlightened leaders help others to recognize not only that they are part of something larger than themselves but also that every part is vital and important to the success of the whole” (Sokolow & Houston, 2006, p.29).

Through this enlightenment, administrators are able to discover within themselves the ability to positively influence their students in this way.

## Part I: Spirituality and Educational Leadership

### A. Enlightened Leaders

Promoting principles that impact the way that leaders think and act are “life sustaining and life enhancing both for the individual and the organization” (Sokolow and Houston, 2006, p.14).

A spiritually connected educational leader, “seeks more than just quantitative change, such as higher test scores on standardized tests” but must first attempt to “change the person” (Cole, 2008). Once the person changes, through “enlightened” behavior, student achievement may follow.

Parker Palmer (1999) writes that:

As a teacher, I have seen the price we pay for a system of education so fearful of things spiritual that it fails to address the real issues of our lives – dispensing facts at the expense of meaning, information at the expense of wisdom. The price is a school system that alienates and dulls us, that graduates young people who had no mentoring in the questions that both enliven and vex the human spirit. (p. 164)

Stephen Sokolow (2002) characterizes this as “leadership” and stresses its significance in this way:

Enlightened superintendents and other educational leaders rarely talk about what motivates us to do the difficult work that we do. Day in and day out, we fight to create the schools that children need and deserve, but rarely do we talk about the values, beliefs and principles that guide and inform our work that sustain us in difficult time. . . Many of the values, beliefs and principles that guide and sustain us have underlying spiritual roots. The more in touch we are with those spiritual roots, the more enlightened our leadership becomes and the more effective we become in leading others to a better future. (p. 32)

By accessing the spiritual elements from within, leadership becomes more focused and so does its influence on students and their behaviors. Scott Thompson (2005) reports in *Spiritual Leadership – The Invisible Revolution* that school leaders must:

. . . bring the whole self, including spiritual resources to bear, on the tangible problems that leaders must face in the complicated world of schools and districts. A revolutionizing of human consciousness is needed to accomplish revolutionary changes that are needed in the educational system. (pp. 152-168)

Thompson (2005) emphasizes this point in his book, *Leading From the Eye of the Storm: Spirituality and Public School Improvement*:

Creating and sustaining a shift in consciousness is enormously difficult. We don't gain an inch against obfuscation of fragmentation by chirping platitudes as Peter Senge noted, 'We're talking about real, 180-degree change – instead of trying to control everything, we're learning to align our intentions with emerging realities. This is a profound shift in our way of being.' (p.27)

Aligning our intentions with what is happening or what is needed today is a shift in what has been done in the past. The reality is that to do what has always been done has been ineffective.

The “emerging reality” is that through the awakening of one’s inner self, potential is ignited and realized:

Yet when educational leaders, who are spiritual practitioners, have made this shift, they have found themselves thinking and acting in ways that feel profoundly natural, authentic. They not only feel more connected to reality itself, they also discern more of the actual wholeness of the schools or system they lead as well as the higher leverage that resides in wholeness. (Thompson, 2007, p. 27)

Emphasizing the inner self creates educational opportunities for growth and success.

Writing in *The Spirit of Leadership*, Gabriel Rshaid (2009) points out that:

Even though the 21<sup>st</sup> century is all about infinite external possibilities, our awareness of these possibilities points us toward our inner-selves, reminding us to honor and nurture a transcendent dimension that has always been at the heart of education. Wholeness is the key to 21<sup>st</sup> century education, and it is what may truly make this a second era of enlightenment. (p. 77)

#### B. The Power of Faith.

Awareness of the possibilities leads to the endless opportunities that spirituality may provide in public education. David Wolpe (2008) in his book, *Why Faith Matters*, provides a rational argument as to why this is possible; “Our lives pivot on real things that are non-material: ideas, emotions, imagination, memory, relationships, intuition, suffering, joy, and faith. To believe only in what you can see seems a peculiar form of blindness” (p. 15).

If it cannot be seen, is it safe to assume that it does not exist? “Faith rejects the rational perfectibility of our science, we may think we’ve got all this figured out, but it does not add up as neatly as a detective novel” (Wolpe, 2008, p. 12).

Having faith and unlocking potential through spirituality is a unique concept for public education. “Faith is not an idea, but a way to live” (Wolpe, 2008, p. 20). Introducing and embedding this way of life in the moral fabric of the public school system provides an avenue that would lead to positive sustainable change. “We are creatures designed to flourish – to heal and to help – when we believe.” (p. 186). Faith used as a tool to unlock people’s potential – staff – students and community – will:

Push us to be better, to give more of ourselves, to see glimmers of transcendence scattered throughout our lives. Such faith is both an achievement and a gift: It is an achievement of seeking, questioning, yearning, reasoning, hoping, and it is a gift of God, who fashioned this world where goodness sustains it and where teachings could save it if only we – believers and learners both – would listen, would love. (p. 198)

#### C. Creating Spiritual Awareness.

Listening, loving, and becoming more spiritually aware can produce an environment that may bring about the type of sustained positive change that public school systems have so desperately sought. Parker Palmer (1983) alludes to this when he writes that:

Education has always been defined as the development of certain capacities (for example, critical thinking and the tolerance of ambiguity) that allow the educated person to live more productively and more at peace in a complex and demanding world. But these vital capacities are sometimes taught in ways that break community rather than build it. Critical thinking becomes a tool for disengagement, and tolerance of ambiguity becomes cheap relativism. (p. xvii)

By awakening this “creative, self-guiding energy” (Miller, 2006, p.1) critical thinking takes on a new meaning for public school students and staff with limitless potential and endless possibilities:

It need not be this way...Critical thinking can be taught as a mode of citizen participation, and tolerance of ambiguity can be taught as a way of listening to others without losing one’s voice. But if community is not a foundation stone of the educational enterprise, these skills quickly degenerate into the capacity for disconnectedness that is so characteristic of educated people today. (p. xvii)

Palmer emphasizes that an education can be the means to develop a unity and feeling of connection – part of what constitutes the makeup of spirituality if it is involved in the process.

Palmer (1983) believes that:

At this crucial moment, we have the opportunity to revise education as a communal enterprise from the foundations up – in our images of reality, in our modes of knowing, in our ways of teaching and learning. Such a revisioning would result in a deeply ethical education, an education that would help students develop the capacity for connectedness that is at the heart of an ethical life. (p. xviii)

Developing the “capacity for connectedness” brings to the students meaning to their learning.

When students personally experience for themselves the value of education, they become invested in a process allowing for a “miraculous unfolding” (Miller, 2006, p.1) of lives that spirituality promotes.

Such an education would root ethics in its true and only ground, in the spiritual insight that beyond the broken surface of our lives there is a ‘hidden wholeness’ on which all life depends. In such an education, intellect and spirit would be one, teachers and learners

and subjects would be in vital community with one another, and a world in need of healing would be well served. That, finally, is the reason why spirituality of education deserves and demands our attention. (p. xviii)

#### D. Why Spirituality and Why Now?

Disconnectedness is a significant reason that students fail to succeed in school. As a result, the focus to solve the problems has turned to an emphasis on the development of the whole person. This wholeness allows for the use of spirituality as a tool in this process in developing student behavior (p. xix).

Paul Houston (2002), in *Why Spirituality and Why Now?*, has written extensively over the past ten years on this topic as it pertains to public education; the answers that he provides to this question are thought provoking:

All leaders must be attuned to the third dimension beyond thinking and doing – to what it is to be a human in touch with the divine. But educational leaders, because of their responsibility for the future through touching the lives of children, have an even greater obligation. (p. 6)

A closer look at the principles of spirituality and how these principles can be implemented would help to possibly meet this obligation. Terrance Deal (2003), in his work on spirituality and education, suggests that:

Schools are out of whack because their souls have shriveled and their spirit has dampened, not simply because they lack rigorous standards or tangible results. Standards and accountability are important but creativity, building character and learning how to work cooperatively with others have been sacrificed to information driven yardsticks that don't come close to capturing the purpose of education. (p. 174)



Capturing the energy and spirit of the individual through an emphasis on the spirituality and morality of the person can tap into the potential of this dimension in the teaching and learning process. Choosing to explore the existence of spirituality in public education and awakening the spirit of learning in this way could meet the current and future challenges and promises that to date have gone unmet and unfulfilled.

This energy is what provides for a connection to the potential that spirituality can provide. Paul Houston (2002) issues this challenge to public school leaders:

Authority comes not from (your) position but from the moral authority we are entrusted to carry as we build a future for our children. We get our work done, not through mandate and fiat, but by gathering folks together and persuading them to do what is right. To carry this out requires a higher connection than the direct line to the state department of education or the president of the school board. . . What we come back to is that spiritual leaders from within – they must know themselves and have a sense of purpose and connection to the infinite. But they live in this world as well and the impact of what they do affects others, and their ultimate goal must be to have an effect that is greater than themselves – and to remember that on this earth God’s work must truly be our own. (p. 8)

Remembering that “God’s work must truly be our own” (p.8) is something that Deepak Chopra (2002) emphasizes in his article, *The Soul of Leadership*:

Great leaders are those who can respond from the higher levels of spirit. They understand that their followers yearn for freedom, love and spiritual worth. Therefore they respond with creativity, vision and a sense of unity. . . Great leaders are in touch with every level of experience. (p. 12)

The ability to match need and response is a trait of effective leadership. Raising the level of student success is a need and accessing one's spirituality can be a way to respond to this need. Increasing this perception and awareness in public school administrators to impact student success is something great leaders need to do immediately.

The role of a school system leader calls for "a power greater than mere human knowledge and experience. The spiritual and administrative sides are of equal importance when guiding a school system dedicated to helping each student become a successful, ethical individual" (Hoyle, 2002, p. 18). Hoyle writes that:

. . . the road to victory in American education will be won by gifted, well-prepared system administrators who lead with both head and heart to ensure that every child will find success and happiness in his or her life. (p. 20)

Leading with "both head and heart" to maximize this potential found in every child is a concept worth promoting. In *What It Means To Be a Spiritual Leader*, Stokley (2002) contends that:

We want students to feel safe, to take risks, to explore, to ask questions, to feel sufficiently free to converse with the teacher, to be engaged in meaningful projects, and to look forward to coming to school each day. For students to feel ownership for what happens in the classrooms and to feel they can influence what is taking place requires a relationship between the leader and student to be one of mutual respect.

These same characteristics - openness, mutual respect, trust and freedom to be oneself - define the characteristics that should exist in all the relationships in a school and school district. When this culture exists, a spiritual dimension can exist. (p. 49)

Administrators must be prepared to step back and allow for the process of spirituality to unfold within public school systems. Leadership for control, as has been seen in the past, must stay in the past. Leading for the sake of leading and exercising control is not the answer and leads to flat results. Margaret Wheatley (2002), in *Spirituality in Turbulent Times*, believes that:

Leadership through command and control is doomed to fail. No one can create sufficient stability and equilibrium for people to feel secure and safe. Instead, as leaders we must help people move into a relationship with uncertainty and chaos. Spiritual teachers have been doing this for millennia. Therefore, I believe that these times, with their irresolvable challenges and turbulence, have led leaders to a spiritual threshold. We must enter the domain of spiritual traditions to find the help we need if we are to succeed as good leaders in these difficult times. (p. 43)

Entering the “domain of spiritual traditions” for guidance and assistance, as well as creating a “spiritual dimension” within a school district, may allow for administrators to “lead with both head and heart” (Hoyle, 2002, p. 20). Establishing such a foundation for these ideals may lead to the potential for building a foundation for student success that can only be attributed to the use of spirituality. Wheatley (2002) emphasizes that:

Life is a consistent teacher. It always teaches the same lessons. Change is just the way it is. Peace is not dependent on circumstances. We are motivated by meaning. We want to express our love through service. And when we believe that, as leaders, we are playing our part in something more purposeful than our small ego can ever explain. We become leaders who are peaceful, courageous and effective. (p. 45)

Being “motivated by meaning” and attempting to be involved in something that is “beyond what can be understood at the moment,” allow for opportunities of greatness –

especially during difficult times where these opportunities make the biggest difference. “As our world grows more chaotic and unpredictable, we are forced to ask questions that historically always have been answered by spiritual traditions” (Wheatley, 2002, p. 45).

Creating solutions with regard to the complex issues facing public education has been difficult and unsuccessful. Despite the guarantees of “No Child Left Behind,” overall success has been elusive. Relying on “spiritual traditions” (Wheatley, 2002) for answers might provide solutions with purpose and a future. Is it worthy to consider that the reliance on ‘spiritual traditions’ can illuminate a level of personal awareness, and enlightenment within the public school system that will lead to awareness within behaviors that may increase overall student success?

We are interconnected to all life. Every spiritual tradition speaks about oneness. So does new science. As leaders, we act on this truth when we’re willing to notice how a decision might affect others, when we try to think systemically, when we’re willing to look down the road and to notice how, at this moment, we might be affecting future generations.

(Wheatley, 2002, p.42)

#### E. Spirituality in Action.

Acting on the truth within this context is something that educational leaders should be willing to do for their staff and for their students if they want to attempt to discover a way to find success first, in behaviors, then, in what follows, or, as a result. In *A Psychological View of Spirituality and Leadership*, Jeffrey Solomon (2002) writes that:

Both our educational framework and concept of spirituality share an ongoing search for connection, understanding and meaning concerning the human experience. Because of this intersection, educational leaders might consider their connections to both their work

and colleagues as well as encourage their associates to contemplate how their meaning systems can play a role in their work. Finally, teachers who are encouraged to fuse connections between larger meanings and their personal work are much more likely to pass on such a spirit of inquiry to those who matter the most: their students. (p. 41)

Roger Soder (2002) in his article, *A Way to Engage, Not Escape*, describes the short-sightedness of leadership in not being patient enough to utilize and allow spirituality to work. Soder uses the biblical figure, Job as an example of this type of patience. Job was able to develop a connectedness through his spirituality and provided an example of what can happen when this is allowed to develop:

A lack of spirituality in leadership also leads us to act from a short-term perspective. We are in a rush because others want things done now, and because we have convinced ourselves, in our self-importance, that we don't make it happen now it never will. (p. 29)

Acting from a short term perspective is what caused the educational process to be in the state that it is now. If achievement drops, quick fix solutions are implemented. If the quick fix solution fails to produce results in a short period of time, it is abandoned and replaced by another. This cycle continues year after year. Patience is so critical in allowing spirituality to influence learning. By not exercising patience people succumb to the pressure to do the wrong things.

The pressure for now, this very moment pushes us to get things done immediately without necessarily considering implications (Soder, 2002, p. 29). For Soder, Job's example is a perfect illustration of this point:

'Just do it' is the order of the day. . . we would be better off as leaders, as human beings, if we were able to take a cue from the Book of Job. There are many ways to interpret this complex part of the Bible. One way is this: Here is Job, wealthy, owner of all those cattle

and those goodies, smug, self-centered. He knows it all, except one critical thing. He doesn't understand connections. Near the conclusion of the tale, God poses for Job a thundering series of questions – was Job there when God laid the foundations of the earth? Can Job tell when animals will give birth? Did Job set the stars in motion? All pointing to Job's lack of understanding, Job begins to act with a new spirituality as well as a new understanding of connections, the dangers of pride and the importance of modesty. (p. 29)

Using the example of Job clearly shows what impatience produces. Failure after failure forced Job to step back and allow the influence of spirituality to impact his life. Job was able to establish the connection and results through spirituality that God was attempting to make through his life.

Understanding connections and what happens when this connection is made can influence student behavior. Soder believes that spirituality, when embedded as a part of the leadership style, will help administrators to move in better, more effective ways as it relates to connecting with students:

With spirituality, we can slow down a bit, take a longer view; take a more modest view of ourselves and our circumstances. A longer time perspective will allow us to weigh and consider, to be more thoughtful, to reflect on connections and consequences. Our decisions will not be perfect (however defined) but they will most likely be better – better for ourselves, our community and our environment. By being less sure of ourselves, less full of ourselves, we will give ourselves the opportunity to listen more and learn better. . . just like what was discovered through Job. (p. 30)

Understanding connections, establishing a central focus, reflecting, listening, and learning at a higher level are all by-products of spirituality and are principles that a public school administrator can promote through their leadership.

F. Spirituality and Connectedness.

In *Nurturing Deep Connections*, Rachel Kessler (2002) writes about this concept in support of the presence of spirituality in education:

When soul enters the room, we listen in a new way. We concentrate on what has heart and meaning. . . . The experience of deep connection, meaning and authenticity stands out most for students, teachers and school administrators. In a classroom where (spirituality) is welcome and safe, deep connection allows masks to drop away. And they rediscover meaning and purpose in their collective responsibility for the children. . . . To bring this experience to the students in our schools, we need a chain of trust, reflection and meaningful connection that begins with superintendents and moves down to those who move directly honor these in students. . . . (p. 22)

Allowing for students and staff to be participants in this process through their leadership turns vulnerability into shared success. Educational leaders must make a commitment to allow this process to unfold and not be concerned about the time that this process will take. Patience is critical to establishing long-term success in this way.

In the process of weaving this (spirituality), we will begin to redress the current problems facing public education . . . without sacrificing accountability, without undermining quality, school administrators today can choose to cultivate in their own leadership and those they lead a host of practical strategies that allow us to genuinely nurture each other in the process of building school communities where learning can thrive and teaching can, once again, be a

calling (Kessler, 2002, p. 24). Schools must exercise patience and allow for time to influence the process of spirituality.

In his article, *Moral Purpose Writ Large*, Michael Fullan (2002) elaborates on the importance of this connectedness to the principles of spirituality in public education. Making a difference in the lives of students is the first order of moral/spiritual leadership and the one we most readily think of. Instructional leaders are devoted to this goal:

This represents a qualitative shift in what we normally think of leadership. At first blush, it may seem naïve to say that school leaders must be almost concerned about the success of other schools (in their district or elsewhere) as they are in their own. This is moral purpose writ larger and, as the key to sustainability, I call this leadership that helps develop ‘the social/moral environment. . . .’ (p. 14)

Being universally concerned about long-term student success is a characteristic that defines spirituality in the educational process.

The key to the next phase of developing education systems is to realize that spiritual leadership and long-term accountability are intimately related. What better motivation than to rediscover and galvanize in its modern form the intrinsic interests of teachers to do good work. (Fullan, 2002, p. 15)

Fullan truly believes that spiritually influenced leadership can have a long-lasting impact on student success.

Connecting this influence on student behavior to an increase in student achievement with the principles of spirituality is rooted in the ideals of Michael Dantley (2003) and can be found in his work *Purpose Driven Leadership*



An educational leader who operates purposively is concerned not only with the intellectual achievement but also with students' sense of becoming contributing members of society. . . . To present conditions in education demand a new type of leadership that offers a diverse learning community – not only an academic agenda but also a way to transcend and modify current societal conditions. . . . Schools serve not only as the bastions for literacy but also as sites of reconstructive and revolutionary thought absolutely essential to the refiguring of contemporary as well as future society. (p. 282)

“Revolutionary thought” found in leadership positions within public education is something that Dantley (2005) truly believes is needed to bring about necessary change and improvements:

It is no longer an anathema to broach the subject of religion and public institutions in the same breath. . . . A deepening sense of emptiness and personal perplexity seems to characterize the cultural demeanor of America. . . . Spiritual solutions are now being sought. . . . Our spirituality as expressed through our faith, and not necessarily through institutionalized religion, can result in a liberating experience. (p. 3)

Dantley (2005) believes that educational leaders must “take the inward journey to discover their spiritual selves from which their notions of morality, community, being and meaning emanate” (p. 18).

#### G. Spirituality and the Public Education System.

Spirituality, used as a resource for discovery, awakening, and resurgence, has the potential to bring about change and results in public education. Allowing this to happen universally brings about the changes in behavior that initialize this process.

Ron Miller (2006), in *The Paths of Learning* reflects on the use of spirituality in education. He believes that “spiritual practice is the cultivation of a compassionate, receptive awareness that remains fluid and open to the world, without trying to fix our experiences in a conceptual mold” (p. 2).

Accessing this awareness is the key to providing a resource capable of unlocking potential in many students. Miller asks this very thought-provoking question:

Is each individual child’s progression through identifiable periods of life so regular and predictable that one set of pedagogical practices can meet every child exactly where he or she is alive at a given moment? I doubt it. . . if we trust that there is some spiritual dimension, some creative energy at work in the cosmos whose limitless imagination is far greater than anything we or our culture can unfold themselves from within, with more or less support from us, as long as we don’t clutter their paths. (Miller, 2006, p.4)

Something far greater than anything that can be created or devised, especially at little or no cost, would be a welcome addition to any school improvement plan or teaching strategy. Miller concludes by writing, “As [education] evolves, I expect to see less emphasis on particular teaching methods, less reverence for individual visionaries, and a greater effort to cultivate among all educators the kind of pedagogical presence that invites direct experiences of spirituality” (p. 4).

Miller is not the only one to profess these feelings. In the article, *An Educational Credo for a Time of Crisis and Urgency* David Purpel (2004) writes that:

. . . educators are primarily moral, political, and cultural agents charged with the responsibility of grounding their special insights in a cultural, political, and moral vision

. . . as educators, we are required to respond to the challenges of life and to choose among the many moral, political, and cultural possibilities open to us. (p. 95)

Purpel is also a proponent of providing a means to discover this potential:

Education is not about finding out things, but about finding ourselves . . . we need an education that produces moral indignation and energy rather than one that excuses, mitigates, and temporizes human misery. . . . As educators, we must strive to see our students not as black boxes, not as clay to be molded or minds to be trained, but as sentient beings deserving of dignity, love and fulfillment. As educators, we must not require people to earn their dignity, but we must strive to celebrate the sanctity, miracle, and preciousness of life. (p. 95)

The elements of time and patience must be injected into the public school system for the ideals of Purpel and of spirituality to become a reality. “This consciousness does not bring us to punishment, tracking, grading, and honors programs, but to an education that reveres life as sacred and inviolate” (p. 95).

Influencing student success in this way may bring about a climate that will produce results. From the research, it appears that an educational system developed for the purpose of focusing on the needs of each individual student should rely on the concepts of spirituality.

Anthony Normore, in his 2008 article, *Examining the Spiritual Dimension of Educational Leadership*, believes that “spirituality is a significant dimension of human existence that is often silenced in the public school system” and believes that “it is time to release the spiritual dimension of human existence out of the boxes in which it is imprisoned” (p. 1).

Teachers who are encouraged to fuse spiritual connections are much more likely to pass such a spirit of inquiry off to those who matter most – their students. . . . Education

emphasizes not only objective learning of knowledge but also the personal connection and relevance that knowledge has to a student's life. (p. 7)

In *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People*, Stephen Covey (1989) conveys these feelings about spirituality as it relates to success:

You increase your ability to live out of your imagination and conscience instead of only your memory, to deeply understand your innermost paradigms and values, to create within yourself a center of correct principles, to define you own unique mission in life, to rescript yourself to live your life in harmony with correct principles and to draw upon your personal sources of strength (p. 304).

Like Normore, Covey emphasizes that "individuals are at peace with themselves when their lives are in harmony with their true principles and values" (p. 305). This peace that transcends all understanding results in the ability to change behaviors and is why it may be beneficial for public schools to focus on the concepts found within spirituality.

"Meditation, prayer, reading great works of literature, listening to music, and communicating with (and through) nature are a few examples of activities that [administrators] may utilize in renewing (or awakening) spirituality" (p. 305). All of these activities are possible on a daily basis within a public school system and can be promoted by its leadership to influence and change behavior:

As supported in the literature, leadership involves the complex cohesion of inspiration, encouragement, multiple paradigms of ethics, authenticity, morality, relationship building, reflective self-honesty, and the renewal of spirituality. It is within these dimensions that leadership provides organizational integrity and authentic leadership

practices that can influence thinking and understanding of individual and collective values, not only in school settings but in greater society. (p. 6)

As Ronald Miller (2006) in *Reflecting On Spirituality in Education* concurs that teachers, under such spiritual leadership, are able to enter their classrooms with a renewed, sustained purpose, as he writes: with “a creative, self-guiding energy which we ought not to attempt to suppress. No ideology, no social order devised by wealth – or power-seeking factions should be allowed to corrupt the delicate, miraculous unfolding of this creative energy” (p.1).

Can spirituality manifest itself in public school students to change behavior? Lee Richmond believes that it can and suggests that for many students spiritual acts may involve meditating on nature, hiking in the woods, reading an evocative poem, listening to inspiring music, singing, reading a meaningful passage, participating in counseling, attending a faith-related service, saying a prayer or going through a life-changing event. Richmond points out that a spiritual belief can be formal or informal, organized or not organized, rational or irrational, transcendent or non-transcendent. A spiritual feeling is an emotion that often accompanies a spiritual action, experience, or belief. Feelings such as love, hope, caring, evil, isolation, guilt, connectedness, oneness, emotional pain (e.g. grief, loss) centeredness and intimacy, characterize spirituality (Richmond, 2004).

Through these concepts and activities presented in Richmond’s work, public schools can focus as much attention on the student as a whole person instead of worrying about just the student’s ability to take a test. As Chuck Bonner (2004), a former high school assistant principal suggests in *Spiritually Oriented Leadership in a Secular Age*, school districts spend a huge amount of time and money (in public schools) on testing children. Bonner asks, “What are schools doing to help students with the most fundamental aspect of life?”

Currently, public school systems are doing very little in this area. Bonner challenges leadership to “embrace the model of spiritually oriented leadership – the only model, he believes, with the power to bring both teachers and students to full humanness, to full creativity, and to being fully alive physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually” (p. 132).

Bonner cautions “that creating partial people who can only lead partial lives seems to be the goal of many public schools in the United States today as the focus remains on strategies that will lead to test-taking success” (p. 146). Schools must recognize that this short-term goal is clearly not enough; public schools need to want more for students. Seeing students as more than their latest test score is critical in encouraging students to reach their full potential.

Bonner warns that if decisions about children are based solely on costs (and test scores), then the allegiance is to something other than children (p. 139). Allegiance to something other than children is what the focus on higher test scores promotes. Breaking this cycle for future generations is critical to their development and ultimate success.

Bonner also believes that schools are “morally obligated to follow the still small voice of their conscience . . . if educators wish to see true reform, they must cultivate spiritually oriented leaders in all aspects of public life including public education” (p. 148). By doing so, leaders will be able to influence and change student behavior and not just for a test but for a lifetime. Cultivating “spiritually oriented leaders” within public school systems will make students lifelong beneficiaries.

#### H. Spirituality and the Biology of Belief.

One of the ways that public school administrators can bring about this change is to return to their beliefs. In the Andrew Newberg and Mark Waldman (2006) book, *Why We Believe What We Believe*, “returning to our beliefs” is a major precept of achieving educational success.

Through an examination of a form of spirituality found through prayer and meditation, Newberg and Waldman “propose a new model for how deep convictions emerge and influence (peoples’) lives.” Newberg and Waldman (2006) examined hundreds of mind-body experiments that have been conducted on the power and results of spirituality, meditation, and prayer. The most stunning and remarkable outcomes are reported in the field of medicine. Thousands of cases of remarkable recoveries are presented, and although such miracles are often attributed to the power of faith and belief, the majority of scientists are skeptical of such claims. For example, the majority of oncologists believe that an unidentified biological mechanism is at work rather than a true miracle; a cure for cancer and current hypotheses favor “alterations in the body’s cellular, immunological, hormonal and generic functioning over psychological mechanisms.” But some cases are truly unique. The remission of some documented forms of cancer has been attributed to the effects of the mind on the biological functioning of the body – in other words, on “the biology of belief” (Newberg & Waldman, 2006, p.4).

In examining “the biology of belief,” Newberg and Waldman (2006) point out numerous examples where the power of belief brought about amazing, positive, and sustainable change:

We are born to believe because we have no alternative. Because we can never get outside ourselves, we must make assumptions – usually lots of them – to make sense of the world ‘out there’. The spiritual beliefs we adhere to and the spiritual experiences that we can have are also influenced by our neural circuitry and its limitations. God may exist, but we can only experience God – or anything else for that matter – only through the functioning of our brains. (p. 7)

By pushing science and spirituality to their limits, public schools can expose their students and staff to other means of seeing, understanding, and believing things. Meditation and

faith and the implementation of these processes can influence staff and change student behavior that will lead to a higher level of student success. Relying on the differences described in the field of medicine, there is the feeling that student behavior can be changed as well.

Similar thinking can be found in the work of Caroline Myss. In her 2001 book, *Sacred Contracts*, she discusses the “existence of ancient patterns in human consciousness” that makes up an individual and intimately influences human behavior. Focusing on discovering one’s “life patterns, lessons, and gifts” assist in unlocking human potential than lead to very positive results. For public school administrators, utilizing these same strategies within the educational environment can only help to positively influence students ([www.myss.com/library](http://www.myss.com/library)).

Proving and cultivating the existence of what Carolyn Myss (2001) refers to as “archetypes,” would make this a possibility. To do this in public education, administrators would have to:

stretch their imagination and burrow into themselves to discover life’s patterns, lessons and gifts (and pass this along to their students). The acquisition of this inner knowledge will not be an easy process but “discovering the empowerment that comes with perseverance (in this acquisition) can have a life-long impact and become a reference point for what (one) is able to accomplish. ([www.myss.com/library](http://www.myss.com/library))

This form of spirituality, outlined in the article *Introducing Spirituality to Professional School Counseling in Professional School Counseling*, Richmond (2004) “reflects a person’s attempts to make sense of his or her world. . . Spirituality within a school environment is perhaps exhibited through the (students’) meaning-making activities” (p. 2). Assisting students to experience and understand these “meaning-making activities” is the task of the professional staff.



In this case, school guidance counselors are the example, but in general it is the job of every professional employee to promote “meaning-making activities” in students.

In *Describing the Elephant: Pre-service Teachers Talk about Spiritual Reasons for Becoming a Teacher*, (Marshall (2009) purports the existence of a spiritual foundation in many new teachers is uncovered:

While the future teachers interviewed in this study did not seem to have the language to talk eloquently about how spirituality related to their teaching, they did seem to talk about distinctly spiritual concepts. They were clear that their teaching related somehow to their previous experiences. They were clear that their teaching will have and has had a purpose and a meaning, and that they were ‘called’ to do it. They were clear that they are helping students and helping the world to be a better place, and they were clear that the most important characteristics of a good teacher is to know their students and to care for them. Although no one used the exact words that spirituality in education writers used to describe spirituality and teaching, the concepts those words represent are present for those students – meaning, purpose, connectedness, and care. (p. 38)

Meaning, purpose, connectedness, and care – all principles that promote good teaching – are also principles that should be taught and shared with all students. By doing so, Marshall believes that “they did seem to have internalized a spiritual framework for thinking about their teaching” as it related to influencing their behavior (p. 38).

Combining the spiritual foundation of new teachers and their enthusiasm and youthfulness with the influence that this could have on students would have the potential to create an environment for spiritual enlightenment, growth and success for students and staff.

Marshall (2009) cites the work of Parker Palmer to demonstrate this point:

Palmer (2003) for example, argues that the current era of high stakes accountability creates a spiritual crisis, which must be countered through programs such as ‘Courage to Teach,’ which addresses the pedagogy of the soul or the ontological reality of being human that keeps us from regarding ourselves, our colleagues, or our students as raw material to be molded into whatever form serves the resigning economic or political regime. (pp. 38-39)

Recognizing and promoting this crucial element of staff training, and its existence within the teaching tools of the new teacher speaks volumes to the significance that spirituality can have within the school. Marshall (2009) concludes that:

Spirituality is not a touchy-feely ephemeral construct without relation to what happens every day in schools and without relevance to today’s tense climate of accountability. It is instead at the very core of who teachers are and what sustains their work with students. It is up to teacher educators and educational leaders to understand it and to foster it.  
(p. 40)

#### I. Spirituality and the Public School Administrator.

Once understood and fostered, the influence of a public school administrator and their spirituality on student success can be measurable and real. Dawna Markova (2006), writing in her article, *Spiritual Courage – Leading from the Inside Out*, contends that “If we are to make it through this time of shedding, we need to be guided by the wisdom of all natural creatures” (p. 40). Connecting to one’s “inner resources” and becoming a “possibilist” will allow for a person to access their own gift. “Your gift lies in what you love, and whole human community needs you to bring that gift to it,” and then give it to his/her children (p. 47). Markova believes that:

Your job is to be quiet and alone from time to time, asking the open questions that have no answers and letting them drift in the winds of your mind like a kite. Often this means reestablishing a relationship with your own silence so that you will be patient enough with yourself to allow the most interesting possibilities of your spirit to emerge. (p. 47)

Preparing oneself for the “spirit to emerge” is critical. Markova concludes that:

There are many forces that are trying to convince us more of our separation than of our connection. . . We may or may not be able to change the world, but it is within the sphere of influence of every person reading these words to choose to create a new personal mythology of active engagement with our present and future. . . We are supported, perhaps guided, by an evolutionary intelligence that has carried us from the age of handcrafting through the age of the machine and now – where? The information age? The age of mindcrafting? If we slip free of the too-small circles we have drawn around ourselves, if we allow ourselves permeable boundaries, we may discover that we are not as alone as we think. We may find that we are held and guided by hidden hands. (p. 48)

Revisiting the work of Parker Palmer (1999) provides additional insight into this inquiry:

When we bring forth the spirituality of teaching and learning, we help students honor life’s most meaningful questions. . . Spiritual questions are the kind that we and our students ask every day of our lives as we yearn to connect with the largeness of life: ‘Does my life have meaning and purpose?’ ‘Do I have gifts that the world wants and needs?’ ‘Whom and what can I trust?’ ‘How do I deal with suffering: my own and that of my family and friends?’ ‘How does one maintain hope?’ (p.7)

Quoting the words of Rainer Maria Rilke from *Letters to a Young Poet*,

Be patient toward all that is unresolved in your heart. . . Try to love the questions themselves. . . Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given because you would not be able to live them – and the point is to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answers. (pp. 1-2)

Palmer's work indicates that by understanding and experiencing spirituality as part of the learning pathway provided through education (Palmer, 1999), public school administrators can truly find ways to positively influence student behavior and connect it to areas like student achievement and success.

Palmer (1999) points out that failure to allow this process to happen may bring about tragic results:

When we fail to honor the deepest questions of our lives, education remains mired in technical triviality, cultural banality, and worse: It continues to be dragged down by a great sadness. I mean the sadness one feels in too many schools where teachers and students alike spend their days on things unworthy of the human heart – a grief that may mask itself as boredom, sullenness, or anger, but that is, at bottom, a cry for meaning. (pp. 2-3)

This “cry for meaning” can be addressed in public schools by providing time to allow the principles of spirituality taught to students to unfold through the influences of the school's leadership.

To fully evoke this spiritual dimension in public education is not something that needs to be ‘brought into’ or ‘added onto’ the curriculum. It is at the heart of every subject that is

taught, where it waits to be brought forth. . . . It is the human quest for connectedness.

(Palmer, 1999, pp. 2-3)

If one is connected spiritually, the question remains can they also be successful academically? In a spiritual sense the answer would be yes:

To teach as a whole person to the whole person is not to lose one's professionalism as a teacher but to take it to a deeper level. . . . Freely choosing to perform this inner-work can contribute powerfully to the well-being of teachers, of teaching, and of the students we are here to serve. By creating such settings, our schools would offer teachers, students and the mission of education they so deeply deserve. (Palmer, 1999, p. 7)

Paul Houston (2002) summarizes this ideal in *Why Spirituality and Why Now?* when he writes:

It is difficult to reconcile the work of leaders as strictly management when so much of it deals with the aspirations and dreams of people, when so much of it affirms or denies their very essence. When you mess with folks' lives, you'd best be aware of the spiritual nature of what you are doing because at the core of our humanity is that golden cord of connection to the infinite.

All leaders must be attuned to the third dimension beyond thinking and doing – to what it is to “be” a human in touch with the divine. But educational leaders, because of their responsibility for the future through touching the lives of children, have an even greater obligation. (p. 6)

Promoted by public school administrators, this “third dimension”, as he calls it, will help to raise the awareness and impact that spirituality has to new heights as it relates to the

administrator's perception on student success in public schools. The results will demonstrate this progress (p. 6).

## Part II: Spirituality and Results in Schools

The question remains how can spirituality be used in public schools as it relates to students and how can it be measured? Once evidence of a foundation of spirituality is quantitatively demonstrated, will it lead to an overall improvement in student behavior within the public school environment?

In the article, *Assessing Students for Morality Education: A New Role for School Counselors* (Rayburn, 2004), the impact of promoting morality education to public school students is explored.

Teaching students core values can vastly improve their ability to appreciate, understand, cooperate, and interact with others in their world. Further, it provides an undergirding for them to be able to choose to follow a moral right and good path throughout life. (p. 357)

This overall improvement and commitment to follow "a moral right and good path", promoted by public school administrators, assists the students in developing a moral maturity and a change in their behavior. Citing the work of J.C. Gibbs (2003), Rayburn (2004) writes that "all deep moral perceptions might give some insight into deeper reality of human connection" (p. 357).

At some basic level, morality involves awareness and appreciation of what is acceptable and morally valued by both society and the truth – and goodness-seeking self . . . when students have more interest in the moral integrity of society, they are more able to meaningfully and constructively shape society and promote social change. (p. 356)

In this particular study, the significance of the school counselor in assessing and working with student behavior and attitudes is emphasized. Rayburn (2004):

School counselors are logically the ones to lead in the design and implementation of morality education programs. . . .Working with students to help them to behave morally towards their peers, parents, and towards society in general, school counselors would have a decisive and significant victory in lessening school violence and in the impact on helping students to become better people and better citizens. (p. 361)

Does becoming a better person and a better citizen translate into success for students academically? :

Growing beyond superficiality in universal truths of the right and the good is transcendent in nature. In the puzzle of the meaning of the universe, love and the ethics of mutual respect may be clues to a primary reality. In the midst of a moral crisis, morally mature individuals may start to sense or to identify with the wholeness and vastness of nature of which they are a small part. In a very advanced stage of moral development, individuals may transcend existential despair and find inspiration from a deeper reality away from self-centeredness, angry distortion, and injustice toward love and justice. . . all deep moral perceptions might give some insight into deeper reality of human connection. (Rayburn, 2004, p. 358)

One can conclude from Rayburn's work that discovering a connection exists between one's morality and spirituality and therefore success in school (student behavior) may provide the basis for solutions to many issues related to students in schools, including student achievement and performance in schools. A public school administrator must realize the implications of this strategy and not be afraid to access it but embrace it.

According to Rayburn (2004), determining the validity of this student connection can be done very simply through the use of the “Inventory on Spirituality” (Rayburn & Richmond, 1996). This 35 item survey:

. . . indicates how students score on caring for others, seeking goodness, truth/forgiveness, and cooperation, and transcendence. This assessment is important because such attributes are the undergirding of learning about, being aware of, and caring for, morality issues and concern about values and is appropriate for administration in a (public) school setting, since it is an ecumenical instrument that may be used by theists and nontheists. (p. 359)

Assessing student behavior through their spirituality could provide a means to maximize student behaviors, potential, growth and success in public schools. This would determine the likelihood that a student’s spiritual foundation could be utilized to promote higher levels of understanding in the classroom and eventually lead to higher levels of student achievement. The ability to make this happen however does not rest solely on the students, but rests on the leadership and teaching found within the school system itself.

A need exists for a separate quantitative study that will measure the level of spirituality or morality within the leadership of a public school system. A design of such quantitative research instrument is contained later in this study.

### Part III: Spirituality and the Impact of Prayer on Results

Utilizing and examining forms of spirituality can provide evidence to support its implementation and use. Prayer is one of these spiritual devices. Can prayer, a form of spirituality, make a positive difference in public schools and, if so, can it impact overall student achievement? When prayer is referenced here, a specific religious denomination is not being



proposed. What is being proposed is an ideal that prayer can have a significant impact on the overall life and achievement of a school system.

Can evidence be provided as to the power of prayer? Several studies have been conducted that specifically demonstrate the success that prayer can and does have.

Debra Williams reported in a 1999 article entitled, *Scientific Research of Prayer: Can the Power of Prayer Be Proven?* that “though the faithful will always believe that there need not be any physical evidence of the power and effects of prayer, science has come a long way toward showing just that – prayer is real and it works” (p. 5).

In her study, Williams (1999) presents various examples to illustrate this point. Heart patients who were exposed to prayer were healthier than those who were not, as those patients who had received continuous prayer experienced fewer CPR interventions and had lower demands for medication. Fewer deaths were also reported. Those who regularly prayed or were prayed for also had lower blood pressure. In twins, when separated for the purpose of research, those who engaged in prayer experienced a healthier life style free of depression and substance abuse. Even in the planting and germination of seeds, those seeds that were exposed to prayer experienced faster rates of germination and produced healthier plants while those seeds, that actually were exposed to prayers of negation, failed (Williams, 1999).

In the Charles L. Allen’s (2003) book, *Prayer Changes Things*, Allen asks the question, “Can you prove the value of prayer?” His answer is as follows:

Can the power of prayer be validated? By various tests, many have sought to demonstrate that prayer gets results. But I have never been too interested in such experiments. I am not sure that prayer values can be proved, but certainly they can be

known. There is a difference. In fact, anyone who sincerely prays is himself a proof of prayer. (pp. 13-14)

About prayer, (Abraham) Lincoln once said,

I have had so many evidences of His direction, so many instances of times when I have been controlled by some other power than my own will that I cannot doubt that this power comes from God. I frequently see my way clear to a decision when I am conscious that I have not sufficient facts on which to found it. I am satisfied that, when the Almighty wants me to do, or not to do, a particular thing, He finds a way of letting me know. I talk to God and when I do my mind seems relieved and a way is suggested. I doubt if Lincoln ever tried to prove the value of prayer – but he knew it. (pp. 13-14)

Spirituality appears in many forms and can manifest itself in a variety of ways. One of these is prayer. As a form of spirituality, prayer can be assessed by a public school administrator in their own personal and professional journey. This could have an influence on student behavior.

### Summary

Connecting spirituality with public education and the influence on student success is something that evokes feelings of fear, anguish, and defensiveness. The general population has been raised to believe that the two cannot co-exist.

An attempt will be made to demonstrate that spirituality, as found in the leadership of public school administrators, impacts public education. An empirical research study using random sampling will be completed for this purpose. The implications and conclusions that will be drawn from this study will provide an insight to solutions for success in public education. This research will be conducted through the lives and work of public school administrators.

The distinctive and thought-provoking nature of this study will attempt to open peoples' minds to the possibility that spirituality makes a difference in the teaching and in the learning that takes place in public education, in essence on student success. Spirituality, in whatever format, is something that, through research, may make a positive overall difference in a student's behavior. Measuring the levels of morality or spirituality found within the lives of public school administrators and connecting it to their perceptions on the influence on student success can help to determine the influence that administrators might have on the behavior of their students.

When a public school leader recognizes the influences of spirituality and morality within themselves, and focuses on the influences that this has on student success, what will the results be? Research studies, such as this one, may contain a way to begin to answer to this question and therefore open the discussion for new ways to bring about positive and sustainable change in the public school environment and in the lives, behaviors and success of students for years to come.

## CHAPTER III

### Introduction

The “Inventory of Spirituality and Morality” sought to examine the influence that the concepts of spirituality and morality had on professionals in their work. This study looked to take this concept a step further by examining the potential influence that spirituality and morality had on Pennsylvania public school administrators and the students in their charge and if this influence could make a difference on their perceptions on student success within the schools where they worked. Pennsylvania public school administrators were asked to complete one of two surveys based on these ideals using primarily the work of Carole Rayburn and Lee Richmond (2006).

### Research Questions

1. What is spirituality and can it exist within public education?
2. Do the terms spirituality and morality convey a similar meaning to Pennsylvania public school administrators?
3. Do the principles found within spirituality and morality influence the professional lives of public school administrators and their perceptions on student success?
4. Once identified, do the concepts of spirituality and morality influence public education and if so how?

The hypotheses developed and tested through this research are as follows:

- Spirituality and morality are influences on Pennsylvania public school district administrators;
- Pennsylvania public school administrators, impacted by spirituality and morality, influence their students.

### Design of the Study

This research was considered a quantitative study using SPSS 18 and was conducted through the use of two separate surveys utilizing random assignment that have been designed to discover administrators' perceptions as they relate to spirituality and morality and the influence that these perceptions have on student success. The surveys were based on the "Inventory on Spirituality" (Rayburn & Richmond, 2006).

By analyzing the responses in these groups, spirituality of the individual was measured. Reliability testing was performed on each of the four sub-constructs of both instruments using Cronbach's alpha.

Using SPSS 18, a TOST equivalency test analysis was conducted to determine if the two surveys used for this study were statistically equivalent. The creation of a hierarchical multiple regression model was then completed that closely examined the responses as to the influence that leadership style had on the sub-constructs created within the two survey instruments in this study and, subsequently, on the overall impact that spirituality and/or morality potentially had on students in the public school setting.

### Participants

The subjects used in this study consisted of a group of Pennsylvania public school administrators (n=400) solicited from 220 Pennsylvania public school districts via email where the overall student enrollment was 2,000 or less as identified during the 2010-11 school year. The decision was made to use only public school districts where the enrollments were 2,000 or less for this research due to the size of the administrative teams. In smaller districts, the administrative teams contained fewer members. As a result, the influence administrators had on their districts appeared to have greater significance. The school districts were identified through

the use of the Pennsylvania Department of Education Division of Data Services website. The individual administrators and their email addresses were painstakingly collected by accessing each school district's web page from email addresses collected from the EDNA (Education Names and Address) website ([www.edna.ed.state.pa.us](http://www.edna.ed.state.pa.us)).

Once collected, emails were sent out containing the request to complete either the Inventory on Spirituality/Morality A or B along with a copy of the Informed Consent Letter about participation in the study. After several attempts were made to collect the surveys, a total of  $n=212$  administrators completed and submitted one of the on-line surveys through the use of Survey Monkey.

#### Instrumentation

An "Inventory on Spirituality/Morality Survey" influenced by the work Rayburn and Richmond (2006) was used. Five additional statements, specifically focusing on spirituality and public education, were added to the survey.

The 30 statements were then divided into four sub-constructs for analysis. Three of the sub-constructs were pre-determined through the work of Carole Rayburn and Lee Richmond (2006) and were identified as follows:

- Transcendence: Seeking Goodness and Truth/ SGT (11 items). In Rayburn and Richmond's work, alpha equaled .905. In this study with administrators, alpha equals .652.
  - I am awed by the beauty and vastness of nature;
  - All creatures are of great worth;
  - I do not think that people of all nationalities and ethnic groups have equal worth;
  - I am a seeker of ultimate truths – the really true things in life;

- I see a spiritual side to my work or occupation in that it benefits others in some special way;
- I think that cooperation and sharing are very important in living in the world with others;
- I feel that I am guided by something or someone outside or beyond myself;
- I view others as more good than bad;
- I need to forgive myself for mistakes and go on with my life;
- I value being optimistic and positive – looking for good in all things;
- I do not have a need or a desire to protect, conserve, or have a responsibility to the world around me.
- Transcendence: Spiritual Growth/ SG (8 items). In Rayburn and Richmond's work, alpha equaled .874. In this work, as it relates to public school administrators, alpha equals .679.
  - I consider myself to be a spiritual person;
  - I care about the well-being of all others – people, animals, and plants;
  - All persons – male and female – are of equal worth;
  - The young and the old are not equally worthy;
  - I am a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars;
  - I'd like to see the world live in peace and harmony;
  - I think that any person can strive for what is good and true in all things;
  - To me, respecting others is important for living peacefully.
- Caring for Others / CFO (6 items). In Rayburn and Richmond's work, alpha equaled .834. In this study, alpha equals .721.
  - A force outside me guides or influences what I do;

- Protecting our natural resources is very important to me;
- I care about others;
- I think people are more bad than good in the way that they really are;
- I value living in harmony with my neighbors;
- I deeply care for my family and friends that goes beyond usual concerns.

For the purpose of this study, a fourth and fifth sub-construct was created and analyzed.

The fourth category was generated by analyzing the strength of the three highest items of the six identified items from the Care for Others sub-construct. By isolating the three highest items and creating a separate sub-construct entitled Care for Others 2, a decision was made to determine if this category was more reliable or had a more significant influence within the individual responses to spirituality than did the original sub-construct, Care for Others. An analysis of the 2 sub-constructs would determine which one would generate the highest measure of internal consistency as determined by Cronbach's alpha. The items in the second sub-construct, Care for Others 2, were as follows:

- Care for Others 2/ CFO2 (3 items). Created for this study, alpha is .797.
  - I feel that I am guided by something or someone outside or beyond myself;
  - Protecting our natural resources is very important to me;
  - I think people are more bad than good in the way that they really are.

The final sub-construct was created through grouping the five additional questions and analyzing the data created through this sub-construct. This sub-construct was entitled Influence on Students/IOS. This data was then compared to the data generated by the three original sub-constructs. Construct reliability was already established by Rayburn and Richmond (2006) of



the three sub-constructs. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the fourth sub-construct and determined to be reliable.

The survey instrument used in this study amends this inventory by adding five additional statements that include references to public education and student performance as it relates to spirituality or morality. By introducing additional questions void of references with regard to spirituality, the information gathered served the intended purpose of the study. By adding references to morality in the survey instrument, a determination was made as to whether the results compare favorably to the results gathered from the responses to the questions in the "Inventory on Spirituality." The evidence examined whether a Pennsylvania public school administrator's spirituality or spiritual response predicted the role that these beliefs would have on their students in the students' educational settings and activities. The level of influence was explored through an analysis of the answers to this survey statistically. Interpreting these beliefs provided a means to examine methods that may lead to an increase in the overall achievement and performance levels of students, not just within the school districts being evaluated in this work, but in other public school districts as well. The following sub-construct was identified as follows:

- Influence on Students/ IOS (5 items). Created for this study, alpha equals .801.
  - It is important to include principles of morality in the school's curriculum;
  - It is critical to a student's success to be taught principles of morality;
  - A student cannot be successful in school without having a foundation built on strong moral principles;
  - Students involved in extracurricular activities, like music or sports programs, are more successful when exposed to principles of morality;

- Students taught, coached, or mentored by teachers or adults with strong moral principles are more successful in the activity.

The survey instruments were then translated into an electronic web-based platform using the on-line survey tool, Survey Monkey. Data collection was electronic and did not depend upon pencil and paper responses that would then have to be mailed. Construct reliability had been established by Rayburn and Richmond (2006) in their original work with the survey. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the additional questions and for the questions that were worded differently so to add or remove references to spirituality or morality. All the sub-constructs proved to be reliable.

The results yielded two data sets: those who completed Survey A and those who completed Survey B. As a result, a TOST analysis of equivalency was conducted to determine if responses to the survey were statistically equivalent.

Survey participants were also asked to identify their leadership style as part of this study. Information to create the statements used in this section of the surveys was retrieved from the Mind Tools website article, "Leadership Styles-Choosing the Right Style for the Situation." Mind Tools, a London based company, provides skill-development strategies for career building.

Fifty-seven percent of the participants believed that meeting the needs of the team was important. Values and ideals defined them. Involving the entire team in making decisions and recognizing the importance of treating each other with respect was significant. Clearly understanding one another's role in the overall operation of the school district brought about the most favorable results. Using this variable as part of the analysis in this study was a significant factor in the correlation that was performed to determine the influence that spirituality had on

administrators and then how this impacted students. These results will be presented later through the hierarchical regression that was performed using these variables.

Full copies of the “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality Survey A” and the “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality Survey B” used for this research are contained in the Appendix of this work.

### Procedure

The decision was made at the onset of this research to include only school districts in the state of Pennsylvania that had overall student enrollments of 2,000 or less. An email was then sent to 400 perspective participants who had been identified as being a Pennsylvania public school administrator in a district of this size. Two-hundred and twenty school districts were represented in this sample. The email asked the individual administrator to use a hyper link to Survey Monkey where they would complete one of two surveys on spirituality or morality. Two follow-up emails were sent a few weeks apart positively reminding people about completing the survey. Ultimately, 212 Pennsylvania public school administrators responded to the request: 93 people completed Survey B and 119 people completed Survey A. Out of the 220 school districts selected, 103 were represented in the responses.

All invitations to participate, as well as the survey instruments themselves, used language that had been previously approved by the IRB of Youngstown State University; therefore, IRB compliance was followed throughout the study.

### Limitations to the Methodology

There were several limitations to the methodology. In all probability, Pennsylvania public school administrators receive hundreds of emails in the span of a few days. If the individual did not immediately respond to this email, no response was forthcoming.

In an attempt to gain additional responses, no response code was given. Identifying the school district where the responses originated was critical to matching student data to the school district responding. The I.P. address locator, Utrace, was used to identify the sender. This was a painstakingly long process.

To participate in the study, administrators followed a self-selection process. This leads one to ask why did administrators choose to participate in a research study on the topic of spirituality and why did other administrators choose not to participate? Does this make a statement about the spirituality of the group before they answered a question or deleted the email asking them to participate?

In distributing the surveys, 200 administrators electronically received Survey A, entitled “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality.” 200 administrators electronically received Survey B entitled “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality.” 119 participants responded to Survey A while 93 participants responded to Survey B. The order in which the statements were presented in each survey was different. The fact that 26 more people responded to Survey A than Survey B is something that is difficult to explain, but should be noted for consideration.

#### Summary

Using an on-line instrument for this study proved to be effective in the overall number of responses. Overall respondents to both Survey A and B was n=212. Collecting 53% of the responses was encouraging and validated moving forward in the analysis of the data.

## CHAPTER IV

### Introduction

The survey results from the “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality” Survey A and the “Inventory on Morality/Spirituality” Survey B from all respondents, superintendents, central office administrators and principals, were collected by the on-line survey and questionnaire tool, Survey Monkey. A copy of the survey is found in Appendix B. Once the data collection was completed, the results were transferred into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet then imported and analyzed using SPSS Version 18. In addition, demographic information was also collected from all respondents.

Survey respondents, superintendents, central office administrators, and principals ( $n=212$ ) completed one of two surveys based on the “Inventory on Spirituality” (Rayburn & Richmond, 2006). Five additional items were added to the survey. These five items were written in the same manner as the original 25 statements and added in an effort to understand how spirituality might have an influence in the public schools represented by the respondents using “morality” statements.

### Data Analysis

The two surveys used the exact same items; the items were arranged in different orders and were entitled “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality A” and “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality B.” Primarily, the newly developed items were presented in different locations throughout the surveys. A total of 400 surveys were emailed to a random selection of Pennsylvania public school superintendents, central office administrators, and principals who work in school districts where the student enrollment was 2,000 students or less. This random selection was made by compiling a list of Pennsylvania public schools with enrollments of under 2,000 students as of

the 2010-11 student enrollment data as listed in the EDNA reporting system from the Pennsylvania Department of Education website. The on-line survey and questionnaire tool, Survey Monkey, was utilized by incorporating the two surveys, “Inventory on Spirituality A” and “Inventory on Spirituality B” into the instrument.

A total of 200 administrators (n=200) electronically and randomly received Survey A, and a total of 200 administrators (n=200) electronically and randomly received Survey B through email and Survey Monkey as a hyperlink in the email. From the surveys sent (n=400), a total of 212 (n=212) surveys were electronically returned through Survey Monkey (a 53% response rate). A total of 198 (n = 198) responses were originally used for analysis. Fourteen were deleted due to incomplete responses.

Demographic variables of race, age, gender, current position, years of service, total number of years in the current position, religious affiliation, and leadership style preference were charted and analyzed against the sub-constructs for the two survey instruments.

The remaining data from the 30 survey questions were then sorted into four sub-constructs for analysis. Three sub-constructs were directly from the “Inventory on Spirituality” (Rayburn & Richmond, 2006). The sub-constructs were as follows:

1. Transcendence: Seeking Goodness and Truth /SGT (11 items)
2. Transcendence: Spiritual Growth /SG (8 items)
3. Caring for Others /CFO (6 items)

For the purpose of this study, a fourth and fifth sub-construct were created and analyzed. The fourth category was generated by analyzing the strength of the three highest items of the six identified items from the Care for Others sub-construct. By isolating the three highest items and creating a separate sub-construct entitled Care for Others 2, a determination was made to

discover if this category was more reliable or had a more significant influence within the individual responses to spirituality than did the original sub-construct Care for Others. An analysis of the 2 sub-constructs would determine which one would generate the highest measure of internal consistency as determined by Cronbach's alpha. The items in the second sub-construct, Care for Others 2, were as follows:

4. Care for Others 2/ CFO2 (3 items).

The fifth sub-construct was created by grouping and analyzing the results of the five statements that were added to the "Inventory on Spirituality/Morality" regarding the influence that administrators felt that spirituality had on specific areas related to students as they participated in a variety of experiences within the public school systems. This category was identified as follows:

5. Influence on Students/ IOS (5 items)

Initially, each sub-construct was tested for internal consistency. These results will be presented shortly. Once the reliability was assessed, the sums of these four sub-constructs were used to perform the statistical analysis. To determine whether there was any impact with regard to the order of the questions, on whether the respondents answered the remainder of the questions, on how they answered the questions, or on the administrators' responses to each of the factors represented by the questions, a test of the response equivalency was conducted. For this analysis, the results from each of the two surveys used in this research were examined using an equivalency test. The test was utilized to determine if the results or the pattern of results in Survey A and Survey B differed in any way. A TOST equivalence test for means was conducted. These results will be presented in this work.

Lastly, a hierarchical multiple regression was performed to determine if spirituality/morality, as conveyed through the administrators' responses in the surveys, influenced their expectations regarding student treatment and behavior. The Influence Students' sub-construct (IOS) was identified as the dependent variable as it specifically contained data expressing administrators' beliefs with regard to the influence of spirituality/morality on students in the public school setting. The independent variables selected were the original three variables developed by Rayburn and Richmond (2006): Care for Others, Spiritual Growth, and Seeking Goodness and Truth and the newly created category, Care for Others 2.

Additional variables selected for this regression to determine the level of influence were: leadership style, the number of years that the administrator worked in the district, and the number of years that the respondent had worked in their current administrative position.

#### Demographics

Descriptive data was aggregated from the responses. Demographic variables of gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, educational level, years in current position and current school district, and religious affiliation were charted and analyzed.

A list of those Pennsylvania public school districts, where the enrollment was less than 2,000 as identified for the 2010-2011 school year and where the administrators worked who had responded to the survey is included in this work. The table also includes the number of administrators who had responded to either survey from each of the corresponding school districts (See Appendix) and identifies the number of school districts (n=108) represented in the responses to this study.

It is also important to examine the other demographic factors requested in both surveys to determine if the demographic data proved to be consistent with nation-wide statistical data for



administrators. The respondents of each survey were asked to indicate their gender. Table 1 provides a summary of the responses by gender.

Table 1. *Gender*

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	128	64.6
Female	70	35.4
Total	198	100.0

As indicated above, two out of three or 65% of the respondents to either Survey A or B were male. In comparison, according to the U.S Department of Education in a recent survey from the National Center for Education Statistics, 56% of all Pennsylvania public school principals were male as were 82% of Pennsylvania public school superintendents.

Next, respondents were asked to give their age by selecting from ranges outlined in six choices. Table 2 represents the ages of the respondents.

Table 2. *Age*

Age	Frequency	Percent
25-35	20	10.1
36-45	69	34.8
46-55	73	36.9
56-65	30	15.2
65+	4	2.0
N/A	2	1.0
Total	198	100.0

The data in Table 2 revealed that the mean age range for survey participants was 46-55. The median age was also 46-55. This demonstrates that the sample of participants in the current study are fairly representative of the age of all public school administrators nationwide as found in a 2003 research study supported by the Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund which indicated that the average age for administrators nationwide was 49.3.

Table 3 summarized the ethnicity of the participants:

Table 3. *Ethnicity*

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
African American	2	1.0
Euro-American	178	89.9
Hispanic	1	.5
Other	16	8.1
N/A	1	.5
Total	198	100.0

In this particular data set, 90% of the survey participants were white which is consistent with 89% at the national level as reported in the 2003 Wallace Foundation research study.

A trend is obviously appearing in a review of the first 3 categories. To be an administrator in a Pennsylvania public school, a person was identified as a white male between the ages of 46-55. Research seems to indicate that nationally this is also the case (The Wallace Foundation, 2003).

Next the participants were asked to report their educational level. To be certified as an administrator in a Pennsylvania public school, a person must minimally possess a Master's Degree. As a result, it came as no surprise that close to 98% of the respondents had either a Master's Degree or Doctorate; 2.5% of the participants denoted that they had a Bachelor's Degree which would signify that those with just a Bachelor's Degree were, in all likelihood, serving in an administrative position as a Dean of Students. This position does not currently require an advanced degree in Pennsylvania.

Table 4 summarizes the educational level of the participants:

Table 4. *Educational Level*

Educational Level	Frequency	Percent
Bachelors	5	2.5
Masters	143	72.2
Doctorate	48	24.2
N/A	2	1.0
Total	198	100.0

As indicated in Table 4, 143 ( $n = 143$ ) of the 198 ( $n = 198$ ) survey participants had obtained a Master's Degree. 191 people or 96.4% had obtained a Master's Degree or Doctoral Degree.

The next category requested of the respondents was marital status. This information is summarized in Table 5:

Table 5. *Marital Status*

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Married	173	87.4
Single	12	6.1
Widow	3	1.5
Separated	8	4.0
Other	1	.5
N/A	1	.5
Total	198	100.0

It also came as no surprise that a majority of the participants were married. The number of survey participants who had been divorced and subsequently remarried was not determined. The fact that over 87% of those responding were married makes a significant statement about the need to belong and feel supported in their work within educational leadership.

Table 6 indicates the current position of the survey respondents at the time of the study:

Table 6. *Current Position*

Current Position	Frequency	Percent
Elementary Principal	38	19.2
Middle School Principal	8	4.0
High School Principal	49	24.7
Central Administration	13	6.6
Curriculum	6	3.0
Superintendent	66	33.3
Other	16	8.1
N/A	2	1.0
Total	198	100.0

As revealed in Table 6, three out of every ten respondents to the survey were superintendents, two were high school principals, and two were elementary principals. The remaining three worked in central office or were in charge of other school district tasks including curriculum. The fact that no one administrative group dominated this category adds to the overall representativeness of the results.

Respondents were then asked to provide the number of years that these people had been in their current position. As indicated in Table 7, these people had been in their current position an average of two to four years:

Table 7. *Years in Current Position*

Years	Frequency	Percent
One	22	11.1
Two-Four	78	39.4
Five-Seven	54	27.3
Eight-Ten	23	11.6
10 Plus	18	9.1
20 Plus	2	1.0
N/A	1	.5
Total	198	100.0

Assuming that there were equal percentages within the two to four year range, the mean number of years of service, as represented in the Table 8, was 2.7 years.

Table 8. *Years in Current Position*

Scale	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Years in Current Position	196	2.70	1.149	.672	-.062

Religious affiliation was then asked of the participants. Relating this to beliefs expressed on spirituality could prove to be important. Table 9 outlines the religious affiliation of the respondents:

Table 9. *Religious Affiliation*

Religious Affiliation	Frequency	Percent
Atheist	2	1.0
Agnostic	3	1.5
Catholic	83	41.9
Greek	1	.5
Jewish	1	.5
Mormon	1	.5
Protestant	86	43.4
Other	11	5.6
N/A	2	1.0
None	8	4.0
Total	198	100.0

The data revealed that 85% of the people were either Catholic or Protestant. The fact that 47% of the people did not respond to the initial survey makes a statement. Despite numerous attempts, through additional emails and phone calls to encourage participation, close to half of the population identified to participate in this study chose not to do so. It appears that spirituality was a topic that some public school administrators may not want to discuss.

Table 10 outlines how each respondent defined their own leadership style based on the five leadership scenarios that were presented to them in the survey.

Table 10. *Leadership Style*

Leadership Style	Frequency	Percent
None	7	3.5
Combo	4	2.0
Rules and Procedures	11	5.6
Ask for Input	42	21.2
Attempt to Lead	116	58.6
Complete Confidence	17	8.6
N/A	1	.5
Total	198	100.0

For administrators, meeting the needs of their team defined the leadership style of 60% of the respondents. Specifically, values and ideals defined (the administrator) as they involved their entire team in making decisions and also felt that treating one another with respect was of great importance as a leader.

In interpreting all of the demographic data that had been collected, survey respondents tended to be between 46 to 55 years old, white, married, and Catholic or Protestant males who had been working between two and four years as a superintendent or high school principal. Involving valued team members in decision making was also given great significance by this group. This data is consistent with the known population of principals as found in the 2003 Wallace Foundation study referenced earlier in this chapter.

#### Reliability, Correlation, and Regression of Instruments by Sub-construct

In order to determine whether differences existed between the surveys used for this study, an equivalence test was performed that generated “evidence of absence.” A TOST equivalence test for independent means was performed using the “Inventory of Spirituality” Survey A and Survey B. The analysis performed estimated and interpreted the confidence interval for the

difference between the means of the two surveys by the sub groups. The results can be found in the following table:

Table 11. *TOST Analysis*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	90% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
SeekGoodTruth /SGT	-.064	195	.949	-.041	-1.102	1.020
Spiritual_Growth/SG	-.950	195	.343	-.416	-1.141	.308
CareForOther/CFO	.224	195	.823	.068	-.438	.575
InfluenceOnStudents/IOS	-.658	195	.511	-.270	-.950	.409

The entire span of the 90% CI (confidence interval) of all the sub-constructs in each table falls inside the equivalence interval. As a result, the null hypothesis that the two surveys differ is rejected. It, therefore, can be concluded that the survey responses are equivalent across the four constructs examined in this outcome for use in this study.

Each sub-construct of the “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality” Survey A and B was analyzed for reliability. Specifically, the items for each sub-construct were assessed for internal consistency. Cronbach’s alpha indicated acceptable reliability for each sub-construct with levels ranging from .652 to .801. These results indicated acceptable reliability of each sub-construct. A reliability coefficient of .70 or higher is considered “acceptable” in social science research (Field, 2009). These results are displayed in Table 12.

Table 12. *Reliability of Sub-Constructs*

	Std.		Cronbach’s Alpha
	Mean	Deviation	
SeekGoodTruth	47.22	4.48	.652
Spiritual_Growth	35.31	3.06	.679
CareForOthers	26.44	2.14	.721
InfluenceOnStudents	20.18	2.87	.801

Since the reliability of the sub-constructs, including the five additional statements added for the purpose of this research was determined acceptable, the analysis turned to an examination

of the relationship between the remaining variables. These results are presented in the Appendix. Based on this zero-order correlation, significant correlations were revealed between the sub-constructs of SeekGoodTruth, Spiritual\_Growth, CareForOthers and Influence on Students. As Influence on Students increased, the values of the other variables also increased by a proportionate amount. The correlations, as outlined in Table 13 between the variables mentioned also demonstrated a significant correlation.

Table 13. *Correlations of Sub-constructs*

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(1)InfluenceOnStudents	-	.171*	.417**	.314**	.313**	.287**
(2) Leadership Style	-	-	.079	-.024	.081	.098
(3) SeekGoodTruth	-	-	-	.679**	.657**	.545**
(4) Spiritual_Growth	-	-	-	-	.589**	.491**
(5) CareForOthers	-	-	-	-	-	.430**
(6) CareForOthers2	-	-	-	-	-	-

As revealed in Table 13, the relationship of the leadership style of the administrator and the influence of students that the administrator had through their own spirituality was significant. This analysis indicates a hierarchical regression would be appropriate to test the ability of the relationship of the three factors to predict Influence on Students.

#### Assumptions

In examining assumptions for this study, independence must first be established. The behavior of one participant in the study did not influence the behavior of another. Participants were individually contacted via email and were not made aware of the participation of anyone else who may have been completing either Survey A or B. Interference was not likely since the invitation to complete the survey was delivered electronically and individually.

Interval data are assumed for parametric tests. The response choices to rate each of the 30 statements from one to five met this assumption as each increment from one selection to the



next has equal value on each instrument (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Additionally, all of the responses were summed to obtain a score for each construct resulting in data that would be used for statistical analysis.

The third assumption is that of normality. Skewness, Kurtosis, and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test were used to measure for normality. Normality results for the four sub-constructs are found in the following table:

Table 14. *Normality Results for Sub-constructs*

Sub-construct	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	K-S
SeekGoodTruth	47.22	4.48	-.90	.998	.038
Spiritual_Growth	35.31	3.06	-.95	1.665	.002
CareForOthers	26.44	2.14	-.47	-.387	.001
InfluenceOnStudents	20.18	2.87	-.46	.005	.044

Note: The significance level is .05

A limitation of the methodology, as discovered through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality, was the sample size of 198 (n=198). Samples of this size can yield significant results on these tests even when the data are generally normally distributed (Field, 2009). In particular, normality was confirmed by skewness and kurtosis measures as well as through a visible inspection of a histogram created for this purpose.

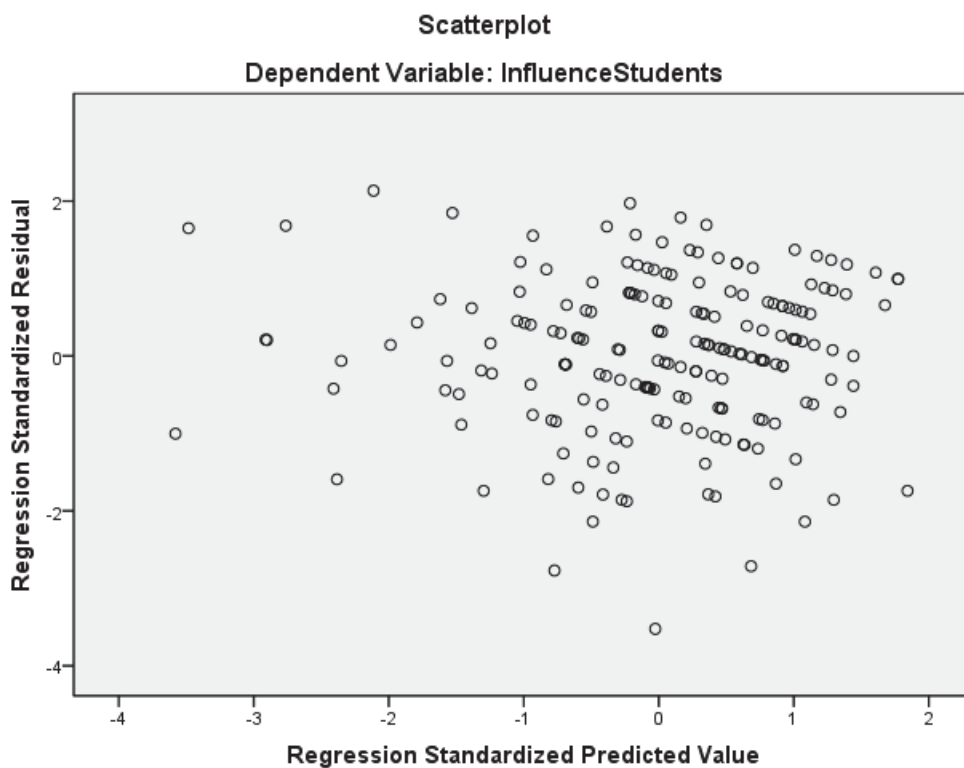
It was necessary to examine the data for multicollinearity, influential outliers, and multiple homogeneity of variance prior to conducting the hierarchical regression. This was accomplished by examining variance inflation values, Mahalanobis distance values, and a scatter plot of homoscedasticity. Mahalanobis distance of .314 indicated that no influential outliers existed.

A test of multicollinearity through the examination of the data revealed in the variance inflation factor revealed that no multicollinearity exists. According to Tabachnick and Fidell

(2007), a VIF less than 10 is acceptable. Table 15, reflecting all of these results, is provided in the Appendix.

Homoscedasticity of the variables showed that the variance of the variables SeekGoodTruth, Spiritual\_Growth and CareForOthers2, as they appeared around the regression line were evenly scattered and the same for all values as they related to the dependent variable, Influence on Students.

*Figure 1:*



#### An Analysis of Administrator's Personal and Professional Responses

Spirituality values were averaged in an effort to determine if a difference existed in the level of endorsement for spirituality by the individual administrators to the statements regarding spirituality in the professional arena vs. statements with regard to spirituality in the administrator's own personal walk. An analysis of the results can be seen in Table 16:

Table 16. *Paired Samples T-test of Endorsement of Spirituality Factors*

Variable	Paired Differences					
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t
				Lower	Upper	
Pair 1 IOS_M - SeekGoodTruth_M	*-.25593	.54928	.03913	-.33311	-.17875	-6.540
Pair 2 IOS_M - Spiritual_Growth_M	*-.37741	.58284	.04153	-.45930	-.29552	-9.089
Pair 3 IOS_M - CFO_M	*-.36937	.57434	.04092	-.45007	-.28867	-9.027
Pair 4 IOS_M - CFO2_M	*-.56481	.59421	.04234	-.64830	-.48131	-13.341

Note: The significance level is  $p < .0001$  \*  $df=196$

In addition, a correlation existed between the response rates of administrators with regard to the statements encompassing their profession (Influence on Students/IOS) and the statements surrounding their personal beliefs (SeekGoodTruth, Spiritual\_Growth, CFO and CFO2). The statements with regard to the administrator’s profession and the influence of spirituality on students (see page 52) revealed a lower response rate from administrators than those statements that dealt specifically with the administrator’s own personal walk of faith.

#### Administrator’s Leadership Style and Spirituality

A closer examination of the responses identifying the administrator’s leadership style in its entirety and the relationship that spirituality had on the administrator’s leadership styles as identified in the survey for this work reveals that the lower endorsements found in the mean exist in the categories that had the lower responses. As the number of responses to the categories increased, the level of endorsement also increased proportionately. This can be seen by examining the leadership style category with the highest response level. With 116 responses, the *attempt to lead* category had the highest response level. The personal spirituality factors of SGT, SG, and CFO had a higher consistent response level than did the professional category, IOS, that related to influences that spirituality may have on students in the public school setting. This was consistent across all of the leadership styles identified in the survey for this study. The breakout treatment of the mean spirituality response for each leadership style is provided in the appendix

and is identified as Table 19. The table will show that the individual administrator's own spirituality did have an influence on their leadership style however a closer examination of the results revealed that the influence was consistent across each style. No one leadership style showed a greater influence by any of the spirituality sub-constructs.

#### Hierarchical Multiple Regression

Based on the results of the correlation found in Table 13, the following variables were found to be significantly related: SGT, SG, and CFO. A multiple hierarchical regression, using a two-step model, was employed to determine if the sub-construct of IOS was predicted by the participant's scores on SGT, SG, and CFO. This two-step model can be seen in Table 18.

Additionally, leadership style was used as a covariate in this analysis, as it was found to be a significant predictor in improving the prediction that the administrator's own spiritual influence had on their students. The analysis was performed using SPSS 18 regression.

Examining the homogeneity of variances determined if the variance of one variable was stable or equal at all levels of the other variables. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) revealed that the sub-constructs of SGT, SG, CFO, and IOS were significant at all levels which meant that equality existed (See Table 17). With the use of  $p < .001$  criterion for Mahalanobis distance, no outliers were identified among the cases. No cases had missing data and no suppressor variables were found,  $n=195$ .

Table 17. *Analysis of Variance*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	46.645	1	46.645	5.830	.017 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	1552.131	194	8.001		
	Total	1598.776	195			
2	Regression	316.713	4	79.178	11.796	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1282.062	191	6.712		
	Total	1598.776	195			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Style

b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Style, Spiritual\_Growth, CareForOthers2, SeekGoodTruth

c. Dependent Variable: Influence on Students

The correlation between the variables, using a four- step model, is displayed in Table 20 and is located in the Appendix. Outlined are the unstandardized regression coefficients (B) and intercept, the standardized regression coefficients, the semipartial correlations, and R, R<sup>2</sup>, and adjusted R<sup>2</sup> after the entry of all three independent variables. R was significant at the end of step one and step two. In step two, the addition of the spiritual sub-construct, SeekGoodTruth, created an R<sup>2</sup> value of .193 and a significant R<sup>2</sup> increment of .164 from step one of the regression. The addition of the spiritual subgroup, Spiritual\_Growth in step three, created an R<sup>2</sup> value of .196, still a positive increase. The addition in step four of the spiritual sub-construct, CareForOthers led to an R<sup>2</sup> increase of .197.

Replacing the spiritual sub-construct CareForOthers with the sub-construct CareForOthers 2 created an R<sup>2</sup> value increase of .198. This represented the three highest values of the six from the CareForOthers category created and analyzed in the work of Rayburn and Richmond (2006) in their “Inventory on Spirituality.” Using this newly created category resulted in a higher R<sup>2</sup> value than was found in the original sub-construct and was used in this study to demonstrate a more significant result as was presented in the assumptions section.

Table 18. *Coefficients*<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t		Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	18.435	.744		24.793	.000		
Leadership Style	.483	.200	.171	2.415	.017	1.000	1.000
2 (Constant)	4.751	2.584		1.839	.068		
Leadership Style	.399	.186	.141	2.147	.033	.975	1.026
SeekGoodTruth	.211	.060	.331	3.523	.001	.477	2.098
Spiritual_Growth	.062	.084	.066	.733	.465	.511	1.957
CareForOthers2	.135	.195	.055	.691	.491	.671	1.491

a. Dependent Variable: Influence on Students

### Summary

Data collected through the use of both survey instruments proved to be reliable and internally consistent. A TOST equivalence test for means performed on both surveys used in the collection of the data showed no difference in the pattern of results.

An examination of the demographics data revealed that 103 Pennsylvania public school districts with enrollment of 2,000 or less were represented in this study. A majority of the 198 (n=198) survey respondents were 46 to 55 years old, white, married, Catholic or Protestant males who had been working for between two and four years as a superintendent or high school principal. This data was consistent with data collected and analyzed nationwide for demographic purposes compared to other public school systems (The Wallace Foundation, 2003).

In examining the assumptions for this study, independence between the participants was established. Interval data are assumed for parametric tests as each of the five rating selections for the 30 statements had equal value. Through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test, the condition of normality was measured and confirmed based on the sample size of 198 (n=198).

An analysis of the administrator's personal and professional responses with regard to spirituality revealed that their response rate to spirituality was higher in areas that dealt with their own personal walk than the response rate to the statements related to their profession and the influence of spirituality on student behaviors in the public school setting.

A closer look at the relationship that spirituality had on the administrator's leadership style revealed that, although spirituality was an influence in the lives of the responding administrators, no single leadership style demonstrated a higher level of spiritual influence. The influence was consistent within each identified leadership style across each of the sub-constructs.

A hierarchical multiple regression was performed using the four sub-constructs of SpiritualGrowth, SeekingGoodTruth, CareForOthers and CareForOthers2. The variables were found to be significant predictors of Influence on Students.

Regression analysis revealed that an administrator's reported spiritual response strongly predicted the influence that the administrator would have on their students and their activities both in and out of the classroom when controlling the reported leadership style of the participant.

## CHAPTER V

## Introduction

The focus on student achievement in America's public schools has increased dramatically over the past decade. The pressure to perform and show growth in student achievement has been placed squarely on educational leaders. Producing results through students that they are educating is critical to the success of educational leaders. Establishing ways to make this happen and sustaining this growth and success is no longer an option but is a demand that must be met. Failure to meet this demand not only impacts the futures of educational leaders but also, and most importantly, negatively impacts the futures of their students. To bring about meaningful change, leadership must find a way to positively influence student behavior to experience long-term growth. Through an administrator's influence on student behavior, sustainable change becomes a possibility. Assessing an educational leader's spirituality is an avenue to make this influence a reality.

This study was designed to consider the possibility that an educational leader's spirituality may be able to positively influence student behavior. The research questions explained an individual's spirituality and examined the possibility of its existence in public education through the influence of the leadership of a public school on student behaviors. To determine if the principles of spirituality existed within the leadership style of public school administrators, the "Inventory on Spirituality" (Rayburn & Richmond, 2006) was amended to create the "Inventory on Spirituality/Morality." This instrument was used to measure the existence of spirituality within the lives of public school administrators. To eliminate confusion about the meaning of spirituality as it related to public school administrators, the word morality was also used in this study. The appearance of the word "morality" throughout this study in



combination with, and in place of the word “spirituality” would show that public school administrators found the words to be synonymous and the influence of both as significant.

Once this was discovered, steps were taken to determine if spirituality had an influence on public school administrators, through their leadership style, and if this influence had an impact on their perceptions on student success in Pennsylvania public schools. To address these areas, descriptive and inferential statistics were analyzed. This is the first study of this kind to examine the influence that spirituality has on a public school administrator and, then what, if any, influence this might have on the perceptions of public school administrators on student success in a public school setting.

The study defined spirituality and by definition and research it was shown to exist in public education through the influence that it had on public school administrators. For public school administrators, the terms spirituality and morality were synonymous – one could be interchanged with the other and still convey similar meanings. Both were shown to influence the lives of public school administrators, both personally and professionally, but not necessarily at the same level. As a result, public administrators, through their survey responses, demonstrated that spirituality and morality collectively influenced public school administrators personally and professionally. Spirituality and morality as seen through public school administrators impacted students in the public school setting. The hypotheses outlined earlier in this study were supported through this research.

### Discussion

In order to determine the relationships that spirituality had on public school administrators, two separate surveys were used based on the “Inventory on Spirituality” (Rayburn & Richmond, 2006). The surveys, “Inventory on Spirituality/Morality” were the same

questions placed in different orders. The word morality was added through the additional five questions inserted into the original “Inventory on Spirituality” (Rayburn & Richmond, 2006) that covered specific areas related to students in a public school setting. The results would indicate whether public school administrators would have a similar connection to the words spirituality and morality. This clearly demonstrated that the words spirituality and morality held similar meanings as it related to this work. Out of the 400 surveys distributed via email, 200 of each were sent out for completion. To determine if a difference existed in the surveys and the impact that this might have on the results, a TOST equivalency test analysis was performed. The equivalency test revealed that the two surveys used were statistically equivalent with mean difference ranging from  $-.461$  to  $.068$ . The 90% Confidence Interval (CI) fell inside the equivalence range.

The surveys were divided into five sub-constructs and tested for internal consistency and reliability using Cronbach’s Alpha. By examining the closeness of the relationship of the items within each sub-construct, the impact level that each sub-construct had on the individual administrator was determined.

The results indicated acceptable reliability for each sub-construct ranging from  $.652$  (SGT) to  $.801$  (IOS). The Influence on Students sub-construct was created by adding five additional questions that specifically addressed student behaviors and the importance of spirituality/morality within these public school activities/behaviors. The fact that this sub-construct resulted in the higher reliability estimates of all of the other sub-constructs indicates the consistency which public school administrators placed on the presence of a foundation of spirituality/morality for students to be successful within the areas covered in these statements.

With acceptable reliabilities across the sub-constructs determined, an examination of the correlation between all demographic variables with each of the four sub-constructs was assessed, revealing that leadership style was a significant variable. Further examination of the four sub-constructs with the addition of religious affiliation and leadership style revealed the existence of relationships throughout the groups. Based on these zero-order correlations, significant correlations were revealed. As the sub-construct, Influence on Students, increased in value the values of the other variables outlined increased by a proportionate amount, an outcome that was hypothesized by the researcher.

Prior to performing a hierarchical multiple regression, an Analysis of Variance, (ANOVA), was performed on the four sub-constructs in an effort to assess homogeneity of variance. The ANOVA revealed that no significant differences in variance or equality existed across the levels.

With the discovery that significant correlations existed across the sub-constructs, a hierarchical multiple regression was employed to determine if the Influence on Students sub-construct of the public school administrators, taking into account leadership style, could be predicted by their answers found within the three remaining sub-constructs, SGT, SG, and CFO.

Significant positive  $R^2$  values were found following each step of the regression. Replacing the sub-construct CareForOthers with CareForOthers2 created an even more positive  $R^2$  value.

Through the research, the intent of the study was to demonstrate that spirituality had an influence on the lives of public school administrators and that this influence had an impact on their perceptions on student success in Pennsylvania public schools. Through the statistical

analyses done for this study, an impact existed in what the administrators expected for the student experiences.

A closer examination of the results, as they unfolded, painted this picture rather clearly. Demographically, a true representative sample was gathered and used for this work. Administrators, currently working in public schools throughout the United States, were married, white, Catholic or Protestant males, with an advanced degree, between the ages of 46 and 55 who had been serving in their current positions between two and four years as an elementary, middle, or high school principal or superintendent. More significantly, the survey results indicated that administrators had a respect for members of their team and, as a result, attempted to lead by involving all members of their team in the decision making process prior to making a final decision on important issues facing the school district.

Two surveys were used to gather data for this study. Both surveys contained the same information. The statements, however, were placed in a different order. In Survey A the first statement read as follows, "I consider myself to be a spiritual person." 119 out of 200 administrators responded to this survey. In Survey B, the first statement read as follows, "I value being optimistic and positive, looking for good in all things." 93 out of 200 people responded to this survey. One can only speculate as to the reasoning behind this discrepancy of 26 responses. Originally, as the results were tabulated, the thinking was that the mention of spirituality would turn people away from responding to the survey when, in fact, the opposite seems to have occurred. 60% of administrators responded to Survey A while 46% responded to Survey B.

Overall, 212 people originally responded to the surveys. 198 survey responses were used originally to evaluate responses. Why did close to 50% of the administrators not respond to the survey? The mere mention of the word spirituality to a public school administrator evoked a

negative connotation and, despite numerous attempts to gather responses for these people, no response was forthcoming. Those who did respond showed a spiritual side to their personalities and obviously to their work and students. What this has to say about the other 50% or so of the people invited to participate is mere speculation. The constitutional mandate that a separation of church and state must exist within the public school system could have been the reason for not responding. Reluctance to demonstrate these beliefs away from home and in the workplace was something that might warrant consideration in examining these results, or lack thereof, for close to 50% of the respondents.

Two-hundred twenty Pennsylvania public school districts were identified as having student enrollments of less than 2,000 students. Out of the 220 school districts solicited, 103 of these districts responded. A geographic scan of the districts, through the use of the Utrace I.P. address locator program, revealed that close to 80% of the school districts that responded were located on the western side of Pennsylvania.

Those responding demonstrated strong feelings with regard to spirituality, especially within their own personal lives. What the implications are for the 47% of those who did not respond can only rest on speculation and the administrator's own introspection. However, according to Dillman (2007), this response rate is within an acceptable range for research conducted online.

An even closer examination of the data resulted in a peculiar observation. The spirituality of public school administrators has two levels. In responding to either "Inventory on Spirituality/Morality A" or "Inventory on Spirituality/Morality B", administrators had higher values, including alpha values, on items from the survey that related to their home or personal life than they did on items related to the public school setting. Public school employees,

especially administrators, have been told, taught and warned for years that one's profession of faith and the public school environment do not go together and should be kept separate. As a result, the values for questions that dealt with spirituality and the home, personal or family environment scored at a higher level than those related to work or the public school setting. Items that involved demonstrating a faith or beliefs in the public school environment scored lower than those related to personal or family items. These items do not have to exist in isolation of one another but should work together to capture the spirit that would maximize the impact that administrators can have in their work with students. Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? Does a plant of one kind produce fruit of another kind? Such is the case in public school administrators and an explanation of their beliefs. The research completed for this study exemplifies this. Those who responded faithfully demonstrated an unwavering commitment to their students based on these values and by respecting the limits of how they can show this faith, what can be accomplished through their faith. One can only imagine the possible impact that faith could have in public schools should the faith and values demonstrated by public school administrators through their responses be the same in their work as it is in their personal life.

#### Implications for Educational Administrators

The influence that an administrator has on a group of students cannot be underestimated and can go a long way in determining the success or failure of a public school. Looking at this through the lens of spirituality is worthwhile and may result in school improvement or success that has not yet been witnessed or experienced in this particular environment. One's own level of spirituality as identified through the sub-constructs of the "Inventory on Spirituality" in connection with leadership style and the impact that spirituality has on selected areas of student

school behavior and/or activities can assist public school leaders in developing programs or creating ways that can effectively influence student success in academics, activities, and in the personal lives of these students both in and out of the public school environment.

Beginning with the use of the “Inventory on Spirituality” (Rayburn & Richmond, 2006) and their own personal influences, administrators can create programs that can target areas for student growth and success within the public school environment. What cannot be underestimated is the impact that the individual administrator and his/her own spirituality has on this process. This study is unique in that it is the first known research that was able to tap into the behavior and beliefs of school administrators in their personal walks relative to their professional arena. The combination of the “Inventory on Spirituality” (Rayburn and Richmond, 2006) with the addition of the five questions developed specifically for this research made this distinction possible.

Constitutional issues could cloud the effectiveness of initiatives of this type as people in today’s society are overly sensitive to connecting the words spirituality and public schools. Challenges could occur if someone perceives that the line separating church and state has become blurred. One’s spirituality does not connote a religious denomination or set of beliefs and any attempt to make such a connection should be immediately dismissed. Through the emphasis and use of one’s spirituality, potential can become reality. One does not have to practice a certain religion or be a part of a specific denomination to make this happen. Allowing this to occur will eliminate any benefits that the principles of spirituality would foster and allow.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

Using the “Inventory on Spirituality” that currently exists to determine one’s level of spirituality, and utilizing this influence to impact student behavior is a concept that may be able

to bring about real, positive, and sustained change and growth for students academically. Once behavior is changed, real change can occur.

In Pennsylvania, connecting this change in student behavior, at least for the time-being, to an increase in student achievement is not possible. Areas that exist that can be measured and compared for growth are not reliable and the overall data over time is flat within districts and from district to district. A movement is currently underway to introduce the use of a Performance Index for Pennsylvania school districts. Currently the effort is meeting a great deal of resistance but could materialize in the near future.

The state of Ohio currently has such a system in place and would lend itself to a study examining the spirituality of administrators in relation to student growth or a school district's performance index. Translating the influence on student behaviors to growth or achievement would strengthen the argument for the use of spirituality in the public school environment.

The use of teachers and their individual and collective spirituality, in addition to the administrator's spirituality in a specific school or school district, (as seen in this study), could also be an area that could be explored for future research.

The impact that spirituality may have in public schools provides an avenue for great potential as other avenues for school improvement are investigated. Expanding its use from administrators to staff and students provides for "limitless potential" and the realization of results that spirituality promises to deliver.

### Summary

Defining spirituality and explaining its value and use through administrators in a public school setting remains an idea that merits serious consideration and that has great value to influencing student behaviors, especially in their overall performance throughout all facets of



their public school experience. This study has provided the means for which this is possible. Assessing the level of spirituality of individual administrators and discovering ways that this influences student behavior while in a public school setting is a concept that provides “limitless potential.” The presentation of research, data, and findings has produced a scenario by which this influence is possible. The implications for public schools and their administrators in their attempt to understand spirituality and relate it to how it impacts perceptions on student success have been detailed in this work.

Recognizing the existence of spirituality among administrators and using it to influence student behavior will lead to ways that can specifically improve overall achievement in a variety of ways and improve public education in general. Suggestions on ways to move forward with this concept have also been presented based on the findings and implications of this work. Discovering the spirituality of educational leadership and exploring its potential as it relates to student success is only the beginning.

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APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL AND  
NIH “PROTECTING HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANT’S” CERTIFICATE



YSU Protocol #146-11

Page 1 of 1

**YSU Protocol #146-11**

Cathy Bieber Parrott [cbieberparrott@ysu.edu]

Sent: Thursday, May 05, 2011 4:07 PM

To: Karen Larwin [kklarwin@ysu.edu]; McClard, Frank

Dear investigators,

Your project "The impact of spirituality on student achievement in public education" is being reviewed under category 2 exemption (not category 1 as you submitted). Your project does appear to meet the criteria of exemption in this category if you can comply with the following conditions:

1. Only publically available electronic email addresses will be used for contacting administrators for recruitment purposes.
  - a. If you wish to use personal email addresses, you will need to provide a method of obtaining consent for use by someone who already has this private information. Another words, the investigators cannot use the private information to contact for consent for use.
2. When the results are presented/published, no respondent can be identified by any single or combination of demographic data description. Therefore, you would need to collapse categories until there are at least 3 respondents in each demographic category you include in your article/publication.
  - a. For example, your demographics may allow the identify of an American-Indian who is an atheist and has a doctoral degree if there is only one administrator in PA with this combination. This person may not want it to be known that s/he responded "almost always" to questions 9 or 11 etc on the spirituality survey.
3. The contact information of the faculty advisor and the Director of the OGSP at YSU are added to the consent document. The IRB recommends that the contact information of the student researcher NOT be provided on the consent document however, the IRB will defer to the faculty advisor's decision for your project.
  - a. Consider using this sentence in the informed consent: Should you have questions about the study, please feel free to contact my faculty advisor [advisor name] at [phone number and/or email] or Dr. Edward Orona, Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs at YSU at 330-941-2377.

To complete the review of your project, please submit the revised consent document with contact info directly to me via an attachment on an email to me. Also, please respond in that email specifically if you can comply with the first two conditions above. Please contact me if you have concerns with the conditions so that we can find a way to allow your interesting research to be completed.

Cathy Bieber Parrott  
Chair, YSU IRB

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**From:** Cathy Bieber Parrott [cbieberparrott@ysu.edu]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 17, 2011 12:30 PM  
**To:** McClard, Frank; 'Karen Larwin'  
**Cc:** 'Cheryl Coy'  
**Subject:** FW: YSU PProtocol #146-11

Dear Investigators,

Thank you for addressing the IRB's concerns by emailing the clarifying information in the below email and the revised consent document. The revised consent document, email clarification and certificate of training from a prior email 5/7/2011 will be printed out and appended to your original submission. Your project "The impact of spirituality on student achievement in public education" has been approved as exempt under category 2. You will receive an official letter in the mail regarding exempt status. However, while awaiting this letter, you may begin your project based on this email approval. Please use the protocol number 146-11 for all future communications about this project. Best wishes for successful completion of your project.

Cathy Bieber Parrott  
Chair, YSU IRB

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Youngstown State University  
Human Subjects Research Committee  
**Exempt Protocol Summary Form**

(To be completed by Human Subjects Secretary.)

Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_ Protocol Number 146-11

TO PIs: complete items, print out then sign.

Title of Research Project "The Impact of Spirituality on Student Achievement in Public Education"

Principal Investigator/Faculty Advisor (include) Department Phone Email address  
 Dr. Karen Larwin Asst Prof. Educ.Found.Res.Tech.& Lead. 330-941-2231 khlarwin@ysu.edu

Co-investigator/Student Investigator Department Phone Email address  
 Frank M.McClard Supt. Lakeview School District

Co-investigator/Student Investigator Department Phone Email address  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Funding Source NA

Projected Duration of Research 6 months Projected Starting Date April 15, 2011

Other organizations and/or agencies, if any, involved in the study None

Exempt under code (see definitions on page one – check one) 1  2  3  4  5  6

**SUMMARY ABSTRACT:** Please supply the following information below: BRIEF description of the participants, the location(s) of the project, the procedures to be used for data collection, whether data will be confidential or anonymous, disposition of the data, who will have access to the data. **Attach copy** of the Informed Consent Form and/or the measures (questionnaires) to be used in the project.

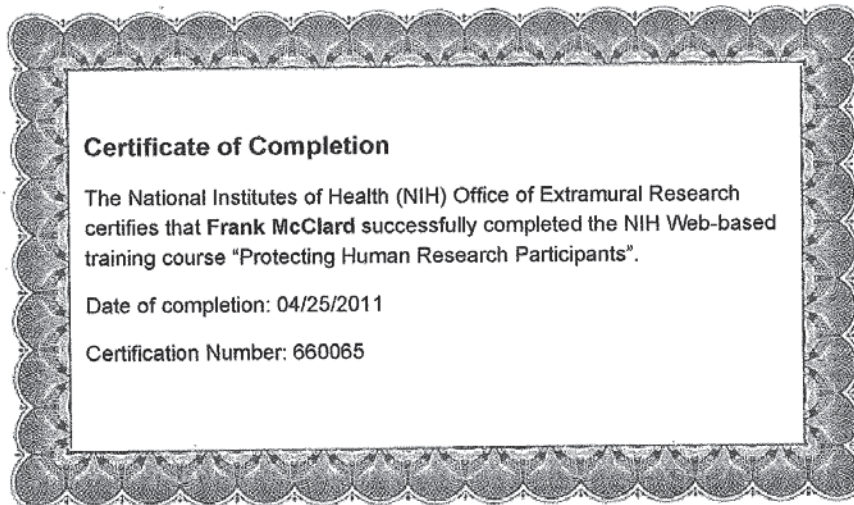
The intent of the research is to demonstrate the impact of interpreting a variety of statements/concepts involving spirituality and what happens when the references related to spirituality are replaced by references related to morality. Will the results show a better acceptance and understanding of spirituality or will the results demonstrate that when spirituality is a factor, people have a tendency to ignore the potential impact that these findings can have; especially as the results are interpreted educationally with regard to student achievement in public education? Or will the results show a broader acceptance of these principles when all references to the spiritual or divine are replaced by references based on morality? Once this comparison is examined through the survey results, hypotheses will be developed and tested with regard to the potential influence that these ideals might have on student achievement in public schools.

Research will be conducted through the use of two separate surveys that have been designed to discover people's perceptions as they relate to spirituality and morality. Each survey contains 10 general information questions and 25 to 30 statements that participants will be asked to give a response based on a 5 choice scale from "almost never" to "almost always". The information will be used to gain insight into the thinking of public school administrators and how this insight will be able to translate into the potential impact of spirituality through the development of educational strategies that will increase student achievement. The surveys are based on the "Inventory on Spirituality" created by Carole Rayburn and Lee Richmond in 1996 and recently updated in 2006 and is being used with their verbal and written permission. Two surveys are being used. The first survey slightly adjusts the inventory created by Carole Rayburn and Lee Richmond through the addition of several statements relative to the nature of this study. The second inventory, entitled an "Inventory on Morality", excludes any reference to the spiritual or divine. Each survey will be sent electronically to 400 people over the age of 18 who are currently working in building level or central office administration in the state of Pennsylvania. The results will then be collected and analyzed through the use of the online tool Survey Monkey.

Investigator/Advisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Co-Investigator/Student Signature (if appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved  Approved with Conditions  Full Committee Review

HSRC Committee Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



APPENDIX B  
INVENTORY ON SPIRITUALITY/MORALITY A  
AND  
INVENTORY ON SPIRITUALITY/MORALITY B

Pages 97-106 have been removed due to copyright.

APPENDIX C

TABLES NOT INCLUDED IN THE BODY OF THE WORK

**TABLES** (not included in the text)*School Districts (referenced on page 59)*

School District	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Allegheny Valley SD	4	2.0	2.0	2.0
Allegheny-Clarion Valley SD	1	.5	.5	2.5
Annville-Cleona SD	3	1.5	1.5	4.0
Apollo-Ridge SD	1	.5	.5	4.5
Avonworth SD	3	1.5	1.5	6.1
Beaver Area SD	5	2.5	2.5	8.6
Bellwood-Antis SD	4	2.0	2.0	10.6
Bethlehem-Center SD	1	.5	.5	11.1
Big Beaver Falls Area SD	1	.5	.5	11.6
Blairsville Saltsburg	1	.5	.5	12.1
Bloomsburg Area SD	3	1.5	1.5	13.6
Brandy Wine Heights SD	2	1.0	1.0	14.6
Brentwood Borough SD	3	1.5	1.5	16.2
Brockway Area SD	1	.5	.5	16.7
Brookville Area SD	3	1.5	1.5	18.2
Brownsville Area SD	5	2.5	2.5	20.7
Burgettstown Area SD	1	.5	.5	21.2
Burrell SD	1	.5	.5	21.7
Camp Hill SD	2	1.0	1.0	22.7
Carlynton SD	2	1.0	1.0	23.7
Catasauqua Area SD	1	.5	.5	24.2
Central Fulton SD	1	.5	.5	24.7
Chartiers Houston SD	2	1.0	1.0	25.8
Clarion Area SD	1	.5	.5	26.3
Claysburg-Kimmel SD	1	.5	.5	26.8
Commodore Perry SD	1	.5	.5	27.3
Conemaugh Township SD	1	.5	.5	27.8
Conemaugh Valley SD	1	.5	.5	28.3
Coudersport Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	29.3
Cranberry Area SD	1	.5	.5	29.8
Curwensville Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	30.8
Deer Lakes SD	1	.5	.5	31.3
Dunmore SD	2	1.0	1.0	32.3
Ellwood City Area SD	3	1.5	1.5	33.8



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Fairview SD	1	.5	.5	34.3
Farrell Area SD	1	.5	.5	34.8
Forest Hills SD	2	1.0	1.0	35.9
Freedom Area SD	3	1.5	1.5	37.4
Girard SD	1	.5	.5	37.9
Greenville Area SD	5	2.5	2.5	40.4
Greenwood SD	1	.5	.5	40.9
Harbor Creek SD	2	1.0	1.0	41.9
Hermitage SD	2	1.0	1.0	42.9
Homer Center SD	1	.5	.5	43.4
Jamestown Area SD	1	.5	.5	43.9
Jeannette City SD	1	.5	.5	44.4
Jenkintown SD	2	1.0	1.0	45.5
Juniata Valley SD	1	.5	.5	46.0
Kane Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	47.0
Karns City Area SD	1	.5	.5	47.5
Keystone SD	1	.5	.5	48.0
Lackawanna Trail SD	3	1.5	1.5	49.5
Lakeview SD	3	1.5	1.5	51.0
Leechburg Area SD	3	1.5	1.5	52.5
Loyalsock Township SD	2	1.0	1.0	53.5
Marion Center Area SD	1	.5	.5	54.0
Mercer Area SD	3	1.5	1.5	55.6
Millersburg Area SD	1	.5	.5	56.1
Millville Area SD	1	.5	.5	56.6
Minersville Area SD	5	2.5	2.5	59.1
Moniteau SD	1	.5	.5	59.6
Montoursville Area SD	1	.5	.5	60.1
Montrose Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	61.1
Moshannon Valley SD	1	.5	.5	61.6
Mount Carmel Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	62.6
Mount Union Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	63.6
Neshannock Township SD	4	2.0	2.0	65.7
Northern Bedford County SD	1	.5	.5	66.2
Northern Cambria SD	1	.5	.5	66.7
Northern Clarion County	1	.5	.5	67.2
Northern Lehigh SD	2	1.0	1.0	68.2

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Northgate SD	2	1.0	1.0	69.2
Northwestern SD	1	.5	.5	69.7
Oley Valley SD	3	1.5	1.5	71.2
Palisades SD	1	.5	.5	71.7
Palmyral Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	72.7
Pen Argyl Area SD	1	.5	.5	73.2
Penn Cambria SD	1	.5	.5	73.7
Penn Trafford	1	.5	.5	74.2
Penns Manor Area SD	1	.5	.5	74.7
Phillipsburg Osceola Area SD	4	2.0	2.0	76.8
Portage Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	77.8
Quaker Valley SD	1	.5	.5	78.3
Reynolds SD	3	1.5	1.5	79.8
Richland SD	5	2.5	2.5	82.3
Ridgway Area SD	1	.5	.5	82.8
Schuylkill Valley SD	1	.5	.5	83.3
Sharpsville Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	84.3
Shenango Area SD	1	.5	.5	84.8
South Side Area SD	1	.5	.5	85.4
Southern Fulton SD	1	.5	.5	85.9
Southern Huntingdon County SD	1	.5	.5	86.4
Spring Cove SD	1	.5	.5	86.9
Steel Valley SD	3	1.5	1.5	88.4
Susquehanna Community SD	2	1.0	1.0	89.4
Susquenita SD	1	.5	.5	89.9
Tri-Valley SD	2	1.0	1.0	90.9
Trinity Area SD	3	1.5	1.5	92.4
Turkeyfoot Valley Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	93.4
Union Area SD	1	.5	.5	93.9
Union City Area SD	1	.5	.5	94.4
Unknown	3	1.5	1.5	96.0
Washington SD	1	.5	.5	96.5
West Middlesex Area SD	1	.5	.5	97.0
Western Beaver County SD	1	.5	.5	97.5
Westmont Hilltop SD	1	.5	.5	98.0
Wilkinsburg Borough SD	2	1.0	1.0	99.0
Wyomissing Area SD	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	198	100.0	100.0	

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*Relationships between Variables (referenced on page 67)*

		SeekGood Truth	Spiritual_ Growth	CareFor Others	Influence Students	Religious Affiliation	Leadership Style
SeekGood Truth	Pearson						
	Correlation	1	.741**	.735**	.467**	.060	.180*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.403	.011
	N	198	198	198	196	198	197
Spiritual Growth	Pearson						
	Correlation		1			-.035	.083
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.629	.246
	N	198	198	198	196	198	197
CareFor Others	Pearson						
	Correlation			1		.041	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.569	.007
	N	198	198	198	196	198	197
Influence Students	Pearson						
	Correlation				1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.044	.002
	N	196	196	196	196	196	195
Religious Affiliation	Pearson						
	Correlation	.060	-.035	.041		1	.052
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.403	.629	.569	.044		.467
	N	198	198	198	196	198	197
Leadership Style	Pearson						
	Correlation		.083			.052	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	.246	.007	.002	.467	
	N	197	197	197	195	197	197

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 15. *Residuals Statistics*

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	15.6012	22.5112	20.1633	1.27443	196
Std. Predicted Value	-3.580	1.842	.000	1.000	196
Standard Error of Predicted Value	.212	.847	.394	.127	196
Adjusted Predicted Value	15.2647	22.7128	20.1577	1.28593	196
Residual	-9.13008	5.52934	.00000	2.56411	196
Std. Residual	-3.524	2.134	.000	.990	196
Stud. Residual	-3.567	2.182	.001	1.002	196
Deleted Residual	-9.35554	5.78239	.00554	2.63087	196
Stud. Deleted Residual	-3.683	2.204	.000	1.009	196
<b>Mahalanobis Distance</b>	<b>.314</b>	19.837	3.980	3.620	196
Cook's Distance	.000	.065	.005	.010	196
Centered Leverage Value	.002	.102	.020	.019	196

a. Dependent Variable: Influence on Students

Table 19. *Leadership Style and Spirituality*

Leadership Style		SGT_M	SG_M	CO_M	IOS_M
None (6)	Mean	4.1515	4.5417	4.3889	3.7333
	Std. Deviation	.46945	.10206	.57413	.48442
Combo (4)	Mean	4.5455	4.6563	4.5833	4.1500
	Std. Deviation	.19639	.27717	.50000	.34157
Rules and procedures (11)	Mean	4.1240	4.2727	4.4545	3.7455
	Std. Deviation	.54889	.45006	.54309	.66387
Ask for input (42)	Mean	4.2208	4.3125	4.6190	3.9381
	Std. Deviation	.42694	.46052	.37229	.47057
Attempt to lead (116)	Mean	4.3393	4.4784	4.6207	4.0776
	Std. Deviation	.39387	.34234	.37273	.59492
Complete confidence (17)	Mean	4.2513	4.2206	4.5882	4.2235
	Std. Deviation	.33944	.37638	.32338	.58687
Total (196)	Mean	4.2927	4.4145	4.6003	4.0327
	Std. Deviation	.40872	.38464	.38729	.57267

Table 20. *Leadership Style: Model Summary of Four Step Regression*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.171 <sup>a</sup>	.029	.024	2.82855	.029	5.830	1	194	.017
2	.439 <sup>b</sup>	.193	.184	2.58596	.164	39.104	1	193	.000
3	.443 <sup>c</sup>	.196	.184	2.58729	.003	.802	1	192	.372
4	.444 <sup>d</sup>	.197	.180	2.59231	.001	.258	1	191	.612
5	.446 <sup>e</sup>	.199	.178	2.59615	.002	.435	1	190	.510

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Style

b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Style, SeekGoodTruth

c. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Style, SeekGoodTruth, Spiritual\_Growth

d. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Style, SeekGoodTruth, Spiritual\_Growth, CareForOthers

e. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Style, SeekGoodTruth, Spiritual\_Growth, CareForOthers, Care2

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT'S INVITATION

EMAIL WITH HYPERLINK TO THE SURVEY

AND LETTER OF CONSENT

Print

Page 1 of 1

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**Subject:** Spirituality in Public Education

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**From:** McClard, Frank

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**To:**

---

**Cc:**

---

**Date:** Sunday, October 16, 2011 2:51 PM

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Thank you for reading and responding to this email invitation. I am currently working on my dissertation through Youngstown State University. My topic is the influence of spirituality on public education. To this end, I have created a survey/inventory based on the work of Carol Rayburn and Lee Richmond which I am asking select Pennsylvania Superintendents, Curriculum Directors and Principals to complete through the use of Survey Monkey.

The survey and inventory contains two parts. The first section contains ten multiple choice questions and one short answer question. The second section asks you to respond to statements by selecting one of five choices. It is very easy to complete.

I truly believe that one's spirituality influences their work. In this case the question becomes can the spirituality of a public school administrator have an influence on students and their achievement in the school district where they work and lead?

Attached you will find the informed consent document that has been developed for this study. This letter contains the link to the survey that I am asking you to complete.

Please help me to show that spirituality makes a difference; even in Pennsylvania public schools.

Thank you so very much. My thoughts and prayers go out to you and the job that you are doing.

Sincerely,  
*Frank M. McClard*  
Superintendent  
Lakeview School District  
2482 Mercer Street  
Stoneboro, PA 16153-3127

**Frank M. McClard**

October 9, 2011

Dear [Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent or Principal],

I am currently the Superintendent in the Lakeview School District in Stoneboro, Pennsylvania and am also a doctoral student at Youngstown State University. I am working on my dissertation which involves the potential impact of spirituality and/or morality on student and staff achievement and performance in public schools. I am examining how the use of language reflecting these ideals may influence this process and as a result have created a short survey that I am asking you to complete by accessing the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/>

The survey contains 10 general information multiple choice questions and 1 open ended question then asks you to respond to 30 statements by checking one of five responses from “almost never” to “almost always” and should take you no more than 15 minutes to complete.

All results and data pertaining to this study will be kept confidential in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Data generated by the study may be reviewed by personnel at Youngstown State University. If any presentations or publications result from this research, you will not be identified by name. It is my intention to complete the research for this study within the next 6 months and present and defend my findings within the next 12 months.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate simply by not responding to my email request. By responding to the survey you are giving your implied consent to participate in the study. Should you have any questions about this research, feel free to contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Karen Larwin, at [khlarwin@ysu.edu](mailto:khlarwin@ysu.edu) or (330) 941-2231 or Dr. Edward Orona, Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs at [corona@ysu.edu](mailto:corona@ysu.edu) or (330) 941-2377.

I thank you for your assistance and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Frank M. McClard



APPENDIX E  
CREATOR'S PERMISSION TO USE THE  
"INVENTORY ON SPIRITUALITY"  
(1996)

**AGREEMENT FOR USE OF THE IS FOR USE IN RESEARCH**

AGREEMENT FOR USE OF THE INVENTORY ON SPIRITUALITY (IS) FOR RESEARCH

1. I/we agree not to put the Inventory or the items of the IS on any electronic device or attachments or forwards, fax, nor in any print as verbatim unless the authors, Rayburn and Richmond, give their written consent to do so; IF SURVEY MONKEY IS OBTAINED BY STUDENT RESEARCHER TO PROTECT COPYRIGHT OF THE IS, MATERIALS MAY BE GATHERED BY ELECTRONIC DEVICE.
2. I/we agree not to publish verbatim the items and/or the full text of the IS unless the authors give their written consent to do so.
3. I/we agree to properly cite and reference the IS in acknowledging the authors as C. A. Rayburn and L. J. Richmond.
4. I/we agree to send a copy of the originals of all completed protocol cover sheets (no identification of the individuals by name or addresses) for demographic information so that you may include our results in your future manuals. We also agree to send copies of the completed questionnaires to you for citation in your manual. These will be sent, at the completion of our gathering the materials and doing the statistical analyses to:

Dr. Carole A. Rayburn

Further, for citation purposes, we will send a copy of the completed write-up of the study to Dr. Rayburn.

5. In my research, I/we will acknowledge in written thanks to the authors, Carole A. Rayburn and Lee J. Richmond, for use of this instrument;
6. In these and in all other ways, I/we will protect the copyright of the IS so as to not allow them to be misused, abused, or dealt with in such a way as to violate copyright boundaries, professional ethics, or legitimate usage of the inventories.

\_\_\_\_\_ Graduate Student

1/28/11 (date)

\_\_\_\_\_ Advisor

2/08/11 (date)

APPENDIX F

“INVENTORY ON SPIRITUALITY/MORALITY A”

OPEN ENDED QUESTION NUMBER 11

“WHAT, IF ANYTHING, IS YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY DOING OR HAS YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY DONE RECENTLY TO ENCOURAGE AN AWARENESS OF SPIRITUALITY?”

**What, if anything, is your school community doing or has your school community done recently to encourage an awareness of morality?**

1 We have hosted assemblies in conjunction with the local ministerium. Our students get the secular message during the day, and the community is invited in the evening for the religious portion.  
Jan 11, 2012 1:05 PM

2 I believe it is encourage on a daily basis as part of our values and belief system. Nov 29, 2011 8:53 AM  
3 I have only been in the District 2.5 months. Recently, I met with the Ministerium to open the lines of communication. Nov 16, 2011 1:47 PM

4 We make every leadership decision both administratively and at the board level based on putting people first and considering the ethical side of things.  
Nov 14, 2011 3:40 PM

5 N/A Nov 14, 2011 4:42 AM

6 We provide assemblies for the students based on making good decisions and morals.  
Nov 13, 2011 3:51 PM

7 Implemented bullying programs. Recently discussed with the discipline committee how to teach respect, basic human civility, and manners.  
Nov 11, 2011 6:46 AM

8 Our Bullying Policy....PROUD P=polite R=respectful O=on time work U=undercontrol D=follow all directions and Using Please and Thank you  
Nov 11, 2011 4:39 AM

9 We teach character clusters at each building and each level. We model respect and expect honesty and respect back - board, admin, staff, students, community. We work hard to increase effective communication to our community and parents. We celebrate accomplishments of both staff and students - in the classroom and in extracurricular activities. My mantra has been that it is our job to: Teach students to learn, think, problem solve, and serve through professional best by staff and academic best by students.  
Nov 10, 2011 6:48 PM

10 Nothing at all....sadly. Nov 10, 2011 5:54 PM

11 We focus on character traits for our students. Our focus is on respect, responsibility, kindness, and integrity. Nov 10, 2011 8:11 AM

12 Character, as it relates to morality and ethics is a part of every administrator's evaluation.  
Nov 10, 2011 7:44 AM

13 I am not aware of anything our school has been doing to promote an awareness of morality. I will say, however, that when dealing with individual students we try to encourage them to deal with issues and their peers in a moral way. Teaching respect for themselves and each other is a lesson we promote on a daily basis. Nov 10, 2011 7:30 AM

14 Character education build into curriculum. Nov 10, 2011 7:03 AM

15 We are engaged in an extensive bullying prevention program in grades K through four which includes a community and home component.  
Nov 10, 2011 6:48 AM

16 Currently, the school community has embarked in a pre-teen program, at the Middle School, to diminish teen pregnancy. We are constantly looking into new opportunities to help our students cope with the realities of life and what is out there that could be potentially harmful to them. It is our job, in my opinion, that we as educators find ways to break the current cycles that our children find themselves in with families. The only way to do that is to show them the way.

Nov 10, 2011 6:44 AM

17 Calling on union leadership to be transparent with their members Nov 9, 2011 6:12 PM

18 An outside group has a religious club held after school in the school for all interested students. Although many morality issues are addressed in guidance classes, they aren't specifically referred to as morality. Nov 9, 2011 5:52 PM

19 Nothing as we have a strong spiritual base in our school community

Nov 9, 2011 6:41 AM

20 None that I am aware of Nov 8, 2011 4:11 PM

21 Continue to say the Lord's Prayer at all public meetings of the Board of Education.

Nov 8, 2011 1:30 PM

22 Without a definition of morality I cannot respond to this question. We certainly do much with staff and students regarding showing respect for other, giving back to community, character education, etc.

Nov 8, 2011 12:20 PM

23 Rachel's Challenge Nov 8, 2011 7:39 AM

24 We attempt to lead by creating a firm but consistent balance of support and accountability for our actions towards each other. Beginning to implement a restorative practices model, we have established values and expectations that all of us are accountable for as well as an expectation of mutual support.

Nov 8, 2011 7:25 AM

25 School Wide Positive Support System Nov 8, 2011 6:11 AM

26 Focus on effective communication strategies Nov 7, 2011 5:18 PM

27 We allow a breakfast pray club. We allow for released time on Wed. afternoon. We have incorporated this into our curriculum.

Nov 7, 2011 12:17 PM

28 We have done nothing intentionally in this area Nov 7, 2011 12:01 PM

29 Character education lessons facilitated through by the guidance counselor and teacher through health class. Nov 7, 2011 11:46 AM

30 The local ministerium keeps me abreast of issues that might interfere with church services such as practices on Sunday.etc.. We also have a baccalaureate program for seniors

Nov 7, 2011 11:24 AM

31 Character ed program Nov 7, 2011 9:00 AM

32 We have a character education program and I meet regular with a local minister group as we work together to meet the needs of the community.

Nov 7, 2011 6:51 AM

- 33 We do use the words "Under God" in the pledge. Our community and school has a strong moral conviction. Nov 7, 2011 5:47 AM
- 34 Project Wisdom Nov 6, 2011 8:08 PM
- 35 Bullying speakers, doing the right things. Nov 6, 2011 7:29 PM
- 36 Character education embedded in curriculum. Nov 6, 2011 5:58 PM
- 37 Extensive anti-bullying trainings. Nov 6, 2011 5:38 PM
- 38 School wide positive behavior plan Anti-bullying presentations Nov 6, 2011 4:40 PM
- 39 The District recently brought in the second segment of Rachel's Challenge. Nov 5, 2011 5:14 PM
- 40 Nothing Nov 3, 2011 7:29 AM
- 41 School wide behavior program Nov 3, 2011 6:15 AM
- 42 We have a very good relationship with the churches in our community. We work with the churches to help our students.  
Nov 2, 2011 5:03 PM
- 43 Very little Nov 2, 2011 9:08 AM
- 44 Our district encourages the awareness and actions of the 6 pillars of character education (trustworthiness, citizenship, fairness, caring, responsibility, respect) throughout our K-12 school.  
Nov 2, 2011 7:54 AM
- 45 Positive behavior support program. Nov 2, 2011 7:31 AM
- 46 Nothing officially Nov 2, 2011 5:51 AM
- 47 We have an ongoing guidance initiative that stresses values, compassion for others, etc.  
Nov 2, 2011 5:36 AM
- 48 We have begun an anti-bullying campaign, throughout the district. Nov 2, 2011 5:20 AM
- 49 Implemented an antibullying program that addresses moral and ethical behavior. Nov 2, 2011 4:40 AM
- 50 Community Service requirement for graduation. Anti-Bullying, Anti-Drug efforts, Local Assessment efforts currently stress importance of doing one's best and keep trying.  
Nov 2, 2011 3:34 AM
- 51 We employ Character Counts and our staff and community serve as role models for students.  
Nov 1, 2011 2:05 PM
- 52 It is a part of our bullying prevention curriculum Oct 28, 2011 1:24 PM
- 53 We have hosted student assemblies in cooperation with our community ministerium that was based on positive decision making and positive peer relationships.  
Oct 27, 2011 7:05 AM
- 54 Educating the board in ethics and morality Oct 27, 2011 5:20 AM

55 Supporting our schools and teachers in front of the children Oct 26, 2011 5:40 PM

56 Character education and Olweus bullying prevention program Oct 26, 2011 9:52 AM

57 Posters in halls and classrooms. Oct 26, 2011 8:15 AM

58 We have guidance classes that touch upon this. Oct 26, 2011 6:09 AM

59 Our district is a fairly conservative community holding conservative social opinions. Abstinence instruction is one aspect of trying to encourage more of an awareness of morality.  
Oct 26, 2011 5:37 AM

60 The administrative team meets annually with the local ministerium. Additionally, students have periodic morning prayer under the guise of "meet/see me at the pole" and teachers have formed a weekly morning prayer session prior to the school day. Lastly, the community has a moms in touch group that prays for the school and school leaders by name. Moms in touch let us know of their activities through notes attached to trays of baked goods several times a year.  
Oct 26, 2011 4:53 AM

61 Character Education Programs, Bible Club Activities Oct 26, 2011 4:39 AM

62 Mentor Groups and Bullying Lessons Oct 26, 2011 3:52 AM

63 I have started three new programs in my building. The first, the HERD Award, is a way of recognizing students not just for academics, but for leading their peers with Honor, Excellence, Respect, and Determination. A student must demonstrate these four principles in all he/she does in order to be nominated. The second, the HOPE Award, is a way for students to recognize a teacher who has gone above and beyond to make a difference in their lives. HOPE stands for - Honoring Outstanding Professional Educators. The third - the 5R's, are principles I expect all members of the school community demonstrate. Every decision must be based on these 5R's of Education: Relationships (positive), Resilience (Self-Efficacy), Rigor, Relevance, and Reflection (Critical). Over the summer I had large signs for each of these principles and mounted these throughout the academic wings of the building. Whether it involves a teacher, planning a lesson, interaction with peers, interactions between teachers and students, with families and community members, the development of new programs, or conduct at athletic events - each member of this community is expected to act with the 5R's in mind.  
Oct 26, 2011 2:53 AM

64 The Good News Club is held in our cafeteria at the end of each Thursday school day. In our classrooms we discuss the importance of respect for oneself and others.  
Oct 25, 2011 10:26 AM

65 Bullying program Oct 24, 2011 9:50 AM

66 We have implemented a program for 7th grade in our health curriculum called Life Skills that helps with proper decision making. Without playing up the morality aspect many of the lessons are based in morality.  
Oct 24, 2011 8:00 AM

67 To date, we have not discussed anything specifically with morality in our curriculum.  
Oct 24, 2011 6:22 AM

68 The district utilizes an anti-bullying program. There has been no specific program at the high school, however, I believe these values and behaviors are learned best by modeling efforts of faculty, staff, and administrators. Oct 24, 2011 6:07 AM

69 Nearly 20% of our Jr.-Sr. HS teachers meet with me on Friday mornings in intercessory (interdenominational) prayer before school. All teachers and staff are invited through email.  
Oct 24, 2011 5:55 AM

70 Implementing a character education program facilitated by a faith-based community organization.  
Oct 24, 2011 5:28 AM

71 We have had a variety of assemblies with our staff and students. One that stands out to me is the "Power Team."  
Oct 24, 2011 5:12 AM

72 We have in place a positive behavior plan - centered on "Ready, Responsible and Respectful"  
Oct 24, 2011 4:31 AM

73 Our school district is trying to meet the needs of a growing population of students who are living in poverty. With that comes the challenge of morality and living ethically. It is an ongoing battle to get kids to see the good in the world when they are surrounded by low moral and ethical environments. Our elementary schools use Project Achieve as school wide behavior support.  
Oct 24, 2011 4:01 AM

74 An anti-bullying awareness program in the high school, 7-12, and responsive classroom training in the elementary school, K-6.  
Oct 22, 2011 7:43 PM

75 The District has instituted the use of the Positive Action Curriculum in grades K-12. Part of the program stresses character building and empathy for others. This along with the School Wide Behavior Support Plan thrive to encourage morality in the school community  
Oct 22, 2011 5:39 AM

76 We have clergy collaboration meetings on a quarterly basis with all clergy in the community. We also are working on character ed and bullying prevention models in our school.  
Oct 21, 2011 1:29 PM

77 We have provided a multitude of activities to assist students and staff in making appropriate choices. We have utilized speakers, programs, and internal classroom activities to assist students and staff in gaining a better understanding of thinking and processing good decision making. Our resources include local teen outreach programs, mental health/social work professionals, and nationally recognized programs (Rachel's Challenge, Olweus Bullying). Our staff promotes the concept that students need to make good mental and physical choices.  
Oct 21, 2011 8:32 AM

78 Our district is very conservative and influence from the community and church groups are evident throughout.  
Oct 21, 2011 7:30 AM

79 N/A Oct 21, 2011 5:54 AM

80 N/A Oct 21, 2011 5:52 AM

81 None Oct 21, 2011 4:38 AM

82 It may not fit exactly into the realm of morality, but our district is currently implementing a School-Wide Positive Behavior Program. The purpose of the program is to instill respect to self, others, and property. This is a program we utilize on a daily basis with students and staff.  
Oct 21, 2011 4:34 AM



83 Nothing at this time. Oct 21, 2011 4:18 AM

84 Our school promotes community connections as well as service to community through a variety of partnerships which assist our students in recognizing that we depend on each other.

Oct 21, 2011 3:16 AM

86 Community fundraising to support local needs, Olweus anti-bullying program

Oct 20, 2011 7:48 AM

87 Not knowing your definition of morality makes this difficult to answer. Our building utilizes a character education program, but I'm not sure if that fits.

Oct 20, 2011 6:56 AM

88 Since my arrival, I have focused specifically on speech, our speech to each other that should be altered and our speech behind each other's' backs that should be halted. Adult behavior in the building should model for students how we expect them to handle their relationships with each other.

Oct 20, 2011 6:32 AM

89 We use two age appropriate character ed programs for the different levels. We also have a building wide behavior plan and have "shout outs" at morning announcements for students that demonstrate favorable behaviors and good manners.

Oct 20, 2011 6:15 AM

90 We brought the Rachel's Challenge Program to our school several times.

Oct 20, 2011 5:49 AM

91 NA Oct 19, 2011 6:28 PM

92 In the past we invited local pastors from the local ministerium to come in and address the entire staff on our first in-service day. It was not meant as someone preaching to us but more as a beginning of year/motivational speech. We also in the past have allowed local ministers to come in to the school prior to the school day to lead prayer sessions. We also in the past had a Bible club in the HS. These three things are unfortunately not happening this year because we had one disgruntled employee that filed a complaint with the ACLU. My high school students still participate in the annual meet me at the pole and we also have a nice Baccalaureate service for any seniors who would like to attend the evening prior to graduation.

Oct 19, 2011 9:12 AM

93 Teachers have been allowed to participate in prayer before the start of the school day.

Oct 19, 2011 8:06 AM

APPENDIX G

RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION NUMBER 11

“INVENTORY ON SPIRITUALITY/MORALITY B”

“WHAT, IF ANYTHING, IS YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY DOING OR HAS YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY DONE RECENTLY TO ENCOURAGE AN AWARENESS OF MORALITY?”

**What, if anything, is your school community doing or has your school community done recently to encourage an awareness of morality?**

1 We stress with students that integrity is one thing that cannot be taken from you. How you act and what you say/do are up to you, being truthful helps you tremendously with us when we are investigating.  
Nov 21, 2011 5:43 AM

2 Multiple community based activities. Most benefit the less fortunate. Nov 15, 2011 6:08 AM

3 Various guidance and curricular driven lessons. Nov 14, 2011 7:30 AM

4 Civility is one of the district's 8 learning outcomes for and with students. Our high school civility project is lead in large part by our students to continue to make our school a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all students. Our anti-bullying initiatives K-8 also are avenues to create positive, respectful learning environments for all students and staff. Nov 13, 2011 7:04 PM

5 Information on bullying Nov 11, 2011 12:31 PM

6 Anti-Bullying Programs; Character education Nov 11, 2011 6:42 AM

7 Currently, our grade level teacher teams are discussing this very topic and brainstorming ways we can affect a change in the morality of our students. Nov 10, 2011 12:15 PM

8 Review state/federal guidelines with teachers. Nov 10, 2011 8:59 AM

9 Educator Ethics overview Nov 10, 2011 8:27 AM

10 Bullying Prevention Program implemented and sustained. Guidance lessons on appropriate interpersonal discussions Nov 10, 2011 5:45 AM

11 We have a very conservative community where church is an important part of life for many in our district. Nov 9, 2011 7:08 AM

12 We emphasize character instruction in a monthly focus on a selected character trait. We have classroom teachers identify students who demonstrate that trait throughout the month. Students are also recognized for "Caught being good" by school adults in the attitudes and treatment of others.  
Nov 9, 2011 6:53 AM

13 Nothing in the formal sense but character education is a focal point in our instruction.  
Nov 9, 2011 6:06 AM

14 N/A Nov 9, 2011 5:30 AM

15 N/A Nov 9, 2011 5:13 AM

16 N/A Nov 9, 2011 5:08 AM

17 We are reviewing language to be included in a dating violence policy Nov 8, 2011 11:25 AM

18 Workshops Nov 8, 2011 10:44 AM

19 A prayer during board meetings Nov 8, 2011 10:41 AM

20 We initiated a prevention program called "Choices". Student who meet 2 of 6 categories are invited to participate in the program which takes place 3 days a week during study hall periods.

Nov 8, 2011 10:08 AM

21 Bullying Program positive remarks ex: manners, helping other students or teachers out with negative remarks Ex: name calling, rumors. Nov 8, 2011 9:30 AM

22 Participation with various agencies to address morality issues. Discuss morality issues in administrative meetings and staff meetings. Nov 8, 2011 5:43 AM

23 N/A Nov 8, 2011 5:35 AM

24 Real project, red ribbon week, Nov 7, 2011 8:17 PM

25 Our school's mission statement is Love & Literacy: The two greatest gifts we can give a child. The outcomes of this mission are a focus on a respectful culture and a focus on effective and engaging reading instruction. We attend to the culture piece with programs such as BARK with Respect, BARK with Character and BARK Against Bullying. We have a school-wide positive behavior program that rewards students for respect of others. Nov 6, 2011 6:34 PM

26 Nothing recently Nov 6, 2011 6:22 PM

27 Nothing Nov 6, 2011 5:08 PM

28 Nothing. Nov 6, 2011 11:06 AM

29 Daily ethical character trait messages. Nov 6, 2011 9:27 AM

30 The closest tie would probably be through Character Education initiatives. Through this we address the ideals of Trust, Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Fairness, and Citizenship Nov 4, 2011 7:56 AM

31 Implementation of the Positive Behavior Support and Intervention program Nov 4, 2011 7:39 AM

32 We have adopted character traits over the past two years K-12. We teach mini-lessons at some grade levels and teaches are encourage to incorporate the traits in their daily lessons. Nov 4, 2011 5:41 AM

33 Character education and anti-bullying based on pro-social behavior. Nov 3, 2011 5:22 AM

34 As our demographics change, we are recognizing increased needs throughout our communities. Our homeless population is increasing, our foster population is increasing, unemployment is on the rise, poverty-based issues are more prevalent, and ultimately our children are suffering. We have recently initiated meetings with our key human service providers (mostly faith-based) to begin a process to coordinate services and get those services to families in most need. Nov 3, 2011 4:50 AM

35 Our community is very religious and the school community respects these values. Nov 2, 2011 10:22 AM

36 The student code of conduct is gone over which involves lying, stealing, etc. Nov 2, 2011 7:16 AM

37 Nothing formal at this juncture. Nov 1, 2011 7:01 PM

38 We work to help the whole child...we look at the child's environment, family, home, behavior, development, emotional well-being, social needs, and academics as parts of the whole success of a student. Nov 1, 2011 9:11 AM

39 We really have not done anything that I am aware of. Nov 1, 2011 5:58 AM

40 Students are encouraged to make positive choices. Social skill groups are held and students are given the "essential ten" guiding principles to follow. Oct 30, 2011 7:01 PM

41 Character Education Program Oct 28, 2011 10:43 AM

42 Nothing directly, mostly at the classroom level class by class. Oct 28, 2011 10:38 AM

43 Our high school has an active bible club that is open to students and staff. The elementary has just recently established a bible study group for staff only. Oct 27, 2011 4:14 PM

44 We have a nationally recognized character development program that directly addresses morality. Oct 27, 2011 4:07 AM

45 Probably most evident is the anti-bullying work and the mission of each school to promote respect and finding the positive in all of us. Oct 27, 2011 3:44 AM

46 We teach anti-bullying. Put yourself in the shoes of others, and treat them as you would like to be treated. Oct 26, 2011 7:27 AM

47 Nothing Oct 26, 2011 5:57 AM

48 I believe that morality is embedded in the fiber of our small community and as such I do not feel we need to encourage it as much as we need to protect it. Oct 26, 2011 5:55 AM

49 I am not aware of any activity that the school is doing to encourage morality. Oct 26, 2011 4:52 AM

50 Nothing in particular. Oct 25, 2011 6:12 AM

51 Service projects/learning community involvement food pantry work charity fund raising activities School wide positive behavior anti bullying (including student meetings/discussions) Rachel's challenge (including student meetings/discussions) Oct 25, 2011 5:13 AM

52 Our RESPECT/Anti-Bullying Program to promote tolerance. Oct 24, 2011 3:51 PM

53 I open every morning with a statement of kindness, respect, and manners to each and everyone in our school. I lead by example especially through the challenging days or events. Oct 24, 2011 7:52 AM

54 The churches have a prayer day for the schools at the beginning of the school year. Oct 24, 2011 6:59 AM

55 We promote morality in a roundabout way by sponsoring anti-bullying activities, encouraging students complimenting each other. Oct 24, 2011 6:54 AM

56 Not enough Oct 24, 2011 4:21 AM

57 Nothing really. Oct 23, 2011 4:11 PM

58 Prior to accepting my current position, The Board of Directors had to agree to not request me to do anything that is unethical, immoral, illegal, goes against PA School Code, or against district policy. Oct 23, 2011 12:12 PM

59 Anti-bullying program Oct 23, 2011 7:26 AM

60 My district partners with community groups and local churches to bring a sense of unity to our endeavors. Oct 23, 2011 5:17 AM

61 I think this is a difficult question to answer unless you define what you consider to be spirituality and morality. When America was formed, spirituality/morality was based on Christianity. The US Constitution was created off of God given rights to people. When God was removed from schools seemed to mark the start when everything went downhill in schools (increased violence, drop outs, drugs, school shootings, pregnancy, etc.). Some educators today feel morality /spirituality to be tolerance / promotion of alternative lifestyles, women's rights that encourages abortion and middle school aged girls being able to get contraceptives and abortions through agencies that school encourage students to get "help" from. Other educators feel morality / spirituality to be Christian based. Some educators feel morality / spirituality to be just being a good person, kind, and loving the earth and people. Just my opinion, but I believe to have valid results, spirituality / morality needs to be defined because in today's world this has many different meanings based on the culture of the community you live. I would welcome the results of your work and wish you the best. Oct 22, 2011 11:40 AM

62 These are quite numerous and involve a daily program entitled RESPECT, a program entitled OLWEUS, one called the HERO program, and numerous assemblies as well as messages of right and wrong infused into the curriculum. Oct 22, 2011 8:30 AM

63 We don't specifically speak to morality. Oct 22, 2011 6:40 AM

64 No initiative of this nature has been undertaken. Oct 21, 2011 6:35 AM

65 I am new to the district so I am not sure. Oct 21, 2011 5:35 AM

66 N/A Oct 20, 2011 5:45 PM

67 Our school focuses on character education. This includes all stakeholders (students, parents, faculty and staff) Oct 20, 2011 5:34 PM

68 Bullying prevention, Just Say No Oct 20, 2011 10:50 AM

69 We have a teacher led prayer group that meets each Wednesday in the auditorium before school. Once per month they also have "Prayer around the flag pole" before school. Within our curriculum we have a course called "Religions of the World". The course surveys the human religious response and the major religions of the world: Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism. The origins, principles, effects and conflicts of each of these major belief systems is described. Oct 20, 2011 8:10 AM

70 Professional Development via Master Teacher and District Professional Learning Series on Character Ed. Oct 20, 2011 6:40 AM

71 We do not believe in morality Oct 20, 2011 5:29 AM

72 District has wellness goal to provide opportunities for staff to participate in wellness activities; Zumba, employee assistance program created. Oct 19, 2011 5:26 PM

73 Our students and staff recently participated in a program designed to provide individuals with a greater sense of social stereotypes as well the importance of tolerance and acceptance.  
Oct 19, 2011 5:20 PM

74 We have a Morning Prayer meeting for staff who are interested. Oct 17, 2011 4:13 AM

75 School and church community have strong ties, which lends itself to promote morality in general.  
Oct 16, 2011 7:09 PM