COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AMONG OHIO'S EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND THEIR POST-SECONDARY PARTNERS

Allia L. Carter

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Committee:
Patrick D. Pauken, Advisor
William K. Ingle
Graduate Faculty Representative
Patricia K. Kubow
Robert DeBard
This constructivist multiple-case study examined the collaborative leadership practices of seven secondary and seven post-secondary leaders who participate in Ohio’s Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI). The 14 educational leaders in this study partnered in an effort to respond to the access and success of traditionally underrepresented (i.e., ethnic/racial minorities, low-income, and first-generation students, and/or non-native English speaking) students in higher education. Therefore, it was proposed that relationships are essential to fulfilling the ECHSI mission, and seeks to: (a) explicate the leaders’ understanding of their school-university partnership and (b) explain the relationship between Early College leaders and the Relational Leadership Theory and its components (purpose, ethics, empowerment, inclusion, and process).

Collaborative leadership is a complex and dynamic process for which strong evidentiary support is required. Therefore, this dissertation applied an exploratory multiple-case study approach to analyzing seven within-case and cross-case comparisons. The foundation of this study was based on qualitative interviews, supported by a web-based survey which yielded a 100% return rate. Additionally, document analysis was used to gain a better understanding of how relationships across secondary and post-secondary educational sectors create comprehensive, seamless systems of learning.

The participants explained the interplay between individual and organizational backgrounds, experiences, leadership styles, values, and goals that promoted the development of their inter-organizational relationship. In this study, three major findings uncovered that cross-
sector educational programs make sense and strengthen the educational pipeline between K-12 and higher education. Secondly, the development of a collaborative working environment can be optimized through the Relational Leadership Model. Finally, true collaboration occurs through meaningful connections with open communication, trust, mutual respect, commitment, accountability, and professional knowledge and competence.

Implications of findings and recommendations for future research are discussed. Notably, future research should consider the exploration school-university partnerships to build effective transitional and support services in addition to developing state-wide and national educational policies that strengthen America’s educational pipeline.
DEDICATION

Always continue the climb. It is possible for you to do whatever you choose, if you first get to know who you are and are willing to work with a power that is greater than ourselves to do it (Ella Wheeler Wilcox)

I would like to dedicate this research to the people who have taught me the importance of persevering beyond all obstacles. To my beloved parents, Joseph Thomas Carter (April 18, 1924 – March 5, 1997) and Genevieve Carter (February 9, 1925 – August 30, 2001), who taught me the importance of hard work, dedication, and tenacity, and to my greatest inspiration and reason for achieving: my son, Jeremiah Trevon Carter-Johnson.
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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION OF STUDY

The United States Constitution does not guarantee, explicitly, the right to a public education. This silence has led to countless debates among teachers, students, scholars, policymakers, taxpayers, and citizens. Without an explicit guarantee federally, the jurisdiction for public K-12 education has been left to local and state governments, with scores of state constitutional provisions, legislative enactments, and local boards of education and their policies and practices. To further opportunities at the post-secondary level, many states and post-secondary educational institutions have developed policies to expand access to all students, especially those from traditionally underrepresented populations (e.g., ethnic/racial minorities, first-generation college students, and those in lower socioeconomic groups). Members of these populations have historically been denied many civil liberties; among these are political, social, economic, and educational equality. Of the various kinds of inequality, educational inequality is one of the most basic yet intrinsic values, and no person should be denied the right to a quality public education. In fact, many scholars have suggested that the low levels of achievement and differential attainment between minority and majority groups should not be allowed to permeate the American education system.

Du Bois (1949) declared, “Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5,000 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental” (p. 230). Although there has been progress in expanding educational opportunities for underrepresented students, many of these students experience higher dropout rates, lower college-enrollment and completion rates, lower standardized test scores, lower representation in gift programs, lower grade point averages, and higher representation in special education and remedial courses (Frye

In 2002, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, along with Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and 10 other private foundations partnered to create inter-organizational learning environments to help students navigate the invisible barriers between K-12 districts and post-secondary institutions to prepare themselves for a better future (Hoffman & Vargas, 2010; KnowledgeWorks Foundation, 2007). These pioneers believed that the educational system was interconnected, and it was the responsibility of all educators and administrators—from pre-K through higher education—to be involved in systemic reform of education (Hodgkinson, 1999). As a result, the Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) was designed as an educational partnership to resolve the academic disparities of traditionally underrepresented students by improving graduation rates and career skills by engaging “students in a rigorous, supportive college preparatory curriculum and compressing the number of years to a college degree” (ECHSI, 2007, para. 2). Since its conception, ECHSI has built and overhauled more than 240 Early College High Schools (ECHS) in 28 states and the District of Columbia (Berger et al., 2009; ECHSI, 2012; Hoffman & Vargas, 2010).

K-20 partnerships and offering college course credits to high school students is not a new concept. In fact, these accelerated course offerings can be traced back to the 1950s with College Board Advanced Placement Exams. To this day, many organizations and individuals pool resources to improve access to high-quality education through programs such as International Baccalaureate, Dual Enrollment, Tech Prep, Middle College, and Early College High Schools. The aim of the present study was to examine the collaborative practices of secondary and post-
secondary communities as articulated by the administrative leaders who develop, implement, and manage Ohio’s innovative educational reform initiative – Early College High Schools (ECSH).

ECHSs are more than concurrent or dual enrollment programs (Hoffman & Vargas, 2010). ECHSs are a collaboration between local secondary systems and their post-secondary institutions that create environments that extend beyond the traditional dual-enrollment experiences by blending learning environments. They are designed for three essential purposes. First, to eliminate time wasted in high school by shortening the time it takes to earn a college degree by offering a rigorous, relevant curriculum (Berger et al., 2009; Berger, 2008; Lieberman, 2004; Nodine, 2009; Smerdon & Berger, 2006, 2005). Second, to reduce the high costs of college attendance by offering tuition-free opportunities in an accelerated program (Berger et al., 2009; Berger, 2008; Smerdon & Berger, 2006, 2005). Third, to eliminate issues of academic and social transition by providing supportive pre-college experience with mentoring, tutoring, counseling, and other key academic support systems (Andrews, 2003; Chmelynski, 2004; Kirst & Venezia, 2001; Lieberman, 2004; Nodine, 2009). The secondary and post-secondary partners involved in ECHSI believe that encountering the rigor, depth, and intensity of college work at an earlier age inspires average, under-achieving, and well-prepared high school students to work hard and stretch themselves intellectually.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in the present study was to uncover why it has been difficult for educational systems to build collaborative models across educational sectors. To properly address the first issue, one must explore the disconnect which has existed between secondary and post-secondary institutions. To do so, it is important to address the historical relationship that has occurred between educational sectors. According to Kirst and Venezia (2001) there has been
a long-standing separation between the educational systems: “K-12 on one hand and universities and colleges on the other – rarely collaborated to establish consistent standards” (p. 92). Kezar (2005) discovered that collaborative practices do not come naturally within higher education institutions, let alone across educational sectors. The researcher explained it has been difficult for secondary and higher education to make significant cross-sector collaboration because of the idiosyncrasies of how they are “governed, funded, and accredited by separate bodies” (Kisher, 2006, p. 81). The complexities of organizational structures, policies, and practices make interorganizational relations difficult, let alone crossing organizational boundaries to develop quasi-organizations (Hora & Millar, 2011). Conversely, several researchers believed that the historical divisions between secondary and post-secondary sectors contribute to a system of patriarchy, and they are frustrated with a business-as-usual philosophy (London, 2012; Lorber, 1994). This business-as-usual philosophy has been a stumbling block for many K-20 partnerships. The organizational divide among educational sectors perpetuates unequal distributions of power, confrontation, hierarchy, and exclusion. London (2012) acknowledged that creating collaborations across sectors is complex, because collaborations are not static, they are fluid, and connection between individual and/or groups should be intentional and used as an effective means of working for change.

Despite the shortage of formal research on collaborative leadership, there is a growing body of literature on collaborations and partnerships in educational settings. Throughout the literature, it is obvious that there is no perfect solution to crossing educational boundaries. However, there have been multiple types of partnerships and several characteristics that have been associated with successful collaborative endeavors. Based on the literature, educational
partnerships can be broadly grouped into three categories – limited, coordinated, and collaborative (Hora & Millar, 2011).

Limited partnerships are loosely coupled networks that exchange information for mutual benefit the respective organization (Himmelman, 1992; Turning Point, 2005). According to Hora and Millar (2011), limited partnerships have apparent distinctions in power, “In which one organization clearly directs the actions of others” (p. 7). Coordinated partnerships have no centralized structured, but they coordinate their activities and pool resources to achieve a common purpose (Hora & Miller, 2011; Turning Point, 2005). Collaborative partnerships are tightly coupled organizations that adopt a consensus-based arrangement to enhance the capacity of another to achieve a common purpose (Himmelman, 1992; Hora & Miller, 2011). The literature suggests that these partnerships represent a continuum, with limited corresponding with the lowest and collaborative symbolizing the highest degree of organizational autonomy (Himmelman, 1992; Hora & Miller, 2011; London, 2012).

Limited and coordinated partnerships center on distributive collaborations or partnerships based on differences. These partnerships are often aimed at resolving conflict (Bess & Dee, 2008a; London, 2012), while collaborative partnerships seek integrative solutions to constructively explore differences, to develop solutions for educational issues, and to advance shared visions for the future (Hora & Miller, 2011; London, 2012). Many collaborative partnerships have been successful at working through organizational hierarchies, policies, governing practices, and cultural dynamics to build collaborative models across educational sectors. According to Hora and Miller (2011), their success can be attributed to: (a) respecting the multifaceted nature of the collaborating organizations, (b) knowing your own organization and getting to know your partner(s), (c) designing a new organizational structure for the
partnership, (d) cultivating personnel who are boundary crossers, and (e) building a common
culture through social cohesion (i.e., trust, respect, inclusion, empowerment, etc.).

**Significance of the Study**

Examining collaborative partnerships that cross educational boundaries is important to resolve complex educational problems. Issues associated with educational access and achievement do not affect one individual, they cross boundaries of communities, sectors, and the larger society. Since no one individual or entity can do this work alone, it is imperative to study how individuals and organizations collaborate to eradicate educational issues impacting America.

Many believe that the problems that exist within American educational systems began prior to the mid-1900s. As higher education was only a reality for an elite few, it was not until recently that educational opportunities opened to students of diverse backgrounds. Even though access and educational attainment have improved at elementary, middle, and some high school levels, there are significant disparities among low-income, first-generation, and ethnic/racial minorities compared to middle and upper-class white and Asian-American students in higher educational settings (Frye & Vogt, 2010; Hedges & Nowell, 1999). The differences between these groups create an achievement gap among students in America’s educational system. According to Kozol (1991), the term “achievement gap” denotes a somewhat polite way of discussing pervasive racial and socioeconomic disparities in student achievement. Contentious as our educational debate on achievement gaps may seem, the disparities between minorities and non-minorities remain an important topic for our nation.

Understanding the sources of disparities in access and achievement is of great importance to broader inequalities between majority and minority student populations. Even though
statistics show increased enrollments, retention, and completion among high school students in
the educational pipeline the percentages of students from traditionally underrepresented
populations (e.g., first-generation and low-come) are on a decline (Aud et al., 2012; Kemp &
Tahan, 2011). According to Aud et al. (2012), there has been a decline each year, between 1975
and 2010, with regards to the number of low-and-middle-income families (52%), but remain
steady for ethnic/racial groups (i.e., White, Black, and Hispanic). The inconsistencies and
debates in percentages could have a long term impact on college completion rates of students.
Asian Americans have surpassed all others at 86.7%, followed by White 67.7%, Black 67.5%,
and Hispanics 66.6%. This reports show that half of the students enrolled in higher education
have the need for remedial courses. Therefore, the question is, if education is to be the great
equalizer then why do so many students enter higher education unprepared or unable to complete
their process?

This educational debate suggests that the disparity between underrepresented and white
students is due to an inequitable educational system with disparate educational opportunities
(Hedges & Nowell, 1999; Jencks & Phillips, 1998). The opposing argument continues to
support that the numbers are misconstrued (Heckman & LaFontaine, 2010), and the American
educational system is fair and equitable, in fact, it is “The Great Equalizer” (Aronson, 2001),
providing all students common opportunities to acquire skills and improve their chances for
productive employment and to expand their knowledge base (Dobb, 2005; Van de Water &
Rainwater, 2001). Nevertheless:

Our nation is no longer well served by an education system that prepares a few to attend
college to develop their minds for learned pursuits while the rest are expected only to
build their muscles for useful labor. In the 21st century, all students must meet higher achievement standards in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools and thus be better prepared to meet the challenges of work and citizenship. (Van de Water & Rainwater, 2001, p. 2) (emphasis supplied)

After all, the primary mission is to afford every student the opportunity to have a high-quality learning experience that begins in preschool (P), continues through elementary and secondary (K-12), and on to post-secondary education (16), or the workforce (State University of New York [SUNY], 2011, para. 14). This continuous learning process is an example of a collaborative model that fuses three largely disconnected levels of public education – preschool, K-12, and post-secondary (P-16) or professional (P-20) – to create a comprehensive, seamless system of learning which leads to academic progression of students from preschool through college (O’Connell, 2007; Vargas, 2006; Kirst & Venezia, 2001; Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003).

The present study will contribute to a body of literature on collaborative leadership and partnerships that cross educational sectors. The research explored how Ohio ECHSI leaders overcame the disconnect in educational systems to develop collaborative partnerships across sectors, authority lines, and organizational boundaries to improve educational opportunities of traditionally unrepresented populations in post-secondary education (Liebermann, 2004).

Theoretical Framework

Komives, Lucas, and McMahon’s (1998) Relational Leadership Model (RLM) was used to formulate an understanding of the phenomenon of collaborative partnerships. Komives et al. (1998) believe that leadership is a “relational and ethical process of people together attempting to accomplish positive change” (p. 74). The RLM explains how members of Ohio’s ECHSI cross
boundaries to build and sustain educational partnerships. The model is based upon five components: being purposeful, inclusive, ethical, empowering, and process-orientated. The theorists defined the five components as: (a) *purposeful*, the ability to intentionally build commitment towards a common goal or activity; (b) *inclusive*, the promotion of fair and equitable treatment of the whole person and their diverse viewpoints; (c) *ethical*, a consciousness of moral importance which is grounded in an individual’s beliefs, values, and principals, while being confronted by unethical practices; (d) *empowering*, the strength of the individuals and communities and assumes that everyone has something to offer; and (e) *process-orientated*, the practice, process, or dynamics of how groups are formed and how they function (Komives et al., 1998, 2007, 2009). Figure 1 is an illustration of RLM and how the five primary components relate to one another.

Conceptual Framework

To establish coherency in the study, the investigator developed a conceptual framework. The framework guided the researcher in the multiple-case study design by connecting the problem, purpose, literature, theory, methods, data, and analysis. When creating the conceptual framework, the investigator adopted a functionalist perspective to explain the theoretical position of collaborative leadership. Figure 2 is an illustration of the conceptual framework for this study. The conceptual framework includes three independent elements that work together to explain the phenomenon—collaborative leadership—and clarify the research process. The three elements: (1) the principal of the ECHS, (2) the liaison of the PSI, and (3) the RLM, which is used to test collaborative leadership practices of EC leaders. The overlapping connections represent relationships between the elements. Collectively, the elements created a lens for looking at the practices that impact collaborative partnerships among Ohio’s ECHSI.
Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

Purpose of the Study

This study was designed for educational administrators who create, administer, and execute collaborative partnership across educational sectors. Due to the nature of cross-collaborations, the study targets anyone who is interested in creating comprehensive, seamless systems of learning which impact academic achievement and educational opportunities of students, especially those from underrepresented populations. To that end, it was proposed that relationships are essential to fulfilling the ECHSI mission, and the study sought to understand perceptions of collaborative leadership and how relationships are achieved or not achieved, and explains if the RLM is applicable to the Ohio EC collaboration.
Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study are:

1. How do Ohio Early College leaders understand the Ohio Early College relationship?
2. How do participants perceive the various components of the Relational Leadership Model (being purposeful, ethical, empowering, and inclusive through the process)? And
3. Which if any of the Relational Leadership Model components have the greatest impact on the Early College partnership?

These research questions address “how” and “why” relationship bonds develop across educational sectors. The first question focused on the individual and their understanding of the EC relationship. The second and third questions focused on theory application and relational dynamics. All of the research questions allowed for an analysis of 14 Ohio EC leaders’ perceptions, values, and characteristics. The leaders provided rich sources of information through personal interviews, online surveys/questionnaires, and documents that supported the creations and management of their partnerships.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms were used:

- **Collaboration** - a process through which partners act in concert to pursue a shared goal (Himmelman, 1992; Turning Point, 2005).
- **Collaborative leader** – a person who safeguards and promotes a collaborative process (Glanz, 2006; Turning Point, 2005).
- **Cooperating** – coordinating and sharing or pooling resources (Turning Point, 2005).
- **Coordinating** – networking and altering activities to achieve a common purpose (Turning Point, 2005).
• *Ethnic/racial minority* – a subpopulation of people often associated by power, influence, cultural and/or physical characteristics. Students and families who identify as African-American, Latino/a, Asian-American, Native American, or International.

• *First-generation college student* – student from a family where neither parent has more than a high-school education (Billson & Terry, 1982).

• *Intermediary organization/partner* – an organization that administers funds, technical assistance, and support to ECHS and partners to ensure the fidelity of early college core principles (Berger, 2008).

• *Inter-organization* – is a formal arrangement between two or more independent organizations with the aim to produce a new structure with a unified mission.

• *Leadership* – the ability to exert influence and have others accept the influence producing change or performance (Chrislip & Larson, 1994).

• *Low-income* – a household income at or below federal poverty levels. (i.e., one person household with $10,890 yearly income, add $3,820 for each addition person in household) (Federal Register, 2011).

• *Networking* – exchanging information for mutual benefit (Turning Point, 2005).

• *Partnership* – on-going relationship between two or more parties, based upon mutual needs (Uhlik, 1995).

• *School-university partnership* – secondary (i.e., ninth through twelfth grades) and university (post-secondary) institutions working together toward a common goal (Harkins, 1998).
Delimitations of the Study

ECHSs are active in more than 28 states and Washington, DC. (Berger et al., 2009); however, this study was limited to the state of Ohio, which includes 10 ECHSs and twelve post-secondary institution partners. Theorizing the entire relational processes of ECHSI would need to include, but not be limited to, educators, parents, community partners, administrators, funders, and intermediates. However, the sample in this study included only leaders of seven Ohio ECHSIs. Leaders were defined as secondary administrators (i.e., principals) and post-secondary liaisons who had varying experiences and titles (e.g., student affairs administrators, enrollment management staff and administrators, academic affairs administrators, and/or faculty members).

A further delimitation of the study was the study’s design. More specifically, it included the following particulars: (a) locations – urban, suburban, and rural areas; (b) time – interviews were conducted from February 2012 to March 2012; and (c) conceptual framework - based on the research questions, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the statement of significance, and theoretical framework.

Limitations of the Study

As with all research, the current case study has a series of methodological limitations that need to be taken into account. The essential task of this multiple-case study was to understand the distinctiveness of collaboration between Ohio’s EC collaborators and the transferability of the study. Collaborations often are based on a specific culture and organizational climate that permeates all interaction and that make it difficult to inform other projects, sites, and outsiders. Traditionally the bounded methodology of a case study makes it easy to over generalize (Yin, 2003). According to Yin (2003), the overgeneralization comes from selecting a few examples and assuming without evidence that they are typical or representative of the population. Thus,
Yin (2003) advises case study researchers to generalize findings to theories, as a scientist generalizes from experimental results to theories. In this study, the researcher expanded the boundaries of the case study to the entire state of Ohio to allow an ample collection of case study examples and in an effort to be more representative of the population and the varying types of school-university collaborations. In addition, the researcher generalized the data to the theoretical proposition, and then looked to discover patterns in the findings, which suggested links between the phenomena (Yin, 1994).

**Organization of the Study**

This study is organized into twelve chapters. Chapter I, the introduction, included the statement of the problem, significance of the study, purpose of the study, guiding research questions, operational definition of terms, delimitations and limitations of the study, and an organizational summary of this study. Chapter II, the literature review, included four sections: (a) an overview of collaboration; (b) a detailed account of the context (organizations) in which collaboration occurs; (c) an exploration of the theories that guide the individuals who lead collaborative initiatives; and (d) an explanation of the theoretical framework to be employed in the study to explore the phenomena-collaborative leadership. Chapter III, the research methodology, explained the rationale for the research study and design, research questions, methods, data collection and analysis, and procedures essential to the study’s protocol. Chapters IV through X, within-case results and analysis, presented descriptive narratives of each case, results, and analysis of the data. Chapter XI, cross-case results and analysis, compared and contrasted the findings across all seven cases. Finally, Chapter XII, discussion, recommendations, and conclusion, summarized the major conclusions related to each of the
initial guiding questions, identified limitations of the study, and suggested questions for further research.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In educational settings, \textit{collaborative leadership} has been defined as an inclusive process that involves multiple constituents working together to build and sustain positive learning environments (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Rubin, 2009; Wepner & Hopkins, 2011). Even though there are numerous examples of educational collaborations, many of these collaborations have had difficulty building partnerships because of their structural, functional, and behavioral differences (Kisher, 2006; London, 2012). These differences create challenges across, and even within, educational sectors. Many would think building coherence, collaboration, cohesion, and connections across educational sectors would be easy. In fact, it is often assumed and even expected that collaborations between secondary and post-secondary institutions are normal operandi of educational systems; however, the reality is that they are not. Educational systems have operated in silos for years (Liston, Borko, & Whitcomb, 2008; Kirst & Venezia, 2001; Rubin, 2009; Wepner & Hopkins, 2011). “K-12 on one hand and universities and colleges on the other” (Kirst & Venezia, 2001, p. 92), and many large-scale attempts to unify educational sectors have failed, especially between compulsory and non-compulsory sectors. Typically concerns of: (a) lack of time and commitment; (b) differences of standards, policies, and practice; and (c) discrepancies over territory, resources, self-interests, and political issues (Kirst & Venezia, 2001; Van de Water & Krueger, 2002) make it challenging for secondary and post-secondary sectors to collaborate. If a collaboration is going to be successful, the partnership must be universal enough to extend beyond differences of the sectors and reach all of its stakeholders regardless of their level of investment or affiliation.

ECHSI is a post-secondary or accelerated learning option that was designed to build coherence across educational sectors, cohesion among multiple stakeholders, and connection
between those who lead the initiative. Many educators, legislators, and scholars refer to the initiative as a seamless system of learning which: (a) expands access to learning at all levels, (b) improves readiness and success for all learners, (c) aids in a student’s transition from one level to the next, (d) closes the achievement gap between white and minorities, and (e) advances teacher education and professional development (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Lieberman, 2004; Siegel, 2007; Van de Water & Krueger, 2002; Van de Water & Rainwater, 2001; Vargas, 2006; Venezia et al., 2003).

The intention of this multiple-case study was to explore collaborative leadership through the personal experiences of ECHS principals and college/university liaisons. The purpose of this study was twofold: to: (a) understand perceptions of collaborative leadership and how relationships are achieved or not achieved, and (b) explain if the RLM is applicable to the Ohio EC collaboration. To better explain the intent of this study, Chapter II provides the research behind school-university relationships by examining educational partnerships designed to create seamless educational systems to improve public education for traditionally underrepresented students.

Chapter II, Review of the Literature, synthesized the relevant literature on the research problem, its purpose, research questions, and theoretical framework. The literature review was divided into five major sections. The first section, Boundary Crossing, provided a brief historical overview of collaborations in educational settings in the United States. More specifically, this section detailed the relationships between educational entities, distinguishing between high schools and community college and high schools and colleges/universities. The second section, Structures for Partnerships, introduced accelerated learning options or post-secondary educational options that characterize school-university partnerships. The programs
reviewed in this section include: (a) Advanced Placement, (b) International Baccalaureate, (c) Dual Enrollment, (d) Tech Prep, (e) Middle College, and (f) ECHSs. The third section, Inter-organizational Collaboration, examined how ECHSs (a) build sustainable partnerships, (b) close achievement gaps among minority and non-minority student populations, (c) aid in the transition from high school to college, and (d) increase college access and success of its participants. The fourth section, Leadership Models, discussed the behaviors, styles, and practices of leaders who cross boundaries. Finally, the fifth section, Theoretical Framework, covered Komives et al.’s RLM, which was used in this study to understand the relationship between school/university leaders who lead the ECHSI in the state of Ohio.

**Boundary Crossing: School-University Collaborations in America**

This historical overview provides the background of school-university collaborations in America. This section is based upon the sequence and connections of events from several key text books (Chrislip, 2002; Hora & Millar, 2011; Komives et al., 2007; Komives et al., 2009; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Wepner & Hopkins, 2011) and multiple articles (Berger et al., 2010, 2009, 2008; Hoffman & Vargas, 2010) that trace the evolution of school-university collaborations from the 1800s to present. The section is divided into two subsections. The first subsection described the history, purpose, and curriculum that connect high schools and community colleges. The second subsection centered on the history and relationship of public high schools and four-year colleges and universities, which explored the various collaborative models that exist between high schools and PSIs.

**Relationship between High Schools and Community College**

The history between community colleges and high schools can easily be traced to the evolution and movement of the junior college movement, the Morrill Act of 1862 and 1890, and
the creation of a two-year post-high-school institution of the 1890s (Quigley & Bailey, 2003; Thelin, 2004). In fact, the bond between community college and high school is so strong that researchers consider high schools feeder schools to community colleges. *Feeder schools* are defined as educational institutions that provide or supply a significant number of graduates (or in this case students) who intend to continue their studies beyond high school, but at a lower level than a four-year college or university – hence the name junior college (Wolniak & Engberg, 2007). The connections between institutions are unified through policies that ease the student’s transfer experience from one institution to another. With the growing number of accelerated learning options, the feeder concept has taken a drastic shift from the transfer experience occurring from high school to community college, and community college to four-year institutions. The growing number of pre-college programs have shifted the dynamics of feeder schools and has increased the concerns of structural, policies, and identity challenges for community colleges (Wolniak & Engberg, 2007).

These institutions fight for their own identity. Often the identity of the community or junior college is intertwined with high schools or four-year institutions. Actually, Hardin (1975) questioned if the junior college model was nothing more than the thirteenth grade (an extension of high school); while Smith (1980) investigated the junior college model to determine if it was an introduction to the first two years of college (a pre-bachelorette program). To explore these ideas the following sections share the history, purpose, mission, and curriculum of community colleges and how these institutions connect with public high schools.

**History of community colleges.** Most educational timelines document 1901 as the founding date for the first public junior college. Although there were several private junior colleges, the nation’s first public community college was founded as a school-university
partnership. J. Stanley Brown, Superintendent of Joliet Township High School, and William Rainey Harper, President of the University of Chicago both established Joliet Junior College in Joliet, Illinois (Haggard, 1930; Joliet Junior College, 2012; Quigley & Bailey, 2003; Thelin, 2004). It was this inter-institutional collaboration that merged the identity of high school and college; however, the goal was to make a distinction among upper and lower division classmen and the education and research requirements of students beyond their sophomore year. William Rainey Harper first made his pronouncement that "the work of the Freshman and Sophomore years is ordinarily of the same scope and character as that of the preceding years in the academy or high school" (Koos, 1924, p.27). According to Thelin (2004), it was Harper’s vision to separate undergraduate education into two divisions -- lower-division (i.e., first two years of college) and upper-division (i.e., final years and graduate programs).

**Community college purpose.** According to Quigley and Bailey (2003) a community college has five essential goals, and they are to serve: (a) the needs of its local community; (b) a diverse student population; (c) as a well-integrated, cohesive program that combines “workers” and “citizens” (awarding Associate degrees and certificates); (d) as the primary educational foundation for general education (allowing students to transfer into four-year institutions); and (e) as a comprehensive education program to improve literacy skills. These two-year institutions (i.e., junior/community colleges) were developed to ensure access to higher education by serving students who: (a) could not afford four-year institutions, (b) wanted to stay close to home, and (c) were not yet qualified or capable of succeeding at four-year institutions (Desai, 2012; Neufeldt, 1982). The purpose of the “junior college movement” was to democratize higher education by allowing “deserving youth who were unable to attend a distant university to begin their college education at home,” at an affordable rate (Neufeldt, 1982, p. 173).
Over time, there has been a definite shift in the mission and identity of community colleges—not necessarily favoring one mission over the other, but certainly taking on varied missions as the student population and their needs grew. According to Desai (2012) community colleges opened the access to “American higher and postsecondary education” (p. 111). To this day, community colleges serve as the point of entry for more than 12.4 million students entering more than 1,100 community colleges (993 public, 143 private, and 31 tribal) in the U.S. (Desai, 2012). Many scholars contribute the growth in enrollment numbers and expansion of community colleges across the nation to the Truman Commission (Bess & Dee, 2008a; Bueschel, 2003).

**1940s: The Truman Commission.** As veterans began to return to civilian life after World War II the Truman Commission worked to assist veterans and others with continued education and workforce development. The educational reform efforts of the 1946 Truman Commission expanded educational opportunities by making post-high school education tuition-free for all able young people and establishing a network of public community colleges (President’s Commission on Higher Education, 1947; Quigley & Bailey, 2003). The Commission’s report documented that education would be made available through the fourteenth grade at no cost to students (President’s Commission on Higher Education, 1947). The Commission was clear that expenses beyond tuition create major economic barriers to education; therefore, the cost should be absorbed by the local community, (President’s Commission on Higher Education, 1947). As a result, enrollments grew and more community colleges were built to serve the needs of the increased student populations.

The Commission saw the Community College model as an effective way to support four-year colleges and proprietary schools, and not as replacements (Quigley & Bailey, 2003). In fact, the Commission documented that the Community College model would respond to the
dangers of the “bigness” of higher education which would undoubtedly impact the quality of education and the need to respond to increased enrollment, limited and poor quality facilities, diverse student populations, and the needs of a curriculum design to support an ever changing economy (President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947; Quigley & Bailey, 2003).

Community college curriculum reform. The community college curriculum has often responded to the priorities of the state governments, now having large roles in developmental education and workforce training. Since the beginning of the community college their identity has depended greatly on their curriculum as it distinguishes these two-year post-secondary institutions as higher education and not college (Kisker, 2006; Koos, 1949). During the 1920s (11-14 integration) and 1930s (6-4-4 plan), the community college curriculum was designed and promoted as an extension of high schools and their curriculum. Both the 11-14 and 6-4-4 curriculum models were designed as seamless courses of studies that allowed high school graduates to continue their education at a community college. The 11-14 integration allowed for secondary schools and junior colleges to combine eleventh grade, twelfth grade, and the first two years of college. Pasadena High School and Pasadena Junior College merged to form the first formal 11-14 curriculum integration in 1928 (Harbeson, 1931; Quigley & Bailey, 2003; Sexton & Harbeson, 1946; Wechsler, 2001). 11-14 and 6-4-4 plan curriculum models share common features. The 6-4-4 plan maintains the basic concepts of the 11-14 model, but stresses the importance of lower educational divisions working together to ensure students are prepared for courses at each academic level. The 6-4-4 plan represents three levels of education uniting towards one curriculum: (a) six-years for elementary schools, (b) four-years for junior high schools (i.e., grades seven through ten), and (c) four-years for junior college (i.e., grades 11 through 14) (Farner, 1938; Kisker, 2006; Koos, 1949; Sexton, 1932). Robert Maynard Hutchins,
the president of the University of Chicago, was the first to put the 6-4-4 theory into practice in the 1930s by opening the university’s undergraduate admissions to tenth grade high school students. Hutchins found resistance with faculty, but pushed for liberal education preparation for all students regardless of academic status (Koos 1949; Wechsler, 2001).

Leonard Koos, University of Chicago professor of education and promoter of the 6-4-4 public education system, provided the research and foundation for the 11-14 integration and 6-4-4 plans. Koos (1949) suggested that Hutchins and Koos collaboration on the 6-4-4 plan was a substantial time saver for the general education sequence, included significant economic savings for students and school-university administrators, and promoted noteworthy curricular reform for curricular gaps and overlaps.

The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1973) endorsed Koos, Hutchins, and the President’s Commission on Higher Education, proposing eliminating duplication and discontinuity via a liberal education curriculum which merged the last two years of high school and the first two years of college to shorten baccalaureate degree completion time. Although the Carnegie Commission and other educators questioned the collaboration between high school and community college, it was believed that the integration of a four year plan which encompassed grades 11 through 14 could allow these institutions to overcome the differences in “norms, missions, prestige, hierarchies, and reward structures” (Wechsler, 2001, p. 18).

For more than 100 years, community college leaders and educators have utilized inter-institutional collaboration to expand the mission, purpose, and curriculum of educational opportunities for students in America (Koos, 1946). Public high schools and community colleges represent two of the largest and most broadly serving public educational systems in the United States, which have similar missions to serve the local community, equal educational
access for local residents, and in some cases similar funding sources - public tax dollars (Grubb, 1999; Townsend & Twombly, 2001). The literature supports the idea that the identities of community colleges are blurred with the mission, purpose, and curriculum of public high schools. To this end, according to four-year administrators, two-year colleges are often the first line of defense for four-year institutions. Townsend and Twombly (2001) stated:

Community colleges already coordinate de facto with secondary schools, since the colleges enroll a large percentage of high school graduates and design programs to extend beyond secondary education and fill in the gap between high school preparation and college–level studies – providing remediation and basic skills. (p. 102)

**High Schools and Community Colleges Crossing Boundaries.** Integrating high school and community college education is not a new concept and as mentioned previously, the community college system has served as a gateway into higher education for traditionally underrepresented populations for centuries. In fact, community colleges serve more than 6.5 million students, of which 69% of the population is White, 25% Black, and the remaining percentage divided equally as 1% among American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic, Asian Pacific Islander, non-resident International, and race unknown. According to the data, 40% of the students enrolled complete an associate’s degree or a certificate program, 39% transfer to another four-year institution, and 21% never complete (NCES, 2004b). These post-secondary institutions have been designed to train, educate, and promote higher education by providing low tuition to increase access, versatile curricula to aid in academic preparation and workforce development, and resources and services to support diverse student populations.
Relationship between High Schools and Higher Education

The literature does not depict the same relationship between four-year colleges and universities and public high schools as it does between two-year community colleges and public high schools (Adelman, 1999; Kirst, 2005; Kirst & Usdan 2007; Kirst & Venezia, 2001). There are 6,463 postsecondary institutions in the United States (NCES, 2010), and these institutions serve as the final phase in the educational pipeline. These tertiary institutions vary by size and complexity, but typically offer bachelors, masters, and professional degrees. These institutions represent complex, bureaucratic structures that operate similar to for-profit corporations (Bess & Dee, 2008b). They have unique missions, purposes, curriculums, and populations they serve.

Purpose of higher education. The purpose of higher education in America has transformed over time; however, three core elements of its purpose remain consistent: (a) intellectual development, (b) vocational preparation, and (c) personal growth. This concept is rooted in the development of the individual and their personal success, and the idea that a successful person builds a successful community and possibly a better nation. After a sequence of events, which included the 1862 Morrill Land-Grant Act (Quigley & Bailey, 2003; Thelin, 2004), the 1904 Wisconsin Idea (Quigley & Bailey, 2003), the 1947 Report of the President’s Commission on Higher Education (President’s Commission on Higher Education, 1947; Quigley & Bailey, 2003) as well as the 1965 Higher Education Act (Quigley & Bailey, 2003; Thelin, 2004), all established to rebuild our nation.

Higher education collaborations. Even beyond the institutional differences and complexities, many four-year institutions have found ways to build collaborations beyond differences. For example, higher education institutions have served as professional development schools (PDS) providing training in the form of pre-service teacher training, fellowship training
site, in-service, university course development, and fieldwork training (Ravid & Handler, 2001; Slater & Ravid, 2010). The faculty members have worked with high school teachers as consultants to provide formal and informal resources as well as expertise to the teachers. College administrators, faculty members, and students have worked in teams to facilitate networks, research initiatives, and projects that disseminate knowledge and create innovative opportunities for high school students, teachers, and districts (Ravid & Handler, 2001; Slater & Ravid, 2010). Other collaborations include, but are not limited to, technology projects, interagency collaboration (i.e., focus on institutional change), and post-secondary models (Slater & Ravid, 2010). These Post-secondary models are also known as accelerated learning options, post-secondary educational options, or P-16/P-20 initiatives and create continuums across educational sectors that improve opportunities for success in post-secondary settings.

**High Schools and Colleges and Universities Crossing Boundaries.** There are an increased number of students trying to gain access into four-year institutions, especially those universities ranked highly selective, as a strategy to become more marketable in the workforce (Adelman, 1999). However, there are significant challenges in terms of access to these institutions and successful completion. According to Schneider and Stevenson (1999), there is a misalignment in ambition, high school preparation, ability, and persistence. The largest disadvantage is among students who parents never attended college, those from lower socio-economic background, and ethnic/racial minorities. Rosebaum (2001) suggests that students from these populations often do not have the resources and know how to properly gain access to and successfully transition through higher education. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2004) and the United States Census (2010), there has been a steady increase in enrollment of all students into higher education. However, the truth is, only 39% of
the 199 billion people in the United States have obtained associate’s, bachelor’s, and/or professional degrees (United States Census, 2010). The recent reports show that, of the people 25 years of age and older, 19.4% hold a bachelor’s degree (10.5% advanced degree, 16.8% some college but no degree, 9.1% associate’s degree, 31.2% high school graduate, and 12.9% did not complete high school). In fact, the odds for success are in favor of Asian American and upper-to-middle class Whites. Regardless if enrollments remain strong, there is an alarming concern among the limited number of Americans who obtain a bachelor’s degree or higher. Several authors suggest that stronger educational policies and programs and services that cross educational sectors are a viable way to aid in transition, increase enrollments, and prepare students to successfully complete post-secondary education.

These collaborations are arrangements between universities, community colleges, high schools, and larger communities that cover a breadth of designs and approaches. These collaborative efforts are designed to improve the enrollment of high school students into post-secondary settings. Many of these partnerships are designed to diversify post-secondary educational settings by servicing special populations (e.g., women, ethnic/racial minorities, low-income) or fulfilling a unique niche (e.g., STEM or service-learning) (Slater & Ravid, 2010). The next section will look at these accelerated learning options in detail.

**Structured Partnerships: Accelerated Learning Options**

Accelerated learning options began as early as the 1960s with advanced placement and continue today with programs such as early college. Accelerated learning options do not recommend a “one size fits all” approach. It presents an integrative approach to complex educational problems—a symbiotic relationships between secondary and postsecondary institutions that has existed since the 1950s (CEEB, 2003). Accelerated learning programs have
the common goal of improving student achievement and expanding students’ learning opportunities beyond high school (Lieberman, 2004; Van de Water & Krueger, 2002). This section outlines popular accelerated learning options and shares the literature that details the successes and challenges of ECHSI and the collaborations established between secondary and post-secondary institutions designed to meet the needs of early college students. The section ends with details of ECHSI as an example of an inter-organizational collaboration.

College success may be defined in a multitude of ways, and frequently includes variables such as GPA, standardized test scores, retention rates, and graduation. However, the research detailed an overwhelming number of positive results regarding the benefits of students who participated in accelerated learning programs during high school. Rosenbaum and Becker (2011) shared that the complexities of these programs need to be investigated because on the surface these programs present “a sure-fire way to boost student achievement” (p.15). All the same, it is rare to not have mixed results in research. This being said, some researchers report that students who took accelerated learning courses in high school achieved more success in college than those who did not (Adelman, 1999; Andrews 2004; Andrews, 2003; Fowler & Luna, 2009; Hargrove, Godin, & Dodd, 2007). The researchers who supported accelerated learning options found three major benefits: (a) the programs are cost effective because they give students an opportunity to earn free college credit, (b) it gives students “a taste” of college before assuming large financial or time commitments to college, and (c) they aid in the retention of students by enabling high schools and colleges to build their confidence and skills to adjust to curricula (Adelman, 1999; Fowler & Luna, 2009; Hughes, Karp, Fermin, & Bailey, 2005).

Despite these benefits, other researchers reported that accelerated learning programs are actually detrimental to success for some students (Oxtoby, 2007). It was determined that
students who took accelerated learning courses in high school had similar outcomes to those who did not (Geiser & Santelices, 2004). It was documented that accelerated learning options were not successful vehicles to early graduation, and these programs could not truly be successful without the correct program design, which includes early intervention testing, counseling, and advising in a supportive and nurturing environment (Adelman, 1999; Hoffman, Vagas & Santos, 2009; Oxtoby, 2007; Rosenbaum & Becker, 2011).

The overall consensus was that the success of the program outcomes where dependent on the programs design (Hoffman, Vagas & Santos, 2009; Lichten, 2000; Rosenbaum & Becker, 2011). The following is an introduction to six of the most popular accelerated learning options: Advanced Placement (AP), (b) International Baccalaureate (IB), (c) Dual Enrollment, (d) Tech Prep, (e) Middle College, and (f) ECHSs.

**Advanced Placement (AP)**

The establishment of accelerated learning programs can be traced back to the 1950s; these programs evolved out of concern that gifted students were not being adequately prepared for college during high school due to unchallenging curricula and boredom (Clemmitt, 2006). In 1951, the Ford Foundation sponsored two research studies to assess the status of academic achievement and perceived gaps between high schools and colleges. These studies concluded that some high school students could succeed in college-level academic courses while still in high school; as a direct result, Advance Placement (AP) programs were created. In 1955, the College Board assumed responsibility for the AP program and began offering the program nationally. The program provides high school students with an opportunity to engage in college-level work in their high school classrooms. Students can earn credit at postsecondary institutions based upon their scores on standardized end-of-course examinations. Postsecondary credits vary
between four or five on an examination (Learner & Brand, 2006). Students pay a small exam fee instead of paying tuition for the college credits they earn. The program currently offers more than 37 AP courses and exams offered in 20 different subject areas which are taught by local high school teachers who have participated in extensive professional development provided by College Board (College Board, 2008).

**International Baccalaureate Program (IB)**

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program was founded in 1968, in Geneva, Switzerland. IB was created as a non-profit educational foundation for students aged three to nineteen. IB consists of three different models: (a) Primary Years Programme (PYP), (b) Middle Years Programme (MYP), and (c) Diploma Programme (DP) (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2005). The most common among the three is the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP), a two-year college preparatory course for students aged 16–19 that provides a common college or university entry credential for students who moved or traveled abroad. The IBDP model is a credit-based transition program that allows for international credits for courses, in native language, second language, science, math, computer science, and the arts. The offered courses allow a student to qualify for entry into any higher educational institution in the world (Hughes, Karp, Fermin, & Bailey, 2005). The first IB schools were private international schools; however, now more than half of all IB World Schools are state schools. All the same, the first American based office opened in 1977, IB North America, in New York. Since its inception IB has developed more than four regional offices opening 3,228 schools in 141 countries, serving more than 930,000 students through the three challenging programs (IBO, 2005).
Dual Enrollment

Twenty years after the inception of AP programs, the dual enrollment program emerged as another model to assist students with their transition from K-12 to postsecondary education. Dual enrollment refers to a high school student enrolled and taking courses in a post-secondary institution while still in high school, and the dual enrollment courses earning college and high school credit simultaneously (Bailey, Hughes, & Karp, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The term dual enrollment is often used loosely to describe the overall phenomena of accelerated learning programs, similar to postsecondary educational opportunities, and is often referred to as “concurrent enrollment” or “dual-credit”.

Since its inception in the 1970s, dual enrollment classes were designed for gifted students to participate in more challenging coursework than what their high schools offered (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 2002). Currently there are multiple models of dual enrollment being offered. Some students take classes on college campuses where they are combined with lower division college students, while others take classes designated for high school students only. In contrast, other dual enrollment programs are based at high school campuses. Dual enrollment programs have been noted as being the fastest growing model among accelerated learning options (Gehring, 2001). Dual enrollment is seen as a way to increase students’ exposure to high-level challenging courses prior to college enrollment by providing a diverse and rigorous high school curriculum (Bailey et al., 2002) Currently, all 50 states offer dual enrollment programs (AASCU, 2002). It has been estimated that within the United States 204,790 high school students participated in some kind of dual enrollment program during the 1995-1996 academic year (Andrews, 2000) This number increased to 560,000 by 2002 (Porter, 2003).
College Tech Prep

College Tech Prep (formerly known as Tech Prep, but currently referred to as Career-Technical Credit Transfer (CT²) or Carl D. Perkins program) was conceived by Dale Parnell with the intent to improve the transition between high school and community college by connecting high school classes to advanced technical education at the community college (Bailey et al., 2002; Bragg 2006). The program begins during the last two years of high school and continues into the first two years of college and prepares students for technical careers in fields such as health, manufacturing, engineering, business, and computer science (Bailey et al., 2002). Tech Prep gained nationwide recognition shortly after the passing of the federal Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act Amendments of 1990 (commonly known as Perkins II), an act targeting federal funding toward the implementation of 2+2 programs, (Bragg, 2006). The ultimate outcome of the program was an associate’s degree or certificate (Bragg, 2004; Golann & Hughes, 2008; Plucker, Chien, & Zaman, 2006); however, in 1994, after the School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) passed the Tech Prep program was expanded to provide students educational opportunities that lead to a baccalaureate degree (Bragg, 2006; Pierce, 2001). In 2006, George H. W. Bush reauthorized the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act to increase the participation and focus of career and technical education in both secondary and post-secondary education (U.S. Department of Education [DOE], 2007).

Middle College High School

In 1971, Janet E. Lieberman, Middle College High School’s principal designer, sought the partnership of Joseph Shenker, LaGuadia Community College’s president, to create seamless secondary – post-secondary education for at-risk high school students. It was the combination of interdisciplinary curricula and a small nurturing environment that “would produce an exciting
path to learning for students who have traditionally been the least well served by public education” (Middle College National Consortium [MCNC], 2011, para.1). In 1973, three years later, Lieberman and Shenker opened the first Middle College High School in Long Island City. The school was setup for urban high school youth and offered a combination of the last two years of high school and the first two years of college and connected core content to apprenticeship and internships. According to Wechsler (2001), Lieberman and Shenkers’ vision was to “provide a closed loop between the job and the classroom,” (p. 158) but without becoming a “narrow vocational school” (p.158). The intent was to decrease the high school dropout rate and increase the college-going and completion rate (MCNC, 2011; Lieberman, 2004). The purpose of this program was like no other accelerated learning option; it was developed to advance the educational opportunities for students who have traditionally been underserved in public education (Kisker, 2006; MCNC, 2011; Nodine, 2009). In addition to its special mission, the program had a financial benefit to all of its constituents. Everyone would win, students would have an opportunity to gain free college credits and both institutions would profit from the cost effective sharing of resources and a reduction in college level remediation courses (MCNC, 2011).

By 1993, the Middle College National Consortium was created as a network of middle college high schools (Nodine, 2009). In 2000, the consortium planned to improve the alignment of high school and college curriculum, raise the achievement levels of high school students, and provide more rigorous alternatives for high school students (Lieberman, 2004). The members of its board expanded their partnerships beyond foundations such as the Ford Foundation, to others such as the Gates foundation. These philanthropic organizations partnered to reform education by creating Early Colleges across the nations to offer students from underrepresented populations
an accelerated course of study which would enable them to earn an associate’s degree or two years of transferable college credits, at no cost to students (MCNC, 2011; Nodine, 2009; Lieberman, 2004). Such moves allowed them to build educational policies and practices that would partner with other funding agencies to establish more than 40 Middle and Early College High Schools in 16 states (MCNC, 2011).

**Early College High School Initiative**

The Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) is an expansion of the Middle College concept because both adopt the mission of a “small school” program while maintaining a strong focus on dual enrollment. In addition, both Middle and Early College programs are intended for low-income, first-generation, English language learners, students of color, and other underserved populations who are at risk of dropping out of high school and who are unlikely to attend college (Hoffman & Vargas, 2010). According to Hoffman and Vargas (2010) students are selected by lottery and/or their background and interest in attending. However, Early College High Schools (ECHSs) emphasize more intensive collaboration between K-12 and higher education and an articulated, accelerated academic trajectory. Fundamentally, the Early College (EC) model (a) reaches out for students who are undeserved; (b) demands a cooperative relationship between the district high school administration and the college president; (c) reaches ninth through twelfth grades, plus up to two years of college or an Associate’s degree that can be achieved in five years or less, instead of six; and (d) combines the resources of a high school on the college campus with the college facilities (Lieberman, 2004).

The early college design goes beyond simply offering the opportunity for students to take college courses in high school; they build a structured route linking grades 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, or the Associate’s degree (Hoffman & Vargas, 2010). More importantly, the ECHSI presents a P-
16 Initiative which asserts a “bold approach, based on the principle that academic rigor, combined with the opportunity to save time and money, is a powerful motivator for students to work hard and meet serious intellectual challenges” (Berger et al., 2010, p. 1). As such, many states believe ECHSI is a viable option for educational advancement and equity.

**Five core principles of ECSHI.** According to Berger (2008) the following principles “define the features of an ECHS [and are] believed to [be] necessary for meeting the ECHSI goals” (p. 4) of improving high school graduation, college attendance, college completion, and narrowing the academic achievement gap for the underrepresented, underserved students (Berger et al., 2009; Berger, 2008). In other words, regardless of the EC niche or design (i.e. startup versus existing; public, charter, or independent; partnership with two-year PSI versus four-year PSI), these principles collectively represent the purpose of ECHSI and all existing ECHSs in the nation.

- **Core principle 1**, early college schools are committed to serving low-income students, racial and ethnic minorities, first-generation college students, and non-native English speakers in higher education. Students are recruited who are at risk of dropping out of secondary school, not matriculating into college, and not completing a degree.

- **Core principle 2**, early college schools are sustained through a partnership that has been established by a local education agency, a higher education institution, and the community with joint accountability for student success, funding, planning, and reporting.

- **Core principle 3**, secondary and post-secondary partners and community align high school, college requirements, and curricula to develop a supportive learning environment that blend high school and the first two year of transferable college credits.
Core principle 4, early college sites and post-secondary partners collaborate to provide a comprehensive support system which addresses academic and social skills as well as curricular and co-curricular activities necessary for college completion.

Core principle 5, a network of early college schools, their post-secondary institution, community partners, and intermediaries collaborate to create conditions and policies that advance the ECHSI.

Summary of Structure Partnerships

Each of the previous accelerated learning programs (AP, IB, Dual Enrollment, College Tech Prep, Middle College, and Early College High Schools) present options for youth to successfully transition through the educational pipeline. All of the programs share common elements of strong academics which are connected to postsecondary standards, reward merits, increased student engagement, exposure to postsecondary settings, lower remediation, cost benefits, in addition to resources and support to ensure student success. All six options offer opportunities for students to gain post-secondary educational experiences while they are enrolled in high school. This is why many states group them collectively under the category post-secondary options or accelerated learning options. All of the programs present viable options for students to enroll early into college. According to Bozaman and Sayler (2011) accelerated learning programs develop the intellectual and personal strengths of a student. Considering this, each of the programs have positive elements - challenge, engagement, access to college, and support-- which are often absent from or overlooked in public secondary settings.

By the same token each program is unique in that it was designed to support different populations, communities, and agendas. When comparing accelerated learning programs individual differences within programs become apparent. For example, AP, Dual Enrollment,
and IB have higher participation among gifted students when compared to College Tech Prep, Middle College, and Early College, which relentlessly focus on underrepresented populations (Boazman & Sayler, 2011; Heilbronner, Connell, Dobyns, & Reis, 2010; Hoffman, Vargas & Santos, 2009). Some contribute the proportion in ethnic/racial enrollment to the cost associated to the learning option or the location of the school district that make these opportunities accessible to their students. It can be assumed that a more affluent neighborhood would have more options and students who families are able to pay for the service. ECHSIs traditionally are in urban school district, which allow students from less affluent neighborhoods and opportunity to participate in an accelerated learning option.

**Inter-organizational Collaboration: The Early College High School Initiative**

Research has shown that there is a need for high school-to-college programs which address the needs of minorities also defined as traditionally underrepresented students. Statistics validate the growing academic gap between minorities and non-minorities. The next step in eliminating this gap is to establish initiatives that make academic programs successful and help to bridge the academic gap for the underrepresented, underserved students. The Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) evolved in response to fulfilling the need to close the educational gaps of students from underrepresented populations. ECHSI has addressed these issues by aligning secondary and post-secondary educational systems at every critical transition point by: (a) aiding in a student’s transition from one level to the next, (b) upgrading teacher education and professional development, (c) creating a wider range of learning experiences and opportunities for students during the final two years of high school, and (d) improving college readiness and success (Cooper, Chavira, & Mena, 2005; Van de Water & Rainwater, 2001).
After assessing the previously stated goals and objectives of accelerated learning options, most specifically ECHSI, P-16 Initiatives, and the diverse interest of educational stakeholders, three overarching categories were developed by the investigator. These categories guided this subsection of the paper; those categories are: (a) building sustainable partnerships, (b) closing achievement gaps of underrepresented student populations, and (c) transitioning from high school to college.

**Building Sustainable Partnerships**

“Early college schools are created and sustained by a local education agency, a higher education institution, and the community, all of whom are jointly accountable for student success” (Allen & Murphy, 2008, p. 2). Since its inception in 2002, the ECHSI has continued to build, sustain, and align local education agencies, higher education institutions, and the community. In fact, the ECHSI grew exponentially from 2007 to 2008 with two-thirds of the new schools being built. More than 132 of the 200 campuses were built on college campuses, and 65% were partnered with a public two-year community college (Berger et al., 2009; Berger 2008, 2007).

It is the context of this relationship that governance, human and material capital, training, support, curriculum, and day-to-day operations are shared and practiced (Berger, 2008). Of these school-university partnerships, 74% of the ECSs partnered with two-year institutions, and 26% partnered with four-year institutions (Berger 2009; Jobs for the Future [JFF] 2010). The Jobs for the Future (2010) report documented how the partners create a rigorous and coherent course of study physically on a post-secondary campus (50%), on a reservation (3%), or freestanding as an independent school site (47%). These sites draw on the “the college environment and experience to build students’ identity as college goers” (p. 2).
Berger (2009, 2008) discovered that an ECHS collaborates with its partners to build college readiness and success by: (a) providing orientation to college classes for students and families to increase expectations and increase awareness about college; (b) aligning high school and college courses to increase the rigor of high school course content and to build course sequences to allow students an opportunity to achieve up to two years of transferable college credit; and (c) developing comprehensive academic (transfer and articulation agreements) and social support services (tutoring, facilities, career and college advising, etc.) to sustain student success. Nodine (2009) stated, “the Early College High School Initiative has created local ‘space’ for educational innovations within schools and colleges to develop on-the-ground designs for bridging the secondary/post-secondary divide of students” (p. 8).

The design of the ECSHI initiative takes into consideration of the importance of relationships and has a commitment to training and development for teachers and staff as well as outreach and development to parents. The small learning community often requires the teachers, faculty, and administrators to collaborate with each other to make decisions regarding planning and implementing curriculum, logistics, assessments, and service, as well as for ongoing professional development (Edmunds et al., 2010). By the same token, ECHSI supports building relationships with community members and parents. Berger (2008) documents that it is equally important to educate and empower parents as well as students. Several studies discovered a connection between parents of EC students with little to no education to students who lacked knowledge of college-going culture and academic rigor which was expected in post-secondary settings (Geiser & Santelices, 2004; Tierney, 2002). Parents, in addition to students, must have knowledge of college admission requirements, assessment requirements, financial aid, and support services to successfully aid their students in navigating through their pipeline experience.
However clichéd it may sound, partnerships among students and faculty are essential to the success of ECHSs. Multiple studies discovered that the small learning communities of EC designs create more personalized environments which support teacher-student relationships. Edmunds et al. (2010) reported that one student commented, “For some reason all the teachers seem like counselors” (p. 360). Another student shared “I feel love, accepted and challenged” (Ongaga, 2010, p. 381). According to Ongaga (2010) the student-teacher relationship transcends the formal teacher-learner box. The interpersonal relationship is established by mutual respect, responsibility, common focus, and high expectations, but it's done in an atmosphere of trust, support, and care (Ongaga, 2010).

Closing Achievement Gaps of Underrepresented Student Populations

The achievement gap refers to the observed disparity between the performance of groups of students and background (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status) using a number of educational measures, including dropout rates, high school completion, standardized test scores, grade point average, and college-enrollment and -completion rates. According to Rowan, Hall, and Haycock (2010), the most common way of measuring gaps is by simple mathematics – subtracting White students performance from the students from the traditionally underrepresented sample and it equals the gap. “If the resulting number is decreasing over time, then the gap is closing; if that number is stagnant or growing, then the gap is not closing” (Rowan, Hall, & Haycock, 2010, p.1). However, others would argue that simple mathematics is not enough to evaluate the multiple factors that contribute to the patterns of student achievement. Often the achievement gaps that appear at the lower end of the spectrum typically receive the greatest attention, and the numbers for low-income and ethnic/minorities, those of Hispanic/Latino origin, are often on the lower end of the achievement spectrum.
According to Kohler and Lazarin (2007), Hispanics have become the largest, fastest growing population in the United States, significantly surpassing the growth of other ethnic/racial groups; however, their postsecondary enrollment rates are significantly lower than any other ethnic/racial groups.

The challenges presented in narrowing the achievement gap and raising equity for all students has been confronted by the ECHSI. To improve the academic achievement of underrepresented students in the educational pipeline educators and administrators believe the following could be done: (a) setting high expectations for their students to go to college and high standards for high school and college course completion; (b) giving students an early start allowing them to take college placement exams as early as the ninth grade and college courses as early as the summer of the student’s ninth grade year; and (c) providing college awareness activities, such as career counseling, college planning, and clear curricular pathways that align high school requirements with college-level courses (Edmund, 2010; Rosenbaun & Becker, 2011).

ECHSI has succeeded in providing their students with early access to college courses; each year higher numbers of students from diverse racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds participate in college coursework (Kim & Barnett, 2008). In 2007-08, ECHSI enrollment included 67% minority students, which was defined as any student not classified as White and not of Hispanic origin; 59% of the students classified as low-income; 10% of the students were designated as limited English proficient (LEP); 43% of the students document that they came from non-English speaking homes (e.g., indication of multilingual students and/or students who are from immigrant families); 31% first-generation, documented they would be the first in their families to attend college; and more than 75% or more of the students came from families living...
in poverty, of which 24% of the early college school qualify as high-minority/high-poverty status institutions (AIR & SRI, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009). Since 2008 ECHSs have consistently enrolled higher percentages of minority students, with an average of 70% versus 64% at comparison districts and, for low-income students, 57% versus 55% (AIR & SRI, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009).

**Transitioning from High School to College**

Many students view postsecondary education as a natural progression from high school. However, others need help or may never experience the transition from one educational system to the other. Many factors hinder and/or change an individual’s decision to attend college - access and opportunity, social and emotional maturity, and academic skill and motivation separate the college bound students from those who are unable to navigate their rite of passage into higher education. A review of the literature showed that the lack of academic skills and motivation are the greatest obstacles high school students face. Students often lack the basic academic skills necessary for successful college level coursework. Due to their inadequate preparation, they are often enrolled in remedial or developmental education, which generally includes programs and/or courses designed to improve students skills in the basic areas of English composition, reading, and mathematics (3Rs) (Tomlinson, 1989). Whereas, ECHSI has had proven success aligning course sequences that: (a) accelerate bridge courses; (b) focus on writing and math; (c) design middle grade opportunities; (d) present theme-based schools to focus on special areas, such as science or technology; (e) college preparation courses to provide foundation/college readiness skills; and (f) shadow courses and experiences with college students and faculty (Nodine, 2009). Another study declared the ECHSI curriculum as a new, innovative accelerated learning process that has transformed the meaning of the 3Rs to “academic Rigor,
instructional Relevance, and instructional Relationships” (AIR & SRI, 2009, p.43). According to Ongaga (2010) *rigor* implies the academic challenge of the program and experience that prepares students for college, work, and citizenship; *relevance* distinguishes instructional context of challenge and support to address curricular and co-curricular learning (real-world applications); and *relationships* are the proponents of “close, supportive, and positive relationships between and among teachers and students” (p. 377). Although the goal of P-16 and ECHSI is to create one continuous process of the educational transition, the following section details key leadership models of those who work with the ECHSI and in educational leadership positions across educational sectors.

**Leadership Models**

During the mid-1990s, organizations began to use the term “collaborative leadership” to describe the relationships that occurred across public and private organizational boundaries (Archer & Cameron, 2009; Chrislip, 2002). For that reason, the term collaborative leadership describes an emerging body of theory and management practices which focuses essentially on the characteristics, strategies, and psychological mindsets of multiple stakeholders who share a common interest to come together to help each other solve problems or achieve goals (Archer & Cameron, 2009; Chrislip, 2002; Turning Point, 2005). However, the study of leadership has produced hundreds of definitions, theories, and beliefs regarding leadership. In fact, the word *lead* can be traced to the 1300s and *leadership* to the 1800s; both terms were used in a political context (Stodgill, 1974). Since that time, several theories and myths have shaped the practices of leadership. This subsection introduces two common leadership theories which have been used to inform leadership practices across multiple disciplines: transactional leadership and
transformational leadership. Each approach builds upon the history and evolution of leadership and provides context for the theoretical model employed in this study.

In 1978, James McGregor Burns made an enlightening distinction between transactional and transformational leadership, providing a major shift in the thinking behind leadership theory. Transactional leadership is typically described as a managerial form of educational leadership, where the leader or individual within the organization is primarily concerned with negotiating their individual, as opposed to group, interests (Bums, 1978; Silins, 1994). Transformational leadership, on the other hand “involves an exchange among people seeking common aims, uniting them to go beyond their separate interests in the pursuit of higher goals” (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1988, p. 198).

**Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership (also known as reciprocal leadership) focuses on the process of change, and it is based on expectations, perceptions, and motivations to work towards common goals (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Transformational leadership encompasses three broad categories of how a “leader can initiate, develop, and carry out change in an organization” (Northouse, 2010, p. 185). Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) suggested that when these broad categories are applied to educational leaders, the individuals work to: (a) set directions by building vision, developing goals and setting priorities; (b) develop people by providing intellectual stimulation and individual support to meet the common goals of the organization; and (c) redesign the organization by helping to facilitate a culture of collaboration and participatory decision-making. Silins (1994) provided a similar definition of transformational leadership that includes three elements: (a) *Inspiration* - the degree to which a leader creates enthusiasm in followers and transmits a shared purpose and clear mission; (b) *Intellectual*
stimulation - the degree to which the leader arouses followers to think in new ways and question the status quo; and (c) Individualized consideration - the degree to which the leader responds to the professional development and needs of their team.

The literature emphasized the common behaviors of an individual identifying as a transformational leader as being charismatic, inspirational, and intellectually stimulating (Bass, 1985; Northouse, 2010). In addition, a leader practicing the three phases of transformational leaders strives to inspire, stimulate, and promote the common good of an organization. Transformational leadership challenges the appropriate use of power and privilege – leadership for social justice and change (Merziro, 1996, 1993; Foster, 1986).

**Transactional Leadership**

Transactional leadership (also known as managerial leadership) centers on the mechanism of exchange between the supervisor, organization, and group performance (Shields, 2010). In contrast, transactional leadership differs because it “does not individualize the needs of the subordinated or focus on his/her personal development” (Northouse, 2010, p. 181); it emphasizes contingent reward, management-by exception, negative reinforcement and laissez-faire (Northouse, 2010). Transactional leaders place a significant emphasis on high performance, efficiency, and system improvement. This leader prototype facilitates the difference between leader and manager. The literature emphasized the common behaviors of an individual identifying as a transactional leader as focusing on an equitable leader-member exchange relationship where team members meet basic expectations and performance (Bass, 1985; Graen & Cashman, 1975).

According to Northouse (2010) a major assumption of transformational and transactional leadership is leadership as a process (i.e., between followers and leaders), and these models
suggest a broader view of leaders than other models by emphasizing a connection between, leaders, followers, and organizational outcomes. However, it has been speculated that both of these models treat leadership as a personality trait rather than behavior, and transactional leadership takes an elitist and antidemocratic approach to creating organizational change (Northouse, 2010).

**Collaborative Leadership**

In the late 70s a group of emerging theories explored the idea of collaborative leadership. Collaborative leadership occurs when leaders of multiple organizations or areas deliberately share roles, responsibilities, and power within one setting or multiple settings (Komives et al., 1998; Northouse, 2010). This theory was very similar to transformational leadership in that it explored the reciprocal nature of relationships (Komives et al., 1998). Collaborative leadership theory advanced the ideas of shared, distributive, and now more recently collective and/or relational leadership. Shared and distributed leadership are alike in that leadership is, in effect, distributed among more than those in formal leadership positions (Spillane, 2006). The concept is based in the notion that formal leaders relinquish their role as ultimate decision-maker and trust decision-making to the members of their organization (Harris, 2004; MacBeath, 2005; Northouse, 2010), thereby creating a shared leadership culture. Harris (2004) defined distributed leadership as a form of collective leadership whereby leadership is developed through shared expertise and decision-making of the team. Shared leadership is a deliberate practice of allowing informal members of a team or individuals from external organizations to come together to share values and goals of the formal organization or leaders (Spillane, 2006). Relational leadership promotes collegiality or consensus and focuses on interpersonal skills and team building (Komives et al., 1998; Northouse, 2010).
Relational Leadership Model. Relational Leadership Model (RLM) was developed in 1998 by Susan Komives, Nance Lucas, and Timothy McMahon as an alternative model to help one conceptualize their own personal leadership philosophy (Komives et al., 1998; 2007, 2009). The model asserts that leadership emerges from the inter-relationship between the leader and followers. According to Komives et al. (1998) the model is not a leadership theory because it does not address the change outcomes for which leadership is intended; it is more of a conceptual framework. In fact, the premise of the framework is “leadership happens in an interactive relational context” (Komives et al., 1998, p. 68). Komives et al.’s (1998) model emphasizes that there are five components of the model, and the approaches to leadership are “to be inclusive of people and diverse points of view, empowers those involved, is purposeful and builds commitment toward common purposes, is ethical and recognizes that all four of those elements are accomplished by being process-oriented” (p. 68).

The scholars who apply and adopt the RLM view leadership as a relational and collaborative process. RLM proposes that there is a dynamic interplay between the person, group, and societal values. Since the theory makes the assumption that leadership is a relational process, it could be predicted that leadership is also a shared process, and places a significant emphasis on ethics (Komives et al., 1998, 2007, 2009). Northouse (2010) argued that these leaders have a “duty to treat others with respect” (p. 386) and focus on altruism – serving others. They are concerned about being fair and just, “must be honest” (p. 391), and strive to attain a common goal within a unified community. A major assumption of collaborative leadership is that the leader places a premium on creating positive work environments for personal growth and development while highlighting self-awareness (Asher, 2005). These leaders value diversity, acceptance of differences, agreement on core values, full participation, trust, communication,
collaboration, commitment, reciprocity, conscious choice, accountability, shared responsibility, efficacy, equity, perceived skills, openness, and cohesion (Asher, 2005; Komives et al., 2009).

**Summary of Leadership Models**

Since the sixteenth century, most of the popular leadership theories have focused on individuals and their level of influence on development within a framework of leader-to-follower. However, recent literature on leadership theories often focuses on the differences between transformational and transactional leadership. Even though the research on collaborative leadership models is not as vast, this study will focus on collaborative leadership more specifically—RLM.

RLM concentrates on leadership across horizontal, vertical, and symbiotic domains that are internal and external to formal organizations operating in adaptive, complex, and transformational environments (Gray, 1989). RLM moves beyond hierarchical or linear mental models (Komives et al., 2009; Northouse, 2010). In fact, RLM is not restricted to a single or even a small set of formal or informal leaders; it is a dynamic system which is interwoven in leadership, environment, and organizational aspects (Hunt & Dodge, 2000). RLM posits that leadership is an evolving process that can occur through the interactions of individuals, not just top-down bureaucratic influence (Komives, 2009; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). In support, Lieberman (2004) postulates that the success of ECHSI depends on “destroying the hierarchy between secondary and higher education and building an equal partnership” (p. 3). In turn, partnerships between the leaders allowed for the RLM to be tested.

**Theoretical Framework**

For the listed reasons above, RLM was selected to assess the collaborative leadership practices of principals and liaisons in Ohio’s ECHSI. The final subsection of this chapter
examines RLM, its five components, and the conceptual framework employed in this study. For the remainder of this section, the majority of the literature will be based on two textbooks by Komives et al., *Exploring Leadership: for College Students Who Want to Make a Difference* (2007) and *Leadership for a Better World: Understanding the Social Change Model of Leadership Development* (2009). Both books serve as a companion resource to exploring “leadership as a relational and ethical process of people working together to accomplish positive change” (Lester, 2010, p. 448). Both textbooks were collaborative efforts among higher educational scholars and practitioners. The authors used education and psychology to ground the theory. The texts are used as frameworks for developing an individual's capacity to work with other people and to engage in leadership while addressing shared purposes. The lead author of both was Susan R Komives. Dr. Komives is a professor of College Student Personnel at the University of Maryland, former president of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), and co-founder of the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (Komives et al., 2007, 2009).

RLM was used to inform leadership practices in emerging forms of collaborative organizations. Therefore, this model of relational leadership was used to determine if the leaders of Ohio’s EC collaborations were being *purposeful, inclusive, empowering, and ethical;* and embedding all four of those elements into their overall *process* or collaborative practices. (Komives et al., 2007). The following sections describe each of the RLM components and the outcomes associated with them.

**Relational Leadership is Purposeful**

Being purposeful is the individual’s ability to collaborate and find mutual ground with others to establish a common purpose, a vision for a group who are dedicated to a goal or
activity, or work toward the public (Komives et al., 1998). The outcome is to build a commitment towards groups who are dedicated to a goal or activity (Komives et al., 1998). Purposeful leadership requires the leader to know the difference between personalized and socialized vision. *Personalized vision* is the legitimate authority of an individual, and *Socialized vision* is a shared vision and is the foundation for inter-institutional collaboration. However, it does not mean that everyone has to help create the vision, but it does infer that all members are responsible for guiding the process and/or actions of the organization (Komives et al., 2007). The goal is to connect individuals and groups by creating a balance between challenge and support. Leaders practicing the concept of purpose must have an attitude of hope, the ability to make a commitment, and the insight into their own actions to fairly unify people, goals, and outcomes (Komives et al., 2007). Although there is no single success factor for creating strong relationships and collaborations, *purpose* is one of the emergent factors in assessing organizational outcomes (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992). A common purpose aligns the members of the organization; it allows the group to examine its implicit, or unspoken, values – culture (Komives et al., 2007, 2009). *Culture* incorporates the idea of shared philosophies, values, beliefs, expectations, and assumptions (Bess & Dee, 2008a; Komives et al., 2007). According to Murray-Close and Monsey (2001), successful collaborations with shared vision, aims, and values typically have the following features: (a) common and unique purpose, (b) trust and partner compatibility, (c) shared governance and joint decision making, (d) clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, (e) open and frequent communication, and (f) adequate financial and human resources.
Relational Leadership is Inclusive

“Being inclusive means understanding, valuing, and actively engaging diversity in views, approaches, styles, and aspects of individuality such as sex or culture that add multiple perspectives to a group’s activity” (Komives et al., 1998, p. 73). This component requires a leader to have an understanding of the self and others. It means understanding how different groups or individuals might approach issues from different perspectives, and it is practiced by envisioning the bigger picture, while having the skills to develop the staff and listening with civility. Inclusive leaders have the ability to develop the strengths and talents of the group so they can achieve the organization’s goals, mission, and purpose (Komives et al., 2007). Regardless of differences of views or diversity of people, all of the stakeholders have something to contribute to the overall knowledge and success of the group (Komives et al., 2007). Being inclusive is about valuing fairness and equality of all people.

Relational Leadership is Empowering

Being empowering creates the assumption that everyone has something to offer. According to Komives et al. (2007, 1998), the empowering component has two dimensions: (a) the power that one possesses to claim ownership, a place in the process, and expects involvement and (b) a set of environmental conditions that promote full involvement. Understanding power dynamics is important to clarifying empowerment of the conceptual model. The literature describes power in five ways: expert power, referent power, legitimate power, coercive power, and reward power. In accordance to Komives et al. (2007), these five power sources can be defined as: “Expert power is the power of information or knowledge” (p. 91). Referent power is the power that one has over another. Legitimate power is the power bestowed upon a person in a formal role or position. Coercive power is power based on threats or sanctions, and rewards of
the group are shared equally among members. *Reward power* is power used to entice positive outcomes and desired behaviors. Power is not infinite and can be shared by giving authority to another, empowerment. According to Murrell (1998) successful collaborations with shared power typically have the following methods: (a) sharing of information and knowledge; (b) leading, inspiring, rewarding, and directing; (c) structuring policies and/or processes to allow multiple perspectives and continuous change; (d) providing resources so that members of the team can get their job done; (e) mentoring to develop personal relationships and professional competencies; and (f) actualizing by claiming it or making it real.

**Relational Leadership is Ethical**

Being ethical is a conscious and moral practice that is driven by standards and values of an individual – it is about being good–moral in nature (Komives et al., 2007). According to Toffler (1986), it becomes the “rules or standards that grow behavior” (p. 10). Aligning what you say with what you do; it is about integrity and being able to balance your beliefs, values, and principals, with confronting unethical practices (Komives et al., 1998). Overall, sound ethical leadership demands: respect, service, justice, honest, and community (Northouse, 2010). Nash (1990) proposes four necessities for leaders to advance ethical standards in organizations: (a) critical thinking skills to properly analyze and convey the ethical components of an issue; (b) high degree of integrity to stand up for your personal and professional ethics; (c) ability to see situations from other’s perspectives; and (d) personal motivation to do the right thing. According to Nash (1990) these four ethical components are modeled by leaders who are courageous, moral, and responsible. Komives et al. (2007) suggests that *courage* is the fearlessness or bravery that a leader assumes when they are faced with option. *Morality* is the conduct that is exhibited when a leader is confronted by these challenges. Being *responsible* is
where accountability is shared among all participants; because it is the group’s obligation to be responsible for the ethical climate. In fact, ethical collaborations assume that everyone is equally empowered to make the right decision and to do the right things. Ethical leaders lead with integrity and moral purpose. According to Komives et al. (1998) ethical leadership is leading with integrity. It is a complex process that does not happen overnight.

According Komives et al. (2007) successful collaborations that lead with integrity and moral purpose, share eight aspects: (a) ethics is the heart of leadership, (b) all leadership is values-driven, (c) personal values intersect with organizational values, (d) ethical leadership can be learned, (e) ethical leadership involves a connection between ethical thought and action, (f) character development is an essential ingredient of ethical leadership, (g) ethical leadership is a shared process, and (h) everything we do teaches.

**Relational Leadership is about Process**

Process is “how the group goes about being a group, remaining a group, and accomplishing the group’s purposes” (Komives et al., 1998, p.94). It is about being aware of the dynamics among people in groups - decision making, and how the group handles tasks related to its mission and vision (Komives et al., 1998). According to Komives et al. (1998) relational leadership means valuing process and understanding how process influences groups and outcomes. Practicing leaders know how the group functions, and they do so by developing and promoting other’s skills of collaboration, reflection, meaning making, and civil confrontation. According to Komives et al. (2007), several key processes are essential to relational leadership, they include: “collaboration, reflection, feedback, civil confrontation, community building, and level of profound understanding of meaning making” (p. 104). Although the terms, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration are often interchanged; Corrigan (2001) explains, “Collaboration
is a higher level of activity” (p.177). The process of collaborating requires “autonomous stakeholders to engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain” (Wood & Gray, 1991, p. 146). This level of sharing creates norms among the members of the group referred to as climate. Bess and Dee (2008a) define climate as an institution’s traditions which are passed on, those which are oral are often referred to as practices; while others that are written become a part of the institution’s espoused or enacted policies. Whether the process orientation is transpired orally or in written form, the process is based on the shared experiences of the group and how they make meaning of their collaboration.

**Summary of the Theoretical Framework**

Relationships are foundational to leadership. Because collaborative leadership is a process that involves more than just one person, it is important that we understand how to work well with others. This involves building rapport, keeping others engaged in the leadership process, and maintaining strong connections which will help leaders achieve their goals. With the exception of recent emerging perspectives on collaborative leadership, a vast majority of the literature deals with participative leadership and interactive theories. (Komives et al, 2007, 2009; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Murray-Close & Monsey, 2001; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). This leaves the theory of collective leadership largely unaddressed. As for the literature that does address collaborative leadership, there is a disconnect among inter-organizational relationships. Even so, participants in multiple studies identified particular individual characteristics, such as, traits and position, as evidence of leadership and failed to connect leadership to the collaborative process by isolating the individual and removing them from the group (Baker, 2011; Eddy 2010; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). Bensimon and Neumann’s (1992) study of university leaders came close to
studying collaborative leadership, but stopped short of developing a model that enhances understanding of the collaborative nature of leadership. As defined, RLM provides an ideal framework for exploring leadership as a “system of joint, coordinated and purposeful action” (Dubin, 1978, p. 58), which can therefore be conceived of as a system of interacting inputs, processes, outputs and feedback that derive meaning, direction and purpose from the larger performance system. This position establishes that RLM is an appropriate framework for examining leadership structures and processes across educational sectors as the result of intentional, collaborative leading.

**Summary of Chapter II**

The development of the ECHSI is a new concept with regards to school-university collaborations. Understanding what defines an EC and how its relational model differs from typical models of school-university collaborations goes beyond an examination of the partnerships structural features. It requires a critical analysis of the process that occurs between the leaders that build and sustain the school-university collaboration. The leaders involved in the partnership must make a commitment to the purpose of improving the educational pipeline of students who have been traditionally underrepresented in higher educational settings. The leaders must be able to empower themselves and others, while being open and committed to positive social change. The partners must be open to different attitudes, biases, values, and viewpoints to respect each other with a high level of civility. The members of these networks must operate ethically; these partnerships require congruence in values, beliefs, and behavior. All four connect as a process to orientate the participants to value-focus, ethical collaboration that supports change. The partners involved in early college believe in part that encountering the rigor, depth, and intensity of college work at an earlier age will inspire average, under-achieving,
and well-prepared high school students to work hard and stretch themselves intellectually. Additionally, the program makes higher education more accessible, affordable, and attractive by bridging the divide between high school and colleges.

The practices of these leaders are essential to understanding the overall effectiveness of early college. Bridging is not merely offering a course in a high school or having a student attend class on campus. Instead, it is providing a clear vision to provide affordable, quality, and accessible educational opportunities to the students. Since early college programs require formal linkages between high schools and colleges, they are also a mechanism for promoting partnerships between the two educational sectors. These leaders represent change agents who support an education reform that adopt change and challenges of collaborations among secondary and post-secondary institutions.

The historical, organizational, and theoretical propositions of this study were present throughout Chapter II, which allowed conditions and concepts of relational components that must be explored to properly understand the best practices of Ohio’s EC partnerships. Chapter III discusses the methodology used in this research, which details the mechanics of this multiple-case study on collaborative leadership practices.
CHAPTER III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter III provides a detailed account of the methods undertaken during the research. The chapter is organized in five sections. It begins with a rationale for qualitative research, then includes the research design, the investigator’s paradigm, and concludes with a reiteration of the research questions that set the parameters of the study. Contained within these sections are: (a) descriptions of the sites and participants, (b) an explanation of the data sources and collection methods, (c) a summary of the data analysis, and (d) a discussion of the researcher's subjectivity and its possible effects on data collection and analysis.

Rationale for Qualitative Research and Research Design

This qualitative study was an exploratory multiple-case study that was designed to explore the collaborative leadership practices of Early College High School (ECHS) principals and post-secondary liaisons within the state of Ohio. Corbin and Strauss (2008) define qualitative research as research about “people’s lives, stories, and behavior, but also about organization functioning, social movements, or interactional relationships” (p. 17). Certainly, collaboration between two distinct educational sectors is worthy to be studied not only for the individuals involved but for the educational organizations, social movements, and interactional relationships. Since the case study design is often used to understand complex issues in contemporary real-life situations (Yin, 1984), the investigator believed that a case study research method would be the best strategy. Given that this study provided an increased scope of collaborative leadership from a single case to multiple cases to look at the complex interworking of 14 Early College (EC) collaborations. The investigator used a qualitative strategy and approach to emphasize the evolving nature of collaboration among the leaders in Ohio’s Early College High school Initiative (ECHSI). More specifically, the investigator adopted a social
constructionist perspective to define, understand, and study the collaborative leadership practices of secondary and post-secondary leaders.

**The Constructivist Paradigm**

The constructivist paradigm also known as naturalistic, hermeneutic, or interpretive paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), served as the underlying framework for this study, because it provided a more comprehensive look at the phenomenon – collaborative leadership – in its natural setting. The uses of an interpretive paradigm supported the investigator’s social constructionist perspective, which suggests that there is no one reality to be discovered (Searle, 1995). It was accepted that truth was, and is, relative and dependent on the individual’s perspective. Therefore, the participants in this study were able to share their personal experiences, beliefs, and views of reality regarding their involvement in the collaboration (Lather, 1992; Robottom & Hart, 1993), while the investigator was able to use “expressive language” and “thick and rich” descriptions to present multiple interpretations of the participant’s voice (Eisner, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

According to Guba (1990), the constructivist paradigm can be characterized through the researcher’s assumptions, beliefs, and research techniques. Also known as *ontology* (What is reality?), *epistemology* (How do you know something?), and *methodology* (How do you go about finding out?). To justify the use of the constructivist paradigm, the following will explain the researcher’s ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions addressed in this study.

**Ontology**

Ontology concentrates on the nature of reality, and the constructivist paradigm asserts that multiple realities exist through multiple constructions (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Erlandson,
Harris, Skipper, and Allen (1993) argued that individual realities provide diverse perceptions with a rich central meaning about the interrelationships in an institution. The investigator is a relativist, who believes that knowledge is a social reality that must be interpreted individually. The present study focused on the experiences of fourteen educational administrators, and how they perceived and negotiated their roles and their positions within the partnership as leaders of an Ohio EC collaboration.

**Epistemology**

Epistemology validates the participants’ knowledge and positions them as expert at telling their own stories. It recognizes their stories as important knowledge about how to build collaborations across educational sectors. The participants shared their understanding of experience (phenomena) and understanding (noumena) and how they made connections or not between the two created meaning for their knowing (Kuhn, 1970). The investigator’s social constructionist paradigm offered viewed knowledge in this case study as implications for the practice of education.

**Methodology**

Methodology focuses on the way one generates knowledge. Constructivists emphasize subjective relationships and interactions between the participants and the environment. Traditional forms of inquiry with researchers working in the constructivist paradigm must demonstrate that separate realities have been ethically considered, constructed, and represented (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). These researchers strive to be detached from traditional forms of inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1989); however, constructivists understand that meaning is gained through close interaction, dialogue, and rapport. It is by acknowledging this relationship and employing solid methods (i.e., peer-review, triangulation, reflexive journals, etc.) that the
investigator in this stayed subjective in order to focus on the participants’ stories. The goal was to clearly and accurately share the stories of Ohio’s EC leaders by constructing meaning around their experiences and knowledge through shared dialogue.

**Study Proposition and Research Questions**

The assertion of this multiple-case study is that collaborative leadership practices are a function of the interplay of two independent systems (i.e., secondary and post-secondary institutions) collaborating to produce organizational effectiveness. The investigator proposed that relationships are essential to fulfilling the ECHSI mission, and sought to: (a) capture the demographics of partners and their ECHSI outcomes that impact achievement gaps, (b) understand perceptions of collaborative leadership and how these relationships are achieved or not achieved, and (c) explain if Relational Leadership Model (RLM) is applicable to the Ohio EC collaboration. The following research questions guided the interview process:

1. How do Ohio Early College leaders understand the Ohio Early College relationship?
2. How do participants perceive the various components of the Relational Leadership Model (purpose, ethics, empowerment, and inclusion through the process) within the EC partnership?
3. Which, if any, of the Relational Leadership Model components (purpose, ethics, empowerment, inclusion, and process) has the greatest impact on the EC partnership? And why?

**Site and Participation Selection Process**

The investigator utilized the executives and staff of the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN), an independent, non-profit organization and subsidiary of KnowledgeWorks Foundation, to assist with the selection of sites and participants. OCAN coordinates the funding,
policies, and activities of several Ohio based educational reform initiatives, the Ohio EC Network being one of them. However, the Ohio EC Network serves as the coordinating agency that unites all of the State’s EC constituents quarterly to pool resources and funding in addition to exchanging information for the mutual benefit of the group. The members of the network include representatives from three intermediates (i.e., EdWorks, Capital Partners, and Jobs for the Future), various state educational policy-makers (e.g., Ohio Department of Education and Ohio Board of Regents), ten ECHS principals, and twelve post-secondary institution liaisons. The investigator was able to attend two EC Network meetings, one during the month of October and another in January. During the October network meeting, the investigator shared the purpose of the study and extended invitations to the ECHS principals and PSI liaisons. Nine ECHS principals and five post-secondary partners were present and agreed to participate in the study. The remaining EC leaders who were absent were contacted by email. The investigator attended the January meeting to build rapport with the members. During the meeting, the investigator was able to reiterate the purpose and anticipated timeline of the study. A commitment was gained from nine of ten Ohio EC principals and seven partnering PSI liaisons. Since this study focus of the study was partnerships it required that both leaders of the EC collaboration agreed to participate.

Therefore, only seven EC principals and seven PSI liaisons were contacted in February after the Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB) application was approved by Bowling Green State University’s Office of Research Compliance (see Appendix A). The participants were mailed a cover letter (see Appendix B) and a consent form. There were two consent forms: one for principals (see Appendix C), and one for PSI liaisons (see Appendix D). These explained the nature of the study, outlined the ethical guidelines to be followed by the investigator, and listed
the parameters of the study’s confidentiality. It was explained to the participants that the level of credibility would be increased for the study if the readers were able to associate the information shared with an identifiable member and institution. At the same time, to respect the privacy of the participants, they were given the option to have their identity protected. Initially, three participants elected to have their identities protected. After reviewing the transcripts, two decided it would be easy to be identified by the reader anyway, and agreed to be disclose their identities. One chose to have her identity remain confidential and a pseudonym was selected.

**Research Sites**

There were a total of seven sites. A site describes a ‘case’ or inter-organization that was studied. Each case or site includes two independent organizations; a secondary school/program and a post-secondary education partner. There were a total of seven secondary partners, which included five public school districts and two private foundations and seven post-secondary partners, which included three four-year institutions (one private and two public) and four two-year institutions. Throughout this study the seven cases are defined as follows: (1) Case One: Dayton, Ohio EC Collaboration, which includes a public, charter ECHS and a two-year, public PSI; (2) Case Two: Youngstown, Ohio EC Collaboration, which includes a public ECHS and a two-year, public PSI; (3) Case Three: Columbus, Ohio Public EC Collaboration, which includes a public K-12 EC academy and two-year, public PSI; (4) Case Four: Toledo, Ohio EC Collaboration, which includes public ECHS and a four-year public PSI, (5) Case Five: Canton, Ohio EC Collaboration, which includes a EC program and a two-year, public PSI; (6) Case Six: Akron, Ohio EC Collaboration, which includes a public ECHS and a four-year research PSI; and (7) Case Seven: Columbus, Ohio Private EC Collaboration, which includes a private and a charter four-year PSI. Table 1 presents a description of each case study site.
Table 1

*Ohio Early College (EC) Sites (N=7)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early College Site</th>
<th>Case #1</th>
<th>Case #2</th>
<th>Case #3</th>
<th>Case #4</th>
<th>Case #5</th>
<th>Case #6</th>
<th>Case #7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inter-Organization</td>
<td>Dayton *</td>
<td>Youngstown *</td>
<td>Columbus Public</td>
<td>Toledo</td>
<td>Canton</td>
<td>Akron</td>
<td>Columbus Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification</td>
<td>Dayton EC Academy</td>
<td>Youngstown EC</td>
<td>Columbus Afrocentric EC</td>
<td>Toledo ECHS</td>
<td>Canton ECHS</td>
<td>Akron ECHS</td>
<td>The Charles School @ ODU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Partner</td>
<td>Dayton Private</td>
<td>Youngstown</td>
<td>Columbus Public</td>
<td>Toledo Public</td>
<td>Canton Public</td>
<td>Akron Public</td>
<td>The Graham Family Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>Public Schools</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Public Schools</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Ohio Dominican University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Secondary</td>
<td>Sinclair Community</td>
<td>Northeast Community</td>
<td>Community College***</td>
<td>University of Toledo</td>
<td>Stark State College</td>
<td>University of Akron</td>
<td>University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>College</td>
<td>Community College</td>
<td>College</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-Secondary</td>
<td>Two-Year Public</td>
<td>Two-Year Public</td>
<td>Two-Year Public</td>
<td>Four-Year Public</td>
<td>Two-Year Public</td>
<td>Four-Year Public</td>
<td>Four-Year Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
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<td>Youngstown State</td>
<td>University</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dayton**</td>
<td>University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Secondary</td>
<td>Four-Year Private</td>
<td>Four-Year Public</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Founded</td>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>Excellent with</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Excellent with</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>Improvement</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EC School</td>
<td>New Site (Startup)</td>
<td>New Site (Startup)</td>
<td>New Site (Startup)</td>
<td>New Site (Startup)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>(2009-2010)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EC Origin</td>
<td>New Site (Startup)</td>
<td>Existing (School</td>
<td>Existing (School</td>
<td>New Site (Startup)</td>
<td>Exiting (School</td>
<td>New Site (Startup)</td>
<td>New Site (Startup)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conversion)</td>
<td>Conversion)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Within School)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Facility</td>
<td>On Campus</td>
<td>On Campus</td>
<td>Near Campus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. (*) denotes sites with multiple post-secondary partners. (**) denotes sites that did not participate in study. (*** denotes pseudonym.

1Location includes the site’s physical location. Some schools are located on-campus and other sites have off-campus (independent) locations near the post-secondary institution.

2Origin is more than the year that the school opened it also refers to how the ECHS developed. There are existing school sites which are current schools that had a conversion, where the entire school or a small program within a school adopted the EC model. The other option is the creation of a new (startup) ECHS.

3Type is specific to the high school or post-secondary institution. The ECHS can be a part of the districts public school system, charter, or private-independent. In addition, Type clarifies the post-secondary institutional type (i.e., 2-year or 4-year) and/or research, private, or public.
Participants

It was essential to the research design and the context of the study that both the site and the leader be investigated to properly study the phenomena, that is, collaborative leadership practices. The individuals who served in leadership capacities according to the ECHSI include principals or lead building administrators at each of the ECHSs. Of the 14 participants in this study, seven were Ohio EC principals and seven were PSI liaisons.

The titles and responsibilities were typically the same (i.e., principal) for the EC sites, with the exception of two ECHS. One, the Columbus Public EC Collaboration EC administrator, used the term school leader since the school was a K-12 school with multiple administrators (i.e., middle school principal, high school principal, and “School Leader”). In this case, the school leader was identified as the chief building administrator and the one who participated in the study. The second site, the Columbus Private EC Collaboration, used the title dean/CEO, as this individual provided administration and leadership to the EC site and two other community based charter schools within the Graham School Foundation. The PSI liaisons have varying levels of experiences and backgrounds (e.g., dean, academic advisor, director, manager, etc.). However, the majority of the leaders are mid-to-upper level administration. Table 2 includes pertinent demographics regarding the fourteen participants.
Table 2

*Ohio Early College (EC) High School Principals and Post-Secondary Liaisons*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Educational</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Taylor</td>
<td>Dayton EC Academy</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>25-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortenous Johnson</td>
<td>Sinclair C.C.</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>45-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michele Dotson</td>
<td>Youngstown ECHS</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>55-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol Ward*</td>
<td>Northeast C.C. *</td>
<td>Executive Administrator</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>45-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernest D. West III</td>
<td>Columbus Africentric</td>
<td>K-12 Leader/Principal</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>35-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Erney</td>
<td>Columbus State C.C.</td>
<td>Dean of Distance Education</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>45-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Wheatley</td>
<td>Toledo ECHS</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>55-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Lentz</td>
<td>University of Toledo</td>
<td>Assistant Director Outreach</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>60-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chet Lenartowicz</td>
<td>Canton ECHS</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>55-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis Trenger</td>
<td>Stark State College</td>
<td>Director of Outreach</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>45-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Herold</td>
<td>University of Akron</td>
<td>Assistant to the Dean</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>40-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marilyn Bennett</td>
<td>Akron ECHS</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>55-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Brown</td>
<td>Charles School ODU</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>55-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Gray</td>
<td>Ohio Dominican Univ.</td>
<td>Director of P-16 Initiatives</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>40-44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* (*) denotes pseudonym
Data Sources and Collection

Quantitative data were collected in conjunction with qualitative data via opened ended and multichotomous questions which included check boxes, multiple choices, and scales. This section provides: (a) a description of each source, (b) the triangulation process, (c) the case study database, and (d) the presentation of the evidence for the case study. The data collected for this study came from three primary sources, and occurred in three phases: (1) survey/questionnaires, (2) interviews, and (3) document collections.

Survey/Questionnaire

Two 46-itemed electronic surveys/questionnaires were created for this study: the Early College High School Principals Survey/Questionnaire (see Appendix E) and the Post-Secondary Liaison Survey/Questionnaire (see Appendix F). The instruments contained three major sections.

Section one included 21 questions that focused on institutional data, such as enrollment and graduate rates, instructor/faculty instruction, and organizational demographics for the 2010-2011 academic year. This section was designed to collect data regarding institutional profile data. See Appendix G for results of this section.

Section two incorporated eight questions that centered on practices of leadership, collaboration, and organizational culture and climate. Questions relevant to cultural and climate dynamics were based on J. Victor Baldridge's three dimensions (i.e., bureaucratic, collegial, and political), Robert Birnbaum's five dimensions (i.e., bureaucratic, collegial, political, anarchical, and cybernetic), and Karl Weick’s making sense of organizations. These multi-dimensional models were utilized because they seek to explain organizational behavior across institutional types (Bess & Dee, 2008b; House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, Dorfman, Javidan, & Dickson,
Even though these dimensional models are traditionally used in college and university settings, the investigator postulated that the models were applicable to this study for three reasons: (a) the theories are well documented and can be transferred to any type of organization; (b) the models allowed the investigator to contextualize the complexities of how secondary and post-secondary institutions work, beyond demographics; and (c) the models allowed for a more in-depth analysis of the collaborations that occurred within, between, and across cases. “These multi-dimensional models examine the interrelationships between societal culture, organizational culture and practices, and organizational leadership” (House, et al., 1999, p. 2). See Appendix H for results of this section.

Section three integrated 17 questions that focused on the participants’ demographic background and personal information. The third section was created to gather data that would allow the investigator to make sense of the participants’ gender, age, race/ethnicity, leadership experience in education, and how they understood and/or identified with underrepresented populations. This portion of the survey/questionnaire provided an overview and introduction of the EC sites and leaders. Many of the participants expounded upon their responses during the interview process, providing a deeper insight into the perceptions of the leaders.

To ensure that the participants had an adequate chance to complete the survey, the link and instructions were sent out on February 15 and the participants were asked to complete the instrument prior to the March 15. Automated reminders were sent out via email beginning March 1 with a one-week follow up to individuals who had not completed the questionnaire/survey. Eleven of the participants completed the instrument prior to the deadline. The final three respondents completed the instrument the first week in April. Even though all of the participants completed the online questionnaire/survey, there was a variation in the response
behavior of the participants. The last three respondents skipped at least two or more questions in section two of the instrument which covered leadership practices and organizational culture and climate. Two of the non-respondents were PSI leaders from two-year, public sites and the other was an EC leader from a private school district. Both of the PSI leaders had multiple roles within their institution. Therefore, it was presumed that the level of interest in the survey topic or lack of time led to their nonresponse. Bickart and Schmittlein (1999) suggest that response propensity or lack of time may be impacted by a participant’s survey fatigue. The length of the entire survey and the intensity of data required for first section may have impacted the completion of the entire survey.

**Interview**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with an open framework to allow for focused conversation (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The semi-structured approach was most befitting to the study’s design and philosophical paradigm because the dialogue was a two-way communication, which allowed the participants to freely express themselves. Due to the nature of the phenomenon being studied, collaborative leadership, a participant would have to be willing to share his/her perspectives and assumptions about their collaborator, which may or may not be political in nature. In addition, the investigator was able to adjust interview questions as needed during the conversation, when deemed necessary to explore issues that were relevant to the context of the collaboration. This mutual perspective, or conversational process, allowed for the articulation of the participants’ viewpoints, while integrating his/her perceptions of the EC partnership and the focal organization’s mission/initiative of the national ECHSI.

Interviews were face-to-face, one- to two-hour conversations conducted at the participants respective ECHS or PSI (see Appendices I and J). The participants were asked to
identify a quiet, private location. Permission was acquired prior to all interviews to use an audio recorder. The audio recorder assured each interview would be documented, and it allowed the investigator to interact with the interviewee to observe body movements and allowed the investigator the freedom to take field notes as the interview occurred. In addition to using the field notes for research observation, the investigator was able to use the notes as commentary to inquire deeper when issues came up and to reflect on personal experiences and impressions of participants as they occurred. The field notes were extremely helpful for the cross-case comparison and documenting information, thoughts about relationships, and observations. Immediately following the interviews, a thank you letter was sent to each participant (see Appendix I).

During the interview process, several participants, especially those who were members of the secondary community often misinterpreted the work “inclusion”. Since this was observed during the first two interviews, the investigator decided to share definitions of the RLM model with any participant that requested. It was stated at the beginning of the interview; however, only three participants asked for clarification of inclusion and one asked for clarification of process-orientation.

Member checks were used to strengthen the study’s dependability as well. The member checks were done in two phases. The first allowed each participant an opportunity to review the transcript of their interview. Four of the participants suggested that edits be made. Once transcripts were revised, they were reissued to each participant for verification. The second member check offered the opportunity to review the within case chapter specific to their EC collaboration. Each participant was allowed up to two weeks to respond with suggestions and
edits. Five participants required edits. Once edits were finalized, participants were allowed an opportunity to review corrections for approval.

**Documents and artifacts**

According to Yin (2003), documentary information is relevant to every case study topic, and in this multiple case study, the method of data collection was used to aid in the understanding of how relationships were formed between the EC partners. Shani (2008) supports the idea that the use documents and artifacts in qualitative studies help to establish “thinking, reasoning, and understanding that are consistent with the organization’s strategy” (p. 168). Further Glesne (1999) asserts that, “Documents and other unobtrusive measures provide both historical and contextual dimensions to… observations and interviews” (p. 59).

The investigator used various documents, artifacts, and written records to provide insight into the participant’s experience (Erlandson et al., 1993). This study relied upon the review of annual reports, mission/vision statements, formal or informal partnership agreements, and supplemental documents such as advisory board documents, bulletins, memos, and newspapers, all of which contained information on the context of Ohio’s EC collaboration.

The investigator conducted systematic searches for relevant documents pertaining to each EC site, the Ohio intermediaries (KnowledgeWorks Foundation and the National Middle College Consortium), and the Ohio EC. The collection of the documents began in December and extended through early February. Over 21 documents were collected and organized according to the EC sites and state-based organizations. The documents were used to examine and “determine the extent to which policies and practices that institutional levels reflected the agenda of these established bodies” (Bridge & Coleman, 2007, p. 278). The following items were collected, organized, and analyzed:
Memoranda of understanding. The memorandums of understanding were essential to the context of the study. Both the state (i.e., intermediaries and Ohio EC Network) and each EC partners; therefore, were contacted to submit these documents for review. Often these agreements serve as legal or non-legal contracts of how the collaboration is to function. The agreements/memorandums set the guidelines and expectations for the institutions and individual’s commitments, defines the roles and responsibilities of those involved, governs the management of funds and resources, and possibly establishes the tone for how decision are made, planning is conducted, and communication is handled (Wepner & Hopkins, 2011).

Annual reports. The investigator requested the most recent annual report from each ECHS site and the state-based EC network; however, there were occasions when the intermediaries were contacted for the collection of data. The annual reports were used to review and analyze the program mission, goals, objectives, and action plans.

Vision/Mission statements. Typically, value and mission statements have been shown to be an important stable reference point and new capability enablers for organization in complex, ever-changing environments. As a result, documents and websites containing vision/mission statements were collected and used from each site, the intermediaries, and the Ohio EC Network. These documents were used to cross-reference common goals that address overlapping site and community interests.

Other supplemental documents. Once these institutional documents were reviewed, the investigator requested supplemental materials (e.g., Board of Trustees minutes, advisory board rosters, course/dual credit articulation agreements, use of facilities contracts, bulletins, memos, and newspapers) which were relevant to EC site outcomes, histories, and partnerships development.
There are pros and cons to using documents and artifacts in qualitative studies. The investigator discovered multiple advantages: (a) the data from the documents allowed the investigator to gather words and concepts from the participants and their organizations; (b) the information was accessible and convenient at any time; and (c) the documents contained facts that were not readily available (i.e., names, statistics, etc.). Conversely, the limitations of documents and artifacts, included: (a) the subjectivity of the documents, (b) the reservation of participants to share confidential document, if and when they had them, and (c) limit or non-existing documentation of the EC collaboration’s origin, and/or policies and practices of the partnership.

**Data Analysis**

According to Yin (2010), there is “no cookbook for analyzing case study data;” however, “the most critical step in doing case study research [is] analyzing your case study data” (p. 15). In a case study design, the appropriate analytical strategy and technique are vital. According to the design of this multiple case study, the best analytical technique was relying on theoretical proposition. Within a general case study design, the theory is not only used for data collection, but also the analysis: “it is the level at which the generalization of the case study results will occur” (Yin, 2010, p. 31). The primary goal of theory development is to maintain the central focus of the study to ensure that the overarching research questions and conceptual framework are preserved throughout the analysis (Simons, 2009; Yin, 2010; 2003). According to Yin (2010), maintaining the research questions and conceptual framework while analyzing the data allows the investigator to support previous key assumptions and/or stimulate new lessons proposed outside of the original key assumptions.
Qualitative Data Analysis

All of the research questions employed an etic approach to coding responses from the semi-structured questions. Coding was performed using NVivo 9 software. Codes were based on the a priori conceptual framework outlined in Table 3 and was used to address the following three statements, derived from research questions.

1. What was the leaders’ understanding of the EC collaboration?
2. What were the leaders’ perceptions of the RLM?
3. Which of the RLM components had an impact on the collaboration and why?
Table 3

**Qualitative Analytic Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding Category</th>
<th>Sub-code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Leadership Required to Facilitate an EC Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship Characteristics Advantages/Successes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disadvantages/Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of RLM</td>
<td>Purposeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empowering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process-Orientated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Key Attributes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLM Impact</td>
<td>Individual leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-Organization (EC Collaboration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emic</td>
<td>Emergent data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Utilizing a priori conceptual framework allowed the investigator to use an inductive process of working back and forth between the themes until a comprehensive set of themes was developed. Once the themes emerged through the data, the information was cross-referenced to support, disclaim, or generate new patterns with relative frequencies within the multiple-case
This was done through an array of matrices, themes, flow charts, and tabulated frequencies. The analysis was conducted within-case to identify themes and patterns within the data. Then a cross-case search for patterns was engaged to examine the similarities and differences across cases. When the themes are supported by evidence from another source or case, the findings became stronger. Also known as categorical aggregation, this process allowed the investigator to collect repeated/significant instances of the data and clear analysis of the relevant issues which emerged (Stake, 1995). In this study, issues of quality were addressed in the following manner: semi-structured interviews triangulated with survey design and document analysis, data collection, and qualitative analysis were conducted in accordance with the constructs of validity, reliability, objectivity, and trustworthiness (Yin, 2003).

**Trustworthiness**

In an effort to increase the trustworthiness of the study the investigator strived to follow systematic methods of a multiple-case study design. As mentioned previously, this case study employed systematic data collection, comparative research design (i.e., within and between case analysis), and rigorous analytical strategies (i.e., coding process) to ensure that the study was a positive example of methodological adequacy each of these steps contribute to the methodological adequacy, which ensure trustworthiness. Researchers suggest the best way to illustrate trustworthiness is through the following four attributes: internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity (Erlandson et al., 1993). Each was relevant to this study.

**Internal validity.** The first attribute, internal validity, represents the truth value or credibility of how the research is carried out (Ely et al., 1991). Internal validity relates to the extent that research findings accurately represent the phenomenon under investigation (Briggs & Coleman 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). In this study, internal validity was established in
multiple ways: (a) prolonged engagement—the investigator spent six months in the field establishing rapport and conducting personal interviews, focus groups, and observations; (b) triangulation of data through the convergence of multiple sources of data; (c) member checks were conducted at each phase of the data collection process and after the results section was completed to allow the participants the opportunity to respond to descriptions, quotations, and interpretations that were attributed to them; (d) referential adequacy of case study methodology (e.g., development and use of case study protocol, sampling, and pattern-matching); (e) peer debriefing—conducted to probe for biases of the investigator and a deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied (Patrick Pauken, J.D., Ph.D., Vice Provost of Government & Faculty Relations and jointly appointed Associate Professor of Educational Administration and Leadership Studies and the Department of Higher Education and Students Affairs at Bowling Green State University, served as the debriefer); and (f) a reflexive journal was maintained on a regular basis by the investigator to guard against ethical and methodological concerns that could occur during the research process.

External validity. The second attribute, *external validity*, references *applicability* or *transferability* of the research, which refers to the degree to which the findings of the study can be applied to other contexts with other participants and/or generalized to the wider population (Briggs & Coleman, 2007). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), “the naturalist cannot specify the external validity of an inquiry; he can only provide a thick description necessary to enable someone interested to making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility” (p. 316). In holding with this principle, the investigator used thick, rich descriptions of the participants’ interviews, rigorous case study methods (e.g., purposive sampling, multiple-cases, and step-by-step methods), in addition to a reflexive journal
to try to aid someone interested in using the findings of this study to generalize about analogous populations.

**Reliability.** The third attribute, *reliability*, signifies *consistency* or *dependability* of the study, which confirms if the data is supportable. According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), a study’s reliability supports that the “data (constructions, assertions, facts, and so on) can be tracked to his/her courses, and that the logic used to assemble the interpretations into structurally coherent and corroborating wholes is both explicit and implicit” (p. 243). In this case, reliability was established by thoroughly describing the data collection and analysis processes and by properly storing the raw data for future use. Triangulation was used to enhance the reliability of the study’s design.

**Objectivity.** The final attribute, *objectivity*, characterizes *neutrality* or *authenticity* and are the standards, behavior, and integrity of the investigator and the participants and how they mutually explored constructions and interpretations. In this study, objectivity was confirmed through peer reviews, member checks, and a reflexive journal. Lincoln and Guba (1989, 1985) argued that although trustworthiness is critical to the quality of the research, trustworthiness alone is not sufficient it requires a burden of proof on the investigator through fairness and multiple levels of authenticity (i.e., ontological, educative, catalytic, and tactical authenticity).

**Researcher Subjectivity**

An important aspect of any qualitative study design, data collection process, or data analysis process is the subjectivity of the investigator (Creswell, 2007; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Yin, 2003). As Glesne and Peshkin (1992) observed, “Previous experiences with settings or peoples can set up expectations for certain types of interactions that will constrain effective data
In the following section, I, the lead investigator, attempted to address my positionality and subjectivities in relation to this study.

Over the last three years, I have pondered on the question – why has it been difficult for educational systems to build and sustain collaborative models across educational sectors? Being a former post-secondary liaison to an ECHS, I understood the unique challenges that EC leaders and advocates face every day as well as the successes they experience. But as a student, parent, and member of a traditionally underrepresented population, the insufficiencies of my answers to this question led me to want to understand how academic achievement gaps of minorities and non-minorities impact various educational sectors. I am a product of multiple pre-college programs (i.e., Upward Bound, Student Support Services, Talent Search, and Ronald McNair), all of which were specifically designed for minority students (i.e., women, ethnic/racial minorities, first-generation college students, and low-income). My involvement in these programs has allowed me to gain a level of respect and appreciation for the services offered that try to expand and improve the educational pipeline by increasing college access and retention of traditionally underrepresented students. I believe that it has been a combination of these experiences which has contributed to my personal academic success, transitioning through the educational pipeline – preschool (P), secondary (K-12), post-secondary systems (P-16), and graduate school (P-20). Whether the educational process has been seamless or not, all of my educational experiences contribute to the level of personal significance this topic holds.

In contemplating the possible “hidden agendas” I might hold, such as: (a) my desire to see these collaborations succeed; (b) my belief that the EC model is a proven model of success; (c) my understanding that these programs help students like myself transition from urban public
school systems on to higher educational institutions to obtain bachelor’s degrees and beyond; and (d) my aspiration to start an urban-based EC of my own.

As I share my agendas, I am reminded that it is impossible to remove my biases, and as Peshkin (1988) shared, whatever the substance of one’s persuasion is at a given point it cannot be removed. Therefore, honesty and transparency are the best solutions to resolving any hidden agendas. In addition, Glesne (1999) suggests that subjectivity is something to capitalize on rather than to exorcise. Just as an effective educator must have a passion for his or her students, this investigator also feels that an effective qualitative researcher must reveal, monitor, and capitalize on his/her passion for the topic or issue under scrutiny. It is important for the reader to understand that the study was approached with the assumption that there are multiple lenses through which educational administrators view and understand collaboration. For this study, it was therefore expected that participants’ understanding would be different from mine.

**Framing the Within-Case Results and Analysis**

Chapters IV through X present the Within-Case Results and Analyses for the seven cases in this study: Dayton, Ohio EC Collaboration (Chapter IV); Youngstown, Ohio EC Collaboration (Chapter V); Columbus, Ohio Public EC Collaboration (Chapter VI); Toledo, Ohio EC Collaboration (Chapter VII); Akron, Ohio EC Collaboration (Chapter VIII); Columbus, Ohio Private EC Collaboration (Chapter IX); and Canton, Ohio EC Collaboration (Chapter X). The chapters are presented in chronological order according to the year the partnership was established and introduced by their geographical location. The content within each case is organized into three broad sections: narratives, results and analysis, and summary.

The first section, the narrative, is divided into two general subsections. The first subsection describes the organizations, which include the ECHS and their partnering PSI(s). The
second subsection introduces the roles, responsibilities, and leadership styles of the ECHS principals and PSI leaders. The results and analysis section is grouped into three segments according to the major themes that emerged from each of the three research questions.

The first research question was “How do Ohio Early College leaders understand the Ohio Early College relationship?” This question included three general areas: (a) the leaders’ understanding of the relationship, (b) the characteristics that make up the collaboration, and (c) the advantages and successes and disadvantages and challenges of the partnership.

The second research question was “How do participants perceive the various components of the RLM?” This question contains five sections which correspond with the five components of RLM: —purposeful, empowering, inclusive, ethical, and process-orientated. The first component, purpose or purposeful, explains how the partners commit to a common goal. It discussed the leaders’ understanding of the institutions’ commitment to the EC mission and the goals of the ECHS. The second, empowering, clarified how the leaders encouraged members to get involved with the EC collaboration. The second component addressed who should be involved with the collaboration, the importance of being involved, how leaders empower others to become actively engaged, and how empowered they felt as leaders. The third component, inclusive, explained how the leaders understood and valued all aspects of diversity. This embarked upon the leaders’ interpretation of inclusion and whether they thought inclusion was important to the collaboration. The fourth, ethics or ethical, discussed how the leaders are guided according to moral principles. This component dealt with values that are essential to building and sustaining partnerships, conflicting values the leaders may have had to deal with while interacting with members of the collaboration, and the importance of ethics overall. The fifth and final component, process or process-oriented, covered the ways in which members of
the organizations interacted and how their interactions impacted the intra-organizational collaboration. This area focused on the leaders’ understanding of boundary crossing and building unified teams across educational sectors.

The third research question was “Which if any of the Relational Leadership Model components have the greatest impact on the Early College partnership?” This section included the participants’ understanding of how the theoretical model and if the components are useful in building EC collaborations.

The summary for each case provides a recap and analysis of the leaders’ experiences working together in the collaboration. The concluding section examines the context in which the partnership was established, leaders’ styles, roles and responsibilities, and key attributes that they have found useful to building and sustaining their EC partnership. This section provides the basis for discussion of the experiences with-in case results and analysis.

Summary

As a result of high school reform initiatives, EC collaborations are on the rise. More and more school districts and colleges are partnering to establish EC programs. This chapter reviewed the research design and methodology used to analyze the organizational partnership of seven ECHSs and seven PSIs in the state of Ohio.
CHAPTER IV. CASE ONE: DAYTON EC COLLABORATION

Background of Dayton, Ohio EC Collaboration

The first EC initiative in the state of Ohio was established in 2003, in Dayton, Ohio as the Dayton Early College Academy (DECA). The state of Ohio gained national recognition with the ECHSI when DECA became the tenth ECHS in the nation. Originally, the school was founded as a public school in the school district of Dayton, but in July of 2007 the academy reorganized as a public community school, independent of Dayton Public Schools. DECA is one of two Ohio ECHSs with two post-secondary partners, the University of Dayton (a four-year, private university) and Sinclair Community College (a two-year, public community college).

ECHS Structure: Profile, Mission, Purpose, and Curriculum

DECA delivers a five-year college preparatory curriculum for urban youth grades 9-12. DECA enrolled 421 students during the 2010-2011 academic year, of which 379 students were from ethnic/racial minority groups, 366 were first-generation college students, 310 were from low-income households, and three were non-native English-speaking students (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 30, 2012).

Upon entrance, students are evaluated and placed in academic tracks based on their individual needs. These tracks are referred to as Gateways. Gateways were developed by David T. Conley, director of the Center for Educational Policy Research at the University of Oregon, in order to bolster the knowledge and skills necessary for college readiness. DECA uses Gateways in place of Carnegie Units (e.g., the basic unit used to define the number of hours spent in a high school course) to evaluate a student’s success in completing course work. DECA uses a series of six Gateways to assess a student’s success and academic progression.
According to DECA standards, in order to pass a Gateway, students must demonstrate the following: (a) success in college-preparatory skills such as using a planner and conducting research projects; (b) demonstration of personal growth and a commitment to co-curricular activities, such as community service, internships, co-ops, or job shadowing; and (c) illustration of academic competence by maintaining high grades (DECA, n.d.). Competences of courses are based on four core sequences, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. These core courses are taught by DECA’s mentor-teachers, also called “advisors.” The term advisor is used as a complement of DECA’s approach to developing the students’ academic, social, and emotional learning. The advisors serve as curricular and co-curricular instructors and guides. Once the students have proven themselves academically, they are allowed to take college courses on Sinclair Community College campus. DECA had a total of 43 seniors, of which 40 graduated during the spring of 2011 and every senior was enrolled in college-level courses (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 30, 2012).

PSI Structure: Profile, Mission, and Purpose

University of Dayton. The University of Dayton (UD) is a private Roman Catholic University founded in the 1850 by the Marianists (Society of Mary). During fall 2010, the University had a total enrollment of 11,063 (7,861 undergraduate/3,202 graduate), and an annual undergraduate tuition and fees of $31,640 ($957 per credit) (University of Dayton Fact Book, 2011). Within the partnership, UD provides academic resources for DECA students, professional development for DECA faculty and staff, and facilities for DECA; the academy is housed on the third floor of UD’s College Park Center.

Sinclair Community College. DECA’s countering partner, Sinclair Community College, is one of Ohio’s largest community colleges. Located in downtown Dayton, this urban
community college provides associate’s degrees, certificates, and four-year transfer options to more than 26,000 students at a full-time rate of $2,095 per year or $90.10 per credit hour. With a significant tuition reduction and the support of the Sinclair Foundation, Sinclair Community College provides academic support, resources, and college courses for DECA students.

Boundary Crossing: Aligning Mission and Shared Resources

Even though a representative from UD was unable to participate in this study, Sinclair Community College agreed. According to Dave Taylor, DECA Principal, the partnership between DECA and Sinclair Community College has been phenomenal, and without the support of Sinclair Community College DECA would be unable to fulfill its mission to prepare “learners from the Dayton Public School District to go to college and be the first in their families to graduate” (Dayton Early College Academy [DECA], n.d.). Taylor confirms that the primary function of DECA “is to prepare students who are the first in their family or who come from poverty to gain college exposure so that they will be successful in the postsecondary option of their choice” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012). Sinclair Community College’s mission aligns by helping “individuals turn dreams into achievable goals through accessible, high quality, affordable learning opportunities” (Sinclair Community College, 2010). With combined efforts, these institutions provide college courses and academic preparation that will prepare students to gain the college experience necessary to transfer to a four-year college of their choice.

ECHS Leader: David “Dave” Taylor

Mr. Dave Taylor has been the principal of DECA since 2009. His tenure at DECA began in 2003 as a mathematics teacher for four years, and then as assistant principal for two years. Dave was born and raised in Pennsylvania and currently resides in Dayton, Ohio with his wife
and twin sons. Mr. Taylor is an African American male in his upper 20s and his highest level of educational attainment is a Master’s degree in education from Cedarville University.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Taylor’s primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide leadership, vision, and policy development for the EC collaboration. Taylor clarifies that, “I don’t have an overly direct role in the process that is the role of our college liaison” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 116-117). The college liaison position parallels the duties and responsibilities of a guidance counselor. The primary focus of this position is “working with students to get them scheduled at Sinclair and working with colleges to make sure the students experience is complete” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 130-132). The position has a continuous relationship with students throughout their transition into a four-year institution and beyond, which includes “college placement, financial aid, and scholarships” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Line 133). However, as the principal of DECA, “I am here to ensure that whether you are a … teacher or student, I’m dedicated to your success and your personal growth” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 160-163).

**Leadership Style**

Taylor described himself as “a servant-leader.” Taylor shared that his employees are the central focus of his role. He reflected on being a mentor and resource, “My goal is to make sure the needs of my staff and students are met—I am a servant-leader” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Line 145). Taylor talked about empowering those around him, “I am big on hiring teachers and getting out of the way…. you should provide guidance and structure… but don’t dictate” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 146-
Taylor also shared, “I’m dedicated to the success and personal growth of my staff and students” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 162-163). Overall, David categorized his leadership style as coordinator, organizer, and administrator.

**PSI Leader: Mortenous A. Johnson**

Mortenous A. Johnson has been the manager of the Office of Pre-College Programs at Sinclair Community College for 10 years. The Office of Pre-College Programs is designed to supplement students’ academic experience and provide college preparation and outreach through various programs such as Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound, Young Scholars Program, Carl D. Perkins, and Advanced College Entry (ACE). DECA falls under the purview of ACE, in which the staff provides academic support services such as scheduling, advising, testing, tutoring and other resources to DECA. Johnson has been at Sinclair Community College for 18 years and prior to his tenure as the manager of Pre-College Programs, he worked in admissions and as the director of the Young Scholars Program. Mr. Johnson reports to the director of School Linkages Group (which includes Fast Forward Center, Pre-College Programs, and Academic Resource Center), who reports to the senior vice president of Enrollment Management, up to the president of Sinclair Community College, and the board of trustees. Though born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, but resides Dayton, Ohio. He is an African American male in his 40s with a Master’s degree in educational administration from the University of Dayton.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Johnson described his role as an administrator “by definition, task, and even function” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 245-246). His primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide decision-making, leadership/vision planning,
outreach and recruitment, parent/family involvement, planning and coordination, policy
development, professional development, and coordinating student support (counseling,
mentoring, advising, etc.) (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012). “As an
administrator, I secure the necessary resources to include, staffing, funding, goals and anticipated
outcomes to sustain this project… my goal is to serve as a facilitator” (M. Johnson, personal
communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 258-260). Johnson shared how he takes “a team
approach and…I will never ask them to do anything that I can’t do. So I have no problems rolling
up my sleeves to get the job done” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines
247-249). The practice and theory of leaders who assume facilitator styles understand that one
person alone cannot get the job done and it is going to take the “time, effort, and support of
everyone to ensure the success of the partnership” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March

Leadership Style

Johnson declared he uses, “A progressive leadership style and it’s coupled with an
Afrocentric ethos and he likes to “engage others” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March
view on leadership and relationships are very circular, very collaborative” (M. Johnson, personal
communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1196-1198). Johnson connects his role, responsibilities,
and style. He posits:

This work is really not about me, I’m just the vehicle. I’m just here for a minute to do a
couple of things and I hope I do them very well. And then leave a pathway and a legacy
for someone else to continue. (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012,
Lines 294-298)
Johnson categorized his leadership style as entrepreneurial, innovative, and risk taking (M. Johnson, personal communication, April 30, 2012). The literature draws a connection between innovative and facilitator styles. According to Yang (2006), facilitator, mentor, and innovator roles were positively correlated with effective leadership. Johnson’s reflections emphasize bringing harmony and equality to the group, while utilizing the expertise of all those involved. Throughout Johnson’s interview, the same themes came up – facilitation, progression, efficiency, building connections through equality, and “progressive Afrocentric philosophical leadership.”

**Leaders’ Understanding of EC Relationship**

Both leaders agreed that the school-university relationship “makes sense” and it is essential to pool resources. Johnson described their relationship as “a symbiotic relationship.” “It’s a necessity…we need each other and…I think we understand that” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 96-98). Johnson postulates:

> Beyond the policies and image, both institutions have and need to have the desire to come together beyond the nation's education reform movement. Quite frankly, we as institutions need to share as many resources as possible for the current and future of this community. Fortunately for us at Sinclair we have a number of caring and benevolent leaders who almost insist that we have genuine conversations with one another that lead to some progressive outcomes for students. (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 12-19)

In Taylor’s interview, he reiterates similar sentiments of the relationship’s importance, and how “it makes a tremendous amount of sense” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 26-27). He states:
They also have a lot of significant dollars to make sure the initiative is cost-feasible for us. Sinclair has been a partner with us from the very beginning. On paper it has always been University of Dayton, so our actual academic partner. Truly, in terms of actual academic support has been 95% Sinclair. Sinclair has really been just a phenomenal friend to us. In terms of the University of Dayton, the reason why our relationship hasn’t evolved in the same way with the academics is simply cost. The University is a private University, unlike all the other early colleges in the state, private universities being able to waiver their cost on their end. However, we are unable to do this on our end, it’s untenable, and it’s not going to happen. Our costs are a tenth of UD’s, so for DECA, Sinclair Community College is a phenomenal community college, it simply is a working partnership; it makes a tremendous amount of sense for both entities to do this. (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 17-27)

Johnson agrees that the partnership “is a cost benefit” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Line 455). He explains that the relationship between the three institutions is harmonic and the community is fortunate to have two institutions in close proximity who can provide resources. Johnson shares:

There’s a triangulated relationship, and it just makes perfect sense for students to take their general education courses right here at Sinclair…. The classes here are a tremendous cost savings to the program, and most importantly the students can experience a smaller class size with a dedicated staff who will support them through their transition…from a business model perspective, it just makes more sense to have them do what they’re doing here. (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 456-466)
Taylor agrees that the relationship is genuine. “It started off solely as a project around the academics and around college courses, but really it has expanded into a true partnership, where we – for them and for us as well” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 86-89).

**Leadership Required to Facilitate an EC Partnership**

Flexibility and vision are themes that recurred throughout Taylor’s interview. Taylor believed that flexibility is important for any person working in a partnership, especially across areas that have different goals. Taylor shared that flexibility and vision are dependent on each other in a collaborative relationship. Taylor recounted, “You have to have vision…you have to be able to look at your institutional goals, and see the partnership as a vehicle to help you attain those goals” instead of coming into the relationship looking to see “what changes need to be made.” Taylor reflected on the importance of being flexible enough to forgo the best interest of the institution for the interest of the students. Taylor stated, “A lot of times, especially with schools, you have sacred cows; you have things that cannot be touched and will not be touched because that is the way we have always done them.” Taylor believed that it is time for leaders to challenge things that no one wants to address or that others are afraid to change simply because of tradition, these “sacred cows” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 201-207).

For Johnson, active participation and eliminating the construct of fear were recurring themes. Johnson’s leadership style and personal philosophies floated between transactional, transformational, and collaborative theoretical models – what many might call situational. Depending on the situation, his style would change. However, Johnson declared that the EC model is “a 21st century model” that requires a “participatory style,” someone who is able to be

He also suggested that those who lead a progressive initiative such as EC must be able to address the construct of fear? “A way in which to erode fear is to recognize and understand that there’s two domains” one is “mental courage” and the other is “physical courage.” Johnson believed that one must possess them both. It takes the mental stamina to address an issue and the physical bravery to take a stance. “You need to be ready to stand up on principle and make some hard-line decisions when it comes to people.” In addition, he shared that a leader has to “be able to really listen to folks and then when necessary, coach them in a way that helps them grow and redevelop to meet organization end goals and meet their own personal end goals” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 357-366).

**Relationship Characteristics**

As leaders of ECHSI, the Dayton team has revolutionized the early college model:

We have drastically changed our position on the early college model. Unlike many of the other early colleges, which take to gospel the idea that we want students to earn an associate’s degree before they leave, that’s not even close to being our intention. Our goal is that all of our students have a world-class high school experience, so that when they go to a four-year university they’re prepared to be successful there. Now in our minds, that includes exposure to the college-going process and earning credits, but it is not restricted or limited to earning an associate degree. (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 207-217)
The leaders agreed that forcing students to complete associate’s degrees while also completing high school is important to the mission of EC; however, every student is not prepared for the rigor and academic intensity, so they do not push students to complete the associate’s, but to be prepared for college upon completing their high school diploma. They both agreed that this decision had nothing to do with the student’s level of academic preparation. They discovered that pushing students through cohorts to attain degrees impeded the student’s experience. Taylor’s sentiments were, “College is different from high school…even though we are very proud to be an early college…we have to do what’s in the best interest of our students” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 225-226). In determining what was best for the student, both institutions came together to design the best model. According to Johnson:

As a collective, we had to come together to design the best curriculum so the students could have a holistic experience…. It is an integrated experience, which strengthens intellectual, social, and emotional competencies of the students. Our goal is to develop true citizens, and it is the responsibility of both teams to provide the support, resources, and expertise to make sure these students excel. (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 468-476)

Taylor questioned:

Do we simply follow the national early college model because this is what we were initially signed up to do, or do we do what’s in the best interest of our kids moving forward? We made the decision to maintain the tenets of the initiative, but to redesign the national model to fit our community and students. (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 227-234)
When surveyed, both leaders agreed that curriculum and instruction were a high priority for the EC collaboration, with Taylor adding assessment and professional development. Although neither was mentioned in his interview, Taylor ranked these items as highly important to the partnership. However, Johnson mentioned throughout his interview the importance of documenting successes and collecting data: “It is wonderful to have data—it’s proof” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 927-928). However, Johnson selected financial support as a high priority of the collaboration. In recounting his experiences leading Sinclair Community College in the collaboration, he focused on having the financial capital to support the initiative; being in the position to create opportunities, make decisions, and direct resources; and the benevolence of the institution’s leadership.

**Advantages/Succes**

According to Taylor, the collaboration has several advantages, primarily the institution’s commitment of human, financial, and physical resources. The human resource advantage is “an entire office dedicated towards helping the enrollment process as well as programs that address teens” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 15-17). The financial advantage is “a lot of significant dollars to make sure that this is cost-feasible for us.” The physical advantage was stated as follows:

The power of place is significant. Having kids physically go to a well-established community college’s location and take college classes there is a huge confidence booster. I want a more tangible front, the fact that students can leave with college credits and enroll and know that Sinclair’s credits will transfer to entities within the state, it’s significant, and that’s something that’s a real selling point to our students as well as to our families. (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 73-80)
Regarding Sinclair’s successes, Johnson pointed out:

We have been recognized nationally, statewide, and locally for being innovators in the work of consistently providing ground-breaking programs and platforms for students. Sinclair has been noted as one of the premier community colleges in the state and one of the premier community college amongst the league of innovation of 1,200 community colleges in the country to have this kind of work, the Office of Precollege Programs work, that extends itself strategically with measureable outcome and data – proof – around what we do and how we do our business that’s providing educational opportunities for students. (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 108-117)

Johnson led me directly into my next question regarding disadvantages. Johnson explained that with fame, comes great responsibility.

**Disadvantages/Challenges**

As an innovator, an ECHS must maintain a stellar reputation of producing success and its team must keep a high level of energy in order to continue to produce successful outcomes. Johnson felt the pressure of maintaining the status quo could be a disadvantage, and shared how the infrastructure between educational systems is broken and in need of repair. He was quite concerned with the members of post-secondary communities criticizing secondary educational systems and their students regarding level of preparedness. “Let’s stop beating up our secondary educational partners” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 191-192). According to Johnson, PSIs do not have the same pressures and challenges as secondary systems because “there’s no federal or state mandate that says you better go find out where those students
are and you must make sure they are educated to our standard” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 196-198).

He was concerned for secondary educators, specifically their large class sizes and that they have to take into account the various needs, issues, and situations of the students and their families. Typically, the secondary educator must play multiple roles – teacher, disciplinarian, caregiver, and big brother or sister. Johnson acknowledged that this is a disadvantage, most particularly for the secondary educator. “I refuse to condemn our secondary partners about what’s happening with the system – within their school building or within their district” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 214-216). Johnson felt that negative energies should be redirected toward educational reform:

The core issues: What are the policies that we have in place that continue to either marginalize under-educated populations? We talk about what we need to do in terms of education and where our grand number needs to be in terms of the global market place, but when you step back and look at what’s happening we have to ask ourselves the question. If secondary education is being led by the scholarship of post-secondary, who’s really at fault? In order to move to the next level, you have to take ownership in that which you’re involved. You can’t say it’s “them” when “we” live in shared system called education. That’s a blame game and that’s an easy way out and I don’t personally, professionally, or philosophically subscribe to that. (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 219-233)

Johnson also addressed a major assumption of faculty working with traditional-aged high school students in college settings. He discussed how a few faculty members have raised the issue of maturity and inappropriate behavior. However, he questioned how their behavior was
any different from a traditionally-aged student. He found himself stepping up to challenge and dispel myths. It is through deconstructing his own fear that he is able to address difficult conversations:

“If you’re talking about immaturity or inappropriate behaviors, how is that any different than any other student who hands in a paper late, who doesn’t take an exam, who sleeps in class - help me understand that. So, at some point you have to accept that these students are somewhat exceptional in what they do and their ability to not only persists through high school, but … college at the same time. You might have to rewire your thinking – your perceptions around these students. (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 941-949)

Taylor struggled to come up with disadvantages and challenges of the collaboration: “Our relationship has been great with Sinclair, absolutely wonderful…. There have not been major issues…It’s hard for me to speak ill of Sinclair” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 240-245). As the interview continued, Taylor shared that nothing or no one is perfect, but he could not think of any major issues. The one issue that came to mind during the interview, one he felt was “more of an internal issue” that DECA and Sinclair Community College were able to work out, was scheduling, and how they have “had issues getting kids into the sections that we want” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 243-247).

Taylor mentioned the greatest disadvantage between DECA and Sinclair Community College was academic rigor across educational sectors. “We’ve gotten more sophisticated and our classes have become more rigorous in many respects than the Sinclair classes” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 100-101). Taylor gave the example of reviewing graded assignments of students taking college course, and discovering that if the assignment was
graded at the high school, it would have received a lower mark. Taylor attributed this to the fact DECA students are not Sinclair’s targeted audience. “Their target audience is a smattering of people from all different walks of life, so they’re not going to tweak what they’re doing solely to fit our needs, so we have to supplement that here” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 109-112).

Academic rigor and creaming were themes that arose in this study. Faculty members have stated that “all PSEO students are the top 20% of their class, the cream of the crop,” but Johnson’s experience and data tell a different story. “They are academic middle students, according to our most recent data” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 923-926). He described how these types of faculty interactions have the possibility of creating “underlying tensions about where students are” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Line 929).

Leaders’ Perceptions of RLM within the EC Relationship

This section covers Taylor’s and Johnson’s awareness of the collaboration’s purposefulness, inclusion, process-orientation, practices of ethics, and empowerment of self and others.

Purposeful

For Taylor and Johnson, purpose was more than just being able to articulate the mission and to share who has been involved with the EC initiative. It was about committing to a common goal. Taylor believed that both organizations must value rigorous, relevant curricula, strong relationships, efficient processes, innovative teaching strategies, and team members with a true commitment that transcends traditional high school programs. “We are a mission-driven school, and we understand college, college, college. That’s what we’re about. All of our
processes, all of our procedures, and all of the little things that we do are geared towards helping kids get there” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 499-502). Sinclair Community College plays an important role in helping DECA fulfill its mission, “They are…our student’s first exposure…to the college-going process” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 506-509). Sinclair Community College has committed its time and resources to the success of the EC initiative. In fact, Sinclair has “an entire office dedicated towards helping” DECA reach its goals (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 14-15).

**Empowering**

The partnership between DECA and Sinclair Community College is bound by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This document is a multilateral agreement between DECA, Sinclair Community College, and UD. There is a state agreement for programs that fall under the auspices of PSEO called the Ohio Articulation and Transfer Policy, under which academic dual credit courses and college courses can be transferred within the state of Ohio to two-year and four-year institutions. There are also Facility Agreements between DECA and both PSI. Those involved in the day-to-day operation of EC meet as a team at least once a week. Quarterly, the leaders of the EC initiative meet with other EC leaders throughout the state. Both Taylor and Johnson also have the opportunity of meeting as needed with parents of DECA students.

There was a disparity between Taylor’s and Johnson’s responses to who was involved with the initiative. According to Taylor, those involved from the ECHS included DECA’s counselors/advisors, principal, and students. Johnson identified those individuals, but added teachers, parents, and CEO/Superintendent. According to Taylor, the involvement from the PSI
included academic deans/chairs/coordinators, executive-level administrators (vice presidents and
directors), and faculty members. On the other hand, Johnson identified executive-level
administrators, faculty members, and university staff (counselors, advisors, etc.). In short, each
participant offered a longer list of those who were involved from the partnering organization, but
reduced the number of individuals involved from their own institution.

When reflecting on the participants’ explanation of empowering self and others, Taylor
said, “I am big on empowering those around me” when he described his leadership style (D.
Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Line 146). In addition, he mentioned that he
personally has all the “latitude” he needs to make decisions on behalf of DECA. Taylor
attributes his personal level of empowerment or latitude to the efficiency of DECA’s processes.
“The process works really well. It’s one of those things that maybe you have the right or ability
to make changes, but there’s no need to do so at this time, because the process works” (D.
Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 662-665). Taylor explained how he
gives his staff the same latitude that he is given, but it all starts with hiring the right people (D.
Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012).

Taylor and Johnson agreed it is ideal to hire people with diverse skill sets, high levels of
competence, and a commitment to work with underrepresented populations. According to
Taylor, the leader should hire faculty and “get out of the way” (D. Taylor, personal
communication, March 9, 2012, Line 149), while Johnson stated “the staff is in charge” (M.
provide guidance and structure…but you don’t dictate” (D. Taylor, personal communication,
March 9, 2012, Lines 152-153). As Johnson proposed, “I provide support and mentoring…. I’ll
deal with the policy issues, but procedures, the staff handles that” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1147-1148).

Taylor believed he has been empowered; therefore, he empowers others, which in turn allows him to be dedicated to his staff’s success and personal growth. Johnson believed that “no one person should be the sum total of anything” and it takes an entire team (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1157-1158). Johnson echoed these sentiments: “It should be about a collective motif whereby, as leader, I am helping my staff, my team move to the next level, given their professional goals and plans” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1159-1161).

Personally, Johnson believed he was in a position to make a difference; therefore, he is able to empower others:

I’m in a position where I can – I like to think either inform or influence folks to make some difference – make some changes. I’m not trying to necessarily convert anybody…. That’s not my goal; but if I can influence folks to bequeath resources, if I can influence folks to channel their energies or their capital in a different kind of way that will help young people, then, I think everyone wins. (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 56-64)

**Inclusion**

Both Johnson and Taylor suggested that parents are a major part of the initiative and often their voices are excluded. However, when working with underrepresented populations, especially those from ethnic/racial minority groups, decisions about higher education are made as a collective. This is why Johnson suggests it is important to “understand family structure and
the dynamics the family – how family and community play in their lives and decision-making processes” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 155-158).

Taylor believed that it takes an entire community to make sure that “our children’s experience at the college is as authentic as possible,” and the whole family has “to be included in the conversation” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 337-338). DECA serves “a significant number of students, especially minority students who are the first in their family or who come from poverty” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 356-358), and Taylor and his staff often have to explain the non-traditional high school (e.g., why the program is five years instead of four and the cost advantages the program). I am responsible to that student and to that student’s parents for communicating what’s going on with that child…. So it’s really – the relationship that extends in truth beyond the academics, it becomes a personal thing” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 427-431).

According to Taylor, all of the teachers are a part of this inclusive community. All full-time teachers at DECA are advisors to students; they help create a stable environment where students feel supported and encouraged, adding a personal touch beyond just teaching and building an inclusive environment.

Johnson defined inclusion as diverse representation of ideas, beliefs, and backgrounds. “If you don’t have the voices of others of difference, you’re bound to keep the…status quo” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1026-1028). He believed that change is good when necessary; however, many people are too afraid to question the existing state of affairs. Johnson’s position is that people will eventually question why you do what you do, especially when it is not effective. He shared, “We’ve got to deconstruct that because it is not moving the agenda for all, it’s moving the agenda and sustaining it for this elite group and that
needs to change” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1037-1040). His theme of “courage” and “deconstructing fear” enlightened his position on addressing “what’s not being talked about” because he believed he has a responsibility as a leader in the initiative to address what’s not being said (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 982-985). Johnson also believed you must attend to “who’s not in the room? Why? Because there’s power in silence” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 982-985). According to Johnson, an advocate for inclusion must have the courage to eradicate the construct of fear: “you have got to be able to stand up and say at those moments—we’re trying to move this inclusionary agenda” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 990-992).

**Ethical**

Taylor felt ethics were extremely important to the collaboration, especially with regard to processes. Johnson agreed, but took the position that, “Ethics is important in everything that we do (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1121-1122). Johnson also took a broad approach to the importance of ethics by associating being ethical with integrity: “Integrity’s all I have; therefore, I have to do the right thing period” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1127-1128). According to Johnson, doing the right thing, being of your word, and addressing inequalities in spite of fear are associated with being ethical.

On the other hand, Taylor believed ethics were about being fair and just in your daily practices and policies. In recounting his experiences working with DECA, Taylor shared how the staff often debated:
How much information for us to know about our kid’s actual performance at Sinclair is too much? Obviously there are things that protect students in college classes, and we require students to sign a waiver, saying “Hey, we need to know what your grades are there because we’re paying for these classes.” Does the waiver and payment give us the right to know their grades? (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 641-647)

Taylor also shared how the staff debated whether it is ethical to inform faculty at Sinclair that the students are high school students. Taylor felt, “We have to embrace the fact that our kids may want to be anonymous” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 522-523). He reflects on the importance of open communication between PSI faculty/staff with ECHS teachers/staff, and how too much sharing can be a fine line between being supportive and violating the student’s privacy.

**Process-Orientation**

During Johnson’s interview, he pointed out that more than 90% of the challenges that occur within the collaboration are around processes – program logistics; understanding and communication differences between institutions. According to Johnson, when the policies and practices between institutions become seamless and invisible to students, then success becomes more obvious.

Johnson shared what it is like to experience a commencement ceremony with a group of students: “When the presidents ask, anybody in high school that has a high diploma and is going to graduate from Sinclair at the shared time. The experience is magnificent.” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 81-84). Johnson believed that, “Student achievement, student success, student completion, [and] student retention” are most important,
because everything that he and his staff do “is about them” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Line 486-488). “The success of their students makes DECA look great, makes Sinclair look wonderful, and it makes UD shine as well” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 493-495). Johnson described his personal mental model as a “triangulated model that…has three dimensions but in the center of it is the student,” and suggested that if you keep students at the core of everything that you do, then success is inevitable and “the outcomes then spill over and will affect those on the outside” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 496-501).

Taylor defined DECA as a highly flexible organization, with strong traditions, efficient processes, and a loyal cohesive team. Taylor described DECA as a “family-oriented, loving place” with an “incredibly hard-working” “dedicated” team. Students come “back in steady streams talking about what they’re doing at the next level…. They’re coming back here because they know that we had an impact on their success” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 695-698).

Johnson defined Sinclair Community College as, “An open access, affordable educational enterprise based on goal-driven outcomes, efficiency and care for the community” (M. Johnson, personal communication, April 3, 2012). He took a more formal and premeditated approach to his interview response by referring to institutional surveys before sharing his experiences, “Some of our recent surveys show this is a great place to work. We received for the second year in a row local, regional, and national awards…. And I would agree that Sinclair as a whole is a good place to be” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1169-1173). With that said, Johnson pointed out that Sinclair has its “institutional challenges just as many other institutions” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1173-1174). Before
Johnson continued, he shared that his own personal perspective could not be relied on, but should be acknowledged:

We’ve got a thing called history in this country and I’m a part of that post-civil rights legislative generation that has benefitted from such; so I’m not in any way suggesting that I don’t recognize that we have a colorblind community and therefore we have an opportunity to address the consciousness(lessness) that’s necessary to exclusionary structures. For example, there are times when I look around and you ask the question “why am I the only one in the room?” I know there are others with extraordinary intellectual gifts and demonstrated insight, credentialed, etc., so where are they? As I’ve experienced an absence in the field? (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1179-1190)

From the surveys and the interviews, Johnson and Taylor describe two different organizations. However, when they were asked to define the practices of how their teams work together and how they bond, they agreed that the team took an innovative, cutting edge, flexible, risk-taking approach.

**RLM Components Impact on the EC Collaboration**

During the interview, Taylor stated that being purposeful was most important component of the RLM. He shared:

We all want to ensure that as much exposure that they have or as little exposure that they have, that the process for our students taking classes at Sinclair, and being a part of an early college is what we understand to be the reason why we do this – it’s so they can be successful. I think having that absolutely drives our mission, our purpose. (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 766-772)
However, the data would suggest that process-orientation had an equal bearing on Taylor’s experience as purpose did. In the previous statement he addressed exposure to the process. In addition, he often referenced the successes of the collaboration to the efficiency of DECA’s processes. There were several times that Taylor coupled purpose with process:

I think it depends on what your mission is, what your goal is. I think for us, having a very clearly articulated understanding of why we’re doing this, with the staff, with the people who are actually overseeing the process is incredibly important. (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 609-612)

Overall, Taylor truly believed that DECA’s “process works really well” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Line 622). Alternatively, Johnson’s “circular” view of collaboration allowed him to take the position that all five of the components are essential to the collaboration.

You can’t exclude one component from the other, as a whole it’s dynamic. It’s ever evolving. We have a fundamental purpose that’s guided by ethical stance. And because we’re employing what’s good or bad or right or wrong about a thing, it necessitates that we are including folks and in order for us to include folks, you have to have people who make good decisions and who are doing stuff, you can’t have this oppressive top-down model. That goes totally against the whole essence of relationship. It’s the shared experience…how do you separate relationship. That’s almost oxymoronic. It’s relational because it’s connected and what connects this is an understanding of a process. What connects it is the structure. A structure keeps it in place so for me if I look at the world in a circular kind of way and there are various parts and components, it all kept within the circle, right. Then that circle can expand or contract, but it never breaks. I don’t see
independent pieces when I look at the model, I see that what makes this relationship work is…the whole component—it’s dynamic ever evolving. We have a fundamental purpose that’s guided by ethical stance. And because we’re employing what’s good or bad or right or wrong about a thing it necessitates that we are including folks and in order for us to include folks, you have to have people who make good decisions and are doing a good job, you can’t have this oppressive top down model. That goes totally against the whole essence of relationship. It’s the shared experience. It’s the yin and yang, the left and right. It’s the balance…. It’s relational because it’s connected and what connects all the components is an understanding of the process. (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1210-1230)

The following Figure 3 illustrates the RLM components with the greatest impact on the Dayton, Ohio EC collaboration according to the leaders.

![Figure 3. RLM Case One: Dayton EC Collaboration.](image-url)
Summary

Since 2008, DECA has had a demonstrated track record of preparing traditionally underrepresented students for college. In fact, the academy continues to gain the nation’s attention for their work with urban students and recognition for being the tenth ECHS in the nation who provides trainings and workshops annually for others looking to build and sustain school-university collaborations. DECA leads the state as a successful collaboration. The leaders of the initiative do not negate the politics they have had to overcome in crossing educational barriers to develop a strong collaboration.

In fact, the leaders shared how the differences in organizational structures and leadership styles could be a hurdle; however, they have discovered several keys to building a successful EC collaboration. Taylor and Johnson believe a strong foundation is most important. Taylor shared, “The mission must be clear from the beginning” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Line 480). They both agreed that the main objective of their ECHSI was to provide each student with a strong academic foundation that prepares them for post-secondary options after or during high school.

Taylor shared that the “gateway curriculum,” a five-year program, ensures their students are prepared for the rigor of a college curriculum. Johnson mentioned how there are often competing issues among institutions, especially with regard to degree completion, but his obligation is to advocate for students and staff.

Johnson summarized it best when he stated, “What we do is not about bricks and mortar. It’s more – it’s about the people, the team coming together as a unit and us all putting the students at the core of what we do” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1242-1244). As both leaders place a high priority on the success of their students and the
experiences and skills of their staff members, it was obvious they were confident in the successes of their collaboration. Among these successes was the leaders’ ability to navigate their individual organizational structures to reach consensus.

Taylor believes entering the collaboration with honesty and integrity is vital to its success, and each partner has “to know exactly what your expectations are and be up front with those at the onset” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 743-744). He also mentioned, “You have to make sure the university you’re working with truly makes the initiative a priority” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 749-750). It was clear that even though Sinclair had a hierarchical, command-and-control environment, the leaders were able to co-create an organization where trust, open and consistent communication, hard-work, and dedication were valued. One of the most powerful statements regarding the collaboration is that, “no one person should be the sum total of anything…it is about the collective” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1157-1159).
CHAPTER V. CASE TWO: YOUNGSTOWN EC COLLABORATION

Background of Youngstown, Ohio EC Collaboration

In 2004, Youngstown City School District and Youngstown State University joined forces to create the state of Ohio’s second ECHS – Youngstown Early College (YEC). YEC is a 9th grade through 12th grade public educational institution located on the campus of Youngstown State University (YSU). YEC is one of five district public high schools in the city of Youngstown. The YEC legacy class began the fall of 2004 with an enrollment of 75 students, and serves low-income, first-generation, and racial/ethnic/minority students from Mahoning and Trumbull Counties.

In 2010, the YSU Board of Trustees (BOT) voted to sever its ties with YEC. According to the June 19, 2009 minutes from the BOT, the audit subcommittee had been meeting in private sessions with an internal auditor, and it was determined that YEC did not pass the institution’s risk assessment (Bennett, 2009). Gwin (2010) documented that the BOT decided the program was no longer financially feasible, as the state had been paying more than $600,000 annually in tuition and fees. YSU’s BOT decision to terminate the relationship left YEC searching for a new partner and possible home. According to Ward, executive administrator, Governor Strickland “approached Jefferson Community College, at the time to expand or charter a campus in three counties…to serve every single Ohioan who lived within 30 miles of a two-year college...He also asked the president to support YEC and she agreed” (C. Ward, personal interview, March 5, 2012, Lines 5-12). As a result, JCC changed its name to Northeast Community College (NECC), expanded its educational opportunities to Jefferson, Columbiana, Mahoning, and Trumbull counties, and forged a new partnership with YEC. Meanwhile, the Youngstown community gathered to support YEC by holding public meetings, writing support letters, and publishing
opinions in the local paper (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012). The support of the community coupled with the attention of the media caused Youngstown State University’s board of trustees to recommit to the partnership. Out of this came a three-way partnership between Youngstown City School District, Youngstown State University (four-year), and Northeast Community (two-year) College.

**ECHS Structure: Profile, Mission, Purpose, and Curriculum**

YEC’s goal is to provide traditionally underrepresented students an opportunity to complete their high school diploma and first two years of college in a comprehensive, interwoven curriculum. YEC has a total enrollment of 261 students, of which 201 identify as ethnic/racial minorities, 203 are first-generation, 232 are low-income, and 22 are non-native English-speaking students. YEC has a “four-year curriculum…where every year the students take a number of college classes toward their associate’s degree” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 349-352). Within the first two years, through block scheduling, YEC students complete Youngstown City School District core content courses which are taught by YEC faculty (YCSD employees), with the assistance from YSU and NECC faculty members (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012; YEC, n.d.). At the end of the second year, faculty members assess if the students have mastered both content and soft skills necessary for success in college courses through the use of placement test and transcript evaluations. During the junior and senior years, YEC students have the options of completing the final two years with YSU or NECC. Those who select YSU complete their high school electives and college degree requirements on the campus of YSU, mainly through the instruction of YSU faculty (YEC, n.d.). Those who select NECC complete their high school electives and college degree requirements through the instruction of NECC faculty and YEC teachers with
NECC adjunct appointments at YEC (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012). The goal is for students to complete at least 45 to 60 semester credit hours before graduation from YEC. The students that successfully complete all of the requirements for an Associate’s Degree program are able to receive their degree from YSU or NECC. During the spring of 2011, YEC had a 100% graduation rate, with 11 students receiving their associate’s degree.

**PSI Structure: Profile, Mission, and Purpose**

**Youngstown State University.** YSU was founded in 1908 as a part of the local branch of the Young Men's Christian Association, commonly known as YMCA (YSU, 2012). YMCA created a school of law within Youngstown Association for the purpose of training men on how to handle the social injustices experienced by men and families migrating to the city from rural areas to find jobs (YMCA, 2012). After several name changes, the four-year university became Youngstown State University in 1955. Today, YSU is known as a comprehensive urban research university with a total enrollment of 15,194 (13,902 undergraduate/1,292 graduate), and an annual cost of $7,451.28 per year and $500.56 per credit hour (YSU View Book, 2011). The partnership between YSU and YEC began under the leadership of the sixth president, Dr. David C. Sweet who served as president of YSU from 2000 until his retirement in June of 2010, around the time the transition in collaboration occurred. Now, the university and the EC college partnership are led by President Cynthia Anderson.

YSU remains the home of YEC, as the university provides space for YEC in Fedor Hall. In addition, the faculty and staff have “committed to ensuring [the] ongoing success” of YEC students by delivering college-level courses and academic support services to YEC students (YEC, n.d.). Unfortunately, YSU and its representatives decided not to participate in this study; however, NECC agreed to participate.
**Northeast Community College** (pseudonym). NECC was founded in 1968 as a public, two-year state school (Northeast Community College [NECC], 2012). In 1995, NECC expanded its mission and curriculum to provide six different associate degrees, multiple certificates, and career training in over 30 career areas (NECC, 2012). NECC prepares students for careers in the workforce, academic credits to transfer courses, or an associate’s degree in its entirety to a four-year senior institution. NECC has six institutions—four career and technical centers and two education centers or satellites—which serve more than 2,163 students at an annual rate of $3,200 per year or $105 per credit hour (NECC, 2012a).

**Boundary Crossing: Aligning Missions and Shared Resources**

The Youngstown, Ohio EC collaboration is only one of two Ohio EC collaborations with both two-year and four-year PSI partners. The leaders of the Youngstown, Ohio EC team serve as boundary crossers, delivering an intensive four-year high school curriculum combined with an accelerated college program. This provides an opportunity for students to earn 45-60 college credits while enhancing the students’ practical and professional skills with community-based learning, which includes, but is not limited to, service-learning, job shadowing, and internships (YEC, n.d.).

**Aligning YEC and NECC missions.** The partnership between YEC and NECC is fairly new, but the partners work in unison to provide educational opportunities to a diverse group of students from Mahoning County. According to both leaders, diverse student bodies include those who have been average or below-average academic performers, who are low-income, first-generation, African American, Latino, or students from other racial and ethnic groups (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012; C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012). Each institution works to align their missions. NECC’s mission is “to advance the ability
of residents, workers, and companies to learn, grow, and prosper into the future through affordable and accessible education fostered by strong community and educational partnerships” (NECC, 2012b). YEC’s mission is to:

Empower diverse groups of students to work together to gain the knowledge and skills necessary for success. This partnership will develop and sustain a school community that supports mutual respect, fairness, trust, responsibility, caring relationships, academic integrity, and a sense of belonging. YEC will recognize and empathize with each student's circumstances, while providing a safe, caring and consistent learning environment. (YEC, n.d.)

According to Ward (2012), “It just made common sense for us to develop that partnership. Jefferson Community College’s mission was always to work hand-in-hand with the secondary system. This just feeds right into our mission working with Early College in the secondary system” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 19-23). These leaders and their respective institutions not only aligned their missions, but they have combined resources, allowing them to facilitate their EC collaboration.

**Sharing YEC and NECC resources.** YEC students are required to identify if they would like to attend college at YSU or NECC. For those who select NECC, the institution and their faculty and staff members provide college courses and academic support services to the YEC students and their families. YSU and its team have more than six years working with YEC. The NECC relationship is only in its second year. According to Ward, this fairly new partnership has been able to “move at a faster rate than a four-year school,” and went on to tout the program’s expanding services and resources:
We have a student success center, which is actually our tutoring center here, and we have one on YSU campus near where they are housed. The Early College students that choose to come to us…will have access to that tutoring center, as any other student [would]. So they will have access to the tutoring center, advisors, whatever resources we have, but we have not worked that out yet. (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 522-528)

**ECHS Leader: Michele Dotson**

Michele Dotson is an African American female in her late 50s who has held the role of primary leader and administrator of YEC for three years. With more than 34 years of experience with Youngstown Public School District, Dotson has served as a substitute teacher, academic coordinator, middle level educator, and assistant principal of a high school prior to retiring in 2008. However, shortly after retirement, the district requested that she come out of retirement to assume the role of principal of YEC.

Dotson was born, raised, and educated in Youngstown, Ohio, and has a long-standing relationship with her alma mater and PSI partner YSU. Dotson received both her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Education from YSU.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Her primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide leadership and vision, decision-making, planning and coordinating, fund-raising, outreach and recruitment, parent/family involvement, assessment and evaluation, community engagement, curriculum development, course instruction, professional development, and student support, which includes counseling, mentoring, and advising for the EC collaboration. Dotson stated, “I’m here in the building making sure that we maintain positive relationships” (M. Dotson, personal
communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 109-112). She works with the faculty and staff to make sure that they have the information and resources they need to properly do their jobs. Dotson keeps the universities “abreast of what’s important and what our needs are, and how they can help” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 124-126); clarifying that, “we have to work carefully with both universities to set up … a four-year curriculum to make sure we can keep them on track to get the associate degree for those are who are able” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 109-112).

Leadership Style

Dotson described herself as a mentor, nurturer, and “facilitator” with a “collaborative, participatory” style. She revealed, “Your style changes over the years,” and time and experience have taught her how to help others facilitate the educational process (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Line 133). Mentoring and building relationships with leaders throughout higher education holds a great deal of importance for her: “If it wasn’t for them, I would not be where I am today” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Line 129). Dotson further clarified, “I’m more participatory, collaborative in nature…. I’m a mentor…. I don’t have one problem with empowering teachers to do what they do best – teach” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 130-136). Overall, Dotson categorized her leadership style as coordinator, organizer, and administrator (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 1, 2012).

PSI Leader: Carol Ward

Carol Ward (pseudonym) has been the executive level administrator working in student services for 14 months at NECC. However, she has worked at NECC for more than 11 years as the Tech Prep Coordinator. Student services include academic based support services, such as
Roles and Responsibilities

Ward described her role as the key contact person, and “if they don’t like me…I don’t think they would be involved in the partnership” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 91-93). Her primary responsibilities within the EC partnership include assessment and evaluation, community engagement, decision-making, leadership and vision planning, outreach and recruitment, planning and coordination, policy development, professional development, and student support (counseling, mentoring, advising, etc.) (C. Ward, personal communication, March 4, 2012).

Leadership Style

Ward described herself as a proactive, hands-on leader: “I try to keep my hands in it, because I meet with [the EC principal], I have been to Early College, I know the population, I know what they need, and I am committed to the students’ success.” Overall, Ward categorized her leadership style as coordinator, organizer, and administrator (C. Ward, personal communication, March 4, 2012).

Leaders’ Understanding of EC Relationship

Ward and Dotson shared similar stories of building relationships at all levels. Dotson commented, “I learned quickly that relationships are important to establishing the initiative, and they go beyond the relationship between the institutions” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 276-277). They both stressed the importance of relationships with students.
and staff, but they also stressed the importance of the relationships with the presidents, community members, and members of the BOT. Ward mentioned “if we did not have the support of our president, this partnership would not work” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Line 347). Dotson’s reflections were connected to YSU’s BOT decision to dissolve the relationship with YEC. This experience taught Dotson an important lesson of building “a positive relationship with the members of the Board of Trustees.... They have a lot of power” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 279-280). Her experiences led her to see the power and influence that community members have. She shared, “community members are important and they can make a difference. When the BOT decided to drop us, the news spread all the way down to Columbus and people from everywhere came to support us” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 293-295).

The strongest and most important relationship is the one between YEC students and the staff at the ECHS and NECC. Dotson stressed, “We are very student focused. It's about the students being able to reach a level where they can transfer and be successful at a four-year institution, and that is why we give them all the support they need to be successful” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 317-321). Both Dotson and Ward used the word “mentoring” when describing their relationship with students. The relationship between the students and staff at “NECC and YEC is more nurturing…and it is extremely important” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 264-265).

**Leadership Required to Facilitate an EC Partnership**

Understanding the culture and climate of your institution and the respective institution to which one is building a partnership was found to be essential to both Youngstown leaders.
You cannot be someone that is very passive. You have to be someone who is a go-getter, enterprising because this industry is changing every day. Really, there is no template that says, okay, this is what Early College does. We are growing Early College year to year, and we are doing different things. We are trying to do things for the benefit of the student. Therefore, I think it needs to be somebody who can be visionary, who can be positive. (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 118-122)

Dotson talked about culture and climate, and understanding the organizational structures, policies, and practices of higher educational institutions and school districts. According to Dotson, to successfully lead an EC partnership, “You cannot be a top-down, or domineering leader…You have to be a collaborative leader” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Line 164-166). She went on to say:

There's no way you can do all this yourself. You have to engage your teachers and empower them to teach, to volunteer, to be engaged, to do all the pieces that need to be done for the students. You cannot be dictatorial; you just can't. You won't survive! (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 170-174)

**Relationship Characteristics**

Dotson shared YEC is a small school that offers college courses to high school student. She mentioned students begin “taking college courses during the summer of their eighth to ninth grade year” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 334-336). The summer enrichment program includes three courses, an orientation and two physical education classes. She explained, “We have a four year curriculum lined up where every single year they take a number of college classes, and if it works out the way we want, at the end of that fourth year they
can have an associate degree” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 348-353). According to Ward:

We are located on a college campus….students complete their freshman through senior years of academics during the first two years of high school. The intent is that they would finish all four years in the first two years…the last two years the students are on the college campus the whole time…taking the remainder of their college level courses. Therefore, that makes us an Early College. (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 188-195)

Advantages/Successes

The leaders felt the things connected to the process of administering the Youngstown EC collaboration were beneficial (e.g., tuition, adjunct status for high school teachers, and relationship with academic support and auxiliary services). Dotson commented, “The reduced rate for tuition…and adjunct status has been very helpful” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 65-67). Ward corroborated, “We have been fortunate enough to be able to approve their teachers with qualifying credentials as adjuncts on our campus, so that they are actually providing the dual-enrollment classes” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 242-246). Dotson expressed her gratitude for YSU support: “We are able to use the second floor of Fedor Hall…whenever we need to, and the reduced rate has been excellent” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 66-72). There were also advantages in having strong relationships with units such as YSU’s bookstore, Youngstown School District’s treasurer’s office, and YSU and NECC’s records, registration, and financial offices. These relationships are beneficial to scheduling courses and providing fiscal support for text books and tuition discounts.
Ward contributed much of the Youngstown EC collaboration success to the size of NECC. She shared, “I think us being a two-year college is an advantage. We are a small institution right now; so when we need to get things done, we can get them completed at a faster rate than a four-year university, and not get bogged down in the politics that takes place in many colleges” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 64-68).

Dotson also felt that the NECC size helps cut out much of the bureaucracy she has experienced with YSU. Dotson commented:

It has been easier to get things done with Northeast; much of this is due to their size and mission…. Their mission is to work with non-traditional students; they are a community based school, so they work with students who are not quite ready for a four-year institution school, and they are very understanding and supportive of the students. (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 91-94)

Both leaders shared how they have a responsibility to encourage and even train the students. Ward reflected on the importance of encouraging the students. She stated, “The team at Youngstown Early College does not tell those students, ‘you can’t do it.’ They give those students all the support and encouragement they need, and I see that first-hand” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 396-397).

Dotson referred to the work that they do with students as “readiness” training:

The students have to have the appropriate support to make it through the college experience. If they do not, they learn quickly and if they don’t they will suffer the consequences…. We are here to support them, but when they leave us they will need to understand how to navigate college and build relationships with others…this is why they
are here, and why this program works.” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 237-241)

Dotson followed up by stating, “The curriculum is rigorous, so a student needs a lot of support with that…” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 265-266); “the ones who teach our kids understand the importance of teaching content and success strategies” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 649-651).

**Disadvantages/Challenges**

Dotson stated, “Faculty members who have worked with our students for some time understand how to support them through their transition” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 649-651), but “it has not always been easy finding faculty members who understand and appreciate the work that we do…Sometimes there are comments, assumptions, or shall I say rumors made about high school students being on college campus” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 96-98). Dotson gave examples of receiving complaints about loud noises in common areas of the university, only to follow up and find it was often not the YEC students; “all that is rumor” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Line 98).

The leaders felt that “distances can be a major obstacle” and “dealing with the financial piece” of the collaboration. Ward shared if NECC ever decided to do another EC partnership, the institution would take two things into account: (a) the location of the ECHS, and (b) who would be leading the collaboration. Ward pointed out that even though NECC has been able to accomplish many things, “the distance is our largest and only disadvantage,” and “even though we move at a faster rate than a four-year school, I just think if I was closer it would make the partnership easier” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 84-86).
The financial aspect of the collaboration led to EC sustainability. Dotson felt that “finances can be problematic and often end up being very political…higher education is a little different than the traditional K-12 schools…it's a business, and I learned that” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 179-181). Dotson was able to associate a positive experience to working through the political affairs of higher education, and shared the importance of leaders finding strong mentors to guide them through these processes: “Everyone needs someone to help you, lead you, guide you, so you don't make mistakes or maybe say something that is inappropriate…especially when you do not know the interworking of your partnering organization” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 189-192).

**Leaders’ Perception of RLM within the EC Relationship**

**Purposeful**

Both leaders aligned the work they do with the populations they serve to their mission:

One thing I can say about early college is we have only one mission, so it's not convoluted. We know why we're here. We are here so these can get a college education. It's about college readiness skills and then getting a college education, so our mission is easy. And our focus is easier to do, and we don't get confused. (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 808-813)

**Empowering**

Dotson and Ward commented frequently about “competence,” “freedom,” and “teamwork” when reflecting on empowerment. Dotson shared how her staff is very involved with designing both curricular and co-curricular activities for YEC students: “The staff is given the latitude to discuss the pieces that need to be in place to make sure the students experience is successful” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 156-157). She talked
about how this would not be possible if her staff was not competent. However, she shared that as a leader “you have to lay the groundwork first; it is about knowing your staff and their professional needs and competences” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 802-804).

Both leaders felt empowered and they believed their own personal freedom allowed them to empower others. Dotson commented, “I feel empowered to make decisions on behalf of YEC and the district” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Line 801). Ward added, “I could not ask for any more power. Sometimes I think I have too much” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 458-459). Ward associated her empowerment to the support and trust of the president of NECC.

**Inclusion**

Both leaders share how important inclusion is to the Youngstown EC collaboration. Dotson defined inclusion as “the process in which we make decisions together jointly.” She gave the example of when decisions are made about the students or curriculum “we include everyone…. All ideas and opinions are heard” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 699-700). Ward defined inclusion as “how we all work together” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Line 346). She continued by stating, “Inclusion is making sure all of the right people are involved that will make the collaboration work” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 353-354).

If we did not have the support of our president this partnership would not work.

Therefore, I think, inclusion would be that we have the proper people supporting this effort. And I would say the same thing for YSU. Their president is always there; their provost is always there; so they have the support of their top people. And the same thing
is true for Youngstown City Schools. (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 347-352)

Ethical

Ward and Dotson agreed that ethics was extremely important. Ward commented, “It is extremely important; I think it is the foundation of it” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 419-420). However, Ward questioned if higher educational institutions are offering college courses to high school students as a means of meeting head counts and to generate revenue. She revealed a personal struggle with questions of the ethics of offering college courses to students who may be too young to take them:

That is a very fine line, between what is ethical and what is not. Because you want the student to benefit, and that is the reason why the students are here. They are the only people we should be thinking about, and we want to make sure we are making the right decisions for the students. (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 430-436)

Process-Orientation

Both Dotson and Ward take on their organizational process was “the collaboration was person-centered.” They described their organizations as cohesive, family-orientated organizations that emphasize teamwork and participation. Both attributed the size of the organization to its family-like climate. Ward shared, “we are small enough that we all know each other and we feel comfortable enough to share” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012, Lines 485-487), while Dotson felt the small size contributes to everyone’s willingness to work together. Dotson believed that EC is “all about relationships” and “nurturing those around you” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 252-264).
They both agreed that what held the organizations together was the members’ sense of loyalty, mutual trust, and interpersonal cohesion. Dotson believed that “integrity and trust…are most important to a true collaboration” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 762-764). Both concurred there is a strong commitment to tradition. Dotson and Ward documented that they place a strategic emphases on innovation, acquisition of new resources, and their ability as leaders to create new challenges. The entire process is about doing what is best for the students. Dotson stated we are “very student focused…student success” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 317-319).

**RLM Components Impact on the EC Collaboration**

Ward concluded that ethics and being ethical was, “the foundation of the relationship. I think it about treating everyone with respect and everyone being ethical towards one another” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012). Dotson felt that all five components were “very important to building collaboration;” however, if she had to choose, she would choose empowerment and ethics: “I expect people that are in education to be ethical…that piece should be intrinsic. If it is not we are going to have a problem…. Empowering is important because when you empower people they do their best work” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 846-854). She shared how empowerment “is reciprocal to the teachers, college administrators, and myself as a principal, because it takes us all to run a program like this” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 8, 2012, Lines 861-862).

The following Figure 4 illustrates the RLM components with the greatest impact on the Youngstown, Ohio EC collaboration according to the leaders.
This collaboration had a significant connection to its community. Both leaders were raised in the community and shared how they desired helping the members of their community was important to them. In fact, in both situations the leaders were selected to lead the initiative because of their experience with the community and their administrative skill set. The in-roads the leaders built in the community were obvious, by the support to community garnered to save YEC upon the BOT decision to end their relationship. Both leaders believed being ethical was most important to the success of the partnership. Much of this was due to their past experiences negotiating institutional bureaucracy and working constantly to sustain an organization after more than eight years of providing academic support to students from one of Ohio’s most disadvantaged communities.

The leaders have discovered “fit” was important to initiating the collaboration. According to Dotson, fit referred to “institutional goals and what worked best for students” (2012). The key is working through institutional size, distance, and “not getting bogged down
with politics.” The leaders’ primary objective was to make a difference in the lives of the members of their community, and they were best served by cohesive collaboration.
CHAPTER VI. CASE THREE: COLUMBUS PUBLIC EC COLLABORATION

Background of Columbus Public EC Collaboration

Columbus City Schools District (CCSD) offers an extensive array of higher education partnership programs. The district promotes these programs as “Your Options, Your Choice,” designed to provide high school students an opportunity to participate in a variety of high-level academic programs, such as advanced placement, Career Technical Education, Columbus Teaching Academy, and International Baccalaureate (Columbus City Schools District [CCSD], 2011; Ohio Board of Regents [OBOR], n.d.). In addition to these programs, CCSD provides multiple post-secondary options based on the early college model, such as the DeVry Advantage Academy, which allows high school students to simultaneously obtain their high school diploma and associate’s degree; Direct Credit/Kenyon College (KAP Courses), which offers college-level courses that students can transfer to Kenyon College or other higher educational institutions; Seniors to Sophomores (S2S), a statewide initiative designed to allow students to graduate high school and enter college at a sophomore level upon completion of their twelfth grade year; and Columbus Africentric Early College (CAEC), an ECHS that provides both high school diploma and up to 60 college credits (CCSD, 2011).

The Columbus Public EC partnership, CAEC, has been a collaboration between CCSD and Columbus State Community College since 2005. Seven years ago, the dean of Arts and Sciences of Columbus State Community College, the superintendent of CCSD, the principal of Columbus Africentric Academy at that time, and the KnowledgeWorks organization joined forces to create the only K-12 academy with an Afrocentric curriculum in the state (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012; T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012). CAEC is defined as a community-based school; the term references how the school was created.
According to West, “The school is an exemplary model of a public cooperative” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Line 599). West shared:

The community felt they needed an Afro-centric school, and members of the Columbus City board agreed it was time to focus on students from urban school districts …at the time Afrocentric schools were becoming more popular. In fact, the city of Detroit had an academy that made national attention for helping students from urban school districts succeed. Therefore, we used that model and their best practices to create this academy. (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 611-616)

According to West, the CAEC is a “family-oriented academy that…strives to create a culture of academic excellence (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 905-908). The idea of family is engrossed in the students’ daily terminology as they referred to the staff and faculty at CAEC as “mama” and “baba.” Cross-linguistic similarities to the terms mother and father, students use the word as a form of “respect and admiration for those who teach and mentor them” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 5-6).

The family focus provides support that filters throughout the community (i.e., home and school) and promotes academic success. West shared how the students often tell him, “I’ve got my family, and I’ve got my school family, both who have instilled positive values in me” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 587-588). West believed “they remember what they have been taught and they have a family that supports and cares for them as they go on and embark on the next levels of their lives. I believe it gives them a sense of pride and determination for themselves” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 588-589).
ECHS Structure: Profile, Mission, Purpose, and Curriculum

CAEC was an existing school that opened in 1989 as a public, K-5 community based school that focused exclusively on the Afrocentric curriculum. Then in 2005, the school made the conversion to a K-12 EC academy (CCSD, 2011; E. West, personal communication, February 29, 2012). CAEC is the only K-12 EC academy with an Afrocentric focus. As an Afrocentric academy, the curriculum and tradition emphasis is on African and African American history, culture, and values. The curriculum is designed to focus on the seven principles of Kwanzaa and the 42 principles or affirmations of Ma’at. Kwanzaa is a Pan-African holiday based on Nguzo Saba, the seven principles, which include: (a) unity (umoja), (b) self-determination (kujichagulia), (c) collective work and responsibility (ujima), (d) cooperative economics (ujamaa), (e) purpose (nia), (f) creativity (kuumba), and (g) faith (imani) to reveal and reaffirm integrity, beauty, and dignity of the human person, family, community, and culture of people from the African diaspora (Karenga, 2008).

In addition, the curriculum intertwines the 42 principles of Ma’at traditions based on the Kemet Law and the Egyptian goddess of truth and moral justice. Ma’at principles center on family, self-worth, self-determination, and an inclusive community (Karenga, 2006; Parker, 1997). The curriculum is complex and vast, in that it includes a K-12 model that infuses Afrocentric principles and post-secondary educational options in a public school setting. The mission of CAEC is clear and it is to ensure that “each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community” (CCSD, n.d.).

CAEC is open to any student in the Columbus city school district and has a diverse staff. CAEC community includes more than 950 students, who gained entrance into the school through
a lottery system. CAEC’s entire student body consists of 950 ethnic/racial minorities, 600 first-
generation students, and 750 low-income students. The school promotes the motto “success is
the only option,” and 67 of 73 students had the opportunity to prove this during the spring of
2011 as they graduated from CAEC with a high school diploma. Even though none of the
students achieved an associate’s degree, the school has a 92% graduation rate, which is high
when compared to other high schools in the district (CCSD, n.d). During the spring 2011 term,
58 students were enrolled in college courses at their partnering PSI, of which each of them
earned an average 14-40 college credits (E. West, personal communication, February 29, 2012).

CAEC is located two miles from Columbus State Community College, its PSI partner.
The academy is on a year-round schedule, which aligns with its PSI partner. The academic year
includes a nine-week instructional schedule with a two- to four-week break. The summer is an
active term used for intersession and regular course work. “The first day of school is around July
25th…and the students attend year round…this puts us on quarters with Columbus State” (E.
West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 396-409). According to West, CAEC has
been on the quarter system since 2007.

The students are required to wear uniforms coordinated with their grade level (i.e.,
elementary, middle grades, and high school). West shared, “The colored shirt is a signal to staff
where a student belongs…. Although it is motivational to have high school students around
elementary and middle school students…you always have to worry about just having people
around Kindergarteners.” West reflected on the positives of exposing elementary and middle
school students to high school students who are taking college courses: “it creates positive role
models and promotes higher education” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012,
Lines 743-744). In addition, West shared that the relationship has a two-fold advantage, “The
elementary and middle school students opportunities to go on field trips to Columbus State, and
to participate in different programs, like summer camps and various early college experiences”
(E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 90-92).

**PSI Structure: Profile, Mission, and Purpose**

Columbus State Community College (CSCC) is a two-year, urban community college located in downtown Columbus. The school was founded in 1963 as Columbus Area Technician’s School by the Columbus Board of Education (Columbus State Community College [CSCC], n.d.). The campus has expanded to include the main campus in downtown Columbus, Ohio, an additional campus in Delaware, Ohio, and nine off-campus regional learning centers (CSCC, n.d.). CSCC has a total enrollment of 30,297 students at a full-time rate of $1,896 per year or $79.00 per credit hour (CSCC, n.d.).

**Boundary Crossing: Aligning Mission and Shared Resources**

The unique niche of CAEC mission is to prepare students from traditionally underrepresented groups with high-impact educational practices that prepare students for leadership, service, and global citizenship (CCSD, n.d.). According to Erney, “CSCC provides an opportunity for the Columbus Africentric students to be able to pursue college education” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 4-6). The mission of Columbus State Community College:

Is to provide quality educational programs that meet the life-long learning needs of its community. Through its dynamic curriculum and commitment to diverse learners, the college will serve as a catalyst for creating and fostering linkages among the community, business and educational institutions. The college will proactively respond to the
changing needs of our community and its role in the global economy through the use of instructional and emerging technologies (CSCC, n.d.).

CSCC’s values and mission align the institution as an intellectual hub that provides continuing education to its community. As one of the largest PSIs in the Columbus area, CSCC has been able to align its resources and services to CAEC by delivering college-level courses to a diverse group of high school students.

**ECHS Leader: Ernest West, III**

Ernest D. West III has held the position of K-12 School Leader since 2010. The title K-12 School Leader is given to the chief administrator who leads the middle and high school principals. Prior to his current position as K-12 School Leader, West served as the assistant principal of CAEC middle and high school for five years. West is an African American male in his late 30s. His highest level of educational attainment is a Master’s degree in education from Ohio State University. He also obtained his certification in Education Administration from Ohio State University. Ernest was born, raised, and currently lives in Columbus with his family. West is committed to “empowering and engaging students to set and attain high goals for academic achievement and life-long success” (CCSD, n.d.).

**Roles and Responsibilities**

West’s primary responsibilities in the partnership are leadership, vision, decision-making, planning and coordination, policy development, professional development, parent and faculty development, and student support (counseling, mentoring, advising, etc.). He shared, “I’m the initial liaison, and I’m more of the facilitator to get all of the staff to connect” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 170-171). West believed his primary responsibility is to “make sure everyone is in the loop,” and reflected on the faculty members who have key roles in
ensuring that the EC mission and collaboration are successful (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Line 174).

**Leadership Style**

West described himself as “very approachable, very visible, very hands-on, open-door policy” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 220-221). He shared, “I’m always collaborating, I don’t pretend to have all the answers…it is important to put it is important put all of our heads into it to come to the best outcome, end result of what we want to do” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 233-236). With this being said, West categorized his leadership style as coordinator, organizer, and administrator (E. West, personal communication, February 29, 2012).

**PSI Leader: Tom Erney**

Tom Erney serves as the Dean of Distance Learning at CSCC. Erney has been in this role for nine years; however, he has worked for CSCC for more than 23 years. Erney reports to the Provost for Learning Systems who reports to the president of CSCC. Erney is a Caucasian male in his 40s with a Masters in Student Affairs Administration from Ohio State University. He was born in Port Clinton, Ohio, raised in Whitehall, Ohio, and currently living in Columbus, Ohio.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

When Erney was asked to describe his role in the partnership, he reflected on how he “inherited the Early College in its second year…after the dean retired” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 15-19). At the time, Erney was over K-12 initiatives and it made sense for EC to report to him. He indicated on his survey that his primary role in the collaboration is assessment and evaluations, community engagement, decision-making, fund-
Leadership Style

Erney described his leadership style as entrepreneurial, innovative, and risk taking. During his interview, he shared that he ascribes to a “participatory” leadership style, which allows him to have an open communication style that supports his distance learning style. “I believe that you’ve got to talk…openly and honestly. I do very much try to allow people that report to me to work to their fullest potential and be there as a support for them. I do step in when I feel like it’s necessary” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 27-31).

Leaders’ Understanding of EC Relationship

Both leaders articulated the partnership was important. West described the relationship as “a bond,” a “partnership that sticks and it gets stronger as opposed to just becoming stagnant” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 41-46). They both agreed that promoting higher educational opportunities was essential to the success of the students. “We have high school seniors graduating with both degrees – a high school diploma and an associate’s degree. It really goes back to the students of the true perks that come out of the partnership” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 347-351). Concurrently, they established that pushing the students to attend CSCC was not their primary goal of the collaboration. West shared that the collaboration was “an added benefit.” He stated, “The EC model is not pushed on the students; it provides an opportunity for the smart students who have tested out of everything and the average students who have passed everything…not to sit around
high school for two years bored wasting time…it pushes them to the next level” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 13-25).

Erney thought that the specialized niche or “cultural curriculum” took precedence over the early college curriculum: “Adding the Early College dynamic sounded great, but trying to find ways to really intertwine those together has been a challenge” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 189-190).

**Leadership Required to Facilitate an EC Partnership**

Communication above all else was important to both leaders. Erney shared, “For everyone to work together successfully, it very much has to be an open kind of relationship where there’s a great deal of communication and mutual support” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 44-46). West supported the idea that communication was essential, stating “I make sure that everyone is in the know…I think that communication is really important to the partnership” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 105-107). West added “being very knowledgeable of both entities and how to work with the staff is important to the partnership” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 272-273). He mentioned that one has to “be open-minded and fair. In addition, you have to know how to multi-task and very must be organized” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 273-275).

**Relationship Characteristics**

West characterized CAEC as an EC because its “curriculum is supposed to be pushed down where all of our ninth and tenth graders get all of their classes for high school in two years, then they’re able to start college two years early.” In addition, “the partnership that we have
with Columbus State makes us an early college” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 362-363). A key attribute of a true EC is a connection to a neighboring PSI. We are much more than a PSEOP or a dual enrollment program. We go much further than what you typically do in those programs…. There is an integration of faculty members through professional development efforts all geared toward EC…and we indoctrinate the students in that college is the pathway to success…. This fits very well with Columbus Africentric’s cultural framework as well as their own mission. I think it is much more intimated kind of relationship than what you would typically find with a dual enrollment. (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 223-234)

**Advantages/Successes**

Both Erney and West referred to their students and faculty as they shared stores of success. Erney attributed much of the collaboration success to the “faculty-to-faculty interactions.”

I think that’s something worthy of a statewide model where the faculty from the two institutions have gotten together to talk about curriculum and what’s really the bridge between the Columbus Africentric way of teaching the curriculum at Columbus State…that is what led to having faculty members who are very invested in the Columbus Africentric kids doing well in college. (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 138-148)

Erney stressed that faculty members and the CSCC community at-large are invested in the success of the CAEC students. He stated, “Our goal is to build a sense of community for the Columbus Africentric students here…and the faculty members are not only concerned about the students’ academic success, but their social connection to the program” (T. Erney, personal
communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 399-402). He reflected on faculty members sharing how “many of the Columbus Africentric students have been our best and brightest students at the college.” Erney talked about how the support comes from all levels. In fact, CSCC “Set up a separate budget…with funds for different workshops for the creation of a web-based support site…to support the curriculum…to having a variety of different workshops on how to be successful in college” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 82-89).

Disadvantages/Challenges

With success comes challenge, and both leaders echoed concerns of space and shared facilities and there were significant challenges to overcome by being “separate entities.” West commented the distance creates “barriers that we just don’t know how to get across” (E. West, personal communication, Lines 711-712). Erney echoed those sentiments: “It’s been less like one unified entity and more like two separate institutions partnering together, which I think has been part of our challenge over the years” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 196-198). They agreed that much of the distinction comes in the differences in secondary and post-secondary fiscal management. In fact, the financial management and policies has created issues with operating the EC collaboration. Both commented how it would be advantageous for “the college to have fiduciary responsibilities” over the EC budget (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 597-598).

In addition, the leaders felt the physical distance creates challenges as well. West mentioned, “Columbus State is very space poor.” Erney agreed:

We don’t have the space…. We are the third largest public institution in the state of Ohio between four years and all two years. So we’re huge in that respect and we’re somewhat under built…but we are scrambling to find enough classrooms to be able to teach the
sections we have to teach to sustain the college…. Space is highly desirable, but it has been very impossible to house Columbus Africentric on our main campus. (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 232-248)

Both felt there would be added benefits to being near each other. Erney believed that if they were physically close to each other, this would strengthen the partnership and provide “safe zones as well as a place where students could get specialized help” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 254-255). West felt if the proximity was closer, this would provide a constant reminder to the students and the parents that the purpose was to advance the students educational opportunities through the EC mission.

West shared how the close proximity would aid in his daily operation. He reflected:

I really wish they were right outside the window, so we will never forget. Sometimes you can get wrapped up in doing K-12 and sometimes forget our partner out of conversation…. If the college was across the street from me, it would be a constant motivational piece…When you are exposed to college, you’re more prone to almost fall into it. If we were all one entity, it makes it a lot easier, but I’m pretty sure there would be more obstacles that came with it, but it at least it would be a little easier money-wise.” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 970-972)

West has, on occasion, felt that motivating students to take advantage of the early college opportunity has been a challenge. He shared how the students felt that if they took classes at CSCC they would be “losing out on their high school years” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 131-132). He indicated that this has impacted the EC enrollment. Currently there are only six students enrolled in EC courses.
It probably could be another 20, but due to sports or not wanting to lose the high school experience, they opted not to even pursue it. You can’t make them go; I’ve even learned that some of my students flunk classes just to not even have to go. When it goes to that extreme – that’s not every case, but that has happened – you don’t want to waste that money and send them if they truly do not want to go. (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 372-380)

Leaders’ Perception of RLM within the EC Relationship

Purposeful

Both leaders shared how their roles in the collaboration were clear; however, they both agreed that the mission of the initiative often gets convoluted with the complexity of the academy being a K-12 institution with an Afrocentric curriculum that has adopted an EC model. Both acknowledged the challenge in achieving the ECHSI goals of associate degree completion, but they were committed to making sure the vision and purpose of the program were clear. In fact, West, mentioned, “The purpose of the Columbus public EC relationship is to provide positive learning experiences for the CAEC students, which open doors of opportunity” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Line 653). Erney confirmed:

The EC purpose is to help the students, succeed in their academic goals that lead to their career objectives…. For us lifelong learning is a key principle and we are fortunate that our missions align and are grounded in the foundation of the African culture…we need to bring [the Afrocentric curriculum] to the forefront and to make this a part of our banner. (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 211-216)

Erney stressed that both leaders will have to work to “make sure the vision is clear…we need to bring the EC mission to the forefront and make it a part of our banner” (T. Erney,
personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 214-216). West talked about “reestablishing” the EC mission:

I think sometimes our mission or purpose has to be reestablished on both sides, we have to remember that we need to reaffirm our purpose among the team by constantly reminding them, but most importantly we have to keep the students at the center…we have to keep pushing our students towards success. (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 692-695)

**Empowering**

Erney believed empowering others is a lot “like seeking their first advice and counsel about the direction you are going and then gaining their commitment. Once they commit and say they’ve got it, then I let it go and let them do it” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 646-649). He has great confidence in his staff, “They’ve never failed me yet.” When questioned about his own level of empowerment, Erney shared, “It depends on the decision…definitely there are things I just need to seek the advice and support of my supervisor before I can make…however on the day-to-day operations…I feel very empowered” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 632-640).

West had a lot to share about his experience in empowering others and when asked about his own level of power.

On a scale of 100%, I feel about 85, 90%. I don’t know it all, there are times when I don’t have all the answers, but I know what’s right for kids. So I make decisions based on that…Then I draw on the support and expertise of others. So I empower them to make decisions as well. (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 849-858)
West believed that he not only empowers his staff, but his students as well: “Empowering them is my area expertise…this is what I do and I do it well. I think that lets them know I trust them…. I believe in them” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 900-902).

West commented that he practices empowering others by:

Making sure they are informed and have the resources to make decisions - Giving them the information, telling them why it’s important. I give them the options that are available and allow them to choose. To empower somebody truly is to – give them an opportunity, letting them know it’s there, and you’re part of this. (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 863-867)

**Inclusion**

Erney commented that inclusion is “critical for a partnership like this:

I’m not sure in all collaborations you have to have a high level of inclusion in order to have a successful collaboration, but I think when you’re talking about something as significant as someone’s academic success and the path they’re on, you’ve really got to feel like you’re able to make a difference…we can do this…we have the opportunity to be a part…to make a difference from the middle school on helping to guide students towards a college education. (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 471-478)

West believed that inclusion is about “teamwork and collaboration.” He stated, “Anybody who wants to be a part is capable of being part, and it needs to be part of the collaboration; however, they must embrace the partnership” E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 782-784). He mentioned that it is his responsibility to make “sure that
everyone is afforded the opportunity to be a part as long as they’re pushing towards the same goal.” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 790-792).

**Ethical**

Erney reflected upon two events that he felt connected with being ethical, one being space and the other funding. Erney toiled with wanting to provide support to Columbus Africentric, but not being able to always provide support because of limited resources or institutional policies. West commented how the school district managed funds differently than the college, and he was often put in awkward positions. He shared:

> You have to be ethical in your decision making…. You don’t want to make irrational decisions that affect or govern others inappropriately. For example, when our numbers are down? I don’t believe it would be right to try to push more kids in the program to boost enrollment…. This is why there are criteria in place. It is the checks and balances. (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 834-839)

West defined ethical as, “do the right thing, and what’s right.” He mentioned, “Tom and I have the same mindset when it comes to making this program move forward, being ethical about the decisions we’re making because of who it affects” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 844-847).

**Process-Oriented**

West and Erney shared how the process is characterized by give and take and it is the combined support of each person to make sure that the partnership works. Both leaders mentioned how they are able to do this through being open and honest, coupled with West’s idea of clear communication and mutual respect impacts the group dynamics. In fact, Erney mentioned, “Our partnership is an open organization where you can speak your mind and it is
actually encouraged to kind of talk through the things” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 658-660). He shared “It is a very supportive culture” (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 660-661). West mentioned how the group process is based on respect. According to West, “Everything is based on respect. It’s across the board - students, staff, and our partners over at Columbus.” He reflected:

> You never know one day these students may be your colleagues; therefore, you need to treat them accordingly…I could look up and they could be ready to operate on me…We have to focus on how we treat people, it’s about respect. (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 263-264)

**RLM Components Impact on the EC Collaboration**

West felt process has being most important, while Erney selected purpose. West felt the process was most important to a successful collaboration; while Erney thought being purposeful was most important. West shared, “The process orientation is to make sure that everyone knows how to get our kids where they need to go…it’s the most important piece because it brings all the together” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 1005-1010). Erney shared, “Purpose is most important to the program and that keeps us going…. You must have a mutual understanding of each organization’s mission…before you try to bring them together…. It’s much easier to develop a sense of purpose (T. Erney, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 680-686).

The following Figure 5 illustrates the RLM components with the greatest impact on the Columbus, Ohio Public EC collaboration according to the leaders.
Columbus Public EC Collaboration has been fortunate to have two leaders who have worked in the partnership for most of its existence. West, a native of Columbus and a product of the public school district, has a strong connection to the community and a clear understanding of the needs of the students. In fact, both leaders have had long tenures with their respective institutions, a clear understanding of the policies and practices of their institutions, and how they work together to sustain CAEC.

Even though they have had challenges overcoming financial and spaces issues, they recognized that clarifying the complexity of their mission was an immediate concern that needed to be tackled. Erney attributed the mission being an issue to the conflicting multicultural curriculum with EC agenda. While West shared the EC agenda was difficult to push because the students simply did not want to miss out on their high school experience. CAEC has done an exceptional job of building a community with high morale and school spirit and to trying to convince a student to leave CAEC their junior and/or senior year to go to Columbus State was challenging. However, West’s resolution was closing the distance gap. He shared if CAEC was
physically located on the campus of CSCC, then the students and parents would be constantly reminded that college was the primary objective, and it would become a part of the culture and the climate.

As the only K-12 Africentric EC academy, the leaders have had their share of challenges. But they have found that if the partnership is able to develop a climate that welcomes diverse ideas, respects the opinions of others, creates spaces where difficult conversations can be had, and clarifies and understands the goals and policies of each institution, then they will be able to work through anything. Erney closed by sharing:

The key to our success is being sensitive to the academic success of our students, and being able to have difficult conversations…. We are able to have conversation without feeling threatened or disrespected…. We have to build trust built amongst the group. You develop trust by first developing a relationship…that’s critical. Second… you have to understand at some level the policies and procedures at the different institutions so that you know when you’re being told no it’s not a personal thing or it’s not that person’s agenda. (T. Erney, personal interview, 2012)
CHAPTER VII. CASE FOUR: TOLEDO EC COLLABORATION

Background of Toledo, Ohio EC Collaboration

Toledo Early College High School (TECHS) opened in August of 2005 to serve urban students in Northwest Ohio. TECHS is a public high school serving grades 9-12. The high school was initiated by the KnowledgeWorks Foundation and developed as a partnership between the Toledo Public School System and the University of Toledo. TECHS has gained recognition as an excellent school with distinction, ranking 17th in the state and as the top-ranked school in the Toledo metro area (Rosenkran, 2012).

ECHS Structure: Mission, Purpose, and Curriculum

TECHS delivers an accelerated college preparatory program that focuses on a liberal arts curriculum. TECHS allows high school students an opportunity to earn up to 60 college credits towards a four-year degree, while simultaneously earning their high school diploma from Toledo Public Schools (Toledo Early College High School [TECHS], 2012). The high school curriculum is compressed into two-years. During 2010-2011 academic year, the school has a total enrollment of 200 students (R. Wheatley, personal communication, February 23, 2012). As the program is designed to assist traditionally underrepresented students with an opportunity to prepare and gain access into higher education, the population consists of 108 ethnic/racial minorities, 120 first-generation, 125 low-income, and 15 non-native English-speaking students (Wheatley, 2012). The students enter in cohorts and begin taking college-level courses immediately; by their junior year, the majority of their courses are taken at the University of Toledo. The TECHS’s motto is “A culture of academic excellence. A climate of accomplishment,” and during the spring of 2011, the institution had 24 students enrolled as seniors, of which 23 graduate with an average of 51-60 college credits (Wheatley, 2012).
PSI Structure: Mission and Purpose

The University of Toledo (UT) is a public, four-year institution located in Toledo, Ohio. The UT was established in 1872, and became a member of the state university system in 1967 (University of Toledo [UT], 2011). This urban, residential liberal arts institution offers more than 230 undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs to more than 23,000 students during the 2010-2011 year (UT, 2011). In-state undergraduate students paid a rate of $316.50 per credit hour or $3,798 per academic year during the 2011-2012 year (UT, 2012). The UT’s mission “is to improve the human condition; to advance knowledge through excellence in learning, discovery and engagement; and to serve as a diverse, student-centered public metropolitan research university” (UT, 2011).

Boundary Crossing: Aligning Missions and Shared Resources

Both institutions have worked hard to build a strong curriculum, with shared facilities and staff. Since TECHS’s existence, the school has been on the Scott Park campus of UT. In addition to the school and the university sharing facilities, the students enroll in college courses with UT faculty members throughout their four years, with many of their courses including electives and foreign language. The students have access to student support services and campus resources (i.e., campus transportation, library, etc.). The UT vision is to transform the world through a student-centered institution that is engaged in this community (UT, 2011). Because of this, both institutions are able to align their missions and share their resources to deliver a liberal arts core to youth in their community.

ECHS Leader: Dr. Robin Wheatley

Dr. Robin Wheatley has served as the principal of TECHS since 2008. Prior to her tenure with TECHS, Wheatley served in multiple roles in Toledo Public School System for more than
24 years. Wheatley is a native of Toledo, and she identifies as an African American female in her mid-50s. Education is very important to Wheatley, and it is a major part of her personal and professional life. In fact, Wheatley’s highest level of academic achievement is a doctoral degree from Bowling Green State University in education (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012).

**Role and Responsibilities**

Her primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide leadership and vision, decision-making, course instruction, outreach and recruitment, parent/family involvement, planning and coordination, professional development, curriculum development, professional development, policy development, community development, assessment and evaluation, and providing student support (i.e., counseling, mentoring, advising, etc.) (R. Wheatley, personal communication, February 23, 2012). Wheatley described her role and responsibilities as the leader of the institution. She stated, “I work through the governance board to identify the needs of the school and the students…. I keep the school current and moving forward. Wheatley made it clear that she “works for the students” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Line 125).

**Leadership Style**

Wheatley described herself as “very directed.” She clarified, “I am very upfront…I will tell you specifically what I want…. I will ask your ideas…especially if those ideas are to promote the vision of the school and the well-being of all students.” Overall, Wheatley categorized her leadership style as decisive, productive, and result-oriented (R. Wheatley, personal communication, February 23, 2012).
PSI Leader: Terry Lentz

Terry Lentz is the assistant director of High School Outreach Initiatives/PSEOP Adviser at the UT Learning Collaborative, Gateway Programs. His office works in collaboration with area high schools to improve the academic preparation and college readiness of students (UT, 2011). In addition to serving as the University liaison to TECHS, Lentz is responsible for advising undecided students on UT’s campus. According to Lentz, his unit “falls under what’s called the Learning Collaborative, “It’s a program not a college, and it houses a number of departments like the Writing Center, Learning Enhancement Center, Office of Accessibility, Excel, and EC” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 61-64). Lentz reports directly to the dean of the Gateway Program, and has been in this role for five years. Before he took this role, he worked at UT for 22 years as an academic advisor. Lentz identifies as a male in his early 60s and he resides in Toledo with his family. His highest level of educational attainment is a master’s degree in education from UT.

Role and Responsibilities

His primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide leadership and vision, decision making, community engagement, planning and coordination, course instruction, and student support (i.e., counseling, mentoring, advising, etc.). Lentz emphasized his role as administrative, but he had fond memories of teaching EC students. Lentz shared, “Even though I am not able to do it often, I enjoy teaching study strategy skills to the students…. The course is a very important component…helps students discover their major and it allows me to work closely with them” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 465-467).
Leadership Style

Lentz defined his leadership style as “democratic,” and indicated much of his motivation for that was derived from his position at the University, “My position requires that I consult with a lot of people” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Line 115). He stated that many of the decisions that need to be made on behalf of TECHS “require input from the president and the board of trustees on down, so I can’t make decisions like that” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 117-118). Overall, Lentz defined his style as a coordinator, organizer, and administrator of the EC collaboration (T. Lentz, personal communication February 27, 2012).

Leaders’ Understanding of EC Relationship

Both leaders thought that the relationship was positive, and necessary. In fact, Wheatley shared, “Without the relations we would not be an early college high school” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 5-6). Lentz felt that the relationship “just makes sense…. Our collaboration makes sense… We are an urban college…sitting at the back door of TPS…or vice versa…We should collaborate or have some type of partnership that works together to improve our community” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 4-10). The leaders shared how the relationship has grown and improved over time. Wheatley described it “as being very progressive and actually getting stronger each day” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 30-31), while Lentz enthused, “Very, very good … I am not sure it could get any better than this” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 17-18).
Leadership Required to Facilitate an EC Partnership

The level of efficiency required to facilitate the collaboration was clear, as the leaders described a results-oriented, decision-maker being the best candidate to lead an EC partnership. Wheatley was very clear that a collaboration like this requires someone who is competent, capable, and has the expertise to make good decisions. She shared the rarity in finding someone who is able to effectively lead a collaboration of this magnitude. In fact, Wheatley shared:

We like to talk about collaboration and it appears to be the current catch term that everybody likes to use - similar to distributive leadership. However, there’s no such thing as 15 people running the school…Collaborative and/or distributive leadership should not be taken literally…It is not going to happen, and if you try to let people force you into thinking that it will…You will end up trying to please everybody all the time and that is not possible. (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 74-83)

Relationship Characteristics

On the matter of relationships, the leaders focused their responses on the characteristics of the ECHS, rather than the relationship between the two of them. However, Lentz did comment how trust and respect were important to the collaborative relationship. He shared how both characteristics must be reciprocal, and he believed that the growth of a relationship has a lot to do with values instilled in the group, which must be agreed upon by the collective. Wheatley described the collective as having “very traditional-type values” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Line 428), and found it important to recognize and reward people for their contribution and for doing well.
Advantages/Successes

Wheatley mentioned how the location and the clear vision of the TECHS strengthens the collaboration. “Being on a college campus, having our students exposed to the culture and climate of a college campus prior to high school graduation is a great advantage for our students” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 35-37). She further commented on how the success of TECHS has a lot to do with the vision and plan. “We have a clear direction...keeping the staff and students focused, keeping everyone focused on the long-term goal — to have a viable school ten years from now...Each year we get incrementally...better at reaching those goals” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 142-149).

Lentz also had some thoughts:

Success wasn’t built overnight...It takes a long time...Sometimes a year or two is not enough. Here we are in our seventh year, and it is working, but it really takes commitment on both sides...I have never sat in a meeting where the collaboration between two governance boards was so tuned in to each other. It’s not about us. It’s about what’s best for the student. (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 245-269)

Disadvantages/Challenges

Disadvantages and/or challenges to the collaboration included issues relating to space, governance, leadership, and working across organizational structures. Space has been a concern for the collaboration in, determining “where Toledo Early College is going to be housed on a permanent basis” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 79-80). Space has been an issue on our campus of UT for many departments, and currently there is discussion about possibly finding another location for TECHS. According to Lentz, “We want TECHS to
stay here; however, we have not heard this from the top leadership…we need to hear them say we want them to stay on campus” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 78-87). Wheatley shared how the location plays a big part in developing a positive culture and climate. She shared how being on the campus has it pros and cons, but she indicated “being in the midst of the college campus is an important component to the EC model” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 48-49).

Lentz mentioned how there is not a strong presence of UT staff that attends board meetings, which can be a hindrance. In fact, Lentz stated, “The last couple of governance board meetings have dealt with really important issues relating to the partnership” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 89-92). Both leaders commented on leadership being an issue. Wheatley pointed out that it is often difficult to switch leaderships, and TECHS “started out with a principal who operated under a specific set of guidelines that had a difficult time responding to the needs of not only both institutions, but the EC intermediates…they had a difficult time being successful” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 109-114).

Lentz commented how difficult it has been working across organizational structures, different leaders, and varying leadership styles. However, he mentioned, “As we spend more time together…getting to know one another. This time together has taught me that it is easier to overcome personality or leadership difference than organizational complexities. The organizational variables are fixed” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 221-223). As mentioned previously, it takes a competent, capable, results-oriented, decision-maker to balance cross-organizational boundaries and efficiently lead an EC initiative.
Leaders’ Perception of RLM within the EC Relationship

Purposeful

Being purposeful for these leaders was about having a common purpose and being committed to that purpose. According to Wheatley and Lentz, their purpose was rooted in the students. Wheatley shared:

My mission is to recruit as many students as I can...who would benefit most from this program, hold true to the mission to serve traditionally underrepresented students…My goals for the school are to make sure that our students gain the confidence that they need to become high school and college graduates and to know that higher education is a reality. (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 191-198)

Lentz commented, “The mission is to have students come in low-income, first-generation populations, and provide them the resources and skills to succeed through high school and college” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 352-353).

Empowering

Wheatley believed empowerment is promoted “through communication.” She mentioned she empowers others by making sure “they are aware of everything that’s going on with the school” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 411-412). Personally, she felt “pretty empowered,” attributing this to the fact that all of her decisions “are to serve the students and the people who I would report to would never challenge that” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 420-422).

Through her experience leading TECHS, Wheatley has learned that “a lot of people want power, but don’t want the responsibility that comes with that power, especially when you make decisions that do not work out....mistakes can’t be made at the expense of the students…it’s too
costly” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 131-138). Contrary to the feelings Wheatley shared, Lentz stated, “Unfortunately, I do not feel very empowered right now (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Line 665). He believes he has something to offer, but he needs those who are in control to value the contributions of others and bestow power unto the group.

Inclusion

For Wheatley, inclusion was about value equity; Lentz paralleled inclusion to citizenship. Wheatley commented that inclusive environments create empowering communities where the members of the community have to think and act ethically, “You have to be fair to students…in the selection process…in the classes they take…in the grades we give…and one’s ability to be fair and equitable is very subjective” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 154-159). Lentz’s idea of inclusion was about creating an environment where,

High school students melt into a college class…. We don’t want our students to go into a college course and the faculty points them out…and even though I don’t know any faculty that looks disfavorably on a high school student…I want them to be and feel a part of the community. (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 632-634)

Ethical

Both leaders mentioned how being ethical was important. They related ethics in the collaboration to values and integrity. “It’s right at the top of the list and our –value system – cannot be compromised…Ethics are really important to me, and I’m not going to do something that would compromise my own integrity – I want to be proud at the end of the day” (Lentz, 2012).
Process-Orientaion

The leaders agreed that process-orientation is directly related to leadership and the individual’s ability to relate to others. In addition, Lentz connected process to building community; whereas Wheatley reflected on valuing the process and how it impacts outcomes.

The process is about looking at the big picture … What process does it take to get from A to B, not just is this what I want…It is true…you have to produce…. However, you have to have a real blueprint for getting there and that’s where the process comes in (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 181-187).

RLM Components Impact on the EC Collaboration

Lentz took a firm position on the importance of the “process-orientation” on the collaboration, but in his sharing he toiled with the idea of “empowerment.” Wheatley believed that “inclusion and empowerment” were interconnected, but the greatest impact on the collaboration is “empowering others, especially students.”

Lentz reflected on the growth and progress of the collaboration over time, “Every year we have grown, and I have come to the realization that being on the same page is important – I found out really quickly that if we’re not unified, everything around us is in chaos, and this creates a divisive type of environment” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 792-795). Wheatley added, ” Being empowering is important because it allows everybody to feel like he or she is contributing to the success of students and to the success of the school” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 500-503).

The following Figure 6 illustrates the RLM components with the greatest impact on the Toledo, Ohio Public EC collaboration according to the leaders.
Figure 6. RLM Case Four: Toledo EC Collaboration

Summary

The Toledo EC Collaboration has had its trials overcoming governance issues and transition of EC leadership. Working through the power dynamics of an urban research institution has had its challenges according to Lentz, but both leaders agreed that their commitment to the students and their success has allowed them to push through organizational challenges. Both natives of Northwest Ohio, the leaders understand the needs of the community and the significance of their EC collaboration. TECHS has had many successes, but the leaders were most proud of the academic achievement and completion of their students through the accelerated curriculum. Lentz and Wheatley mentioned that the cohort model creates a peer support group that allows the students to create accountability partners to help see them through their academic experience.
CHAPTER VIII. CASE FIVE: CANTON EC COLLABORATION

Background of Canton, Ohio EC Collaboration

In 2005, Canton City School District (CCSD), KnowledgeWorks, Stark Education Partnership, and Stark State College of Technology partnered to create Canton Early College High School (CECHS). More specifically it was the efforts of Stark State’s dean of Engineering and CCSD’s superintendent who worked together to create accelerated learning options for students in Canton’s district (D. Trenger, personal interview, 2012). The dean and superintendent used the EC model to develop CECHS a program within a school that allowed students an opportunity to earn their high school diploma and an associate’s degree. The associate’s degree was based on a six-track curriculum that allowed students to choose personal relevant areas of academic concentrations (i.e., information technology, business, pre-health, liberal arts, etc.). Since CECHS’s inception, the tracks reduced from six, to four, and now two—an Associate of Arts and Associate of Science from Stark State College. The course work and credits from the tracks are completely transferrable through the Ohio Transfer Module or transfer assurance guide classes (CCSD, n.d.).

ECHS Structure: Mission, Purpose, and Curriculum

CECHS delivers a four-year program for 9th through 12th grade students from the Canton City School District. CECHS is one of three public schools options for students in the district. CECHS has been designated as a program or school within a school as it shares administration with Timken Senior High School and space on Timken’s campus. According to the CECHS administration, CECHS is not a standalone school, “We do not have an Internal Retrieval Number (IRN) number or report card with the state of Ohio...The students receive their high
The program serves 240 students (115 ethnic/racial minorities, 197 first-generation college attendees, and 168 low-income) who would normally be considered underrepresented in higher education. The CECHS’s vision is to encourage these students to attend a PSI and complete a four-year degree at a college or university. During the spring 2011, CECHS had a 100% graduate rate with 53 students completing their high school diploma, 21 of whom simultaneously earned their associate’s degree (CCSD, n.d.). The 2011 graduating class earned an average of 44 college credits upon completing high school (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 23, 2012).

**PSI Structure: Mission and Purpose**

Stark State College (SSC) is a comprehensive public community college that offers more than 230 associate’s degrees, multiple certificates, and one-year training programs with transferable higher educational options (Stark State College [SSC], 2012). Founded in 1960 as a technical institution, SSC continues to offer technology-based education at an affordable rate to northeast Ohio residents. During the fall of 2010, the college had a total enrollment of 14,358 (5,456 full-time/8,902 part-time) at a rate of $147 per credit hour or $3,828 per year for students enrolled full-time. SSC mission is to provide a “quality, high-value associate’s degrees and professional development in a student-centered learning environment…through accessibility, diversity, and business and community partnerships” (SSC, 2012).

**Boundary Crossing: Aligning Missions and Shared Resources**

SSC works hard to live up to its motto “We’re changing lives and building futures…your future!” (SSC, 2012). SSC does this through the work of their consortium, the Stark County
College Tech Prep Consortium, establishing partnerships with nearly 30 school districts in five counties to offer dual enrollment classes (D. Trenger, personal communication, June 15, 2012; SSC, 2012). CECHS is one of SSC’s most seasoned and successful collaborations (D. Trenger, personal communication, February 29, 2012, Line 11). In 2012, CCSD and the consortium partnered to create the fourth middle school in the district – Early College Academy (ECA). ECA was designed to provide high quality college preparatory curriculum that would align grades 7 to 14 (D. Trenger, personal communication, February 29, 2012, Line 11). SSC rents space from CCSD on Timken Senior High School campus, this allows the SSC to have a satellite locate near CECHS. In addition, the partnership established a co-teaching model that allows CECHS “staff to function as cooperating teachers with the college professors and instructors” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, Lines 20-21).

**ECHS Leader: Chet Lenartowicz**

Mr. Chet Lenartowicz has been the principal of CECHS since 2009. Prior to serving as the principal Lenartowicz worked in the CCSD as a high school math teacher, mathematics curriculum specialist, and PK-6 principal. He is a Caucasian male in his 50s who was born, raised, and continues to live in Canton, Ohio. Lenartowicz's highest level of education is a Master’s degree in education, which he earned from Ashland University.

**Role and Responsibilities**

His primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide leadership and vision, assessment and evaluation, community engagement, course instruction, curriculum development, fund-raising, outreach and recruitment, parent/family involvement, planning and coordination, professional development, and student support (i.e., counseling, mentoring, advising, etc) (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 23, 2012). Lenartowicz shared, “It is my job to
make sense out of the whole thing...We are on the ground level making it all happen.” In addition to serving as the lead administrator of CECHS, Lenarotwicz also serves as one of the assistant principals of Timken Senior High School. Serving in multiple roles requires someone to be “heady…someone who could work through the problems and think them through clearly” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 293-296).

**Leadership Style**

Lenartowicz described himself as a visionary leader who knows how to get the job done. Leadership is having a goal of where you want to be and doing what you need to do to reach that goal…You have to carefully use the resources at hand….to get the people at hand and have them buy into the vision, and create a path that leads them to your vision.

(C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 327-336)

Lenartowicz clarified, “I don’t want to sound like it’s a covert operation or something, but a leader must be able to create the best product possible with the resources they have” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 330-332). He stressed the importance of being a change agent and the importance of being resourceful. Overall, Lenartowicz categorized his leadership style as a mentoring, nurturing, and facilitating (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 23, 2012).

**PSI Leader: Dennis Trenger**

With more than twelve years of service at Stark State College, Dennis Trenger has been the Executive Director of Fuel Cell Technology and Academic Outreach for the past two years. The executive director is the senior level administrator for the Division of Academic and Community Outreach. Trenger and his team are charged with increasing college access for adult learners. The division is “committed to building partnerships with our school districts,
businesses, universities and community to increase college attendance and degree attainment rates” (SSC, 2012). A large part of his role is to build relationships with community constituents, and even though Trenger was born in Michigan, he does not find his job difficult to do because he has been a member of the Canton, Ohio community for most of his life. Trenger earned his Master’s in Business Administration from Ashland University. He identifies as a Caucasian male in his late 40s.

**Role and Responsibilities**

His primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide leadership and vision, curriculum development, community engagement, planning and coordination, and policy development. Trenger defined his role as “a counterpart of…the Early College High School Principal…the leader for the college closest to the students” (D. Trenger, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 277-280). Trenger shared that a major part of his job is to build partnerships with students, community members, and businesses, and his “relationship with Lenartowicz and the school has been a success” (D. Trenger, personal communication, February 29, 2012, Line 332).

**Leadership Style**

Trenger called himself a student advocate and believed many of the students that he serves need someone who is willing to stand up for them and protect their rights. He stated, “Sometime they don’t know how to fight for themselves and…they need somebody to at least teach them…how to handle various situations” (D. Trenger, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 1081-1087). Trenger documented that his leadership style is decisive, productive, and result-oriented. He stated, “I am very, very collaborative…I love to bring as many people to
the table as possible to come up with the best solution” (D. Trenger, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 290-292).

**Leaders’ Understanding of EC Relationship**

Both leaders shared strong sentiment for each other and their relationship building and sustain CECHS. Trenger shared, “We have a wonderful relationship. I’ve worked with three administrators since 2007, but by far our relationship has been the strongest.” Lenartowicz stated that the relationship has been “fantastic.” In fact, he mentioned how their “personalities just mesh.” He reflected, “We’ve grown together over the last three years. We’ve made a lot of changes to the program; all of them have been beneficial for the students” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 53-56). Both agreed the students are the reason they do what they do.

**Leadership Required to Facilitate an EC Partnership**

Lenartowicz continued to mention how a person leading an ECHSI needed to knowledgeable of policies, procedures, and practices, stating that the job requires a person with the ability to work through problems with careful thought.

You have to have the willingness to be open to ideas… [and to be] willing to operate way outside of whatever boxes exist, because a program like this is not normal…You’re trying to accomplish pretty incredible things with a group of students that may not have thought that was possible for the…and you must be willing to make the hard decisions. (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 376-377)

Trenger was clear that you could not properly facilitate a collaboration like this without the support of a team. “I think it is hard to find everything in one person…Together we bring the skills that are necessary for a collaboration like this, we are great together…and that is the
purpose of a team” (DT, Interview, Lines 346-349). He also shared that it is difficult to run a partnership like this if you have one leader at the top dictating—it is about a partnership. Trenger found that one of the most important skills of an EC leader is being able to convince others of your vision, ideas, and the purpose of the collaboration.

**Relationship Characteristics**

Lenartowicz at times felt the nature of the school was “mind boggling,” and that it could be hard to distinguish if it was a college or a high school, because it is actually both. He clarified:

To take a college and to merge it with a high school…in this particular situation that’s what’s been done. We’re not on a college campus. We’re on a high school campus. We have a high school schedule that we must fit into a college schedule…It’s fairly mind boggling…It took a lot of collaboration to make it happen. (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 8-25)

Trenger stated the relationship works because they are able to share ideas, resources, and staff, as well as engage in strong communication and collaborating teams to help them reach their goals.

Not only do we share facilities, we have co-teach model that definitely a best practice…It’s not like a traditional early college program where the kids are going straight to a college campus. We’ve done something a little different where we’re actually bringing our faculty members down to the Early College High School campus. And so, if we’re not working so closely together with our faculty members, we would have major, major problems because our faculty members and their teachers are actually
in the classroom together. (D. Trenger, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 5-22)

**Advantages/Successes**

Both agreed that their ability to create a fun, open, family-oriented climate has been an advantage. It is due to this positive climate that they are able to successfully run their collaboration. More importantly, they shared their success is in their students.

The true success is in the stories of the students. Here we have chance to actually make a difference in the lives of students, to get them through their education on a right path, and out of that bad cycle…a bad spot in their lives…the work that we do is true success…My job excites me and every time I think about the difference we made in the lives of others I get pumped up….If you’re having a down day, just throw that video of one of our students and that will pump you right back up – it reminds you why we do this work. (D. Trenger, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 219-225)

Moreover, the leaders were excited about their cooperative teaching model, which they described as a win-win for all involved. It allows the college faculty member and the high school teacher to collaborate on the curriculum and it makes the content delivery to the students easier. The students have an opportunity to have additional supplemental support from both instructors because they know what is being taught and they can share information across disciplines.

**Disadvantages/Challenges**

The challenges came down to CECHS being a program and not a school and working through staff selections, scheduling, and distance. According to Lenartowicz, they have tried to heighten the morale of the students. Lenartowicz shared:
We have created their own trademark…We have our own colors…We even sell paraphernalia for CECHS, but it is challenging working through their identity because, You’re either McKinley or Timken, but you’re also early college…but we really don’t exist…. We are steady trying everything to build our community our own identity. (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 1225-1229)

Trenger felt proximity, staff selection, and scheduling were issues. Trenger mentioned how they have to work twice as hard to make sure the communication between them is strong because of the distance. He commented on staffing only because he does not get to pick the staff. He thought if he had an input on hand selecting faculty members it would resolve issues with faculty. Trenger stressed it does not happen often, but sometimes an adjunct faculty member is identified to teach an EC course and they are not aware of the program. Trenger passed his issue with scheduling off by briefly stating, “Scheduling has always been an issue.” Lenartowicz breezed through it as well by sharing, “Scheduling is always a challenge, but you know, we’ve gotten much better at working through those” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 425-427).

**Leaders’ Perception of RLM within the EC Relationship**

**Purposeful**

For these leaders, being purposeful was associated with clear direction, roles, and change. Most significant was how change occurs internally through the collaborative process and how change is manifested through the success of students. Both mentioned how their purpose was to make college accessible to underrepresented populations, and to make a difference:

Leadership is about taking the tools you have…using those tools to create the best product possible...and realizing every tool is not right for the job so sometimes you will
need to change tools…meaning you have to be willing to make change happen; therefore, you may need to be willing to change policies and procedures. (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 327-329)

The leaders believed the EC program serves as a cycle breaker for many students, and the purpose of the program is to change lives. EC “breaks the cycle of poverty and gives our students an opportunity to be successful in college” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 162-163). EC “gets students out of that bad cycle” and “on to the path of success and continued education” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 23, 2012, Line 168).

**Empowering**

It was obvious that the PSI had clear gate keepers who were able to block policies and practices. Trenger shared how it is important to convince the people at the top of the importance of what he was doing:

> You have to be able to sell yourself…your ideas and your concepts…Unfortunately those at the top have a different understandings of what’s happening...To be honest with you, those on the front line see the realities and sometimes it doesn’t always match with leadership, and so we have to bring them in line…I see it as my responsibility to inform that and to try to convince them that what we are doing. (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 327-329)

When Trenger was asked about his own level of empowerment within the collaboration he shared, “On a scale of 1 to 10, I’ll put it as a 6…about medium…I’ll say that because I think that I’m a co-chair of the Early College” (D. Trenger, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 1102-1107). Lenartowicz commented how “Dennis’ role is a little more political, but I
think we’ve been able to get everything that we’ve wanted to, so I think both of us feel very empowered.”

While Trenger possessed an intermediate level of self-empowerment, Lenartowicz had a much more positive position on power. In fact, Lenartowicz felt completely empowered by the superintendent to run the program. “It’s referred to as Chet’s World… I mean, I feel tremendously empowered to make all the decisions that I want…and everyone has been very supportive (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 1101-1123).

Lenartowicz also shared that he felt it was his responsibility to empower those with whom he worked. “You have to take your time and develop the folks you’re working with to make sure everyone is on the same page” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 341-343). Everything that’s done here needs to go on if I’m not here. The only way that’s going to happen is that if I empower everybody to be part of the program and take an active role in the program and run the program themselves (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 1084-1088).

Inclusion

Both agreed that inclusion was a huge part of the collaboration. “Inclusion is about all parties coming together…The decisions wouldn’t be made in a silo over in one unit or at one institution leaving the rest of us and more importantly the students to live with the decisions made…Inclusion is about all of parties” (D. Trenger, personal communication, March 9, 2012, Lines 959-967). Lenartowicz began looking for clarification for the term inclusion, as he naturally thought about inclusion in the context of special education. However, once clarified Lenartowicz shared:
Our focus is on the kids and them being successful in this program. So, in order to achieve that goal we have to all work together on the same page…inclusion is about people working together to achieve a common goal with the kids with it in their heart and the goal in their mind. (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 1053-1062)

**Ethical**

The leaders of the Canton EC Collaboration shared that being congruent with decisions and policies, creating trusting relationships, with reliable people are important to preserving the integrity of the program and its curriculum. Lenartowicz shared:

> We’re here to preserve the integrity of the associate’s degree and of the college class. We’re not here to just push kids through college classes and throw degrees at them. I mean there’s a certain amount of ethics involved with that, to maintain the integrity of the program (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 23, 2012, Lines 1131-1136).

Lenartowicz and Trenger mentioned how ethics is the force that drives them” (D. Trenger, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Line 1206), “We work hard to do what we say we are doing to do, and “we do not expect any expectations lowered” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Line 1140-1141).

**Process-Orientation**

It was clear that the collaborative process is a “give and take.” According to Lenartowicz, there is a tremendous amount of give and take between the two. One cannot be rigid and true to what you want to be, because it will not work. Compromise is a necessity, but never on the integrity of what they offer to students.
The leaders shared how they work hard to create a cohesive, supporting team. Regardless of inherited power issues, the process is based on openness and a fair exchange of power. Trenger’s experience with two other EC leaders taught him quickly that “it is critical to have a bond built on openness and trust, and that’s what we have. If there’s an issue on my side or on his side, we pick up the phone…and address it not matter how difficult” (D. Trenger, personal communication, February 29, 2012, Lines 52-56).

It is obvious the relationship between the Canton EC leaders is strong and the process flows well. Leaders from other EC partnerships within the state jokingly referred to them as Chet 1 and Chet 2. “We work really well together. I mean it’s amazing and I can’t imagine how difficult it would be if we didn’t have that kind of relationship” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 632-639).

**RLM Components Impact on the EC Collaboration**

The leaders did not agree on the components that had the most impact on their collaboration, but they did share many of the components were essential to the success of their collaboration. Trenger placed a strong emphasis on openness, trust, and communication, but he also placed a valued on two of five of the RLM components, empowerment and inclusion, and stated that “purpose was not as important, because we know our purpose” (D. Trenger, personal communication, February 29, 2012, Line 1222). Empowerment and inclusion stood out as highly important issues with both men, with ethical conduct and a mutual respect for the organization of the other being high points in their professional relationship.

It is about the students’ ability to accomplish all of the things that we ask them to do. I think quite often a lot of our students could easily be written off, but we believe in their abilities. There’s a sense of belief this program can be accomplished by the students and
they can be successful. And we don’t compromise anything in the process. (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 1158-1163)

The following Figure 7 illustrates the RLM components with the greatest impact on the Canton, Ohio EC collaboration according to the leaders.

Figure 7. RLM Case Five: Canton EC Collaboration

Summary

As the only EC program (school within a school) in the state of Ohio, the leaders of the CECHS have discovered many challenges and successes in their collaboration. As the leaders have had to learn to overcome political issues between educational sectors, they have also learned how to negotiate timelines relevant to staffing and course and space scheduling. The CECHS employs a cooperating teacher model, which the leaders feel deserves regional and possibly national recognition. Their ability to deliver unified course content with supplemental educational services in a four-year curriculum has been one of their greatest successes. In addition, the leaders shared their pride in the quality and various levels of accomplishments among their students. Above all else, the leaders believe that change and flexibility are
inevitable and that a person leading an initiative like this must be able willing to “build the plane while you’re flying… We are always creating new things and you’re always on the run…you’re constantly tweaking things…there’s never a static state ever…You have to be very fluid and accepting— that this is how things roll” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 385-395).
CHAPTER IX. CASE SIX: AKRON PUBLIC EC COLLABORATION

Background of Akron, Ohio Public EC Collaboration

In 2007, Akron Public Schools (APS) and the University of Akron (UA) jointly created the Akron Early College High School (AECHS). The provost of The University of Akron, who had previously served as dean of the College of Education, worked together with APS’s superintendent to develop the EC initiative. The two meet monthly to coordinate and stay abreast of other activities that the schools had a common interest in (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 467-470). The leaders were approached by members of KnowledgeWorks Foundation with an opportunity to start an EC initiative; however, UA’s provost and APS’s superintendent decided not to join with the foundation at that time. Instead, they created a joint APS and UA team who “spent time visiting schools across the nation and taking the best practices from those and establishing our own model…. The team sought start-up funding from a local foundation initially…and then partnered with KnowledgeWorks to begin to establish the format for the AECHS” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 50-54). AECHS opened on the campus of UA during the fall of 2007.

ECHS Structure: Mission, Purpose, and Curriculum

AECHS is a public high school that allows students to earn a high school diploma and potentially an associate’s degree or up to 72 college credit hours from UA (AECHS Bulletin, n.d.). During the 2010-2011 academic year, the urban school served a total of 353 students (155 ethnic/racial minority, 321 first-generation, 222 low-income students) (M. Bennett, personal communication, March 1, 2012). AECHS’s mission is to ensure that each student “achieve his or her fullest potential in a safe and affirming learning center characterized by an extensive,
student-focused collaboration of all segments of the community, with an emphasis on preparing students to live and excel in a global environment” (AECHS Handbook, 2012).

During the spring of 2011, AECHS had its first graduating class of 59 students from a total of 63 seniors. Eighteen students simultaneously earned their high school diploma and associate’s degree. All 63 of the students enrolled in college courses at UA earned an average of 59 college credits per student (M. Bennett, personal communication, March 1, 2012).

**PSI Structure: Mission and Purpose**

UA is a public four-year research university in Northeast Ohio. UA was founded in 1870 as Buchtel College by the Ohio Universalist Convention as a private, non-denominational school (University of Akron [UA], 2012). Over time the institution has expanded its mission, curriculum, and enrollment. Currently, UA offers to its current offering of more than 300 undergraduate, graduate, and professional academic programs. The institution has grown recently. According to the fall of 2010 enrollment UA had a total more than 29,000 students (24,601 undergraduate, 4,140 graduate, 520 professional students). Ohio residents enrolled during the fall of 2012 paid a rate of $281.70 per credit hour or $9,552.48 per academic year (UA, 2012). UA’s mission is:

To develop enlightened members of society by offering comprehensive programs of instruction from associate through doctoral levels; pursues a vigorous agenda of research in the arts, sciences and professions; and provides service to the community. The University pursues excellence in undergraduate and graduate education, and distinction in selected areas of graduate instruction, inquiry, and creative activity. (UA, 2012)
Boundary Crossing: Aligning Missions and Shared Resources

UA has positioned itself as a regional institution at the heart of the Akron community, which allows the institutions to build partnerships to help advance businesses, government, and local agencies. With a long history of creating and running pre-college programs, UA works with AECHS to help students get a “start in the right direction!” (AECHS Bulletin, n.d.). The schools share facilities, staff, and resources, with AECHS being considered a part of UA’s Summit College (AECHS, 2012) and APS. It is located on the campus in the Polsky building. The students commit to a four-year academic tenure on the university’s academic schedule, which differs from APS’s schedule. The ninth and tenth grade students follow a traditional high school curriculum taught by APS teachers, but interacting with the UA campus community through enrolling in one or two college courses during their first semester (AECHS, 2012). As the students master their high school academic competencies and test college ready, they have an opportunity to enroll in college courses towards the completion of an associate’s degree during their eleventh and twelfth grade years.

ECHS Leader: Marilyn Bennett

Marilyn Bennett began as the principal of AECHS in 2010. Prior to beginning her tenure at AECHS, Bennett had more than thirty years of experience within the APS district serving as a high school teacher, a high school principal and mentor to new principals. Bennett described her experience as vast and diverse within the secondary educational system (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012). Bennett was born and raised in Akron, Ohio; however, she currently resides in Stow. She is a Caucasian female in her mid-50s and has a Master’s Degree in Secondary Administration from UA.
Role and Responsibilities

Her primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide leadership and vision, decision-making, course instruction, outreach and recruitment, parent/family involvement, planning and coordination, professional development, student support (i.e., counseling, mentoring, advising, etc.). “I see myself as an intermediary between the two institutions, I have to be well versed and able to balance APS and the university’s policies and procedures” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 86-88).

Leadership Style

Bennett described herself as a collaborative leader:

I’m very strong on collaboration. I consult with my staff on most all decisions, especially the decisions that affect the classrooms, curriculum, teaching, the staff time, and professional development…. I am not the sole leader in this particular program – I am a collaborator. (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 77-82)

Bennett firmly believes that “it is a leader’s responsibility to set the tone for the organization; you have to work with the staff to make sure they understand the vision and as a team the vision is molded into reality” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 75-77). Overall, Bennett categorized her leadership style as mentoring, nurturing, and facilitating (M. Bennett, personal communication, March 1, 2012).

PSI Leader Kelly M. Herold

Kelly M. Herold serves as the assistant to the dean of Summit College at the University of Akron. Herold has been in this position for five years, but has been at UA for 15 years. Herold reports to the dean, who is also an associate provost. She is a Caucasian female in her
early 40s who was born and raised in Northeast Ohio and currently resides in Akron, OH. Her highest level of educational attainment is a master’s degree in education from UA.

**Role and Responsibilities**

Herold’s primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide leadership and vision, decision making, assessment and evaluation, community engagement, outreach and recruitment, planning and coordination, policy development, professional development, and student support (K. Herold, personal communication February 22, 2012). Herold was a member of the team that originally designed AECHS, and was able to later assume the role as college liaison. She described the experience as fulfilling – “being able to see the plan come into fruition” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, line 90).

**Leadership Style**

Herold did not define her leadership under any particular category, but described herself as providing a pathway and setting goals. To her, being able to work to as a unified team is the primary goal, and had an overall perception of herself as a mentor, facilitator, and nurturer to those that she lead (K. Herold, personal communication, February 22, 2012).

**Leaders’ Understanding of EC Relationship**

The leaders described their professional relationship as excellent. According to Bennett, “We have a great working relationship…from the top down…. The relationship is very solid, especially between APS and UA” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 20-38). Herold echoing that the relationship was excellent and both partners have a high level of mutual respect for one another.

We have worked with Akron Public Schools for a significant number of years, and have multiple partnerships that benefit our students and community. Because of these
partnerships, the Early College model seemed like an appropriate addition to our partnerships. We work well together and everyone understands the benefits that it brings for our students. (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 29-37)

**Leadership Required to Facilitate an EC Partnership**

Bennett felt there was no particular leadership style required for success; however, there were specific skills, and they would include, but were not limited to, being a visionary leader who possesses strong communication skills. She also mentioned the importance of developing positive relationships with students, parents, staff, and community. “Students see AECHS and the staff as their second home and family; therefore, the leaders must be able to establish strong bonds with and the students…and others” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 883-884). Herold shared what was required of a leader initially, but not throughout the process. She mentioned, an “autocratic leader” is needed in the beginning, but by the end it takes someone who is more “laissez faire”. However, she shared that a strong leader should set the tone and be very hands-on in the beginning, then let go once the team is in place. Herold made it clear that for this to happen there must be a strong team in place.

**Relationship Characteristics**

Bennett described the Akron EC relationship as positive “…our relationship is great. Our EC program is enmeshed in the campus. Our classes are held on campus, not just in this building, but I have teachers in various buildings across the campus…. We have 13 and 14-year olds on the college campus” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 347-348).

Herold agreed fully with this sentiment, calling the environment “fully encapsulated…. Our students are not relegated to one building, they are fully incorporated. They start taking
college classes immediately in ninth grade. They are a university student in every way, shape and form, just like anybody else on our campus with very few exceptions” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 74-83).

One of the things that make their relationship different from a traditional high school is the academic schedule. AECHS follows the UA schedule (i.e., August through May), which is different from APS schedule (i.e., September through June). In addition, “Students are released at 1:00 p.m. on Thursdays to allow teacher professional development…. Teachers use this time together to work on class content or student issues…. They can use this time to work with their faculty counterpart on our campus (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 513-531). Bennett shared how that time “can also be used for disseminating information…. We make use of that time…. It’s time to work together in teams” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 127-133). The academic schedule and standing release time allows for teachers and faculty members to collaborate—this encourages a team-centered work environment.

Advantages/Successes

Working together as a team was acknowledged as one of the larger successes in the collaboration. Being able to cross policy boundaries was mentioned frequently through both interviews.

Working as a partnership or team, the AECHS principal has to work to balance both institutions’ policies and procedures. I understand how the university works and I full understand APS; we work together to make sure we have clear policies and procedures that we implement for our students and we make sure that every student is informed up front of the rules and regulations…. There are times that we have to make a
compromise…. For example, [on the] dress code” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 155-172).

Bennett agreed that the ability to share policies across sectors was a great advantage. She also acknowledged the “support on both ends because it took me a while to learn both procedures, but it is essential for a leader in this capacity to learn as much as possible” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 772-777).

Both leaders believed their working relationship has been smooth and successful, providing examples of the program’s success, such as being a “School of Promise three years in a row, [earning] excellent [ratings] on the school report card, students matriculating into college, and the number of students completing an associate’s degree a week after high school graduation” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, Lines 230-236). They attributed the success of the collaboration to the fact that they were able to establish their relationship on their own terms:

I have never seen people get along so well. It’s just very unusual that partnerships come together on their own terms; typically they’re forced in some manner, and this wasn’t the case for us. (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, Lines 246-250)

Bennett reflected on the pros and cons of the program, “The best thing is the freedom and the worst thing is the freedom” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, Lines 268-269). She explained that it is important not to lose sight that these students are traditional-aged high school students on a college campus and they have the freedom like a college student. Her concern was that the freedom could create attendance issues; however she and the staff makes sure that the expectations for the students are clear up front. Herold attributed the success to the maturity of the students and the high expectations of the program:
We don’t have as many behavioral or attendance issues that traditional public high schools may have. Much of this is due to the maturity of our students…. Because they’re on the campus, they emulate the behavior of the college students, and so they may have never set foot in a traditional high school setting, and they don’t see the behavior that typically may happen. And so, we are very low in disciplinary issues. (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 364-371).

As a proactive measure Bennett and the staff instituted a senior seminar. Bennett shared, “There was no touch point anywhere for me to reach twelfth grade students enrolled full-time at UA, “…You know, they’re not freshmen, they’re high school seniors. So this year we instituted a senior seminar” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 250-253).

**Disadvantages/Challenges**

The issue of navigating policies came up again when discussing disadvantages and challenges. Both leaders stressed the challenges of managing policies from two distinct institutions. Bennett shared, “I knew APS policies and procedures but then to meld the university policies in was difficult at first; however necessary to properly run an early college M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 819-820). The leaders shared the importance of managing policies difference and how this can impact the success or failure of a partnership of this nature. It was agreed that a leader would need to ascertain a certain level of boundary-crossing competences to be able to successful navigate policy differences. Additionally, Bennett mentioned how having clearly articulated and aligned goals can resolve issues. Herold agreed, “It is important that the all of the constituents, UA, APS, Gates Foundation, etc. goals align, and this is something that we committed to with KnowledgeWorks” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, 364-371).
Leaders’ Perception of RLM within the EC Relationship

Purposeful

Both leaders agreed that the purpose of their collaboration was to create opportunities for students. “Our real purpose is for our kids to continue their education. The university and APS each want to provide this opportunity for these predominantly first-generation students to obtain a college degree” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 701-703).

The school has a universal objective. “It is not only about high school, but college” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 701-702). Herold stated:

We’re an accepting place. We have always been committed to staying an open-enrollment school…. If a student or family wants an [early college] opportunity, and has a commitment to succeeding, we have been the place for them…because we serve all walks of life” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 727-731).

Bennett supported Herold the purpose is “to provide an outstanding opportunity and education to as many students as possible (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 864-865). Bennett believes, “Education is a good ticket for a good life, for success, for betterment; that is lifelong learning” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 389-390).

Empowering

Herold tries to empower others by having an open-door policy creating opportunities for involvement. She has the firm belief that all of those who understand their mission and the importance of the work that they do, then she does her best to give them an opportunity to get involved. In support, Bennett shared “even though it is difficult balancing the policies of APS
and the University…. I am confident…and I know what decisions I can and can’t make” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 853-858).

Inclusion

Herold touted the importance of inclusion, “It is probably in the top three or four things that I would say have to be there…It is important that everyone has access to information and is invited to contribute or share in the collaboration” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 548-555). She defined inclusion as a shared governance that facilitates collaboration—“a distributed leadership modeled throughout the collaboration…to college faculty, high school faculty, and to the students, who themselves take on leadership roles” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 753-765). She mentioned, “I think they see that it’s okay to try new things, and there are not going to be any repercussion if it doesn’t work out or they do not succeed. You’re only going to learn from failure, so why not try as much as you can” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 776-779).

Ethical

Neither leader referenced being ethical, nor did they share if and how ethics impacted the Akron EC Collaboration. However, they both related “acceptance” to being ethical. For them it was about systematizing processes and practices. “There’s trust, there’s respect, there’s a genuine level of acceptance” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 756-761).

Process-Oriented

The leaders seemed to put an equal weight on the value of the process and delivering program outcomes. Both leaders mentioned how the process is based on creating an accepting atmosphere and a team that could trust one another. The idea of acceptance was a common
theme that came up between the leaders in regards to how the members of the groups and the institutions interact with one another. Bennett mentioned, “There is an acceptance at the early college, the team feels very comfortable with one another” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 757-758). She believed trust, respect, and clear goals ground the team. Herold felt they had an accepting place “…that creates opportunities for all…and serves all walks of life” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 772-776). Herold attributed the success in the process to trust and dedication:

Everybody who has signed on to be a part of this collaboration is extremely dedicated and trustworthy…. Everyone is here for the good of the student, so everyone has the same goal in mind, and everyone wants the students to succeed. (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 572-579)

**RLM Components Impact on the EC Collaboration**

Outside of the RLM, trust, respect, dedication, and clear goals were common attributes of a successful EC Akron collaboration. However, Bennett mentioned being purposeful was the most impactful for her, “The University and Akron Public Schools each want to provide this opportunity for these predominantly first-generation students to obtain a college degree” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Lines 907-909). Herold was confident that the overall process has the greatest impact on the collaboration—the multiple parties who come together to create a vision and find the right people to lead the team.

The following Figure 8 illustrates the RLM components with the greatest impact on the Akron EC Collaboration.
Summary

It was obvious that a lot of time and effort was put into the design of AECHS. A collective team of APS and UA researched best practices and independently sought the funds prior to opening their EC. Between both leaders they have enough experience, background, and community connection to successfully run this collaboration in Akron. Bennett, a native of Akron, is approaching her second year as co-leader of the initiative and, as she navigates her way through the process she declares, “students come first” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Line 886).
CHAPTER X. CASE SEVEN: COLUMBUS PRIVATE EC COLLABORATION

Background of Columbus, Ohio Private EC Collaboration

The Charles School at Ohio Dominican University is a member of the Graham Family of Schools, a private foundation created in memory of Russell E. Graham (1896-1996), a native of Zanesville, Ohio (The Graham School, n.d.). Russell was an eighth-grade-educated, self-taught broker and respected community member (The Graham School, n.d.). In honor of his memory and legacy his family established the foundation. The Graham Family Schools consist of a consortium of three public, community charter schools in Columbus, Ohio. The Charles School at Ohio Dominican University (TCS@ODU) is the newest of the Graham schools, and was founded in 2007. The Charles School is a collaborative effort among Ohio Dominican (ODU) and Middle College National Consortium an intermediary educational organization. The mission of the Graham Schools is “To prepare students for lifelong learning and informed citizenship by immersing them in real-world, active learning as well as rigorous academics” (The Graham School Family Handbook, 2011-2012, p. 3).

ECHS Structure: Mission, Purpose, and Curriculum

Adopting the same mission, TCS@ODU’s stated purpose is:

To make higher education affordable, accessible and attractive for a broad diversity of Ohio’s high school students. As well, the school works to provide successful college preparation and experience to high school students who may have faced obstacles in the past, along with an arc to higher education for students who might not have considered college an option. (The Charles School at Ohio Dominican University [TCS@ODU], n.d.)
TCS@ODU does this by delivering a five-year Early College High School opportunity to 290 students (230 ethnic/minorities, 177 low-income, 12 non-native English-speaking) during the 2010-2011 academic year. The objective is to compact four years of high school and two years of college into five-years. The students who attend TCS@ODU obtain a high school diploma and up to 62 hours of college credit, the equivalent of an associate’s degree, entirely tuition free from ODU (The Charles School at Ohio Dominican University [TCS@ODU], n.d.). During the spring of 2011, TCS@OCU had 43 students enrolled in twelfth grade. Of these, none completed an associate’s degree, but several obtained transferrable college credits (G. Brown, personal communication, March 15, 2012). According to Karen Gray, PSI liaison, “Each student is required to graduate with 12 credit hours, but the goal is an associate’s degree (62 credit hours) and then continue on to whatever is their final academic endeavor. Whether that’s a 4-year degree, a master’s, or a doctorate, they’ve got a strong pathway built” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 246-250).

The curriculum is based on the philosophy of experiential learning, and is a combination of an accelerated learning program with a hands-on experiential learning component to bridge the gap between high school and college (TCS@ODU, n.d.). The accelerated hands-on program is designed “to bridge the learning gap between high school and college” (TCS@ODU, n.d., para. 2).

**PSI Structure: Mission and Purpose**

Ohio Dominican University (ODU) is a private, four-year institution located in Columbus, Ohio. ODU was founded in 1911 by the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the Spring as a women’s school (Ohio Dominican University [ODU], n.d.), transforming into a co-educational school in 1964. The school is an urban religious (Roman Catholic), liberal arts
institution. With three campuses (two in Columbus and one in suburban Dublin), the institution offers 43 majors to more than 3,097 full-time (2385 undergraduate/ 712 graduate) students during the 2009-2010 academic year (ODU, n.d.). Undergraduate students enrolled at ODU paid a rate of $531 per credit hour or $26,260 per academic year during the 2011-2012 year (ODU, n.d.). The ODU mission:

Is guided in its educational mission by the Dominican motto: to contemplate truth and to share with others the fruits of this contemplation. Ohio Dominican educates all individuals committed to intellectual, spiritual and professional growth to become lifelong learners committed to serving others in a global society, as ethical and effective leaders grounded in the pursuit of truth, justice and peace. (ODU, n.d.)

**Boundary Crossing: Aligning Missions and Shared Resources**

Part of Ohio Dominican’s mission has always been to meet the needs of the first-generation college student and, as you know through your research and work, college really does target those first-generation college students. So when we were approached to build the collaboration… it really seemed to be a great fit with the mission and identity of ODU. (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 4-9)

According to ODU’s website, the institution takes pride in being a student-centered institution that values a liberal arts curriculum and is “committed to excellence in academic and co-curricular programs; its commitment to service and community responsibility; its outstanding campus facilities and resources; its global outreach in response to educational needs; and its reputation for distinction in values-based higher education” (ODU, n.d., para. 16). As part of the fully-accredited curriculum, the institutions work to provide guidance and support to students, guided by teachers and professors who are certified in their academic disciplines (ODU, n.d.).
ECHS Leader: Greg Brown

Greg Brown’s official title is CEO of Academics, Principal of TCS@ODU. Brown has served in this role since 2007. As the chief administrator over all three Graham Family Schools, Greg works closely with the staff at all three schools and ODU. Prior to his tenure at TCS@ODU, Brown served as a teacher and school board administrator in the Columbus Public School System. Brown was born in Detroit, Michigan, but was raised and currently lives in Columbus. He is a Caucasian male in his mid to late 50s and his highest level of educational attainment is a master’s degree in education from Ohio State University.

Role and Responsibilities

His primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide leadership and vision, community engagement, planning and coordination, policy development, decision-making, fund-raising, outreach and recruitment, parent/family involvement, professional development, and student support (i.e., counseling, mentoring, advising, etc.).

My role has transitioned…In the beginning I was a key administrator the first few years…I helped to create this initiative by bringing other people on board and teaching them what they needed to know about this ongoing partnership or relationship with ODU and Middle College National Consortium [MCNC], our intermediary…Now I am less involved with the day-to-day work of the college…so my main job is overseeing the administrators of this school and maintaining the relationship with MCNC. (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 146-160)
Leadership Style

Brown described his leadership style as collegial, collaborative, and friendly, ensuring that the team treats each other well with honesty and compassion. Brown mentioned how he has adopted Meg Wheatley’s philosophy on leadership.

Collaborative leadership is acknowledging what you care about, and care for and how you create meaning, purpose, and clarity in the work that we do...my job, partly is to motivate other people to create, motivate them to care, and to set the table for what it is our vision is about. (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 195-202)

Overall, Brown categorized his leadership as a mentor, facilitator, and nurturer.

PSI Leader: Karen Gray

Karen Gray currently works at Columbus State Community College in College Access & Readiness. However, her previous position was at Ohio Dominican University as the Director of Office of P-16 Initiatives for five years. Despite her recent transition from ODU to Columbus State Community College, Gray graciously agreed to participate in this study. She is a Caucasian female in her early 40s and was born in Pennsylvania, but resides in Columbus, OH. Her highest level of educational attainment is a master’s degree in education from Franklin University.

Role and Responsibilities

Gray’s primary responsibilities in the partnership are to provide leadership and vision, decision making, community engagement, planning and coordination, policy development, and professional development. “My role truly was just as an administrator, making sure that those monthly meetings were called, making sure that agendas were set, making sure that any issues
that were raised were fully addressed until we had come to a resolution” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 144-146).

Leadership Style

Gray defined her leadership style as “detail-oriented,” focusing primarily on “getting the job done” with empathy and emotional intelligence. Her overarching mission is to serve the students and ensure that the systems support their pathway to success. Overall, she documented that she was a coordinator, organizer, and administrator of the EC collaboration (K. Gray, personal communication, April 8, 2012).

Leaders’ Understanding of EC Relationship

The leaders agreed that their partnership is focused on helping students by developing strong and active citizens. They do this by meeting the needs of the first-generation college students in an urban community. Brown shared the relationship is strong and well developed, going so far as to describe the connection between TSC and ODU as exceptional. In addition, both missions were to serve their community.

It is a part of their mission, to help bring a more equitable education to our community, to help everybody, especially underserved...To be served…right alongside the already served and that is a part of our mission…Our relationship works and it works well. (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, lines 48-51)

Leadership Required to Facilitate an EC Partnership

Brown mentioned it takes leaders with a sense of self-assurance to properly facilitate and EC partnership. “People who feel threatened by the outside world or by other people's talents really struggle in this kind of environment” (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 231-235). Secure people who can create an atmosphere of relational trust are vital, and the
culture has to welcome open, honest dialogue where people can share their shortcomings and what they are thinking without running the risk of being fired for it. Such an atmosphere promotes growth for teachers and students. Brown stressed the bottom-line is that you must be professional and able to get the job done. He shared, “You have to appreciate the importance of collecting data, and analyzing it, and then figuring out how that can create change” (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 254-255).

You have to have strong leadership…someone who is focused on the details…who can handle discord that may occur in either organization… Someone who is creative…who understand how to handle all kinds of things…The partnership is not exclusive to academics, but it’s about the relationship between the two organizations that care about the students. (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, lines 169-184)

**Relationship Characteristics**

Although both institutions promote a family-oriented culture, Gray believed TCS more wholly embodies that family orientation due to the nature of the K through 12 systems as opposed to secondary systems; TCS is a more relaxed kind of operation, whereas ODU is a little more structured and detail-oriented. Brown felt that the two schools had a wonderful relationship and valued their select status as one of two private charters in the state.

[The school] is unique in that it’s a five-year high school…with strong support systems at every grade level to allow students to go onto a college or university. Students are really given the tools for self-efficacy, they learn how to navigate the college campus, and they have a very clear-cut plan for how these credits become stackable and they result in certificate, degree, or launch them onto their four-year degree program of study. (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 303-309)
Advantages/Successes

Both leaders shared that the advantages of the collaboration were the students. “True success is the students’ stories…It’s not just the academics. The academics are absolutely what bring us together, but it’s that social support that comes around and wraps those students and encourages them” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 230-232). Brown valued the advantage of watching the students take classes at ODU and seeing them grow as human beings into the professionals “that they can, should, and deserve to be” (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 89-91). It was clear that the collaboration has a strong social and emotional support system; in fact, “These students are fantastic, they’re engaged, and they have some of the top grades in the class” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 138-139).

Disadvantages/Challenges

Gray remarked on the significant time commitment required for the collaboration as a disadvantage. She emphasized how it is important to have a commitment from both parties, and then develop an infrastructure that supports consistent communication. Gray talked about the TCS@OCU infrastructure, which included multiple committees “There is a large commitment part on both ends” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 49-50). When Brown reflected on the time commitment, he used the words “intense, but necessary.” Other than that, Brown could not think of any disadvantages:

Maybe they are more intensely aware of our business. Wow! That's actually a plus. I can see how some folks might think I rather not be so close – by allowing someone to know our foibles, but I can't think of a disadvantage from our perspective. (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 123-126)
Leaders’ Perception of RLM within the EC Relationship

Purposeful

For the leaders of this EC collaboration, being purposeful focused on shared values and common purpose.

The creation of the TCC was very purposeful because in the very beginning when Ohio Dominican made the commitment to partner with TCS everyone was abreast of what was going on…We did them that way not only for the ODU community but for the community at large. (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 346-352)

According to Brown, “The whole purpose is for our students to be in college classes while they're in high school so we can work with them to help them navigate what it means to be a college student” (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 5-7).

Empowering

Both leaders shared empowerment was about the collective. “Mostly everything was approached as a committee…there was never a situation where it came down to one person made a decision, but rather we all weighed in and it was really a democracy that we went with what the majority felt was the proper decision” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 518-522).

Brown took a position of encouraging and affirming others and promoting self-leadership or collective power, “Personally, I feel very empowered…That being said, I try to make as few decisions as possible because I want other people to make decisions along with me...We are all in charge…working collaboratively with others…at the mercy of others” (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 603-608).
Inclusion

Gray thought inclusion was “critical” to the collaboration, “On occasion, people could become very territorial or they can feel left out. The more leaders create a culture of inclusion, the better it is for the staff (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 464-466). Gray mentioned she does this by “having the open forums, roundtables, committees…and opportunities for others to be involved…I have tried to have very transparent processes and policies” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 445-453).

Brown mentioned that inclusion was essential, ”because you have to care about each other's business and you have to be in each other business to care about it, and if you don't, you're just an afterthought” (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 526-528). Brown defined inclusion as colleagues including each other in their work; for this to happen, it is necessary to have caring, respectful professionals.

Ethical

Gray touted “extremely important,” and “that in every aspect, at every level … from how much tuition we charged…to when we will schedule classes…we had to be very honest and open with…each other at every level” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 506-513). Gray shared, “The wonderful things about Ohio Dominican is it is a faith-based institution, there is a policy in place protecting all of God’s children and so what every your personal belief system is, the climate supports and encourages being ethical” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 493-497).

Ethics…varies depending upon the individual…In fact, for us ethics is about self-directed learning…where a student has a deeper connection to the community…and feel more responsible for, and more concerned about the community…on its own being connected
isn't enough…You have to see yourself as responsible for the success and failures of your community… That’s the ethics that we promote—honesty and compassion—these are the things that we value most about our relationships with Ohio Dominican. (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 571-584)

**Process-Oriented**

Both agreed their process is about building a collective, a community, that process as a group. “From the beginning we have always coordinated our efforts…constantly working together (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 480-483). It was clear that Brown thought that the process is as important as outcomes. Above all, the leaders both agreed respect and communication are essential to a collaboration.

**RLM Components Impact on the EC Collaboration**

Gray believed empowerment and inclusion were above the other RLM components. On the contrary, Brown understood all the components as being essential to the EC collaboration.

I never got the sense that it was about somebody’s personal agenda or somebody’s ego, but rather they felt very strongly about the position they were taking on an issue…It has always been about the students…So when you would see some conflicts arise, it wasn’t out of a sense of not being collegial or not wanting to be part of the team, but rather bringing their expertise, their experience to the forefront and saying this is what we need to do and this is why…And for these reasons everyone has felt like a valued member of the team and free to contribute. (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 531-540)

Brown explained how each component of the RLM has impacted his experience with the TSC@ODU:
I would say that we share a sense about the meaning of this work is how we have been purposeful. Then inclusion—I think comes out of some of this…shared purpose…We are more inclined to want to see how we can work close together…and then of course ethics is just a given it is how we operate. The empowering piece is more about style, and I think that I'm not going to impose my sense about how to work with other people or on another organization, so empowering others is something that is more internal to us. Then overlaying all of this with the process-orientation. It leads me to question, what are the processes that you can create that help further our purpose or mission? All of the pieces work in unison, and of course, there are other values such as care, respect, trust, communication, etc., which have been important to our collaboration. (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 709-724)

The following Figure 9 illustrates the RLM components with the greatest impact on the Columbus, Ohio Private EC collaboration according to the leaders.

![Figure 9. RLM Case Seven: Columbus Private EC Collaboration](image_url)
Summary

Hard work, intensity, and commitment are the words that come to mind when one reflects on the experiences of those leading TSC@ODU. Developing efficient processes based on ethical practices has been the standard of those involved. As the members of each organization find a committee that allows them to share and contribute, the organization’s intention is that it continues to grow. Brown prides himself on making sure that the members of his team are involved and empowered to play an active role in the decision-making process of their students.

It is important that anyone involved in a collaborative relationship must enter knowing what you’re about and what you have to personally contribute to the partnership…You must learn to be the personal spokesperson for your institution and the collaborative cause. You must learn about the University that you are working with, and try to understand the world from the University perspective. (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Lines 730-733)

If there was one important lesson learned from Gray, it is that communication is key to a successful collaboration. She mentioned how her new leadership role at a nearby PSI with an existing EC collaboration will allow her to lend her expertise building and sustain an EC initiative. She was excited about the success her new institution has had with its EC collaboration, and she looks forward to seeing how she can make a contribution. She shared, “We’ve got to get people talking. Others must be aware of the work that’s being done. We got the right people around this partnership to make it successful. So I would like to get them together to communicate more” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 601-604).
CHAPTER XI. CROSS-CASE RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The current chapter compares and contrasts the seven cases presented in Chapters IV through X. This cross-case analysis is presented in six sections. The first section, *Background and Structure of Ohio EC Collaboration*, summarizes the background information of the seven EC collaborations. The second section, *Ohio’s Early College (EC) Leaders*, covers the individuals who lead the initiatives (i.e., roles and responsibilities and leadership styles). The third section, *Understanding of EC Collaboration*, describes characteristics required to facilitate successful EC collaborations, attributes that were significant to the partnerships, and organizational strengths and weaknesses. The fourth section, *Relational Leadership Model Components*, details the leaders’ understanding and application of the Relational Leadership Model (RLM) components. The fifth section, *Cross-Case Analysis of Research Questions*, reviews the three research questions that guided this study. The sixth section, *Summary*, for the cross-case analysis and concludes the chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to explore whether or not common understandings can be extracted from the individual participants’ understanding and experiences described in the individual cases.

**Background and Structure of Ohio’s Early College (EC) Collaborations**

Since 2003, Early College High Schools (ECHS) have had a presence in urban communities throughout Ohio. Each of the participating collaborations has adopted the national Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) mission to provide accelerated learning options in small-school environments for students from traditionally underrepresented populations (ethnic/racial minorities, first-generation, low-income, non-native English-speaking). The ECHSs are designed to provide these students an opportunity to earn a high school diploma and an associate’s degree or up to two years of college credit toward a bachelor’s degree in four
years (five of seven Ohio EC collaborations) or five years (two of seven Ohio EC collaborations). Ohio has delivered these accelerated learning options through educational partnerships between schools and colleges with varying characteristics. Five of seven Ohio EC collaborations are with public schools, and two of seven Ohio EC collaborations are with community schools. Both four-year universities (two private, three public Ohio EC collaborations) and four public two-year colleges make up the post-secondary partners in Ohio’s EC collaborations.

Of the seven participating collaborations, Columbus Public EC Collaboration is the only K-12 academy with an Africentric curriculum, and it is the only collaboration that is not located on or near the campus of its post-secondary partner. Canton EC Collaboration represents the only EC program (school within a school), as opposed to the others, which are free-standing schools. Two of the seven collaborations had tri-partnerships with a four-year and two-year institution—Dayton EC and Youngstown EC Collaborations. Two collaborations are community schools (charter schools) with a five-year curriculum and a private, four-year partner—Dayton EC and Columbus Private EC Collaborations. Dayton EC and Canton EC Collaborations have EC preparatory academies serving grades six through eight. Columbus Private EC is the only EC that receives funding and support from the Middle College National Consortium (MCNC), while the others work through the KnowledgeWorks Foundation.

**Ohio’s Early College (EC) Leaders**

For the most part, the leaders who participated in this study were Caucasian men in their mid-40s to 50s. Nine of the leaders identified as White/Caucasian and five African American. More specifically, five classified as Caucasian men (two principals and three PSI liaisons), four Caucasian women (one principal and three PSI liaisons), two African American female
principals, and three African American males (two principal and one PSI liaison). The ages of the leaders ranged from 25 to 64 (one late 20s, one mid-30s, one early 40s, two late 40s, five mid-50s, and one early 60s). The youngest leader was an African American male principal in his mid-20s, and the oldest was a Caucasian male PSI leader in his early-60s. All of the leaders had at least a master’s degree. Eleven had master’s degrees, two had specialist degrees, and one had a doctoral degree, all in education-related concentrations. During the interviews, many leaders said that they were associated closely with the population they served. Eight leaders indicated that they personally identified as a member of a traditionally underrepresented group: three identified as first-generation, three ethnic/racial minorities, and two acknowledged that they had multiple identities (i.e., first-generation, low-income, and ethnic/racial minorities). Six of the leaders indicated that they were not members of a traditionally underrepresented population.
Table 4

*Leaders’ Understanding of Characteristics Necessary to Facilitate an Early College (EC) Collaboration*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>EC Collaboration</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Trust</th>
<th>Respect</th>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
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*Note.* EC denotes Early College Leader, PSI denotes Post-Secondary Institution Leader
Roles and Responsibilities

Of the seven EC leaders and seven PSI leaders, two of the seven EC leaders had titles above a principal (i.e., CEO or School Leader), and four of the seven PSI leaders had jobs directly related to P-16 initiatives/community outreach, while the others served in multiple administrative roles. Fourteen months was the least amount of time that an EC leader had within the collaboration, and 34 years was the highest. The average years of work experience among the 14 leaders was eight years. However, each of the leaders had at least four years of full-time experience in education. All of the leaders’ experiences were within their respective educational sector and not cross sectors.

A dominant theme among the leaders was that they all considered themselves “student advocates” or “student centered”. Each one articulated that students were the main focus of the EC collaboration. Secondary to being student-centered was the idea of being “home-grown”. Twelve of the fourteen leaders where born or raised in the area of their collaboration. So there appeared to be a strong connection between EC leader and community in which the ECHS is located.

The level of roles and responsibilities varied according to the leaders’ position and authority within their respective institution. When describing their roles, eight shared their primary role was to serve as an “administrator” or “facilitator” to the initiative. Three mentioned “middle management”, and the other three participants’ responses varied with multiple responses (e.g., entrepreneurial, detailed-oriented, visionary, mentor, collaborator).

Leadership Style

The most common articulated leadership styles among the leaders were collaborative (five of fourteen leaders) and participatory/democratic (two of the fourteen). The others
identified as a combination of direct, visionary, proactive, detailed-oriented, progressive/Africentric, and servant-leader. One decided not to disclose a leadership style. Of those who identified as collaborative leaders, four of the five were in their late 50s, and they each used the terms mentor, facilitator, and nurturer as descriptors. The other collaborative leader was in his late 30s and used the terms coordinator, organizer, and administrator to describe his leadership style. The leadership styles of the five collaborative leaders and the servant-leader aligned with the collaborative leadership model. The collaborative leadership model promotes collegiality or consensus and focuses on team building. The three who identified as visionary, proactive, progress/Africentric aligned with transformational leadership model. The transformational leadership model thrives on motivating others to work towards common goals. The leaders who mentioned direct or detailed-oriented style correlated with transactional leadership. The transactional leadership model emphasizes outcomes, performance, and system improvement.

**Leaders’ Understanding of EC Collaboration**

The partners revealed attributes that they felt were necessary for a successful collaboration. There were six key themes that arose from the data: (a) open, consistent communication, (b) mutual respect, (c) trust, (d) dedication, (e) accountability, and (f) knowledge/competency. Of the additional reoccurring characteristics of leaders, strong decision-making and diplomacy (i.e., must have a clear understanding the culture and climate across institutional sectors) were most common. Often, three or more leaders referenced these attributes as being essential to the success of a collaboration outside of the components that were associated with RLM.
Leadership Required to Facilitate an EC Partnership

There were also key skills that the leaders thought those who lead or who were interested in leading EC collaborations should possess. These skills included strong communication, progressive (“out-of-the-box”) thinking, detail orientation, flexibility, and team building. These skills were mentioned throughout multiple cases. Many of the leaders shared skills that they did not claim to possess themselves. However, several mentioned how difficult it is to find an individual who would possess all the skills and attributes. “Nothing or no one is perfect” (D. Taylor, personal communication, March 9, 2012). Further, the following thoughts were shared: “no one person can possess all the skills necessary to lead a collaboration” (T. Lentz, personal communication, February 28, 2012); “no one person should be the sum total of anything … it is about the collective” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012). Several leaders shared that the advantage of a collaboration is being able to combine the skills of two individuals into a shared role. In fact, Johnson described it as a “collective motif” where you build teams, share resources, and “mesh personalities” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012).

Advantages/Successes

There were several advantages and successes noted; a few of them were noted as best practices or prominent events among collaborations. Multiple leaders declared that the students are their true measures of success. They shared, “True success is the students’ stories” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Line 230), and “The true success is in the stories of the students…” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012); “…we have the chance to actually make a difference in the lives of a student” (D. Trenger, personal communication, February 29, 2012, Lines 219-220). There were several best practices that were previously
mentioned as part of the Gateway curriculum. However, from those who mentioned Gateway, most of the emphasis was placed on the experiential learning component (i.e., internship, practicum, shadow experiences, etc.). Two of the ECHSs had cohort models and several ECs required students to begin the college curriculum during their first year of high school. Even though the college courses could be considered rigorous to high school freshmen, the early introduction to the college content and cohort model were attributed to being advantageous to the students’ success and the success of the collaboration. According to the Canton EC collaboration, the cooperative teaching model was identified as a strength in that it allowed high school teachers and college faculty members to work together to deliver a unified curriculum across disciplines and supplemental educational support for students. Lastly, being close to or being physically located on the campus of a PSI partner was seen as a strength, in that it set up a high level of expectation, created a climate of success, and became a reality that the college culture was the norm.

**Disadvantages/Challenges**

According to the Youngstown EC collaboration principal, the Toledo EC collaboration PSI liaison, and both leaders with the Akron EC collaboration managing students attendance as their college schedule increase can be a challenge because it could lead to truancy problems. They also questioned the students’ level of maturity and academic readiness, but quickly dismissed both challenges by asserting that their students are equally or more prepared than the traditional first-year freshmen. This is because there are support pieces, workshops, constant reiteration, and courses that teach the students how to navigate higher education. However, one leader did mention being on a college campus is associated with a certain level of freedom. In
fact, she stated, “The best thing is the freedom, and the worst thing is the freedom” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012).

There were four common challenges among Ohio EC collaborations. First, the issue of fiduciary authority / budget management across sectors was an issue, especially among public school districts. Primary among those concerns was nonpayment of tuition and other expenses in a timely fashion. Second, location was a big deal for ten of the leaders. Several mentioned the importance of the EC being located close or nearby a college campus. In addition, three of the leaders specifically shared that the proximity of their office being far from their counterpart created challenges. The leaders in the Columbus Public EC Collaboration, the only site not located on the campus of their PSI, shared how being close would help promote the EC model and the proximity would be a constant reminder to the students and their parents of the relationship. Third was the issue of conflicting time and schedules. Often the collaborations had issues with operational timelines and conflicting academic calendars. Several of the leaders mentioned how the aligning of academic schedules would aid in curriculum development and delivery. Finally, institutional bureaucracy was an issue for many EC leaders working with PSI partners. Irrespective of their organizational structure (i.e., two-year or four-year) many shared concerns of politics. Eight of the fourteen had political issues that caused difficulties within their own organization or with their partner. Five of the leaders referenced the difficulties of trying to navigate both cultures, and three shared how the internal misuse of power hindered them for their inter-organizational effectiveness.

**Relational Leadership Model Components**

In the cross case analysis that was conducted on the five components of RLM, seven of the fourteen leaders identified being empowering as highly significant. Six leaders selected
ethics and process-orientation, and five leaders chose inclusion, purpose, and process. When compared by institutional types, being empowering was selected by secondary and post-secondary leaders in four-year partnerships. In addition, PSI liaisons identified being empowering as important to their partnership. Several of these leaders shared how they dealt with professional issues of bureaucracy within their organization. The second highest ranked component, ethics, appeared more frequent among principals, while being ethical occurred the least among leaders in two-year collaboration. All of these leaders mentioned maintaining the integrity of the program is most important; therefore, the leaders espouse fair student selection, a quality curriculum, and unbiased grading practices. Several of the leader shared how they had been accused of “creaming”, which is selecting the best and brightest or the students who rank within top twenty percentile of the district to attend the EC. In addition, the data supported that ethics was based mostly on the leader’s understanding of decision-making processes within the collaboration, as well as the overall integrity of program’s policies and guidelines. For example, one leader questioned if “offering college courses to high school students as a means of meeting head counts and to generate revenue” was ethical (C. Ward, personal communication, March 5, 2012), and another toiled on whether the “support services provided were violations of FERPA” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012). Table 3 represents a frequency table for the RLM components according to 14 leaders in Ohio’s EC collaboration.
Table 5

*Relationship Leadership Model (RLM) Components with the Greatest Impact Across Early College (EC) Collaborations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case #</th>
<th>EC Collaboration</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Purposeful</th>
<th>Empowering</th>
<th>Inclusive</th>
<th>Ethics</th>
<th>Process</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case # 1</td>
<td>Dayton</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PSI</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case # 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PSI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case # 3</td>
<td>Columbus Public</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PSI</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case # 4</td>
<td>Toledo</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PSI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case # 5</td>
<td>Canton</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PSI</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case # 6</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PSI</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case # 7</td>
<td>Columbus Private</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PSI</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* EC denotes Early College Leader, PSI denotes Post-Secondary Institution Leader
Cross-Case Analysis of Research Questions

The questions that drove this study were as follows: (1) How do Ohio Early College leaders understand the Ohio Early College relationship? (2) How do participants perceive the various components of the Relational Leadership Model (being purposeful, ethical, empowering, and inclusive through the process)? (3) Which, if any, of the Relational Leadership Model components have the greatest impact on the Early College partnership?

The data suggest that the school-university relationship makes sense. In fact, “it makes sense” was a reoccurring statement from four of the seven partnerships. Several leaders mentioned the importance of pooling resources especially during these tough economic times. Another shared how both educational institutions represent the intellectual hubs for their community and it was expected that they made a difference in the community. Others talked about simply working towards the same mission and goals. Regardless, it was clear that the relationship across educational sectors made a “tremendous amount of sense” (D. Trenger, personal communication, February 29, 2012, Line 27).

How do Ohio Early College leaders understand the Ohio Early College relationship?

The first research question clarified three things: (a) relationships take time, (b) the partnership was bigger than the two individuals leading it; and (c) the bottom-line was fulfilling the mission of increasing the educational pipeline for predominately first-generation and low-income students. Several of the leaders described their relationships as symbiotic bonds or even relationships “that grow stronger as opposed to just becoming stagnant” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Lines 46). Every leader saw the relationships as invaluable. Even though the data were overwhelmingly positive, several of the leaders admitted that their relationships have grown and improved over time. They all acknowledged that personal contact
outside of work and opportunities shared informally helped cultivate their relationships. The leaders discovered that adequate time must be available for consultation and participation to be effective. For example, if there were differences in leadership style or challenges in program development, time allowed them a chance to restore differences and work through trials.

The data also revealed the relationships were bigger than the individual partners. It was about the collective, which included teachers, administrators, support staff, community members, parents, legislative leaders, presidents, superintendents, Board of Trustees members, intermediary organizations, and the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN, a state-wide EC network). If it was not for them coming together, the relationship would not be a success. Several of the leaders shared that building relationships at all levels was an essential part of their job and was a necessity for the success of the partnership. A few of the leaders shared sentiments of, “how everyone has a role to play in the collaboration from the top down” (M. Bennett, personal communication, February 28, 2012, Line 36), and this was not exclusive to upper level administration as one of the leaders shared that “if it was not for the support of the president…” (C. Ward, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Line 347) or “the number of caring and benevolent leaders” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Line 13), and contributions the “support of community and Board of Trustees members” (M. Dotson, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Line 279) these collaborations would not exist. The idea that” it takes a village to raise a child” was a reoccurring theme for understanding how Ohio EC relationships work.

One of the leaders clearly stated, “Without these relationships we would not be an early college high school” (R. Wheatley, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 5-6). It was understood that it was the collaborative efforts of the two institutions “coming together to
improve our community” (T. Lentz, personal communication, March 1, 2012, Lines 4-10). The overall goal was to promote “higher educational opportunities” (E. West, personal communication, March 12, 2012, Line 347), and “to help bring a more equitable education to our community” (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012, Line 48). All of the EC leaders agreed that their primary goal was “meeting the needs of the first-generation college students” (K. Gray, personal communication, March 10, 2012, Lines 4-5) in an urban community.

How do participants perceive the various components of the Relational Leadership Model (RLM)?

According to the data, the participants found the components of the RLM — being purposeful, empowering, inclusive, ethical, and the overall process-orientation — important to their collaborations. At least the three EC collaborations had common components, and all of the components appeared as least once as a common characteristic among the partnership. In addition, two of the leaders found every component to be important to facilitating the collaboration. One specifically mentioned, “I don’t see independent pieces when I look at the model…. The whole component – it’s dynamic ever evolving” (M. Johnson, personal communication, March 13, 2012, Lines 1210-1212).

However, the data revealed that there are other attributes which were essential to a successful partnership. The leaders shared that without open communication, mutual respect, trust, dedication to the mission and commitment to the partnership, strong decision-making and proven results, competence or knowledge base to do the job, flexibility, and/or the know how to negotiate and work with multiple constituency (i.e., boundary crosser) it was hard to facilitate the partnership.
Which if any of the RLM components have the greatest impact on the Early College partnership?

The data revealed the components according to their level of importance or impact in the following order: (1) being empowering, (2) being ethical, (3) being process-oriented, (4) being inclusive, and (5) being purposeful. See also Table 3, presented above. Also, the data showed that above all, the RLM components being ethical and empowering had the most impact on the collaboration. An important conclusion to emerge from the RLM analysis is EC leaders at two-year institutions thought ethics was the most important RLM component, and leaders at four-year institutions found ethics to be of least importance. It may be assumed that this was due to the climate at their respective institutions. Often ethics is learned from our environment, and once we develop or become acclimated institutional ethics become part of our norms to help us understand or make sense of the things around us. Four of the seven participating institutions were public, two-year institutions. Three of the four are large complex structures, being located in urban areas, with more than 14,000 students, and even though there were some centralized structures in place, the bases of many of these units related to the EC initiative were decentralized within the institution. In turn, this caused issues with decision-making and imbalance of power, which were ethical challenges for several of the leaders.

Summary

There was definitely interplay between the EC relationship and collaboration leadership practices of the participants. Participants identified four key areas that contributed to how this interplay happened. The most compelling results were from sections one and three. The first section, *EC Collaborations and their Leaders*, indicated that the most commonly identified leadership style was collaborative. Four of the five who noted this style were in the same age
range and identified mentoring, facilitating, and nurturing others as important to leading a collaboration. The majority of the participants understood that EC collaborations take the support and work of everyone. All constituencies are seen as valuable and having something to contribute to the inter-organization. I was clear that the students and fulfilling the needs of their local community were the primary objectives of the collaboration. Next were the outcomes of the Relational Leadership Model Components. The data showed that all of the components were valuable, however, ethics and empowerment were the most frequent components discussed among the leaders. What was most revealing was that the leaders associated with four-year collaborations found being empowering to be the most impactful, while being ethical had a greater impact on EC principals. Further distinctions will be made in the next chapter. Finally, the participants disclosed that there were other important attributes to facilitating a successful school-university partnership, and they included, but were not limited to having open communication, trust, mutual respect, vision, commitment, accountability, and professional competencies. Even though several of the collaborations have created their own niche, they use the components of the previously mentioned RLM and common attributes to successfully facilitate their collaboration.
CHAPTER XII. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since 2002, it has been understood that the mission of ECHSI could not be accomplished in isolation. Therefore, schools districts, post-secondary institutions, educators, parents, students, and community members have worked together to build and sustain early colleges in more than half the states and the District of Columbia (Early College High School Initiative [ECHSI], 2012; JFF, 2008). These early college institutions and programs are designed to reduce the academic disparities between members of minority groups and their majority counterparts by providing small learning environments with strong student support. The support is designed to (a) ease the transition to college, (b) reduce college costs by accelerating time to degree completion, and (c) provide a highly-trained workforce that can compete in a global marketplace (Berger, Adelman & Cole, 2010). Early college institutions and programs have provided many students accelerated educational opportunities as well as strengthened educational partnerships between secondary and post-secondary institutions. The present study focused on seven of the ten early college partnerships and the 14 leaders who lead the Ohio ECHSI with the purpose of reforming America’s educational system.

The final chapter of the study is organized into four sections. The first section discusses the findings of the study, with each central purpose of the study – leaders’ understanding of the EC relationship and the application of the Relational Leadership Model (RLM) and its components – getting separate attention. The second section of this chapter considers the implications for practice, policy, and future research. This section also addresses the study’s limitations. The third section presents a personal reflection upon the research methods utilized in the study. Finally, the study wraps up with a brief conclusion.
Discussion of Results

The purpose of this study was to understand collaborative leadership models across educational sectors, with the ECHSI as the context, and to explore if and how the Relational Leadership Model and its five components (purpose, inclusion, empower, ethics, and process) are applicable to the partnerships. This two-fold purpose will be used to guide the reader through this section of the chapter. The results were not driven by student outcomes or the particulars of how the partnerships were formed. Rather, the leaders’ understanding of building meaningful collaboration across educational sectors.

Leaders’ Understanding of EC Collaboration

Inter-Organizational Characteristics

The observation that EC leaders were bound by the norms and traditions of their respective institution is highly consistent with what Baker (2011), Hora and Millar (2011), and Wepner and Hopkins (2011) found previously in their studies. They concluded that partnerships are complex organizations that must take into consideration the multi-dimensional constructs of inter-personal, intra-organization, and inter-organizational relationships. Hora and Millar (2011) have also noted that the culture of the partnering organizations are so multifaceted that the only way to form true partnerships is to develop a new structure, independent of the existing organizations. Some of the scholars refer to this as the third space of partnership work (Hora & Millar, 2011), the nexus (Baker, 2011), an inter-organizational relationship (London, 2012; Wepner & Hopkins, 2011; Turning Point, 2005), or the interagency collaboration (London, 2012), or partnership capital (Eddy, 2010). All of these represent a shared community or structure beyond the individual partners and organization. This newly formed structure becomes the foundation of the collaboration. This new structure is the space where terms are mutual and
shared and where competing interests and perspectives play out differently (Eddy, 2010; Hora & Millar, 2011).

Without question, all of the EC collaborations are representative of the literature’s formation of a new structure or inter-organization. For each of the partners, the EC represents a mutual place where they can develop shared vision, goals, and resources. The EC high schools and programs represent the newly formed structure or inter-organization of the Ohio EC school-university partnerships. Six (five new and one existing schools) evolved as partnerships between two independent sectors—a secondary school district (e.g., typically the superintendent) and the administrator at a post-secondary institution (e.g., usually a dean and most often the dean of education). Five were newly built structures and the other was (Columbus Public EC Collaboration) an existing site. Existing EC sites are partnering organizations that work together to convert an established school (Berger, 2008; Lieberman 1998). The seventh, Columbus Private EC Collaboration, was launched between two private entities (a private foundation and a private, four-year institution). Nevertheless, all seven of the EC collaborations represent organizational structures with central administration, funding, technical assistance, and support through an intermediary partner – Middle College National Consortium (MCNC) or KnowledgeWorks Foundation. Intermediaries coordinate ECHSI throughout the nation, and the organizations are designed to ensure the fidelity of early college core principles and standards (JFF, 2010). The KnowledgeWorks Foundation supports six of the EC collaborations, and MCNC manages the one private EC Collaboration.

Greenberg and Baron (2003) postulated that organizations are dependent on the history and individuals of the collective, as they shape the values, beliefs, and norms that hold an organization together. Other scholars describe this phenomenon as “culture” (Bess & Dee, 2008;
Kuh & Whitt, 1988). According to the literature, culture is used to describe an organization based on the individuals and the collective behaviors (Fairholm, 1994; Hora & Millar, 2012; Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Through the exercise of visions and values, norms are created. Komives et al., (2007) expounded:

> Culture is the sum total of ways of living; including values, beliefs, esthetic standards, linguistic expression, patterns of thinking, behavioral norms, and styles of communication which a group of people has developed to assure its survival in a particular physical and human environment. (pp. 156-157)

Typically, culture is used to define and/or describe a community, organization, or structure. Therefore, it is important to understand that structural features and tasks “are not the real work of collaboration” (Hora & Millar, 2012, p. xi). According to Komives et al. (2007), the structure is not the organization. The organization is the membership—the people—who have come together for certain purposes” (p. 257). Therefore, true collaboration happens through people who connect with each other and get to know one another (Hora & Millar, 2012), when the members of the organization develop mutual respect for one another (Hora & Millar, 2012; Lieberman, 1998; London, 2012; Wepner & Hopkins, 2011), they can agree on success (Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Hora & Millar, 2012; Komives et al., 2007), and create clear paths or visions to reach their goals (Hopkins, Hora & Millar, 2012; Lieberman, 1998; London, 2012; Wepner & Hopkins, 2011). The leaders of the Ohio EC Collaborations found each of these characters to be true in how they developed inter-organizational relationships. In fact these paralleled the six characteristics defined as key attributes of an EC inter-organizational collaboration. The literature and leaders of Ohio’s EC collaborations believed that making intentional or meaningful connections is best achieved through open communication and trust.
That developing mutual respect and being able to agree on success is how an individual proves their commitment and is held accountable. Finally, a leader of a collaboration must create clear pathways and ensure that they and their team have the professional competencies and knowledge to successful facilitate a school-university partnership. The following section provides a full explanation of the six characteristics which are essential to building and sustaining educational partnerships.

Making Intentional or Meaningful Connections

According to Hora and Millar (2012), the connection between two or more organizations or individuals is a fundamental point in any relationship. It is the dimension of meaningful connections where tasks are accomplished, goals are achieved, development occurs, people make sense of experiences, and so on. At best, though, making meaningful connections is serendipitous (Dutton & Ragins, 2007). The participants in the present study found that communication and building trust were the most important aspects of making meaningful connections in organizations and with people. Similar to Eddy’s (2010) research, communication is a part of the process-orientation of organizational development, and it’s the one tool or skill that triumphs over challenges or obstacles in organizations. The findings in the present study revealed that communication is critical throughout the partnership, and it is the foundation for how trust occurs.

Communication. Communication across the board was a priority for all of the EC leaders. Several of the leaders shared how being able to facilitate authentic dialogue was an important skill. In support, Cesar (2005) found that open dialogue creates a sense of community. It allows the individuals involved to connect with one another. The data in the present study showed that effective communication creates opportunities for safe dialogue where participants
are able to deepen their understanding of team members, to build relationships, and to transcend institutional and intellectual boundaries. Communication is the means by which boundary issues are addressed, goals and objectives are achieved, and costs and benefits are negotiated; most importantly, communication happens at all levels and among all members (Hora & Millar, 2010). Several scholars believed that open communication creates respect (Eddy, 2010), loyalty (Komives et al., 1997), reciprocity and trust (Eddy, 2010; Komives et al., 1997).

**Trust.** In this study of EC collaborations, trust was typically cross-referenced to RLM’s ethical component, making meaningful connection, and building strong lines of communication. More importantly, however, the participants shared how trust was the foundation of the collaboration. In the collaborations, the leaders discovered that trust is built on integrity and confidence, and that the people and the organizations involved are committed, honest, and reliable. Two of the leaders mentioned that once trust in a relationship has been violated or broken, it was very difficult to rebuild. These leaders believed that creating a safe, welcoming environment with open communication can rebuild trust in a partnership. Komives et al. (2007) shared that, “Trustworthiness is far more telling than the truth. Being worthy of trust means being honest, demonstrating integrity, keeping promises, and being loyal” (p. 134). In support, one of the leaders shared that loyalty and trust are reciprocal, and a team member needs to know that they are supported and respected.

**Developing Mutual Respect**

Five of the fourteen participants shared stories and sentiments of the importance of respect, particularly the mutuality of respect: “respect is a give and take” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 23, 2012). The Akron EC Collaboration used the words “mutual respect” often as they described their relationship. One of the leaders shared how
respect is not just about the individuals in the organization, but the organization as a whole treating its team members fairly. Accordingly, Komives et al. (2007) shared, “Respect means you treat others considerately, not that you admire or agree with all their views or behavior” (p. 134), but that the individual is committed to treating others in ways that do not demean or take advantage (London 2012; Komives et al., 2007). The participants and the researcher paralleled respect to ethics. Most enlightening was Wepner and Hopkins (2011) analogy of mutual respect to mutual renewal. The scholars believed that renewal allowed the individual an opportunity to see the big picture. It was a chance to address the conflicts of what happens in an organization when one feels disrespected. Mutual renewal deals with conflict and draws on strengths and commonalities to build trust in difficult situations especially in their attempts to cross boundaries—“It requires a relentless reconnection and calibration about purpose” (Wepner & Hopkins, 2011, p. 72).

Agreeing on Success

Often success is measured in terms of external factors, some form of reward or goal attainment, and it is contrasted with failures or shortcomings. According to Komives et al. (2007), success holds different attributions depending on the individual or organization. Therefore, success could be a part of the culture or it can be an external factor. The premise is that it is left to the person’s interpretation. The participants of this study agreed that success was about the leader’s level of commitment and accountability to their students’ success. According to the leaders, student success can be measured at completion of high school while engaging them in a quality college experience (i.e., above average grades, C+ or 2.5 grade point average).

Commitment. According to Komives et al. (2007), commitment is a level of passion that reflects an individual’s willingness to be responsible and accountable for his or her actions
and simultaneously conscious of the moral and ethical implications of his or her behavior. In turn, being committed, responsible, and accountable are simultaneous. Every one of the leaders in the present study shared that being committed to the purpose, mission, and/or collaboration was important. The participants viewed commitment in two levels – individual and institutional. At the institutional level, commitment involved providing the resources to support the partnership, and they included, but were not limited to, activities and programs to engage team members in reflection and dialogue, and allocation of time to allow teams to balance both roles. At the individual level, commitment encompassed being dedicated to the mission and committed to the vision of the partnership at all levels.

**Accountability.** According to the leaders, accountability is determined by one’s actions. According to Komives et al. (2007) accountability means being responsible, “it’s accepting accountability for your own actions and being conscious of the moral and ethical implications of deciding or not to act” (p. 134). Seven of the EC leaders shared how they have multiple levels of accountability. First and foremost was a personal level of accountability, and it included being committed to the mission and the students that they serve. Then there was a peer accountability system that the partners shared. Three of the leaders shared how holding one another accountable holds them steadfast to the purpose of their work and ensures that they operate morally and meet their outcomes and goals. When these findings were compared with the literature, it was discovered that commitment, as it is often operationalized, becomes the subscale for describing the extent to which an individual, school, or system aligns with goals and is working towards the overall purpose or vision of the organization (Heck, 2000; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Heck & Hallinger, 2009). Finally, the leaders described a professional level of accountability, which included two levels—the leader’s accountability for school performance to
the state through Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) and nationally to their intermediaries (i.e., KnowledgeWorks Foundation and Middle College National Consortium). Chrislip and Larsen’s (1994) definition of collaborative leadership clearly articulates the leaders sentiments, collaborative leadership is a mutually beneficial relationship between two or more parties who work toward common goals by sharing responsibility, authority, and accountability for achieving results” (p. 5)

Creating a Clear Pathway or Vision

Vision relates to an individual’s ability to see the big picture or to forecast what is to come. Within organizations leaders are often seen as the individuals who are responsible for setting the strategic plan, defining the direction, and guiding others through the experience. In the present study, being able to clearly articulate the vision of the organization and to gain the support or buy-in of others were continuous themes. According to Hallinger and Heck (1996) the foci of leadership are developing a shared vision, facilitating a collaborative working environment, and involving others in the process. The participants in the present study shared similar sentiments. Typically the leaders associated purpose and vision together. Their perspective aligned with collaborative leadership, in that the approach involves developing shared vision for change and then enabling people to achieve the vision (Bass, 1985; Wepner & Hopkins, 2010; Yolk, 2010).

Content Expertise

The participants in the present study also shared how a specific level of knowledge, skills, and expertise were expected and required of an EC leader. The majority of the leaders shared how effective leaders must demonstrate active involvement in multiple contexts and positive interactions in multiple communities. Becoming an expert across K-12 and higher
education sectors with the specific knowledge, understanding, and skills, needed for relating to all constituencies was the goal. Multiple leaders shared how making certain that your staff was well trained in their areas and across sectors was important to the success of the collaboration. Overall, it was clear that both the K-12 and PSI teams needed to have the individual and collective capabilities to understand complex, interdependent issues in order to be able to actively engage in the intra-organizational collaboration. The literature supports that expertise increases an organization’s capacity for improvement (Fullan, 2006), and shared knowledge and expertise is an obligation of a collaborating leader (Eddy, 2010). Eddy (2010) shared how knowledge is an intangible resource. It is an essential part of an organization’s capital, and those with a high level of resources or knowledge leverages a high level of density in a relationship (Eddy, 2010). It is similar to the concept that “knowledge is power”. Two of the participants in the present study shared how too much knowledge or the misuse of knowledge would be a detriment to the individual, but if used wisely it is a power resource for building relationships.

Relational Leadership Model Components

Applying RLM to this study requires theorizing on the broader work of collective leadership models (see, e.g., Komives et al., 2007; Oozes & Posner, 2002). According to Komives et al. (2007), “leadership is a relational and ethical process of people together attempting to accomplish positive change” (p. 351). Applying this model requires one to conceptualize leadership as networked and dynamic. Rooted in relational theory (Komives et al., 2007), RLM adds a view of leadership as a process through which leadership emerges from the networked interactions of organizational members. The interactive process involves reaching shared goals, and operating through collective leadership offers a distributed form of leadership
consistent with RLM. The foundation of this model is the leadership process, which reflects the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that inform relational leadership (Komives et al., 2007).

The data from this study supported that the five components of RLM are useful to building and sustaining EC collaborations in the state of Ohio. Even though the RLM is traditionally used in a higher education setting with college students exploring leadership, the model proved to be effective in building relational leadership across Ohio EC secondary and post-secondary educational sectors. Although the responses varied according to the leaders’ experiences, all of them shared how one or more of the RLM components were significant with regards to building and sustaining their partnership. The leaders’ understanding and application of RLM aligned with Komives et al.’s (2007) exploration of how leaders used the components to make a difference. For example, the Ohio EC leaders and researchers associated being:

- Purposeful with the role of the mission or vision (e.g., sense of shared values and common purpose) and institutionalized commitment to change and how it occurred in the partnership;
- Empowering with how policies or procedures blocked or promoted feeling involved in the creation or growth of the collaboration and the belief that everyone had something to offer;
- Inclusive with building communities that respect multiple frames of realities while being open to difference;
- Ethical with being trusting, reliable, courageous, and authentic, and
- Process-Oriented with the overall group dynamics and process of formation. The leaders supported that this final component, by and large, was the overarching factor of the
relational leadership model, and all of the other elements—being purposeful, inclusive, empowering, and ethical—are embedded within the overall process.

**Relational Leadership is Purposeful**

One of the most important success factors in any partnership, according to researchers, is having a common purpose and shared objectives that facilitates a true collaborative process (Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Hora & Millar, 2012; Komives et al., 2007). For the context of this study being purposeful was about understanding the individual institutional partners and their objectives in detail. More importantly, if the leader could uncover its partner’s motivations, he or she can be clear if he or she is actually in support of or in competition with the partner. In this case, the joint objective – to help traditionally underrepresented students matriculate through PSIs – says a lot. Mission often overshadowed purpose and this may be one of the reasons this component did not supersede empowerment and ethics. But several of the leaders shared stories of dedication filled with why they do what they do. It was a personal level of passion to serve these students and to make a difference in their life.

Several of the leaders felt that being honest and upfront helped them reach a shared goal. According to Komives et al. (2008), collaborating partners must take the time to map out their self-interests and institutional goals and then make those clear to the partnering organization. It happens that EC has a clear distinctive purpose, and it was clearly articulated to all those interested in supporting the initiative. Therefore, in the case of an EC collaboration, it comes down to the leader and his or her ability to make quality decisions.

The EC collaborations are structured as partnerships – a structure known for its difficulty in fostering decision making. Key issues that require a full partnership are often bogged down with lobbying, voting, and possibly promising favors. Cross-organizational partnerships are far
more fragile edifices than a single educational institution. It stands to reason, then, that they need better decision-making structures to articulate common purpose and operate effectively. For each of these collaborations in the present study, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) served as a foundation of understanding their inter-organization; however, the MoU alone was not enough. Typically the MoU serves as the formal vehicle for making joint decisions; however, it was revealed that what was most important was the quality of the relationship, communication, and flexibility of the partners that laid the foundation for the partnership and its purpose.

**Relational Leadership is Empowering**

One of the leaders in the present study shared, “Empowerment is ultimately about helping others join the collaboration and feel welcomed enough to contribute” (G. Brown, personal communication, March 7, 2012). According to Komives et al. (2007, 1998), this is an adequate definition because being empowering is the conviction that everyone has something to offer. The majority of the leaders shared ideas of democratic decision making and collective ownership because they found power in the process of building consensus and buy-in from team members. However, there were challenges with leaders who did not feel empowered themselves—either inherently or by their superiors. Nonetheless, leaders still encouraged or tried to assure others that their contributions were valuable and to work the power issues out behind closed doors directly with their superiors. The data revealed that empowerment appeared more frequently among leaders within four-year collaborations (three principals and three PSI leaders). Several of the leaders mentioned the importance of empowering others and building collectives and consensus beyond the collaboration. Often these individuals were responsible for building alliances to recruit faculty members and to negotiate resources such as classroom space, text
books, and tuition reductions. Ten of the leaders shared stories about boundary crossing and dealing with politics. However, in their sharing, several did not feel that it was a hindrance, nor did they associate it directly with their own sense of empowerment. In fact, many of them shared the sentiments of a Canton leader: “that was just the way things are done”. What was most unique was only one participant shared a story of having to deal with power issues within the collaboration as a whole. The others who noted power issues acknowledged that they occurred more often within their respective organizations than across the partnership. In fact, two mentioned how the intra-organizational collaboration was a safe place. With respect to politics and power within the individual partnering organizations, three of the leaders mentioned how they felt like mere “middle management”, and two of the others referenced feeling “powerless”. It was clear that these participants were experiencing issues of top-down influence, which is in direct contradiction to Komives et al. (2007).

**Relational Leadership is Inclusive**

Introducing the component of inclusion took more prompting than the other components did. Much of this was due to the cultural meaning of the term in K-12 settings. An overwhelming number of principals associated inclusion with special education, while the PSI liaisons where able to grasp the concept, as presented by Komives, et al., more readily. This difference is not surprising, as the RLM was developed by higher education student affairs administrators. Over time, the model has been adapted to various fields of study and individuals. The component was a confirmation about the importance of culture and context. Nonetheless, Komives et al. (2007) describe relational leadership in general as welcoming different points of view and reaching consensus, if possible. However, the scholars shared that bureaucratic-hierarchical nature of education, makes collaborating difficult. Therefore, the leaders in
partnerships must build and sustain the institutional mechanisms to ensure that the collaboration works. This is done by being willing to listen to others, to be open to difference, to value others’ views, and to be willing to compromise (Hora & Millar, 2012). According to the leaders in the present study, everyone on the team has to want to be a part of the collaboration. Nearly all of the fourteen shared how equal access to relevant information and a fair opportunity to participate effectively throughout the process was important. One of the leaders described it as “being invited to the table” (C. Lenartowicz, personal communication, February 23, 2012). True inclusion comes through collective wisdom and buy-in that comes from fair and creative processes that include all relevant viewpoints, cultures, information, experiences, needs, interests, values, and contributions (Komives et al., 2007). Ultimately inclusion results in being servant oriented (Amey & Brown, 2004). The participants of this study agreed, and three shared how their role as a leader requires that they create the atmosphere for inclusion so that their team members feel like equal contributors.

**Relational Leadership is Ethical**

Maintaining high ideals and commitment is an important professional responsibility of educational leaders. If leaders are to develop a strong sense of ethics, they must be able to appreciate the moral and ethical inferences of numerous perspectives on complex issues and to creatively blend the perspectives into practical solutions (Ambrose & Cohen, 1997). According to Ambrose and Cohen (1997), being able to negotiate personal experiences is a gift that aids in a leader’s ability to maintain a firm moral grounding. These leaders shared experiences of balancing injustice, facing courage, being congruent in policies and practice, developing trusting relationships, and making ethical decisions. Being ethical appeared more frequently as an impactful component among leaders that had EC affiliations with two-year PSIs (four principals
and three PSI liaisons); it appeared the least among four-year collaborators. Many of the leaders related being ethical to the integrity of the EC program services and course delivery. In addition, they often shared the importance of being full committed and gaining the support of stakeholders. London (2010) shared that leaders must dismiss the premise that the ethics of collaboration does not involve politics. In fact, the research shared that it is not about winning, but about playing fair. An Akron leader’s reflections would support London’s premise, as she mentioned “the importance of playing nicely in the sandbox” (K. Herold, personal communication, February 28, 2012).

**Relational Leadership is about Process**

Actually, the process orientation component was the most difficult to create structured conversation around, because the concept is abstract. In fact, process is what the leaders do on a daily basis, so it becomes second nature to the leader. It is the very reason they collaborate; it combines the purpose with the dynamics of how the individuals relate to one another. However, there was a consensus among the participants that there is no one right way to get this work done because the issue is relevant to the interest of the organization and the individual’s experience. In fact, the leaders shared the importance of studying models and community needs and figuring out how to design a well-suited organizational partnership. The leaders also shared that the process is ongoing and ever changing. This component appeared frequently among EC principals, as their sharing reflected ideas of efficiency; parent, teacher, and community participation; collective intelligence; and value based outcomes. Overall, the process was about getting the job done and making an impact on others.
Implications

The dialogue with these 14 EC leaders was exhilarating and intriguing. The process produced a tremendous amount of data that have implications for current and aspiring administrators, teachers, faculty members, boards of trustees, and key constituents (i.e., counselors, mentors, advisors). Included are considerations for how these leaders built and sustained collaborations across educational sectors. According to the literature and this study, there are several perceived benefits of collaborating across educational sectors. The findings revealed two major implications:

- Implication for Practice is to strengthen programs and services across sectors. It is recommended that secondary and post-secondary personnel collaborate to create effective programs and services that help students complete high school, matriculate into college, and gain a head start on their college career by developing and improving student support services.

- Implication for Policy is to create state-wide and national P-20 reform policies. It is recommended that educators and administrators at every academic level work as a collective with state legislatures to create comprehensive, systemic structures that increase the academic trajectory of students in the pipeline (P-20) by unifying levels of accountability for sustained funding, effective planning, and continuous reporting across sectors.

Each of these implications parallels the five ECHSI core principles which were introduced in Chapter II. Berger (2008) used these core principles to define the aspects of an ECHSI, and many agencies and partnerships use these principles to design and assess academic pathways. The implications for practice corresponds directly to the five core principals which
are as follows: Core principle one commits to helping serve students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education complete high school, matriculate into college, and gain a head start on their college careers. Core principle two endorses the idea of joint accountability at all levels and with multiple constituencies. Core principle three unifies academic processes so all students can earn transferrable college credit during high school. Core principle four supports the development of comprehensive programs which addresses academic and social skills necessary for successful college completion. Core principle five creates conditions and policies that advance pre-college programs. The recommendation is strong momentum across sectors at national and state levels, and below are detailed explanations and recommendations for these implications of practice.

**Implication for Practice**

It was clear that developing new and improving existing academic and support programs and services is essential to helping students in secondary systems transition successful through post-secondary settings. Each of the EC partners had variations of support services. Whether it was peer cohort models, tutoring, supplemental education programs, and/or career and college preparation through advising and college-level student success courses, all of the collaborations had formal programs and services to help students transition through their high school and college experiences. In fact, the educational partners in this study made an official distinction between counseling and advising functions. Counselors usually had different professional training and dealt with personal issues while advisors tended to focus on scheduling and academic planning. Each of the secondary institutions had one or more staff members who worked with students taking college-level courses. These individuals were highly involved in the day-to-day operations of the EC and worked closely with PSI advising, records and
registration (scheduling), and financial aid offices. Inevitably, the PSIs had specialized units or multiple staff members who also provided advising and counseling services to students specifically involved in pre-college or post-secondary programs. By working together and unifying resources, the secondary and post-secondary teams designed program models that assimilated “first-year experience” programs. These programs helped to socialize, integrate, and retain new students through high school and into college.

Unifying and sharing resources has multiple benefits for educational collaborations in terms of adequate resourcing (i.e., of funding, staffing, and time), which was found to be fundamental to the success of an intra-organizational collaboration. According to the literature (Allen & Murphy, 2008; Cooper, Chavira & Mena, 2005; Grobe, 1990; Hora & Millar, 2011; Wepner & Hopkins, 2011), maximizing resources during these tough financial times will help secondary and post-secondary systems save and/or cutback on staffing, purchases, and resources. Shared resources generate win-win opportunities for the partnering institutions and the students involved (MCNC, 2011). The following subsections describe how harnessing resources can benefits the institution and students.

**Institutional benefits.** There are multiple benefits to sharing of resources through developing collaborative programs and services across educational sectors. The following benefits were associated with this study, and they include, but are not limited to funding, human resources, and physical resources. It was discovered that fully centralized budgets may not be the solution, but cost-sharing through a partially centralized structure, where a mutual office holds fiduciary responsibilities for the collaboration, may be a viable option. It was revealed that cost-sharing improves financial efficiencies by reducing repetitiveness for funding requests, over spending, and expediting the processes and policies across institutions for shared services.
Sharing of human resources can be advantageous by developing common instructional and support staff members and/or utilizing the knowledge and expertise of one to provide training and professional development to the other is common, and often necessary to enhance the skills of team members. This could be done by ensuring that team members have the necessary support, training, and mentoring needed to deliver academic and social programs within their respective institutions and across sectors as crossed trained professionals. Alternatively, sharing of space, technology, and other supplies has been another common means of developing an educational partnership. Often limited space is a concern for many, but sharing facilities has made for more efficient use of existing spaces, which cuts costs associated with overhead, space utilization, and construction. Technology has become an essential means for delivering education; however, many institutions have been unable to stay abreast of modern technology. Nevertheless, sharing equipment and technology could transform the delivery of educational services and save money. Finally, reducing cost through sharing supplies and equipment could help decrease purchases, especially those associated with student equipment such as books, computers and supplies. All of which provide better results for students and secondary institutions—especially in cases in which one or neither could independently afford such resources.

Accordingly this implication aligns with Berger’s (2008), *Core principles three through five*, which call for the development of joint systems of accountability to ensure open, transparent policies that are amenable to external scrutiny and review (Wiley, 2008). Opening an organization to external scrutiny has multiple advantages for developing a coherent system of accountability that (a) creates well refined systems and/or policies, (b) clarifies roles and lines of
accountability, and (c) eliminates turf wars (Berger, 2008; Wiley, 2008). All suggest effective methods for improving the practice of educational partnerships.

**Student benefits.** The greatest benefit to the students is the opportunity to obtain college credit or an associate’s degree free of charge. Many accelerated learning options have fees associated with them; however, the ECHSI experience is a significant cost savings for the student and his or her family (MCNC, 2011). According to several of the leaders, the students who participated in these initiatives often found themselves beneficiaries of stronger support networks that address their diverse learning needs and identified alternative strategies which will help them pursue their long-term educational goals. The leaders shared that students were the primary focus of the ECHSI, and those who took full advantage of this accelerated learning option were able to reduce the cost associated with two years of college and eliminate the redundancy that is often associated with their senior year (National Commission on the High School Senior Year, 2001; Oxtoby, 2007).

These advantages parallel Berger’s (2008) *Core Principles one and three*, which are committed to helping students complete high school, matriculate into college, and gain a head start on their college career. Simply put, the implication for practice is the need for each partnering organization to create a new structure—an inter-organizational structure—with a distinctive identity and shared mission. Aligning expectations and giving students information about their level of readiness while they are still in high school could also ensure that students do not want to lose out on their high school experience during their senior year.

**Implication for Policy**

School-university partnerships are more than an altruistic gesture. Improving college readiness for students should be, and has become, a priority for many states, as Ohio's EC
collaborations have illustrated. For many of these educational leaders, policy reform is simply the process of improving education. ECHSI has been designed to strengthen the educational pipeline by increasing the educational access of students who have been traditionally been underrepresented in college. Educational sectors have had some form of connection for centuries; however, most of the attention has focused on enrollment and professional development. Nevertheless, this leaves much to be debated about the enrollment processes of higher education and the selectivity of four-year institutions in relation (e.g., selective admissions, high costs are typically associated with low enrollment of minority students). As the literature reviewed for the present study shows, enrollment into PSIs is just the tip of iceberg. In fact, the most difficult challenge is the students being able to afford and successfully complete college level courses. The leaders in this study suggested that states must create reform policies that connect four distinct educational systems – preschool, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary – by creating state directed P-20 agendas. Such a system will help retain students and foster progress through the academic pipeline.

P-20 policies call for a systemic reform. According to Hoy and Miskel (2008), \textit{systemic reform} is defined as “a comprehensive change program designed to modify schools in an integrated, coordinated, and coherent fashion to achieve clearly stated educational outcomes” (p. 283). A P-20 agenda requires educational systems to move away from a silo mentality and shift to a collaborative model of shared responsibility to successfully get students through the educational pipeline (Wepner & Hopkins, 2011). To apply systemic reform within the United States educational system, an institution would need to promote an integrated, open system. According to Hoy and Miskel (2008) open systems are concerned with both structure (educational system) and process (students and/or learning) in an ever changing environment.
Lieberman (2004) is a strong advocate for the ECHSI as a viable P-20 reform agenda. Lieberman (1998, 2004) and Berger et al. (2009), believe that ECHSI is an aggressive, integrated educational reform model that has had success bridging the educational gap between secondary and post-secondary systems, and one that builds collaborative learning communities that articulate accelerate academic trajectory of underrepresented students. It is clear that agendas of this magnitude require the collaboration of educational leaders and advocates who are willing to cross educational boundaries to reform state policies. It entails partnerships that extend beyond secondary and post-secondary institutions; it necessitates the attention and support of the federal government, state legislatures, and public and private sectors to come together to unify policies, budgets, curricula, and systems of accountability. More specifically, higher educational institutions can work with states and local government to align policies services, such as admissions, records and registration, and financial aid.

P-20 educational reform, as an implication for practice, is large and beyond the scope of this study. However, Berger (2008), Lieberman (2004), Wepner and Hopkins (2011), the supporters of the ECHSI, and others clearly believe P-20 educational reform is a worthy agenda item for America’s educational reform. Accordingly, this implication for practice aligns with Berger’s (2008), Core principles two and five, which call for educational systems to move away from their fractured structures and to begin to partner to build a unified, educational system that increases the academic trajectory of students, especially members from disenfranchised populations. If the EC model is adopted on a national level, it could expedite and reduce the cost of a student’s education while providing him or her with adequate academic support. In such a model, it just might be possible for a student to complete a master’s degree in the same amount
of time, and possibly at a comparable cost, as a student who is currently working to obtain a bachelor’s degree.

**Implications for Future Research**

This qualitative exploratory multiple-case study was designed to explore the collaborative leadership practices of ECHS principals and post-secondary liaisons within the state of Ohio. Given the idiographic nature of this study, claims of generalizability were unsuitable. At best, the reader is left to conclude whether these observations are transferable to a more familiar site or setting. Nevertheless, there were three major threats to the external validity of this study that should be addressed, and each related to the people, place, and time.

First, this study only investigated the collaborative leadership practices of mid-to-upper level administrators: ECHS principals and building administrators (e.g., CEO, dean, lead administrator) and their post-secondary college liaisons (e.g., assistant director, director, chief administrator, manager, etc.). As learned through this study, leadership is often a role and not a title. Throughout the study, it became apparent that successful leaders develop and count on leadership from others within their organization. Within this study there were two distinct groups who helped to facilitate the initiative and played a major part in sustaining the collaboration. The first were members of entry-to-mid level management (e.g., advisors, counselors, coordinators, assistant directors, etc.) who typically handled the day-to-day tasks of the intra-organization, which includes, but are not limited to coordination of events, courses, and activities between institutions, community, and students. The second were teachers and faculty members, who often assumed multiple roles in the initiative, such as serving as mentoring/advising students, lead teachers, and members of committees, etc. Either group would warrant further research. In fact, a 360-degree research design looking at the interplay between
all members (e.g., superintendents and deans, with principals and PSI leaders, with entry-to-mid level management, teachers and faculty) of the community and how they collaborate would be recommended.

Second, the study was bounded to the state of Ohio. Therefore, expanding this study to others states would help to support or refute the results gleaned from this study. In fact, it would help to verify if the similarities and differences were a result of the leaders’ membership in the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN). According to Fairholm (1994), membership in organizations create sub-cultures or communities in which leaders builds norms. Throughout this study there were commonalities among language and practices across cases. Therefore, expanding the study across state borders would lend to the understanding of social and cultural construction of leading intra-organizational collaborations.

Finally, the data were collected within a two-month period of time. Even though the study appeared relatively short, the conventional approach was very time-consuming in the collection and analysis of data. In fact, the issue of having large volumes of data forced the researcher to have to omit data from the presented analysis. This in itself was a contentious issue because the usefulness of the data could be jeopardized at the discretion of the researcher. Thus, suggesting that the design of the study merit a comprehensive, longitudinal strategy. Providing more time would allow the researcher adequate intervals to preserve the integrity of the data and the overall research. In addition, it would allow the participants more time to reflect on overall experiences instead of recent events. More time would improve the aspects of interpretation-understanding on behalf of the participants and the researcher. According to Conrad (1987), a two-stage or double hermeneutic process is involved with data collection and analysis. The participants are trying to make sense of their sharing and experiences, while the research is trying
to understand and interpret the participant’s story. Hence, refocusing the investigation to a longitudinal study would allow the leaders to properly reflect on the overall practices, processes, or dynamics of the collaboration and give the researcher more time to critically analyze the data. Also, the member check process could be more intense by allowing the participants two to three weeks to review and another week to respond to any necessary edits.

**Reflections on the Study**

My interest in this topic emerged from my personal experiences working in primary and secondary education. I wanted to learn more about what policies and procedures in a school system would ensure quality education for underrepresented children. From there, my interest and passion for the subject grew. I knew the only way my ideas and hypotheses could be validated was through research and continued professional development. Over the past three years and throughout my doctoral study, I have taken a personal interest in researching areas of leadership and retention and graduation of students of color. Prior to this, I had the privilege of creating and operating my own academy – African American Initiative for Males (AIM) academy. AIM academy was developed as a partnership between three public school districts in middle Georgia and Georgia College and State University. Much of the support for the academy came from the University System of Georgia’s Board of Regents office as it provided funding to help disadvantaged men from Georgia successfully transition from high school into post-secondary institutions, the workforce, and military. I worked for four years, investing time and building relationships with families, school personnel, members of the University, community and political leaders, and grassroots organizations, and I believe these relationships made the academy a success. In fact, I am almost certain it was the relationships that sustained this
partnership; shortly after I left, several of the families, schools, and community agencies pulled out of the partnership and the academy closed.

My experiences in and out of class made me realize relationships are essential in all that we do. This dissertation was an opportunity for me to learn about the successes, challenges, and skills required to properly facilitate educational partnerships across sectors. My experiences with this dissertation have not been easy. In fact, it has been one of the most challenging experiences of my life, and most of the difficulty has been with building relationships. One of the first was trying to gain the support and confidence of the participants. Next was building inroads with the gatekeepers (e.g., support staff of leaders, the staff in Human Subjective Review Board).

There were several points of difficulty. In fact, I could sum the entire dissertation process up in the following idiom – “I bit off more than I could chew”. My initial design and level of comfort was quantitative research, not qualitative. However, the research questions and design suggested a qualitative design would be most appropriate. If I would have known then what I know now, I would have changed my questions. The methodology of this study took on a life of its own. A simple case study design became a multiple case study with an embedded design that focused on two different units of analysis: the partnership as a whole and seven distinct working groups. After I thought the most difficult process – gaining the commitment of the participants and waiting on HSRB approval – was over, constructing an interview, scheduling, and getting 14 participants to stick to the schedule was a terrible experience. In fact, I recall driving three hours for a confirmed interview; however, my participant was ill and her secretary forgot to clear her schedule. Nevertheless, I was able to conduct 14 personal, semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews were great because it allowed the
participants and me to have more conversation. I was able to develop rapport and freely probe areas that arose during the interview. However, after my first transcription, I learned not to speak as much. Cutting back on my conversation did not hinder the following interviews. In fact, the time together was an opportunity for the leaders to freely share their experiences and reflect on their process working with leaders from other sectors. During the interview process, I learned quickly there was a difference in the use of the word inclusion. Those from secondary education interpreted the word as inclusion model used to educate special needs students. Meanwhile members from PSIs used the word as belonging and a sense of association, as inferred by the RLM. Many times the interviews extended beyond the one hour agreement. I found I had dedicated countless hours transcribing data, which could take me days. After the third interview, it seemed almost inconceivable how I would be able to complete eleven more. Therefore, I sought support for transcribing some of the interviews. My next step was analyzing the transcripts. All I can say is the learning curve on the Nvivo 9 software took me a week, and I have yet to master it. However, as I analyzed the data, it became apparent it really was not possible to separate the leaders’ collaborating experience across institutions without describing their institution’s culture and climate. It was rejuvenating to conduct the cross-case analysis. The connections between the data and how the leaders’ stories either contradicted one another or corroborated evidence from two or more cases was astounding. What was learned from both my interview process and survey methods were that one common practice is not a good fit for every institution or collaboration. What works well at an urban two-year public institution was not a fit for an urban four-year private institution. Finally, I was able to learn that relationships often serve as levels of motivation. What I gained were new relationships with several great leaders who possess a certain level of enthusiasm for their work and commanded my attention. For me,
this was a liberating experience. This study was a dream actualized and my journey as a future leader in developing sound educational pipeline programs across educational sectors. My desire is that this research becomes a contribution to the state of Ohio and to the work of others who look to build intra-organizational collaborations that just make sense.

Conclusion

This study focused on seven of the ten early college partnerships in the state of Ohio. It encapsulated the stories of seven Ohio EC principals and seven PSI liaisons and represents their understanding that relationships across educational sectors are unique, common, dynamic, poignant, and sometimes exasperating. However, their experiences in the EC collaborations were a reflection of their experience and influence within the partnerships and within the profession. It was clear that many of the leaders came from diverse backgrounds and had varying skills and leadership styles. But what was most important was the leaders’ ability to unite others to work for a common goal, to help improve Ohio’s educational pipeline. The leaders revealed that the RLM and its components had a positive impact on their ability to build and sustain relationships. In addition, they shared how inter-organizations are about more than institutional structures. The real work happens when genuine relationships between the experts are established in safe spaces with open communication, trust, mutual respect, accountability, and commitment. All striving toward the goal of establishing life changing collaborations across boundaries.
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APPENDICES
APPENDIX A. HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

DATE: February 13, 2012
TO: Ailia Carter, M.S.Ed
FROM: Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board
SUBMISSION TYPE: Revision
ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: February 12, 2012
EXPIRATION DATE: January 30, 2013
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review
REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # 7

Thank you for your submission of Revision materials for this project. The Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

The final approved version of the consent document(s) is available as a published Board Document in the Review Details page. You must use the approved version of the consent document when obtaining consent from participants. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that you are responsible to conduct the study as approved by the HSRB. If you seek to make any changes in your project activities or procedures, those modifications must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the modification request form for this procedure.

You have been approved to enroll 22 participants. If you wish to enroll additional participants you must seek approval from the HSRB.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must also be reported promptly to this office.

This approval expires on January 30, 2013. You will receive a continuing review notice before your project expires. If you wish to continue your work after the expiration date, your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date.

Good luck with your work. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at 419-372-7716 or hrsb@bgsu.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence regarding this project.
APPENDIX B. PARTICIPANT LETTER

Greetings «Advocacy_Lead_Contacts»,

My name is Allia Carter, and I have been working with Ohio’s Early College Network to conduct research on Ohio’s Early College High School (ECHS) models. On [DATE of NETWORK MEETING], I met with members of the network requesting their support with my research. My study, Collaborative Leadership Practices among Ohio’s Early College High School Principals and Post-Secondary Partners, is a multiple case study that examines the relational process of collaborative leadership among Ohio’s Early College school-university partnerships. I am seeking your participation because you have been identified as a key constituent with Ohio’s Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI). My goal is to find at least six to eight partnerships within the state that are willing to participate. I have obtained the initial support of «Name of partnering site»; however, now I need your support. If you decide to participate, it would require you: (a) to complete an online survey/questionnaire, (b) to participate in a one to two hour personal interview, and (c) to submit documents that may be relevant to the study (e.g., partnership agreements, EC reports, etc.). I am really excited about this opportunity, and I hope that you are able to participate in my research endeavors.

In case you were not present at the meeting let me provide you with a brief introduction of who I am. I am a native of Detroit, Michigan. However, I currently reside in Bowling Green, Ohio, as a third-year doctoral student in the Higher Education Administration program at Bowling Green State University (BGSU). My area of specialty is Educational Administration and Supervision. While enrolled at BGSU, I intentionally selected Higher Education Administration and Educational Administration Supervision in an effort to integrate the pedagogy of the two programs into a multi-dimensional leadership perspective. I believe that the infusion of these academic programs will prepare me as a K-16 research scholar and practitioner. This is one of many things that led me to my dissertation topic. My goal is to understand and explicate the relationships and interaction of secondary and postsecondary communities as articulated by the leaders who develop, implement, and manage Ohio’s innovative educational reform initiatives.

Please take into consideration that I am a strong scholar, passionate leader, and experienced professional with more than ten years of full-time experience working with diversity initiatives, enrollment management, and educational reform. Additionally, I have experience working with the U.S. Department of Education Federal TRIO Programs (TRIO) where I have had the opportunity to write grants and manage projects. Furthermore, I have had the privilege of serving as a college liaison on the advisory board of Georgia College’s Early College, and more than four years of proven success running a college preparatory academy for disenfranchised African American males in middle Georgia. These experiences speak to my record of professional achievements as an administrator and a community leader. Moreover, these experiences have cultivated my administrative, analytical, and management skills making me an ideal consultant to the ECHS network.

If you are willing to participate please, read and sign the attached consent form. If you have any questions, email me at acarter@bgsu.edu or call me at 313.492.3772.

Sincerely,

Allia L. Carter
Enclosure: Informed Consent
APPENDIX C. EARLY COLLEGE PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent for Early College High School Principal

My name is Allia L. Carter and I am a doctoral student at Bowling Green State University in the Higher Education Administration program. I am conducting a multiple-case study examining the Collaborative Leadership Practices among Ohio’s Early College High School Principals and Post-Secondary Partners. The purpose of this study is to understand and explicate the relationships and interaction of secondary and postsecondary communities as articulated by the leaders who develop, implement, and manage Ohio’s Early College High School Initiative, and you have been selected to participate in this study because you are a leader and advocate of one of Ohio’s early college models.

Procedures
Approximately 16 to 22 school-university leaders will be asked to participate in this study. Involvement would include: (a) the completion of a questionnaire/survey, (b) participation in a personal interview, and (c) the submission of documents.

Questionnaire/survey
The questionnaire/survey will be administered to you electronically. It should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The questionnaire/survey is designed to collect institutional data (which will require enrollment data for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic years), regarding collaborative practices, demographics, and personal information.

Interview
One personal tape-recorded interview will take place at your school or another convenient location. The interview will be approximately one to two hours in length. At least one phone follow-up may be required to confirm and clarify the content of the interview and to obtain additional information. Transcriptions of your interview and my interpretation will be sent to you prior to the completion of the research study so that you can make suggestions and revisions.

Documents
This study relies upon the review of annual reports, mission/vision statements, formal or informal partnership agreements, and supplemental documents such as advisory board documents, bulletins, memos, and newspapers. Therefore, your cooperation in submitting these documents is essential to the study.

Voluntary Nature
Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time. You may decide to skip questions (or do not a particular task) or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Deciding to not to participate will remove any data that was collect on you, your site, and your partnering organization. Your withdrawal will not affect your relationship with Bowling Green State University or any state affiliate.

Risks
The anticipated risks to you are not greater than those normally encountered in daily life.

Confidentiality/Anonymity
Due to the nature of the study it may be difficult to ensure your anonymity. If you are interested a pseudonym can be assigned as an attempt to safeguard your name and identity and the name and identity of your school. However, the study is not exclusive to the leadership position, but the relationship between the early college school-university partnerships. Therefore, separating your identity from the site has practical challenges and it may be important to share...
best practices and lessons learned through the collaborative practices by allowing full disclosure of your identity and your site. In addition, completing the online questionnaire/survey on a work or public computer could make your information accessible to others. If you use a work computer there is a possibility that your information could be made accessible to your employer if they use tracking software. If you use a public computer there is a possibility that your information could be made accessible to others if you leave the questionnaire/survey open. Therefore, you may want to complete your questionnaire/survey on a personal computer and remember to clear your browser cache and page history after completing the survey. With this being said this notice should serve as a reminder that your participation in this study is voluntary and may be discontinued at any time without penalty or prejudice.

In the hope that you participate, I will maintain confidentiality of information collected from you. I will make every effort to protect any data collected by: (a) using a personal password protected computer; (b) storing all submitted documents in a securely locked home office, which only I will have access to; (c) maintaining research data for only three months after the completion of the study; and (d) destroying data after the completion of the study by shredding hardcopies and deleting electronic files and voice recordings. Any documents or artifacts submitted will be returned upon your request. However, if there is no request the documents and or artifacts will be properly destroyed with the files.

Benefits
Inquiry into this elite group of school-university leaders could help to educate the next generation of educational partners who desire to be, know, and do what you have been doing. Further, such a focus expands insights available on Ohio’s educational reform, and gives breadth and more detail to extant literature on best practices of collaborative leadership and educational partnerships among Early College models.

Contact Information
Should you have any questions about the study or need clarification, please contact me at (313)492-3772 (cell) acarter@bpsu.edu or contact the chair of my dissertation committee, Dr. Patrick Paulsen at (419) 372-9234 or paulkemp@bgsu.edu. If you have questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of BGSU’s Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 or hrbc@bgsu.edu.

By signing this consent form, I agree to participate in this study having read, understood, and agreed to the above terms.

Participant’s Signature Date

I agree to conduct and report this research according to the above terms.

Investigator’s Signature Date

I have included two copies of the consent form. Please sign both. Keep one for your records and return one to me at:

Allia L. Carter
Assistant Director, Office of Service-Learning
Bowling Green State University
315 University Hall
Bowling Green, Ohio 43403

Once I receive the signed consent form, I will contact you to set up the survey and the interview. Thank you very much for your support and participation in this important study.

D
APPENDIX D. POST-SECONDARY LIAISON CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent for Early College Post-Secondary Liaison/Advocate

My name is Allia L. Carter and I am a doctoral student at Bowling Green State University in the Higher Education Administration program. I am conducting a multiple-case study examining the Collaborative Leadership Practices among Ohio’s Early College High School Principals and Post-Secondary Partners. The purpose of this study is to understand and explicate the relationships and interaction of secondary and postsecondary communities as articulated by the leaders who develop, implement, and manage Ohio’s Early College High School Initiative, and you have been selected to participate in this study because you are a leader and advocate of one of Ohio’s early college models.

Procedures
Approximately 16 to 22 school-university leaders will be asked to participate in this study. Involvement would include: (a) the completion of a questionnaire/survey, (b) participation in a personal interview, and (c) the submission of documents.

Questionnaire/survey
The questionnaire/survey will be administered to you electronically. It should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The questionnaire/survey is designed to collect institutional data (which will require enrollment data for the 2009-2010 academic year), regarding collaborative practices, demographics, and personal information.

Interview
One personal tape-recorded interview will take place at your institution or another convenient location. The interview will be approximately one to two hours in length. At least one phone follow-up may be required to confirm and clarify the content of the interview and to obtain additional information. Transcriptions of your interview and my interpretation will be sent to you prior to the completion of the research study so that you can make suggestions and revisions.

Documents
This study relies upon the review of annual reports, mission/vision statements, formal or informal partnership agreements, and supplemental documents such as advisory board documents, bulletins, memos, and newspapers. Therefore, your cooperation in submitting these documents is essential to the study.

Voluntary Nature
Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time. You may decide to skip questions (or not do a particular task) or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Deciding to not to participate will remove any data that was collect on you, your site, and your partnering organization. Your withdrawal will not affect your relationship with Bowling Green State University or any state affiliate.

Risks
The anticipated risks to you are not greater than those normally encountered in daily life.

Confidentiality/Anonymity
Due to the nature of the study it may be difficult to ensure your anonymity. If you are interested a pseudonym can be assigned as an attempt to safeguard your name and identity and the name and identity of your institution. However, the study is not exclusive to the leadership position, but the relationship between the early college school-university partnerships. Therefore, separating your identity from the site has practical challenges and it may be important to share best practices and lessons learned through the collaborative practices by allowing full disclosure of your identity and your site.
In addition, completing the online questionnaire/survey on a work or public computer could make your information accessible to others. If you use a work computer there is a possibility that your information could be made accessible to your employer if they use tracking software. If you use a public computer there is a possibility that your information could be made accessible to others if you leave the questionnaire/survey open. Therefore, you may want to complete your questionnaire/survey on a personal computer and remember to clear your browser cache and page history after completing the survey. With this being said this notice should serve as a reminder that your participation in this study is voluntary and may be discontinued at any time without penalty or prejudice.

In the hope that you participate, I will maintain confidentiality of information collected from you. I will make every effort to protect any data collected by: (a) using a personal password protected computer; (b) storing all submitted documents in a securely locked home office, which only I will have access to; (c) maintaining research data for only three months after the completion of the study; and (d) destroying data after the completion of the study by shredding hardcopies and deleting electronic files and voice recordings. Any documents or artifacts submitted will be returned upon your request. However, if there is no request the documents and/or artifacts will be properly destroyed with the files.

Benefits
Inquiry into this elite group of school-university leaders could help to educate the next generation of educational partners who desire to be, know, and do what you have been doing. Further, such a focus expands insights available on Ohio’s educational reform, and gives breadth and more detail to extant literature on best practices of collaborative leadership and educational partnerships among Early College models.

Contact Information
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By signing this consent form, I agree to participate in this study having read, understood, and agreed to the above terms.

Participant’s Signature Date

I agree to conduct and report this research according to the above terms.

Investigator’s Signature Date

I have included two copies of the consent form. Please sign both. Keep one for your records and return one to me at:

Allia L. Carter
Assistant Director, Office of Service-Learning
Bowling Green State University
315 University Hall
Bowling Green, Ohio 43403

Once I receive the signed consent form, I will contact you to set up the survey and the interview. Thank you very much for your support and participation in this important study.
APPENDIX E. EARLY COLLEGE PRINCIPAL SURVEY/QUESTIONNAIRE

Early College High School Principals Survey/Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire/survey. Your feedback is important to helping me complete my research on collaborative leadership practices of Early College High School (ECHS) principals and post-secondary institutional (PSI) liaisons. This survey should only take about 30 minutes of your time. The instrument contains three sections: (a) institutional data (which will require enrollment data for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic years), (b) information regarding collaborative practices, and (c) demographics and personal information.

If you have any questions, please contact me at acarter@bgsu.edu.

Please select your Early College High School (ECHS) site
[Blank]

Section I: Early College High School (ECHS) Information

Instructions: Before beginning this section, make sure that you have enrollment details for your institution. Within this section there are two types of questions – multi-chotomous and open-ended. The multi-chotomous questions in this questionnaire/survey include check boxes, multiple choices, and scales that allow you to select one or multiple options that best respond to the question. Open-ended questions allow you to provide quantitative and qualitative responses to the questions.

ECHS classification
Please check all that apply
☐ Ohio Public School
☐ Community School/Charter
☐ Private
☐ Magnet
☐ Alternative
☐ Other: [Blank]

ECHS geographical location
[Blank]

ECHS originated as a
[Blank]

ECHS site physical location
Please check all that apply
☐ On post-secondary institution campus
☐ Off post-secondary institution campus

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dCI1Le1kHMxwXZUMJl1lipUEzFUnsDZExoMQtg#gid=0[6/14/2012 3:37:26 AM]
Early College High School Principals Questionnaire/Survey

- Shared facility
- Independent facility
- Other: 

**ECHS specialty or niche**
Please check all that apply
- Africentric
- Research
- STEM
- Technical/Trade
- Other: 

**Date ECHS opened/founded**
If you do not have the specific date enter the year

**ECHS Enrollment/Academic Data**
The following data is based on ECHSi goals and outcomes. You will need 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 enrollment data. Please provide as much details as possible

**School Performance 2009-2010**
- Excellent with Distinction

**Total student enrollment/population (2010-2011)**
Enter total student enrollment for Early College High School

**Total ECHS enrollment for female students (2010-2011)**

**Total ECHS enrollment for male students (2010-2011)**

**Total ECHS enrollment for ethnic/racial minority students (2010-2011)**
(i.e., African American/Black, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American - percentages are allowed)

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dC1LakdRMWxaXZUMllgUEZFUtFDZXesiMQ!gcid=0[6/14/2012 3:37:26 AM]
Total ECHS enrollment for first-generation students (2010-2011)

Total ECHS enrollment for low-income students (2010-2011)

Total ECHS enrollment for non-native English speaking students (2010-2011)

Total number of students enrolled in 12th grade (2010-2011)

Total number of students who graduate from ECHS (2010-2011)

What was the average number of college credits earned by spring 2011 graduates?
Indicate if this is per student/total class

Number of Associate’s degrees earned by the 2011 graduates

Number of students who graduated and enrolled in college/university for Fall 2010

The majority of our college level courses are taught by
○ high school instructors
○ college faculty members/instructors

Section II: Leadership/Relational Practices

Instructions: This section contains various types of questions which will require you to prioritize or categorize your response according to the level of importance. Although all of the options provided are essential to the success of your institution and/or relationship, it is important that you rank the items according to your personal preference. The section includes: (a) ranking questions, 1-represents the lowest priority and 5-the highest, (b) multi-chotomous questions comprise of check boxes, multiple choices, drop boxes, and scales that allow you to select one or multiple options that best respond to the question; and (c) open-ended questions that allow you to provide quantitative or qualitative responses.
What formal or informal agreements/documents does your Early College partnership have?
Please check all that apply
☐ Partnership Agreement
☐ Memorandum of Understanding
☐ Course Articulation Agreement
☐ Academic Dual Credit Course Articulation Agreement
☐ Facility Agreement
☐ Other:

How frequently do you meet with your post-secondary partner?
Please indicate if this is - per week, month, or year

What type(s) of meeting(s) do you attend?
Please check all that apply
☐ Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) meetings
☐ Early College board meetings
☐ Post-secondary institutional staff meetings
☐ Parent Meetings
☐ One-on-one meetings (ECHO principal: PSI Liaison(s))
☐ Other:

The Early College High School has the following people involved with the initiative:
Please check all that apply
☐ Counselors/Advisors
☐ Parents
☐ Principal
☐ Students
☐ Teachers
☐ Assistant Principal (Vice, Dean, Equivalent)
☐ Other:

The college/university has the following people involved with the initiative:
Please check all that apply
☐ Academic Deans/Chairs/Coordinators
☐ Executive level administrators (Vice Presidents and Directors)
☐ Faculty members
☐ Graduate students
☐ President
☐ Undergraduate students

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Early College High School Principals Questionnaire/Survey

☐ University staff (counselors, advisors, etc.)
☐ Other: __________________________

What describes your leadership role or contribution to the partnership?
Please check all that apply
☐ Assessment and evaluation
☐ Community engagement
☐ Course instruction
☐ Curriculum development
☐ Decision-making
☐ Fund-raising
☐ Leadership/Vision planning
☐ Outreach and recruitment
☐ Parent/family involvement
☐ Planning and coordination
☐ Policy development
☐ Professional development
☐ Student Support (counseling, mentoring, advising, etc.)
☐ Other: __________________________

What components of your collaboration are most important to your partnership

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<th>3 - medium priority</th>
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<th>5 - high priority</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment (student, program, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student support and resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>(counseling, advising, etc.)</td>
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Which factor has the greatest impact on ECHS student success?

ECTS mission/kiche (STEM, alternative, etc.)

Prioritize the following key aspects of the ECHSI and/or the EC operation which may be associated with school improvement

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Early College High School Principals Questionnaire/Survey

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<tr>
<td>Distributed leadership</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focused and sustained action on school improvement</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional capacity of the school</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of student support</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
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<tr>
<td>School communication</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
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<td>o</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stakeholder involvement</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
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<td>o</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student safety and well-being</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
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<td>o</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong leadership and clear vision</td>
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<td>o</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Organizational culture/climate assessment**

Please select the one that best describes you or your organization

**Organizational attributes:**
- Cohesiveness, participation, teamwork, sense of family

**Organizational bonding:**
- Loyalty, mutual trust, tradition, interpersonal cohesion

**Organizational strategic emphases:**
- Innovation, acquiring new resources, creating new challenges

**Leadership style:**
- Mentor, facilitator, nurturing

**Section III: Demographics and Personal Background Information**

Instructions: This section requires your individual background and personal identity information. The data provided here will be used for research purposes only and none of the information is required. Note: your personal contact information (e.g., email, phone number, or address) will be shared or published.

First and Last Name
Early College High School Principals Questionnaire/Survey

Please enter information as you would like it displayed (middle initials, suffix, etc.)

Title
Please enter information as you would like it displayed

Phone number
Please indicate office, home, or cell

E-mail

Number of years in position

Number of years at your current institution
If different, please enter number of years and previous title/position

If there is someone other than yourself that I should contact for scheduling please enter his or her information
First and last name, title, phone, and email

Please indicate your age range
20-24

How do you define your sex/gender
Female/Woman

Ethnicity/Race
African American/Black
**Highest level of education completed**
High School Graduate

**I was born in (list city, state or country)**

**I was raised in (if different list city, state or country)**

**I currently reside in (list city, state or county)**

**When I was a P-16 student I identified as**
Please check all that apply
- □ Ethnic/racial minority
- □ First-generation
- □ Low-income
- □ Non-native English speaker
- □ None of the above
- □ Other: 

**I would like to disclose my identity in this study**
- □ Yes
- □ No, please select a pseudonym for me

**I would like to disclose the identity of the ECHS site**
- □ Yes
- □ No, please select a pseudonym for the site

---

**Thank you for completing the questionnaire/survey. The next step in the research process is for you to forward relevant documents and artifacts to:**

Allia L. Carter, Assistant Director  
Office of Service-Learning  
315 University Hall  
Bowling Green, OH 43402  
Fax to (419) 372-5467 to the attention of Allia Carter

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dC1LeklRMWxuaXZUMllpUEZFUwFDZXoiMQ9gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dC1LeklRMWxuaXZUMllpUEZFUwFDZXoiMQ9gid=0)
APPENDIX F. POST-SECONDARY LIAISON SURVEY/QUESTIONNAIRE

Post-Secondary Liaison/Advocate Questionnaire/Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire/survey. Your feedback is important to helping me complete my research on collaborative leadership practices of Early College High School (ECHS) principals and post-secondary institutional (PSI) liaisons. This survey should only take about 30 minutes of your time. The instrument contains three sections: (a) institutional data (which will require enrollment data for the 2010-2011 academic year), (b) information regarding collaborative practices, and (c) demographics and personal information.

If you have any questions, please contact me at acarter@bgsu.edu

Please select your post-secondary institution (PSI)

| Columbus State College |

Section I: Post-Secondary Institution Information (PSI)

Instructions: Before beginning this section, make sure that you have enrollment details for your institution. Within this section there are two types of questions – multi-chotomous and open-ended. The multi-chotomous questions in this questionnaire/survey include check boxes, multiple choices, and scales that allow you to select one or multiple options that best respond to the question. Open-ended questions allow you to provide quantitative and qualitative responses to the questions.

**PSI classification**

Please check all that apply

- [ ] Public, 4-year institution
- [ ] Public, 2-year institution
- [ ] Private, 4-year institution
- [ ] Private, 2-year institution
- [ ] Other: __________________________

**PSI geographic location**

Fond

**PSI type or mission**

Please check all that apply

- [ ] For-profit institution
- [ ] Historically Black College & University
- [ ] Hispanic Serving Institution
- [ ] Liberal Arts
- [ ] Nonresidential campus
- [ ] Residential campus

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dFZmaV95U2pvQVqM1U2R0kzMng4Uns6MQojid=0\&e=2012-3-14\:17:34 AM
### PSI Enrollment Data and ECHS Academic Data

The following data is based on PSI enrollment data and ECHSI goals and outcomes. You will need 2010-2011 enrollment data. Please provide as many details as possible.

**Total PSI student enrollment (2010-2011)**
Enter total number of students enrolled at college or university

**Total PSI enrollment for female students (2010-2011)**

**Total PSI enrollment for male students (2010-2011)**

**Total PSI enrollment for ethnic/racial minority students (2010-2011)**
(i.e., African American/Black, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American - percentages are allowed)

**Number of early college students enrolled in college courses (Fall 2010)**

**Number of faculty members/instructors who taught courses for ECHS students (Fall 2010)**

**Number of early college student enrolled in college courses (Spring 2011)**

**Number of faculty members/instructor who taught courses for ECHS students (Spring 2011)**
Section II: Leadership/Relational Practices

Instructions: This section contains various types of questions which will require to you prioritize or categorize your response according to the level of importance. Although all of the options provided are essential to the success of your institution and/or relationship, it is important that you rank the items according to your personal preference. The section includes: (a) ranking questions, 1-represents the lowest priority and 5-the highest; (b) multi-chotomous questions comprise of check boxes, multiple choices, drop boxes, and scales that allow you to select one or multiple options that best respond to the question; and (c) open-ended questions that allow you to provide quantitative or qualitative responses.

What formal or information agreements/documents does your partnership have?
Please check all that apply

- Partnership Agreement
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Course Articulation Agreement
- Academic Dual Credit Course Articulation Agreement
- Facility Agreement
- Other: ____________________________

How frequently do you meet with your EC partner?
Please indicate if this is - per week, month, or year

__________________

What type(s) of meeting(s) do you attend?
Please check all that apply

- Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) meetings
- Early College board meetings
- ECHS staff meetings
- Parent meetings
- One-on-one meetings (PSI liaison(s) and ECHS principal)
- Other: ____________________________

The college/university has the following people involved with the initiative:
Please check all that apply

- Academic Deans/Chairs/Coordinators
- Executive level administrators (Vice Presidents and Directors)
- Faculty members
- Graduate students
-
President
- Undergraduate students
- University staff (counselors, advisors, etc.)
- Other: 

The Early College High School has the following people involved with the initiative:
Please check all that apply
- Counselors/Advisors
- Parents
- Principal
- Students
- Teachers
- Assistant Principal (Vice, Dean, Equivalent)
- Other: 

What describes your leadership role or contribution to the partnership?
Please check all that apply
- Assessment and evaluation
- Community engagement
- Course instruction
- Curriculum development
- Decision-making
- Fund-raising
- Leadership/Vision planning
- Outreach and recruitment
- Parent/family involvement
- Planning and coordination
- Policy development
- Professional development
- Student Support (counseling, mentoring, advising, etc.)
- Other: 

What components of your collaboration are most important to your partnership?

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<td>Curriculum and instruction</td>
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<td>Financial support</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy development</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Organizational culture/climate assessment

Please select the one that best describes you or your organization

**Organizational attributes:**

- Cohesiveness, participation, teamwork, sense of family

**Organizational bonding:**

- Loyalty, mutual trust, tradition, interpersonal cohesion

**Organizational strategic emphases:**

- Innovation, acquiring new resources, creating new challenges

---

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dl♂ZmaWi95U2gbQ1VqM1U2R0k2Mng4Uuc6MQ9gidal=0j614/2012 3:54:17 AM]
Leadership style:
Mentor, facilitator, nurturing

Section III: Demographics and Personal Background Information

Instructions: This section requires your individual background and personal identity information. The data provided here will be used for research purposes only and none of the information is required. Note: your personal contact information (e.g., email, phone number, or address) will be shared or published.

First and Last Name
Please enter information as you would like it displayed (middle initials, suffix, etc.)

Title
Please enter information as you would like it displayed

Phone number
Please indicate office, home, or cell

E-mail

Number of years in position

Number of years at current institution
If different, please enter number of years and previous title/position

If there is someone other than yourself that I should contact for scheduling please enter his or her information
First and last name, title, phone, and email
Post-Secondary Liaison/Advocate Questionnaire/Survey

Please indicate your age range

20-24

How do you define your sex/gender?

Female/Woman

Ethnicity/Race

African American/Black

Highest level of education completed

High School Graduate

I was born in (list city, state and/or county)

I was raised in (if different list city, state, and/or county)

I currently reside in (list city, state and/or county)

When I was a P-16 student I identified as

Please check all that apply

☐ Ethnic/racial minority
☐ First-generation
☐ Low-income
☐ Non-native English speaker
☐ None of the above
☐ Other: ____________________________

I would like to disclose my identity in this study

☐ Yes

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dFZmaW93U2gxQlVqM1Z2R0lkZnBzQkFveEQUMQ#gid=0
Post-Secondary Liaison/Advocate Questionnaire/Survey

☐ No, please select a pseudonym for me

I would like to disclose the identity of the PSI site
☐ Yes
☐ No, please select a pseudonym for the site

Thank you for completing the questionnaire/survey. The next step in the research process is for you to forward relevant documents and artifacts to:

Allia L. Carter, Assistant Director
Office of Service-Learning
315 University Hall
Bowling Green, OH 43402

Fax to (419) 372-5467 to the attention of Allia Carter

Email to acarter@bgsu.edu

Documents and artifacts would include, but are not limited to:
- Partnerships agreements
- Memorandums of understanding
- Annual reports or documents that assess goals and outcomes
- Vision/Mission statements
- Other supplemental documents (e.g. advisory board rosters, course/dual credit articulation agreements, use)

Report Abuse - Terms of Service - Additional Terms
APPENDIX G. EARLY COLLEGE PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Phase II: Interview Guide for PSI Liaison

I. Greeting

A. Thank you for being willing to participate in my multiple-case study on the collaborative leadership practices of Ohio’s ECHS principals and their university partners.

B. Purpose: I am interested in learning about the perception and practices of principals and liaisons who partner to create clear pathways from high school to college for students who have traditionally been underrepresented in higher education.

C. Procedures: I’ll be asking a number of semi-structured questions. As I indicated in the initial Invitation letter, I would like to tape these interviews so that I am able to recreate accurately what you say. If you would like to say something and prefer for it not to be recorded, please indicate this desire to me, and I will turn off the tape recorder. All tapes, transcriptions, forms, and other documents can be coded and altered to safeguard you and institutions’ identities to the greatest extent possible.

D. Do you have any questions before we begin?

E. Review and sign two consent forms; give one form to the participant. You indicated that you ___ want to disclose your identity or the identity of your institution is that correct?

Due to the nature of the study the researcher is unable to ensure anonymity, however, if you are interested there is an opportunity for you to select a pseudonym as an attempt to safeguard your name and identity. However, the study is not exclusive to the leadership position, but the relationship between the early college school-university partnerships. Therefore, separating your identity from the site has practical challenges and it may be important to share best practices and lessons learned through the collaborative practices by allowing full disclosure of your identity and your site.

F. Make sure that digital recorder is ready. Start interviewing!

G. On the survey/questionnaire you indicated that you have ___ years of experience at your institution, of which ___ have been in this role. What were your previous positions? What lead to you assuming this position?

H. Begin interview process, make sure terms are clearly defined.

<p>| Collaborative leadership has been defined as an inclusive process that involves teachers, staff, administrators, parents, students, community businesses, legislatures, and other stakeholders uniting to build and sustain a seamless educational system which leads to academic progression of students from preschool through college (Hallinger &amp; Murphy, 1986; Rubin, 2009; Wepner &amp; Hopkins, 2011). |
|---|---|
| <strong>RQ</strong> | <strong>Case Study Questions</strong> |
| <strong>1</strong> | <strong>How do Ohio Early College leaders understand the Ohio Early College relationship?</strong> |
| <strong>1Q</strong> | Why is the relationship between your university and the EC important? |
| <strong>1Q</strong> | How would you define your relationship? |
| <strong>2</strong> | What are the advantages of your collaboration? |
| <strong>2</strong> | What are the disadvantages of your collaboration? |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ</th>
<th>How do participants perceive the various components of the Relational Leadership Theory (purpose, ethics, empowerment, and inclusion through the process) within the EC partnership?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Relational Leadership Theory (RLT) places relationships as the central focus of the leadership process. According to Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (1998) relational leadership has five primary components and the theorists advance that **purpose** is the ability to intentionally build commitment towards a common goal or activity (b) **inclusion** is the promotion of fair and equitable treatment of the whole person and their diverse viewpoints; (c) **ethics** is a consciousness of moral importance which is grounded in an individual’s beliefs, values, and principals, while being confronted by unethical practices; (d) **empowerment** is the strength of the individuals and communities and assumes that everyone has something to offer; and (e) **process-orientation** is the overall practice, process, or dynamics of how groups are formed and how they function.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RLT Component</th>
<th>RLT Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>According to RLT, being purposeful builds commitment towards a common goal or activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID - Purpose</td>
<td>Case Study Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>What characteristics make your school an Early College?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>How does your EC differ from the local public high schools in your district?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>What is the mission of your Early College initiative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>How does the mission/niche impact students’ success?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>Were all the partners involved in creating the mission?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>What is the PSC’s role in fulfilling the EC mission?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>Does the [college or university community] have a common understanding of the EC mission, vision, and philosophy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>Does the [ECHS staff] have a common understanding of the EC mission, vision, and philosophy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>How is your mission similar or different than the national ECHSI mission to improve the educational pipeline of traditionally underrepresented students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>What makes your ECHS different from the other ECHSs in the state?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>What are your institutional goals for the EC?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>Promoting fairness and equitable treatment of the whole person and their diverse viewpoints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID - Inclusion</td>
<td>Case Study Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>How do members of your [school] perceive members of the partnering [university]?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>How many university faculty members are involved in the collaboration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>How do the faculty members describe their experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>How do you define inclusion within the context of your partnership?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>How important is it [inclusion] to the relationship?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>[If so,] why is it important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>[If not,] why isn’t it important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>A consciousness of moral importance which is grounded in an individual’s beliefs, values, and principals, while being confronted by unethical practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID - Ethics</td>
<td>Case Study Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>What values have been essential to the relationship? and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ID</strong></td>
<td><strong>Case Study Questions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IQ</strong></td>
<td>Also, can I get a copy of your Memorandum of Understanding or other documents that you believe may be helpful to me understanding the EC collaboration?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I. Ask if the participants have any questions or concerns.

J. Make sure that the digital recorder is turned off. Complete interview!
APPENDIX H. POST-SECONDARY LIAISON INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Phase II: Interview Guide for PSI Liaison

I. Greeting

A. Thank you for being willing to participate in my multiple-case study on the collaborative leadership practices of Ohio’s post-secondary liaison and their ECHS partners.

B. Purpose: I am interested in learning about the perception and practices of principals and liaisons who partner to create clear pathways from high school to college for students who have traditionally been underrepresented in higher education.

C. Procedures: I’ll be asking a number of semi-structured questions. As I indicated in the initial Invitation letter, I would like to tape these interviews so that I am able to recreate accurately what you say. If you would like to say something and prefer for it not to be recorded, please indicate this desire to me, and I will turn off the tape recorder. All tapes, transcriptions, forms, and other documents can be coded and altered to safeguard you and institutions’ identities to the greatest extent possible.

D. Do you have any questions before we begin?

E. Review and sign two consent forms; give one form to the participant. You indicated that you ___ want to disclose your identity or the identity of your institution is that correct?

Due to the nature of the study the researcher is unable to ensure anonymity; however, if you are interested there is an opportunity for you to select a pseudonym as an attempt to safeguard your name and identity. However, the study is not exclusive to the leadership position, but the relationship between the early college school-university partnerships. Therefore, separating your identity from the site has practical challenges and it may be important to share best practices and lessons learned through the collaborative practices by allowing full disclosure of your identity and your site.

F. Make sure that digital recorder is ready. Start interviewing!

G. On the survey/questionnaire you indicated that you have ___ years of experience at your institution, of which ___ have been in this role. What were your previous positions? What lead to you assuming this position?

H. Begin interview process, make sure terms are clearly defined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Case Study Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1</td>
<td>How do Ohio Early College leaders understand the Ohio Early College relationship?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>Why is the relationship between your university and the EC important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>How would you define your relationship?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the advantages of your collaboration?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the disadvantages of your collaboration?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Collaborative leadership has been defined as an inclusive process that involves teachers, staff, administrators, parents, students, community businesses, legislatures, and other stakeholders uniting to build and sustain a seamless educational system which leads to academic progression of students from preschool through college (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Rubin, 2009; Wepner & Hopkins, 2011).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ2</th>
<th>How do participants perceive the various components of the Relational Leadership Theory (purpose, ethics, empowerment, and inclusion through the process) within the EC partnership?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Relational Leadership Theory (RLT) places relationships as the central focus of the leadership process. According to Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (1998) relational leadership has five primary components and the theorists advance that purpose is the ability to intentionally build commitment towards a common goal or activity (b) inclusion is the promotion of fair and equitable treatment of the whole person and their diverse viewpoints; (c) ethics is a consciousness of moral importance which is grounded in an individual’s beliefs, values, and principals, while being confronted by unethical practices; (d) empowerment is the strength of the individuals and communities and assumes that everyone has something to offer; and (e) process-orientation is the overall practice, process, or dynamics of how groups are formed and how they function.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>RLT Component</th>
<th>RLT Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>According to RLT, being purposeful builds commitment towards a common goal or activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID - Purpose</td>
<td>Case Study Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ1 Purpose</td>
<td>What characteristics make your partnering school an Early College?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ2 Purpose</td>
<td>How does this EC differ from the local public high schools in your district?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ3 Purpose</td>
<td>What is the mission of your Early College initiative?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| IQ4 Purpose   | Who was involved with creating the EC mission?  
|               | What is your institution’s role in fulfilling the EC mission? |
| IQ5 Purpose   | Does the [college or university community] have a common understanding of the EC mission, vision, and philosophy?  
|               | Does the [ECHS staff] have a common understanding of the EC mission, vision, and philosophy? |
| IQ6 Purpose   | How is your EC mission similar or different than the national ECHSI mission to improve the educational pipeline of traditionally underrepresented students?  
|               | What makes your ECHS different from the other ECHSs in the state?  
|               | What are your institutional goals for the EC? |
| Inclusion     | Promoting fairness and equitable treatment of the whole person and their diverse viewpoints |
| ID - Inclusion| Case Study Questions |
| IQ7 Inclusion | How do members of your [university] perceive members of the partnering [ECHSI]?  
|               | How many faculty members are involved in the collaboration?  
|               | How do the faculty members describe their experience?  
|               | How do you define inclusion within the context of your partnership? |
| IQ8 Inclusion | How important is it [inclusion] to the relationship?  
|               | [If so] why is it important?  
|               | [If no] why isn’t it important? |
| Ethics        | A consciousness of moral importance which is grounded in an individual’s beliefs, values, and principals, while being confronted by unethical practices |
| ID - Ethics   | Case Study Questions |
| IQ9 Ethics    | What values have been essential to the relationship? and why? |
| IQ17 Ethics | When working in this collaboration, have you ever had to make a choice or decision that conflicted with your own personal values?  
If so how did you work through this?  
If not why do you believe you have not had this experience? |
| Empowerment | To the strength of the individuals and communities and assumes that everyone has something to offer |
| IQ18 Empowerment | As a leader of the EC partnership, how empowered do you feel to make decisions? |
| IQ19 Empowerment | How empowered do you feel to empower others within your organization to get involved? |
| IQ20 Empowerment | |
| Process | Although process is consider a component for this study, it is not as concrete as the others because it is more of a functioning of the overall practice, process, or dynamics of the group; how they are formed and how they function |
| ID - Process | Case Study Questions |
| IQ21 Process | How would you describe the culture and climate of your school/institution?  
How does this differ or similar to your EC collaboration? |
| IQ22 Process | How do the relational dynamics between you and your partner impact your institution? |
| IQ23 Process | Are there any power issues inherent in the collaborative arrangement? |
| IQ24 Process | What strategies or best practices have you learned from the EC model that can be used to advance collaboration in other school-university partnerships? |
| IQ25 Process | How do the relational dynamics between you and your partner impact your institution? |
| RQ2 | Which if any of the Relational Leadership Theory components (purpose, ethics, empowerment, inclusion, and process) have the greatest impact on the EC partnership? And why? |

I. Ask if the participants have any questions or concerns.  
J. Make sure that the digital recorder is turned off. Complete interview!
APPENDIX I. THANK YOU LETTER

Thank You Letter

Dear «Advocacy_Lead_Contacts»:

Thank you for the generous amount of time you allowed me in the recent interview. In addition, I want to thank you for all the effort you put forth arranging the interview.

I enjoyed meeting with you and getting your perspective on Early College (EC) partnerships and your philosophy on collaborative leadership. The information you share will be an asset as I begin to prepare my dissertation. Your contribution and leadership to EC is commendable.

Thanks again for the opportunity to meet with you in person. You are delivering a powerful message to the administrators, teachers, and educational leaders that you are willing to be part of an educational partnership that makes a difference. I am very impressed with Ohio’s EC model.

Sincerely,

Allia L. Carter