

**The Role of the Elementary Assistant Principal:
*Allocating Resources Effectively?***



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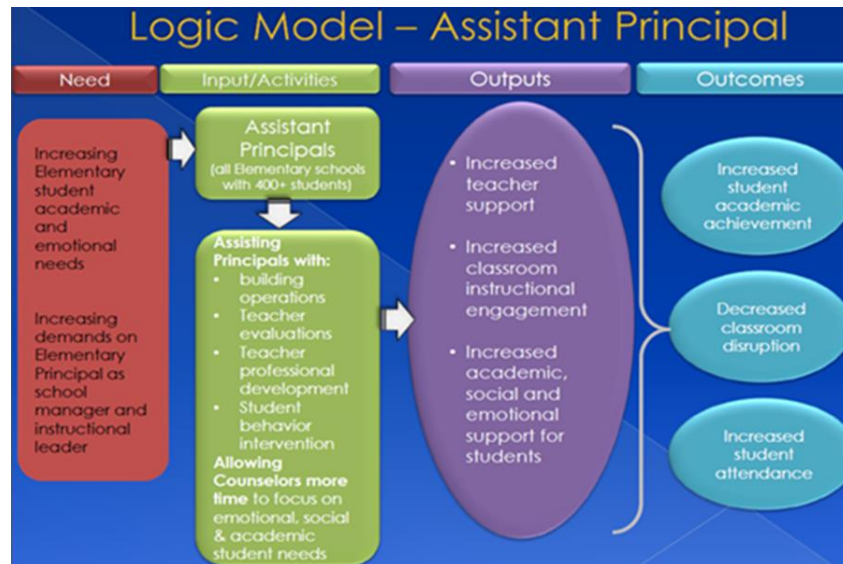




3 Executive Summary

Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) is the largest school district in Kentucky, serving over 101,000 students in the Louisville metropolitan area. The district comprises 155 schools and nearly 6,200 teachers. JCPS has deployed the assistant principal role at both the high school and middle school level for some time, yet this role was absent from the elementary level until the 2012-13 school

year. JCPS deployed assistant principals in every elementary school with over 400 students beginning in 2012-13. In 2013-14, the district staffed the remaining seven elementary schools with enrollment of less than 400 students, such that all 90 buildings were served by an assistant principal.



The addition of this role at the elementary level developed in part because of district concerns that principals and counselors were spending too much time on work outside of their core functions, instructional leadership and student support, respectively. Thus, the purpose of the assistant principal expansion was to provide more administrative leadership and support at the school level, as well as to allow both the elementary principal and counselor to spend more time on the primary aspects of their work.

JCPS is interested in learning how the presence of assistant principals at the elementary level has increased student learning while also supporting the administrative, discipline, and counseling functions in accordance with the logic model contemplated by district leadership. As such, we explored the following research questions:

- What is the work of the elementary assistant principal in terms of administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support?
 - To what extent does the work of the assistant principal influence (intersect with) the work of the principal and counselor within a building?
- What is the perceived value of the work of elementary assistant principals?
 - What is the school community's perception of the impact of the elementary assistant principal role?
 - What, if any, relationship is there between the type of work the assistant principal is performing and student suspensions,

attendance, and overall school climate?

To address these research questions, we completed a mixed methods investigation that included both qualitative and quantitative elements. First, we conducted interviews based on a purposeful, random sample of schools to generate a representative group in terms of ethnicity, poverty, and size. We completed semi-structured, recorded interviews with three principals, two assistant principals, two counselors, and three goal clarity coaches at six schools. Next, we conducted interviews that included the entire census of principals, assistant principals, goal clarity coaches, counselors, and teachers with scales designed to align with our conceptual framework for the work of the assistant principal – administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support. The survey respondents were from 84 schools with a total of 678 participants, including 61.1% of principals, 55.6% of assistant principals, 44.4% of counselors, 43.3% of goal clarity coaches, and 15.3% of teachers. We also used existing survey data from the JCPS Comprehensive School Survey for student perceptions of school climate. Finally, we completed focus groups using a convenience sample of schools, which were selected for proximity. We employed a semi-structured interview protocol, recorded for review, with two principals, three assistant principals, two counselors, and two goal clarity coaches from six schools.

The key findings of our study are highlighted below.

Work of the Assistant Principal

- **High Degree of Variation** – The assistant principal role varies widely across JCPS and is realized through the vision of the principal at each building. The role is largely defined through principal attitudes, how assistant principal work responsibilities have been assigned, and the degree of clarity for assigned duties of other support staff.

- **Domains of Work** – The work activities in which assistant principals are engaged encompass the four domains of our conceptual framework – administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support.
- **Key Areas of Support** – Overwhelmingly, respondents conveyed that the most important work of the assistant principal is instructional leadership and student support. These are the two work domains where assistant principals spend most of their time, where staff reported highest frequency of assistant principal engagement, and that staff ranked as the highest priority.
- **Diverging Viewpoints** – There is not consistent agreement among all staff groups with regard to the work of assistant principals. In particular, counselors indicated that assistant principals were less frequently engaged in administrative support, and goal clarity coaches indicated the same for instructional leadership.

Assistant Principals Influence on Other Roles

- **Overall Perceptions of Influence** – The assistant principal role intersected with both the principal and counselor in ways that benefited those roles, though the principal was seen as the primary beneficiary. Specifically, school staff indicated the assistant principal's work was a source of principal support and an enabler of counselor productivity.
- **Teacher Support and Student Engagement** – Staff described the assistant principal as influencing both the work of the principal and counselor in terms of teacher support and student engagement. However, the evidence was stronger regarding the work of principals versus that of counselors in both areas.
- **Impact on Time** – Assistant principals report spending the majority of their time engaged in student support and curriculum and teaching-related tasks. This aligns with our finding that the assistant principal role provides more support to principals, as counselors reported

they still spend a majority of their time on administrative tasks.

Perceived Value

- **Highest Areas of Impact** – The areas where the assistant principal was deemed to have had the greatest relative impact were *student progress monitoring, consistent rule enforcement, teacher collaboration, student achievement, and school safety*.
- **Lowest Areas of Impact** – The areas where the assistant principal was perceived to have less of an impact were *facility conditions, student attendance, student tardiness, student time with counselor, and student behavior on the bus*.
- **Resource Allocation** – Both principals and counselors agreed that they would allocate resources for an assistant principal over other uses of the funds. Counselor attitudes on resource allocation were driven by their perceptions on the frequency of the assistant principal's engagement in work related to administrative support.
- **Counselor Priorities** – For counselors, the most important work for assistant principals is administrative support, and the increased frequency of such resulted in counselors reporting that they are able to spend more time with students.

Impact on Non-Academic Outcomes

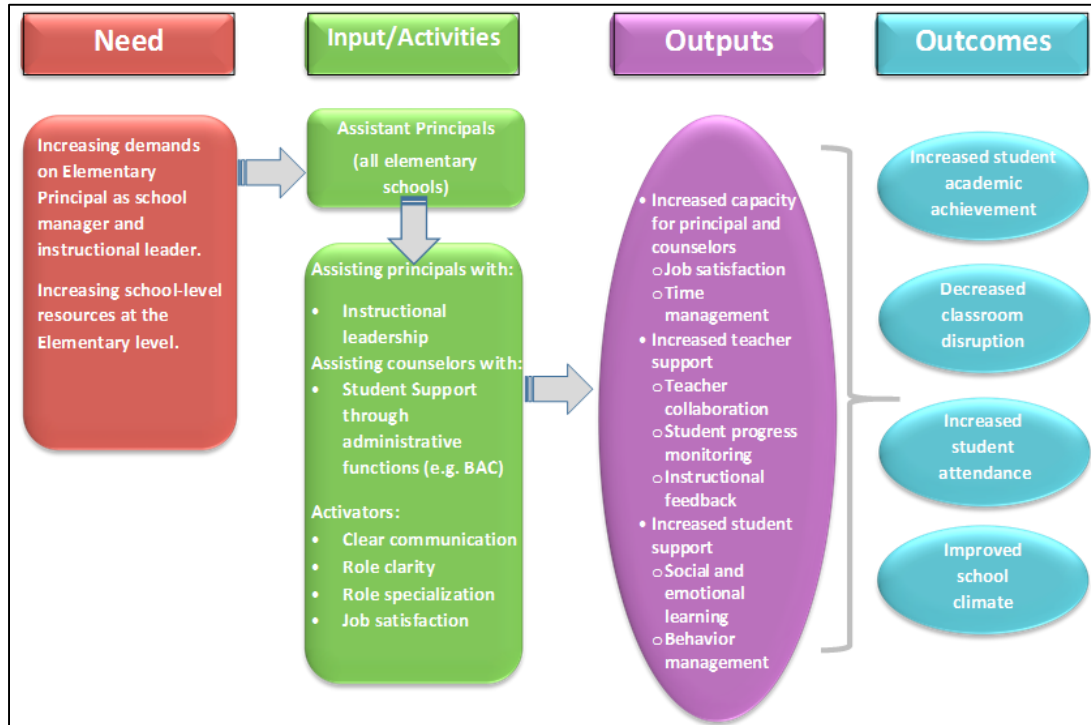
- **Suspensions** – We found a positive relationship between suspensions and the work of assistant principals, which provides some support of progress toward the goal of decreased classroom disruption. Higher numbers of suspension were associated with assistant principals more frequently engaged in student support work and time spent on student interactions.
- **Attendance** – When assistant principals were reported to be more frequently engaged in school operations and student support work, their schools tended to have higher attendance rates. Assistant principals may be indirectly influencing student attendance rates via their work in student support.

- **Teacher Perceptions of School Climate** – For teachers, higher frequencies of assistant principals engaged in the work of the AP domains including administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations and student support were associated with more positive perceptions of school climate for all four domains.
- **Student Perceptions of School Climate** – We found a positive relationship between the work of the AP student support scale and the change in student climate perceptions of support from 2012 to 2014 after the addition of assistant principals.

Based on our findings, we made recommendations that consider decision points for JCPS leadership with regard to the alignment between their theory of action and the observed activities for the assistant principal role.

1. **Adjust practice to align with current logic model.**
 - a. Reduce assistant principal time on instructional leadership and engage goal clarity coaches to backfill their capacity.
 - b. Improve teacher and coach perceptions of the frequency and quality of feedback.
 - c. Understand the involvement of assistant principals in increasing suspension rates.
 - d. Increase assistant principal involvement in behavior interventions rather than simply doling out consequences.
2. **Prioritize principal autonomy through revamped theory of action.**
 - a. Provide building leaders with complete autonomy regarding roles and responsibilities.
 - b. Provide building principals a certain number of full-time employees (FTEs) that they may allocate to any support role.
3. **Update logic model to achieve current goals for AP role.**
 - a. Add instructional leadership explicitly and broadly to assistant principal responsibilities.
 - b. Shift work of the AP to include more administrative support.

- c. Distinguish and divide special education assessment (for identification) from general education assessment.
- d. Gather feedback from counselors on how to increase their time on direct student interactions toward enhanced social and emotional supports.



4. Clearly communicate roles and responsibilities of the administrative team.

- Clearly articulate building and district expectations regarding roles.
- Provide professional development regarding role and responsibilities.

5. Address goal clarity coach concerns.

- Clarify the goal clarity coach role as a pipeline to assistant principal or principal.
- Communicate that the goal clarity coach is a member of the administrative team.

4 Introduction

4.1 Client Institutional Overview

Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) is the largest school district in Kentucky, serving over 101,000 students in the Louisville metropolitan area ("Kentucky School Report Card: Jefferson County," 2014). The district comprises 155 schools and nearly 6,200 teachers ("Kentucky School Report Card: Jefferson County," 2014). JCPS ranks 28th nationally in terms of enrollment size among urban school districts ("Envision Equity: A community commitment to improving education for all students," 2013). The district is funded just above national averages, spending \$13,312 per pupil from federal, state, and local sources (Center on Education Policy, 2012; JCPS: Data Management, Planning and Program Evaluation, 2014). Beyond these basic data points, JCPS has several characteristics that make it somewhat unique among large school systems. The district has relatively stable leadership, a storied history with regard to equity-driven student assignment plans, and a comparatively diverse student body (with a resulting range of school performance).

In August 2011, Donna M. Hargens, Ed.D. began her tenure as JCPS Superintendent. Dr. Hargens is an accomplished educator, having spent 22 years of her 30-plus year career in Wake County Schools in Raleigh, North Carolina ("Jefferson County Public Schools Board of Education," 2011). She served as a principal, area superintendent, director of curriculum and instruction, and Chief Academic Officer prior to her JCPS appointment ("Jefferson County Public Schools Board of Education," 2011). The JCPS school board may have found the most compelling element of her résumé to be her service as Interim Superintendent in Wake County Schools during a contentious community battle over that district's voluntary desegregation plan (Konz, 2011). Dr. Hargens's predecessor in JCPS was ousted amid a similar community struggle over the promotion of neighborhood schools versus student assignment policies which prioritized racial and economic diversity ("New JCPS superintendent starts job; talks goals for school year," 2011). Ultimately, Dr.

Hargens's experience overseeing such a plan may have been the deciding factor in her selection as the new Superintendent of JCPS, appeasing both sides of the issue.

JCPS has a long history of pursuing equity through busing and student assignment plans. In 1973, the district entered a court-ordered desegregation plan as a result of federal lawsuits in which the district was found to be illegally segregating schools (PICS). Over the next three decades, JCPS designed a student assignment system which encompassed parental choice of schools in cluster zones and target ranges for African American student enrollment of between 15 and 35 percent at each school (Bhargava, Frankenberg, & Le, 2008). The district continued this practice after it was granted unitary status in 2000. Yet, in 2007, JCPS found itself in another federal lawsuit, *Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education*, in which the parent of a white student challenged the voluntary desegregation plan that resulted in her son's exclusion from his neighborhood school (PICS). The Supreme Court rendered a landmark decision prohibiting the use of race in determining individual student assignment in its *PICS v. Seattle School District* opinion, addressing both the Seattle and Louisville cases. Since that time, JCPS has updated its desegregation plan to use socio-economic status rather than race (Bhargava et al., 2008). However, the student assignment system continues to be a contentious issue in the community, as the student body becomes increasingly diverse (Konz, 2011).

JCPS serves the greater-Louisville metropolitan area. As such, the district includes a diverse portfolio of urban and suburban schools. In 2013, 50.4% of enrolled students were White, 36.1% were African American, 7.4% were Hispanic, and 3.3% were Asian American ("Kentucky School Report Card: Jefferson County," 2014). By comparison, White students made up nearly 81% of the enrollment in the state of Kentucky ("Kentucky School Report Card: Jefferson County," 2014). This school year, the district is majority minority with White students comprising only 48.5% of enrollment, and all other minority groups

comprising 51.5% of enrollment ("2013-2014 Current Enrollment by Race and Gender: Elementary Schools," 2014). The proportion of African-American student enrollment held steady versus last year, while Hispanic student enrollment increased ("2013-2014 Current Enrollment by Race and Gender: Elementary Schools," 2014). As would be expected, this demographic change is most pronounced in elementary schools ("2013-2014 Current Enrollment by Race and Gender: Elementary Schools," 2014). With regard to economic diversity, approximately 64% of JCPS students receive free or reduced lunch (FRL) ("Free/Reduced Lunch 2005-2006 Through 2013-2014: Elementary Schools," 2014). This proportion has increased by 10 percentage points since 2006

("Free/Reduced Lunch 2005-2006 Through 2013-2014: Elementary Schools," 2014). Yet, there is a wide-range of school characteristics, with FRL percentages from 14% to 97% across 90 elementary schools ("Free/Reduced Lunch 2005-2006 Through 2013-2014: Elementary Schools," 2014). Overall enrollment in JCPS has been fairly steady, increasing 3.5% over the last decade. The district is currently in "Needs Improvement" status and includes six of the 10 lowest performing schools in the state ("Kentucky School Report Card: Jefferson County," 2014). JCPS continues to focus on ways to provide the necessary resources and supports to improve its student academic outcomes.



5 Problem Definition

JCPS has deployed the assistant principal role at both the high school and middle school level for some time, yet this role was absent from the elementary level until the 2012-2013 school year. The addition of this role at the elementary level developed in part because of district concerns that building principals and counselors were spending too much time on work outside of their core functions. Thus, the purpose of the assistant principal expansion was to provide more administrative leadership and support at the building level as well as to allow both the elementary principal and counselor to spend more time on the primary aspects of their work. An elementary assistant principal, as contemplated, would enable the principal to focus on instructional leadership, while providing the counselor time to counsel students – aspects of their work that were diminished by the other demands of running a building. JCPS Superintendent, Dr. Hargens, indicated the rationale for the creation of these positions at a school board meeting,

Part of the reason that it has been recommended is to provide additional support at the school level. We feel this will provide an opportunity [for principals] to give teachers more time...to work with teachers to help them, for the counselors to have more time to work with the children. (Jefferson County Public Schools, 2014).

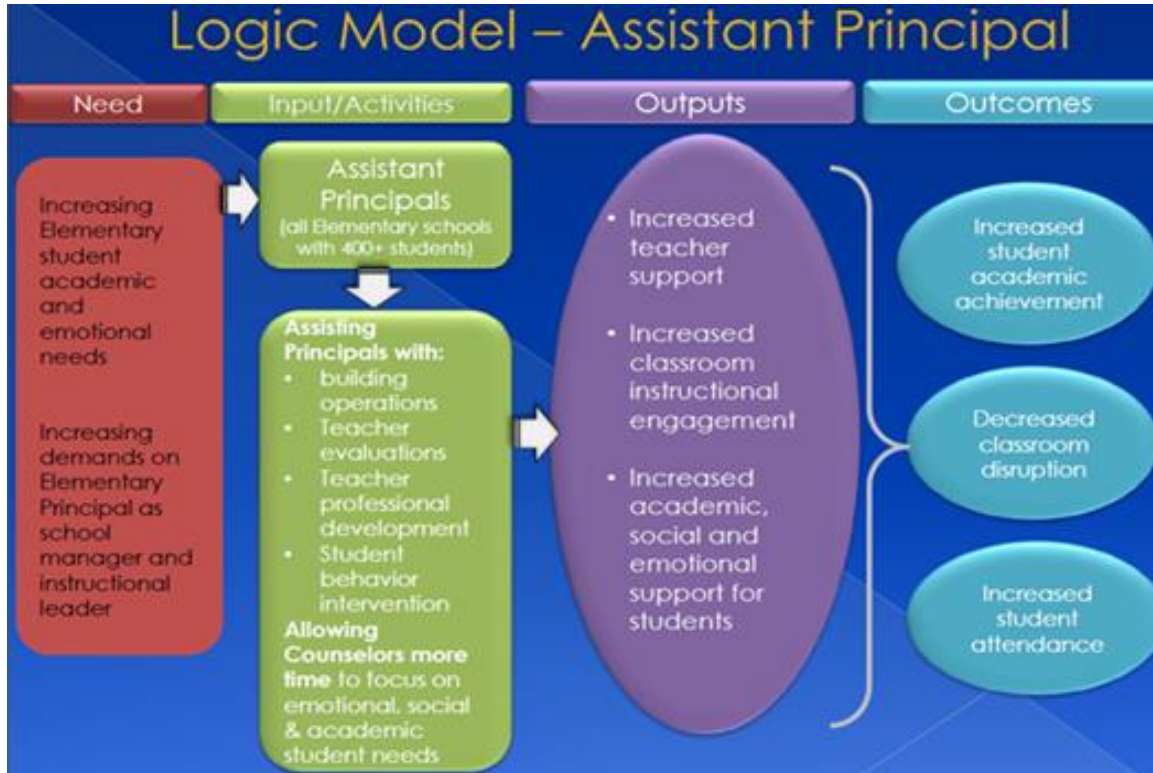
JCPS developed a strategic plan in 2012 “to set a course for the district through 2015” (Jefferson County Public Schools, 2012). The strategic plan included four goals – two of which are directly impacted by the inclusion of assistant principals at the elementary level. Increased learning is the first goal and has three strategies impacted by the assistant principal role: the

establishment of a formal process to support and monitor the use of instructional best practices (1.4), the creation of a coordinated system of student support to increase attendance, reduce dropouts and suspensions, and increase time spent on learning (1.9), and to provide for continuous improvement of systems designed to support student achievement and eliminate the achievement gap (1.10). The establishment of safe, resourced, supported, and equipped schools is a second goal that the assistant principal role is aimed to impact: development of a comprehensive system of proactive supports and interventions for students (4.4) and retention and recruitment of high quality staff who reflect the diversity of the student population (4.8). Thus, the study of the Elementary Assistant Principal Program in JCPS is intended to determine if the addition of this role aids the district in meeting the objectives of the strategic plan.

5.1 Program Theory and Logic Model

The yearly cost of adding an assistant principal at each elementary school district wide is \$3.5 million. Part of this funding comes from redirecting financing for half-time counselor positions at larger elementary schools and the remaining funds come from other district resources. As the district has invested a large amount of capital and the assistant principal role has now been in effect for two full school years, JCPS leadership wants to evaluate whether the role is having the desired impact. Specifically, JCPS is interested in learning how the presence of assistant principals at the elementary level has increased student learning as well as supported the administrative, discipline, and counseling functions in the district. Thus, the district has proffered a basic logic model to guide the program evaluation:

Figure 1: JCPS Logic Model



6 Research Design and Data Collection

The research questions developed for this evaluation address two areas of program theory – assessment of program process and impact assessment.

6.1 Research Questions

An evaluation of program processes “assesses the fidelity and effectiveness of a program’s implementation” (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). We sought to uncover how the role of assistant principal has been implemented in the schools and whether that implementation has created the intended transformation of the work for elementary principals (more time with teachers) and counselors (more time with students). To do so, we completed an evaluation of the work of the assistant principal. As such, the first part of our study focused on these questions:

- What is the work of the elementary assistant principal in terms of administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support?
 - To what extent does the work of the assistant principal influence (intersect with) the work of the principal and counselor within a building?

While our work was mostly descriptive, we also investigated some preliminary outcome

measures. We wanted to determine what type of impact the assistant principal was having based on the perceptions of staff and/or students. Although it is too early to draw any conclusions about student academic outcomes as measured by state assessment results, we did investigate if there was any impact on non-academic measures. Those questions of interest included:

- What is the perceived value of the work of elementary assistant principals?
 - What is the school community’s perception of the impact of the elementary assistant principal role?
 - What, if any, relationship is there between the type of work the assistant principal is performing and student suspensions, attendance, and overall school climate?

6.2 Variables and Concept Map

In order to ensure that the research questions are completely addressed, we aligned our data collection with a concept map that captures the definitions of relevant variables and guides the creation of scales within the survey instrument.



Figure 2: Functional Concept Map

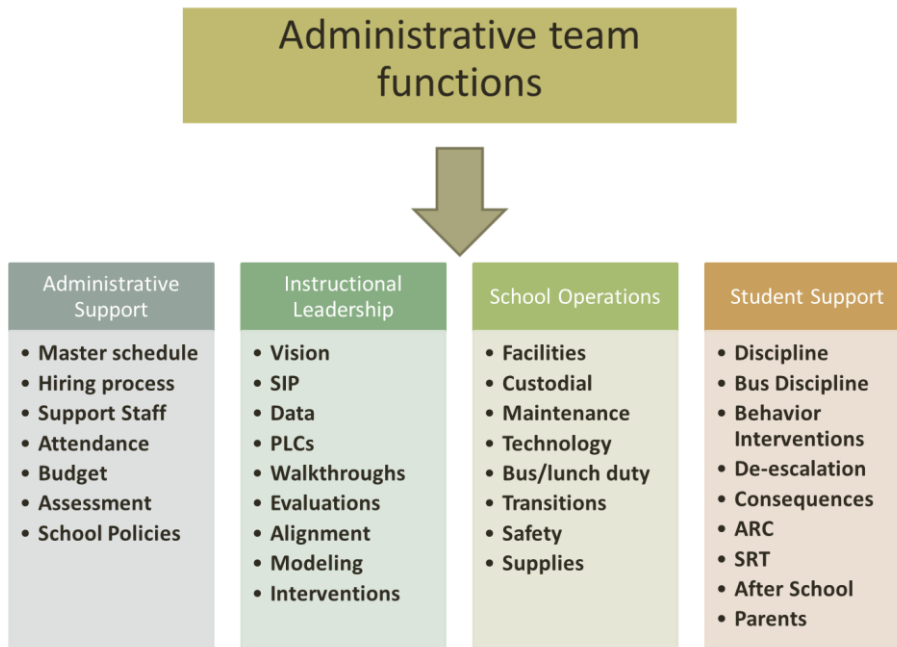
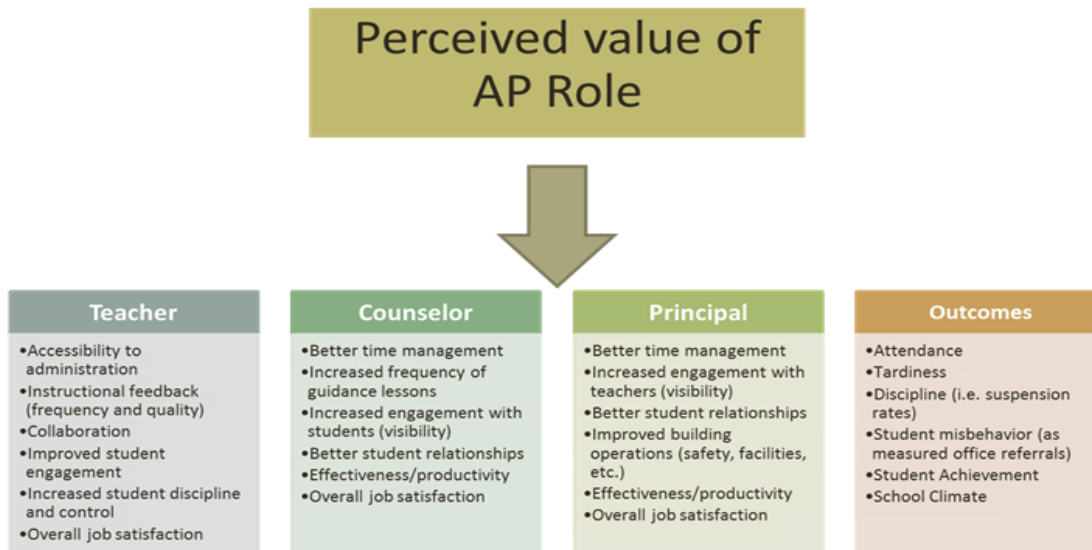


Figure 3: Perceived Value Concept Map



In addition to these two concepts, we also defined school characteristics and assistant principal characteristics as variables in order to fully address the research questions and guide the data collection process. Our determination of these definitions was dependent upon what was readily available from JCPS and what the research literature suggests are important factors. School climate was defined as it is currently in the JCPS comprehensive school survey. Suspensions

included both in-school and out-of-school suspension. Finally, attendance was defined based on JCPS criteria for an absence as recorded in the student information system.

The unit of analysis for our study is two-fold. First, we sought to understand the individual role of the assistant principal for the descriptive, process questions. For the impact questions, we focused on school level results for climate and non-



academic student outcomes (attendance and suspension).

6.3 Methodology

JCPS collects and tracks extensive data regarding district and school attributes and outcomes. These data were utilized in combination with data collected through interviews, surveys, and focus groups to answer the research questions about the elementary assistant principal role.

- What is the work of the elementary assistant principal in terms of administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support?
 - o To what extent does the work of the assistant principal influence (intersect with) the work of the principal and counselor within a building?
- What is the perceived value of the work of elementary assistant principals?
 - o What is the school community's perception of the impact of the elementary assistant principal role?
 - o What, if any, relationship is there between the type of work the assistant principal is performing and student suspensions, attendance, and overall school climate?

6.4 Interviews

We initiated our data collection through on-site interviews in mid-September that included both school-based staff and central office administration. For central office administration, the chief academic officer was interviewed regarding the assistant principal role. He provided insight on the logic model for assistant principals and provided an external view of the work of the assistant principal. Additionally, that interview helped frame the questions used in the interview protocol for school-based staff.

The sample of school-based staff included elementary principals, assistant principals,

counselors, and teachers in the interview process. All of these employee groups are mentioned in the JCPS logic model for the assistant principal role. However, we understood from initial conversations with the research and evaluation staff that all elementary schools also staff a goal clarity coach who contributes to some of the instructional leadership responsibilities of the principal. Based on this, goal clarity coaches were included in the interviews as well. In addition, many of the current assistant principals served as coaches prior to taking an assistant principal position. Thus, as these individuals represent a potential pipeline for the assistant principal, it was relevant to include goal clarity coaches in our initial interviews.

To reduce the possibility of bias, we used random sampling methods. For the interviews, we drew a stratified sample. The stratified sample drew from "homogeneous subsets of the [study] population" (Babbie, 2011, p. 230). As such, we randomly sampled from elementary schools based on representative school enrollment categories. We ensured that school demographics such as poverty and minority enrollment are reflected in the sample. All elementary schools were ranked by their free and reduced lunch percentage along with their percentage of non-white students. Schools were then divided into tiers based on this information. Schools were then randomly selected from each tier. In total, six schools were selected to participate in the interviews. Individuals serving in each of those four roles in each school were asked to participate.

In order to glean rich data from our interview subjects, we utilized a semi-structured interview protocol. The semi-structured interview includes a prior preparation of a limited number of questions, with the expectation of follow-up questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The interviews followed our conceptual framework based in the research literature and aligned to the logic model. The JCPS logic model for the addition of the elementary assistant principal position, along with the elementary assistant principal job description, and conversations with the chief academic officer led to the creation of interview questions. The interview questions were designed to gather



descriptive data around the assistant principal role, as well as the impact of the role on individuals and at the building level.

Interviews were conducted in September 2014. School A was a high poverty school in which the principal and goal clarity coach participated in the interview. School B was a suburban, higher achieving school, where we interviewed the assistant principal, the counselor, and the goal clarity coach. A second suburban school, with average achievement, School C, was the site of interviews with a counselor and goal clarity coach. Schools D and E were both urban, high poverty schools. We interviewed the principals at the two urban schools in addition to the assistant principal at School E. In total, we interviewed three principals, two assistant principals, two counselors, and three goal clarity coaches.

We recorded the interviews and completed concept cluster matrix to conduct the analysis. We organized the concept cluster matrix into several key themes based on our research questions and concept map. Those themes were related to the perceived value of the AP role, the allocation of resources, defining the AP role, and the background characteristics of APs. We discuss our concept matrix and these themes more fully in our findings. The interview protocol can be seen in Appendix A, while the concept matrix from the interviews can be seen in Appendix B.

6.5 Surveys

Once we concluded the interviews, we finalized our survey instrument and distributed it electronically in October 2014. We collected email addresses of all of principals, assistant principals, goal clarity coaches, counselors, and teachers assigned to elementary schools throughout the district, such that we are able to distribute the survey electronically. We captured a complete census of all relevant elementary staff as survey participants. Our surveys were completely confidential, with email addresses collected and retained with our response data files. The survey instrument included item scales designed to align with concept map for the administrative functions such that we were able to conduct quantitative analysis that address our research questions. We

located survey questions from prior research questionnaires such as the annual school staffing survey from the Institute for Educational Sciences, as well as the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) survey.

We also developed survey items original to our research project, based on the information we collected in our interviews, when we were unable to locate existing sources that addressed specific areas of interest. We designed and distributed five survey forms that were specific to the educator role - principal, assistant principal, counselor, goal clarity coach, and teacher. Each survey included a section on the Work of the Assistant Principal (AP), which was a series of questions designed to address work activities related to each domain of administration as we defined in our concept map – administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support. The questions referenced tasks relevant to each of the four areas. Individuals rated how often the assistant principal of their building was involved in particular tasks in each area of work. The scale for each of these items was 1 for never, 2 for sometimes, and 3 for frequently. The full survey instruments are in located in Appendix C for reference.

We asked principals, assistant principals, counselors, goal clarity coaches, and teachers about three elements of teacher support that were common themes in our initial interviews: Teacher Support. The addition of the assistant principal role has...(a) increased the frequency of classroom guidance lessons led by the counselor; (b) enabled the counselor to be more effective as a support to teachers; and (c) enabled the principal to spend more time providing feedback to teachers on instruction.

In addition to the questions on teacher support, we used our survey instruments to gather perception data from certified elementary staff on how the role of the assistant principal had affected the work of principals and counselors. We asked principals, assistant principals, counselors, goal clarity coaches, and teachers about four elements of student engagement that were common themes in our initial interviews: The addition of the assistant principal role has...(a) enabled the



counselor to build stronger student relationships; (b) enabled the principal to build stronger student relationships; (c) increased the time that the counselor spends engaged in individual, one-on-one, student counseling sessions; (d) enabled the counselor to be more effective as a support to students.

The survey instrument for principals, counselors, and assistant principals also included an accounting of time spent (as a percent of overall work duties) on tasks in broad categories:

- Internal administrative tasks, including scheduling, attendance, human resource/personnel issues, regulations, reports, school budget;
- Curriculum and teaching-related tasks, including teaching guidance lessons, lesson preparation, classroom observations, PLCs, mentoring teachers;
- Student interactions, including discipline and academic guidance;
- Parent interactions, including formal and informal interactions;
- Operations tasks, including facilities, custodial, food service, technology, equipment, maintenance, etc.; and
- Other.

We employed our survey instrument to gather information on perceptions of principal and counselor job satisfaction based on a series of five items rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree: The addition of the assistant principal role has... (a) made the job of the counselor more manageable (all groups excluding teacher); (b) made the job of the principal more manageable (all groups); (c) made the job of the principal more attractive to me as a long-term career option (all groups); and (d) Improved my overall job satisfaction (principal, counselor, and goal clarity coaches).

We surveyed certified elementary staff directly about the impact of the assistant principal role on the overall time management of the principal and counselor. We structured our survey

questions as follows: The addition of the assistant principal role has (a) helped the counselor to manage his or her time more effectively; and (b) helped the principal to manage his or her time more effectively.

We included items on our survey instrument that asked directly about the impact of the assistant principal's work on various elements of school and student outcomes. The outcomes included 18 elements spanning administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support. Each item was rated on a three-point scale: negative impact (1), no impact (2), or positive impact (3). In addition, all groups with the exception of assistant principals were asked about their overall job satisfaction as a result of the addition of the assistant principal role.

In addition to creating a project-specific survey, we also used existing survey data from the JCPs Comprehensive School Survey for students in 2012, 2013, and 2014. This survey included items that were relevant to our program evaluation with regard to student perceptions of school climate. We used this information to create scales for student perception that were aligned to those scales developed to reflect the work of the assistant principal and teacher climate perceptions.

The surveys were sent to all certified staff in all elementary schools. Reminder emails were sent to increase participation rates. The participation rates for the surveys were as follows: principals 61.1% (n=55), assistant principals 55.6% (n=50), counselors 44.4% (n=41), goal clarity coaches 43.3% (n=43), and teachers 15.3% (n=480). Though the response rate for teachers was low, we did confirm the responses we received were representative of the school demographics across the entire elementary teaching population. Figure 4 details the results of our analysis in terms of generalizability to the overall elementary teaching population. Given the similar distributions, we conclude that our survey is representative of the population and the findings are generalizable.



Figure 4: Response Demographics

% Free and Reduced lunch	Survey Teacher Responses	Actual Teacher Population
90% or greater	12.9%	13.7%
At least 80% and less than 90%	28.3%	29.7%
At least 60% and less than 80%	24.4%	25.9%
At least 40 and less than 60%	20.2%	16.1%
Less than 40%	14.2%	14.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 5: Response Demographics

Neighborhood Context	Survey Teacher Responses	Actual Teacher Population
Rural	1.7%	4.0%
Suburban	16.7%	14.8%
Urban	81.7%	81.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

6.6 Focus Groups

After review of the survey data, questions that remained or arose from the survey data regarding the assistant principal role were used to create questions for the focus groups held in January 2015. The focus group sessions followed a semi-structured interview protocol and were recorded for review. The schools selected for the focus groups were selected based on proximity – selecting schools in close proximity to each other would allow participants the opportunity to participate on a school day. When schools in close proximity within the district were identified, a review of the characteristics of those schools was conducted to ensure diversity in school characteristics.

Staff members from two to three schools were invited to participate in each focus group. Six focus groups were originally planned - two for administrators and four for teachers. Each individual serving in the given role at the selected schools was invited to participate in the focus

group. The two administrator focus groups comprised (a) principals and counselors and (b) assistant principals and goal clarity coaches. The principal/counselor focus group included staff from two suburban schools with a total of two principals and two counselors who participated. The assistant principal/goal clarity coach focus group included staff from three schools that were less affluent, though not inner city. That group of participants included three assistant principals and two goal clarity coaches. For teacher focus groups a random sample of teachers at each building was contacted to participate. The teacher focus groups failed to garner enough participation for a sample that included multiple schools and were canceled as a result. The focus group protocol is located in Appendix D, while the focus group cluster matrix can be seen in Appendix E. The concept matrix was aligned to our research questions and based on the concept map used for the survey. The key themes we identified are discussed in the data analysis.



6.7 Additional Document and Data Review

Additional data from JCPS was gathered and examined to provide context to the data gathered through interviews, surveys, and focus groups. JCPS has a comprehensive set of data that it collects on schools annually. Data reviewed for this analysis included school demographic characteristics (free and reduced price lunch, achievement, enrollment, etc.), suspension rate, attendance rate, and the results from the Comprehensive School Survey. Further, a review of qualitative sources provided additional context and helped triangulate with primary sources of information. The documents included in the qualitative analysis included board presentations, job descriptions, assigned duties by role, performance evaluation protocol, as well as salary and compensation information.

6.8 Limitations

Our study was designed to provide a comprehensive view of the elementary assistant principal role in JCPS. However, it is possible that our sample for interviews and focus groups was small enough such that sampling error could produce results that were not representative of all 90 elementary schools in the district. This issue was mitigated by random sampling but not eliminated. Moreover, the teacher feedback on the survey included a small percentage of the overall teacher workforce in elementary schools. We were unable to talk to teachers directly to gain more feedback and further explain some of the trends that we noted from teacher responses to the survey. As such, this is a limitation of the study and further research should definitely include more direct feedback from teachers regarding the work of the assistant principal.

In addition, focus groups were primarily chosen for convenience and proximity in an effort to increase our participation rate. Once the schools in close proximity were chosen, we conducted an analysis on the demographics on the schools to make sure there was representation from a variety of contexts. Although the schools did include a range of demographic characteristics, it was still

not a random sample. As such, it is possible that the schools selected were not representative of all other elementary schools, which would mean the data we collected may not be generalizable to the district.

Our study used surveys and interviews that were completed individually. However, the focus groups involved multiple participants. We did have all participants sign confidentiality agreements. It is possible that in those situations, participants did not feel they could be as candid as they may have been if they were interviewed alone or if they were not in the focus group with a principal or assistant principal, both of whom are evaluators for other staff in the school. Participant responses may have been curtailed by perceived risk of offending someone in a supervisory role.

Our study sought to address the intended outcomes for the assistant principal deployment as defined in the JCPS logic model. One of those outcomes is classroom disruption, as the district designed the assistant principal role to help support student engagement in the classroom. However, for our research, we were unable to obtain school-level office discipline referral data. Instead, we used the school suspension rate as a substitute for data on classroom disruption. It is possible that the suspension rate is not an appropriate proxy for classroom disruption; behaviors resulting in suspension could be happening outside of the classroom or suspension rates may not increase or decrease at similar rates to classroom disruption. Thus, it is possible the results utilizing suspension data cannot be extrapolated to inform the impact of assistant principals on classroom disruption. Further study utilizing office discipline referrals should be conducted to more fully examine the link between the assistant principal role and classroom disruption.

Ideally, we would have used a pre/post-test experimental design, allowing for data collection prior to and after the implementation of the assistant principal role. However, as this study was conceived and conducted after the implementation of the assistant principal role, we selected an interrupted time series methodology. Though we selected this methodology to provide



the most accurate and useful information, it is not without weaknesses. We were able to examine some data from before and after the implementation of the assistant principal role, including non-academic student outcomes (suspension and attendance) and climate data. However, the surveys/interviews/focus groups that were conducted served as a post-test only, as they were not conducted prior to the implementation of the elementary assistant principal role. Most elementary schools were assigned an assistant principal in the 2012-2013 school year. In the 2013-2014 school year, all elementary schools were assigned an assistant principal. This means that there was no control group that would allow an investigation into potential causation analysis. Our findings represent correlations only; we cannot draw any definitive conclusions regarding causation, though we do discuss possibilities around such.

In 2012-2013 JCPS added the assistant principal role to all elementary schools with enrollment of over 400 students. In the 2013-2014 school year, assistant principals were added to the remaining elementary schools, regardless of student enrollment. Thus, every elementary school in JCPS now has an assistant principal, regardless of size. Notwithstanding the differences in the work activities of assistant principals, this size difference among schools affects the actual “treatment” related to the deployment of assistant principals. The addition of a single assistant principal at an elementary school with fewer than 300 students can have a very different level of involvement and impact than the same resource at elementary school with enrollment of over 700.

The intensity or density of the treatment of the assistant principal role may vary widely based on the size of the elementary school. Additionally, the work activities of the assistant principal role varies quite widely school to school. Thus, the treatment of the assistant principal varies by school, so it is possible that our research findings on outcomes may only reflect the assistant principal role as implemented in certain schools.

Finally, the timing of the study is also a potential limitation, as the assistant principal role is relatively early in implementation. Our study was conducted at the beginning of the third year of implementation. It is possible that the role will evolve in significant ways as the position and its incumbents season into their duties. In addition, there were a number of concurrent events that may have influenced participant responses for the interviews, surveys, and focus groups. The implementation of a new teacher evaluation system was in process in the 2014-15 school year. Most of our participants had yet to fully engage in the new process, as only a few pilot schools were included in the prior year. At the time that assistant principals were added to elementary staff, goal clarity coaches were also deployed as school-based personnel. It may be difficult for respondents to distinguish between the influence of the assistant principal’s work versus the work of the goal clarity coach. In addition, programmatic changes including professional learning communities, updated standards, response to intervention, and others may prejudice participant responses, as those initiatives were also new to elementary schools as assistant principals and goal clarity coaches were deployed.



7 Data Analysis and Findings

We began our analysis by reviewing data collected to answer the first research question: *what is the work of the elementary assistant principal in terms of administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support; and to what extent does the work of the assistant principal influence (intersect with) the work of the principal and counselor within a building?* We initially considered the responses to the interview questions regarding the work of assistant principals. We then analyzed survey results and focus group feedback to create a comprehensive view of the activities of elementary assistant principals across the district.

7.1 What is the Work of the Elementary Assistant Principal?

In order to ascertain the work with which elementary assistant principals are engaged in JCPS, we believed it was critical to not only to identify the tasks assistant principals indicate they complete but also to triangulate that data through multiple lenses. The assistant principal role is defined differently across the district with four themes driving those definitions: *principal attitudes, division of labor, lack of role clarity, and primary responsibilities*. Assistant principals are engaged in a wide variety of work within the building, touching all four domains of building administration – *administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support*. We asked the different employee types to reflect upon their perceptions of the frequency of the work in which the assistant principal was engaged to determine if role impacted the indication of frequency. Moreover, we investigated if the principal’s communication of the assistant principal’s responsibilities had any influence on the perceptions of the staff regarding the work of the AP, given the varied responses from our initial interviews regarding this issue. Finally, we considered if this reporting from the various employee groups was aligned to the amount of time assistant principals indicated they were engaged in particular work. The following

details our findings based on this analysis of the data.

7.1.1 Defining the Role

Our initial interviews yielded some insight into how assistant principals were being engaged. We noted four key themes in terms of defining the role of assistant principal in elementary schools. First, *principal attitudes* varied with regard to how they engaged the assistant principal in their schools. One principal noted the challenges some of his peers faced in reflecting, “It was hard to transition for some principals; they did not want to give away power.” This notion of power sharing seemed to closely relate to how complementary the principal and assistant principal team viewed themselves. In fact, another principal opined, “I think it is very important that [the principal and the AP] think alike. That we have the same values and beliefs.” Thus, in many ways, the principals were looking for assistant principals to be an extension of their own leadership style and philosophy. However, principals also looked to assistant principals to help fill skill gaps. An assistant principal described this intentionality in the selection process, “I was first hired by the principal as she was looking for someone opposite from her – she was a visionary, but lacking in instructional expertise.”

The second key theme we identified was the varying ways in which the *division of labor* between members of the administrative team was determined. There was little consistency in terms of this process from school to school. In some schools it was very intentional how the work was divided among administrators, one assistant principal indicated, “When I was hired as an AP, I sat down with my principal, we took all three roles [principal, assistant principal, counselor] and listed the responsibilities of each person, then we gave that to the staff.” Often, principals tried to simply offload responsibilities such that they could concentrate on instructional leadership. One principal voiced this concern in saying that, “If the principal’s job is to ensure there is more effective



instruction in more classrooms more of the time, then we need for counselors to work on mental health, we need a manager for the building, need a behavior person.” Yet, when there was not a deliberate thought process in terms of division of labor or weak principal leadership, roles often remained unclear.

This *lack of role clarity* created some dysfunction and confusion among the team. There was a rather consistent viewpoint on this notion of unclear roles. A goal clarity coach remarked, “In the first year with the AP no one’s role was clear. You would just get in and be utilized in whatever role.” There was not a universal understanding of the assistant principal’s job. Interview participants were unaware of the logic model relating to the assistant principal’s job, and no one referenced the job description. In fact, a counselor observed, matter-of-factly, “The AP role is not defined. So, if the principal doesn’t define it, it’s really kind of difficult.” Goal clarity coaches often expressed the most angst about the undefined nature of the assistant principal’s work:

I don’t know if the district set-out defined roles of ‘here’s how we imagine you using your APs... I think there is a double-edged sword in saying ‘Here, we’re giving you an AP, we know your job’s so stressful...Use them.’ But, I think it should have been “our [district] expectation is that [APs]...do walk-throughs, that they do provide best practices, feedback to teachers, [handle]some of the behavior issues...”

As such, what the work consists of and how much authority is given to assistant principals varied by building. *Primary responsibilities* of the assistant principal were wide-ranging based on the responses of our interview participants. One principal indicated, “My assistant principal is just that, an assistant principal – she is involved in all the work I do.” Yet, some of the work that was specifically designated to go to assistant principals, according to the JCPS model, was not necessarily transitioned to that role. One example is the building assessment coordinator (BAC) role, this was a role originally undertaken by counselors, but with the addition of assistant principals at the elementary level, this duty was intended to be

moved to them. This transition has not necessarily been the case. One counselor even indicated, “I had asked to be relieved of my assessment duties, but that was turned down.” The data we collected illustrates that there were other examples of administrative work that was intended to transition to assistant principals that had largely remained with counselors. In terms of student support, interviewees often referenced the assistant principal’s participation in behavior referrals. Most also highlighted the importance of the assistant principal as an instructional leader, citing their presence in PLCs and the walk-throughs they conduct to observe teachers.

The work in which an assistant principal is engaged is largely determined by the principal of his/her building. During our interviews, one assistant principal indicated frustration in the duties she is assigned by her principal saying “If I could change one thing it would be that the responsibilities that I was assigned when I originally got here and I have to account for every year in my evaluation that I am really allowed to do them.” Considering the impact of principals in determining an assistant principal’s duties, it was important to see the influence of different areas on the duties of assistant principals.

As such, in our survey, principals were given a list of influencers regarding assignment of assistant principal duties and asked to indicate how influential those had been when assigning duties. We found that principals’ lowest-ranked areas of influence include principal preference, assistant principal preference, district job description, and district guidance. Principals indicated that they did not use these sources to determine what duties the assistant principal would be assigned. Any district guidance was the least referenced source for specific guidance on intended use of the assistant principal role. One goal clarity coach spoke to the lack of direction regarding what the assistant principal role was supposed to look like, “I don’t know if the district set-out defined roles of ‘here’s how we imagine you using your APs’...” Moreover, the fact that the assistant principals were deployed during the same academic year that the goal clarity coach became a school-based role made for even more



confusion regarding the assignment of duties. Thus, our data indicates that the district guidance regarding the assistant principal played a minimal role in how duties were assigned to the assistant principal and that this reality could result from a lack of specific guidance on the intended job duties.

The definition of the assistant principal role is wide-ranging across elementary schools in JCPS. Depending upon the principal attitude, how tasks are divided across the administrative team, how clearly those roles are defined and what primary responsibilities are associated with each role the assistant principal role can look very different school to school and very different from the job description set forth by JCPS.

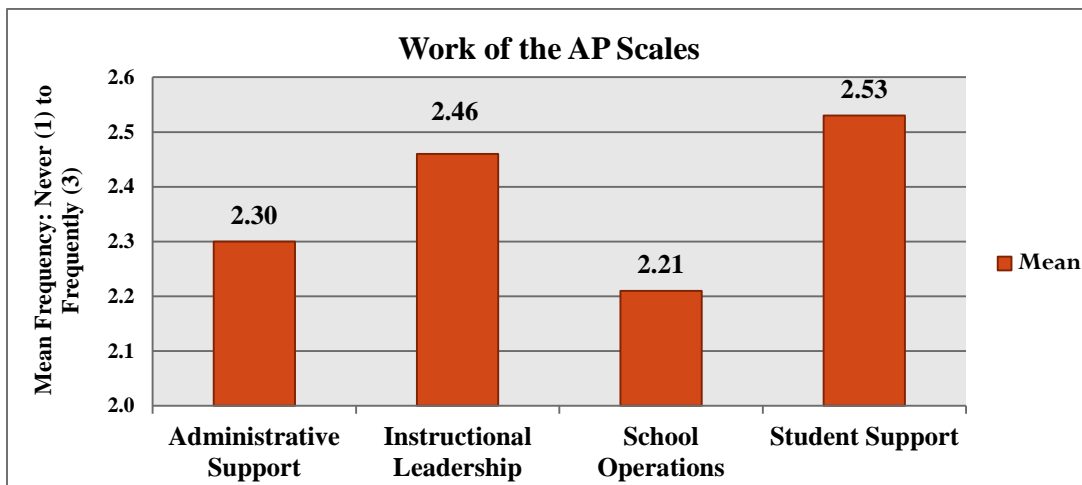
7.1.2 Work of the Assistant Principal

Our interviews provided some useful insight into the structuring of the work of assistant principals, but the larger sample of the survey allowed us to garner more information regarding this role. Our analysis of the role of the assistant principal (AP) explored administrative support levels, instructional leadership responsibilities,

school operations, and student support functions. We found that that the items included in each of the work of the AP sections do address work in which assistant principals are engaged. The fact that assistant principals are, to some degree, involved in all aspects of this work, exemplifies the division of labor at some buildings where principals have assistant principals engaged in all aspects of work. One assistant principal at the focus group indicated his principal has engaged in all of the work that she does as she is “grooming him to be a principal.”

To allow us to more fully investigate the work of assistant principals, the items on each task were combined into scales for each of the four areas of work. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.) The values used in these items were 1 for never, 2 for sometimes, and 3 for frequently. The means for the scales found below in Figure 6 indicate that school staff members believe assistant principals are engaged in all areas of this work with some frequency. We found that assistant principals are more frequently involved in student support and instructional leadership based on our survey respondents.

Figure 6: Work of the AP Scales – Mean Responses



In order to see if the reported frequency of the work in which the assistant principal is engaged aligns with the prioritization of the work, we asked respondents in all certified staff roles, with the exception of teachers, to rank the four categories of assistant principal work – administrative

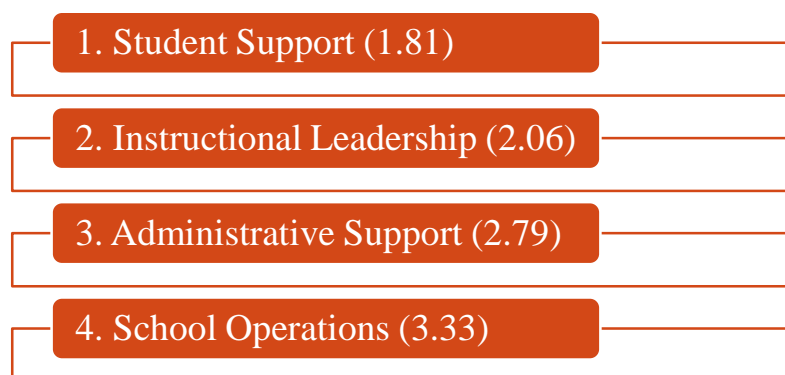
support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support – in terms of the perceived importance for the AP role in their building. Figure 7 depicts the descriptive statistics for the ranking of the categories of work of the assistant principal. A rank of 1 indicated the most



important area of work and a rank of 4 indicated the least important area of work. Thus, the response means demonstrate that student support, instructional leadership, administrative support, and school operations were the highest to lowest ranking of priority work for the AP across

elementary schools. This ranking aligns with the patterns found in the frequencies reported on the work of the AP scales and the assistant principal reporting of the percent of time spent, where higher values were also found for student support and instructional leadership.

Figure 7: Prioritization of the Work of the AP



The prioritized order of work differed by role. ANOVA tests revealed that there were differences between groups in the ranking of administrative support and instructional leadership. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.) Goal clarity coaches ranked administrative support higher than did principals and they ranked instructional leadership lower than all three groups (principals, assistant principals, counselors). These findings highlight that goal clarity coaches ranked instructional work as less important for assistant principals than did the other three groups. This observation is supported by findings in both interviews and focus groups, as noted above, where it appears there is some tension between the work of goal clarity coaches and assistant principals around their roles supporting instruction within the building.

Thus, the survey item on prioritizing the work of the AP revealed that student support and instructional leadership were ranked higher than administrative support and school operations. This finding aligns with the frequency data on the work of the AP scale where tasks in these two higher ranked domains had higher frequency means than in the other domains. However, it is important to note that the ranking was not consistent across all roles.

In summary, this initial analysis of the work of assistant principals reveals four relevant findings. First is that the items included in each section of the survey regarding work of assistant principals were identified as having modest to high levels of frequency of assistant principals engaging in that work. Second, the scales of the work of assistant principals worked together to address those domains. Therefore, the tasks identified to be included as items in those areas seem to work together to measure that construct. The tasks included in each of the work of the AP scales are in fact the work in which JCPS assistant principals are engaged. Third, assistant principals are engaged in work across all four areas, yet student support and instructional leadership work have the highest level of frequency. Fourth, student support and instructional leadership are areas seen as priorities for assistant principals in regard to their work, but not all roles prioritize the work the same. Overwhelmingly, it seems that the most important work is related to instructional leadership and student support – these are the areas where the most time is spent, where the highest frequency tasks are reported, and that are highest ranked as most important.



7.1.3 Differences in Perception by Role

We noted above that there were some differences in how building staff prioritized the work of the assistant principal. Therefore, we investigated further to see if there were also differences in how individuals serving in different roles saw the frequency of work of assistant principals differently. The interviews we conducted prior to the administration of the survey indicated that the work of assistant principals was not only different by school but was also viewed differently by principals, assistant principals, counselors, goal clarity coaches, and teachers. For example, a goal clarity coach indicated, “I always heard that the AP position was

the three b’s: behavior, buses, budgets,” while a counselor indicated, “I think the AP should be an instructional support to principal and teachers as well. Support for behavior, general running of the school type of stuff.” We found similar divergence when we discussed other areas of responsibilities with the various members of the administrative team.

To fully explore these disconnects in perspective, we compared the means for each work of the AP scale across roles to determine if there were statistical differences. Figure 8 summarizes those roles and domains which had statistically significant differences at conventional levels.

Figure 8: Differences in Work of the AP Scale by Role

	Administrative Support	Instructional Leadership	School Operations	Student Support
p < 0.05	(T, P) (AP, C) (T, C)	(AP, C) (AP, T)	(AP, C) (T, C)	
p < 0.01		(P, GCC) (T, GCC)		(T, C)
p < 0.001		(AP, GCC)		(AP, C)

Note: each pair of roles reads left to right, the role on the left had the largest mean

These findings, from ANOVA and Tukey post-hoc assessments, support the contention that individuals serving in different roles rate the frequency of work done by assistant principals differently. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.) There were statistically significant differences on each of the four work of the AP scales by role. Counselor response means were statistically different, and lower, than those of assistant principals on all four scales. Counselor response means were also statistically different, and lower than that of teachers on all scales except instructional leadership. We conclude that in most cases counselors indicated a lower frequency of assistant principals engaged in work related to administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support than what was reported by assistant principals and teachers.

We found the largest number of differences on the instructional leadership scale.

On this scale, assistant principals indicated a higher frequency (higher mean) than counselors, goal clarity coaches, and teachers. Similarly on this scale goal clarity coaches had lower means than principals, assistant principals and teachers. One final note is that across all four scales, we never found a difference in means that was statistically significant between principals and assistant principals. For JCPS, we find that principals and assistant principals are largely in agreement regarding their perceptions of the frequency of assistant principals engaged in work in all four domains. Overall, our analysis showed there were differences on all scales (administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support) between at least two of roles to finding differences between all roles except the principal and assistant principal.

The perspective of the goal clarity coach further exemplified these differences in



perspective. We consistently heard that the district hired goal clarity coaches to provide instructional support for teachers. During both interviews and focus groups, goal clarity coaches reiterated that same primary job description – *focus on instructional support*. It seems clear that goal clarity coaches view instructional support as their primary domain of work, and, as a result, they tend to report that assistant principals are engaged in this work less frequently. Thus, our qualitative findings appear to align with our survey findings.

There is also some consensus among assistant principals that instructional leadership and support is the largest part (highest priority) of their responsibilities – one assistant principal asserted, “My job is number one to support teachers... be more of an instructional leader. I don’t feel like [being a disciplinarian] is my job.” In buildings where both the assistant principal and the goal clarity coach are focused on instruction, confusion and conflict can arise.

This conflict has resulted in some tension between assistant principals and goal clarity coaches in terms of their relative engagement in supporting instructional work. Part of this tension may originate from the perceived pipeline for administrators within JCPS and the competition that goal clarity coaches and assistant principals may feel they are engaging in for future principal roles. One assistant principal indicated, “The district made it sound as if ... your chances are better of getting a principal job if you are a goal clarity coach.” This belief would squarely position the two roles jockeying for instructional leadership, as a prioritized skill set for principalship. A goal clarity coach even indicated that her transition into that position was based on her interest in gaining an administrative role,

I purposefully went from the instructional coach, which was the same thing as the goal clarity coach...When I went on an interview for principal, a young teacher asked ‘what’s an instructional coach’, she didn’t know what it was, but she did know goal clarity. So I felt maybe I need to switch my title for the pipeline to principal because the younger people who started in the last few years knew goal clarity. I

switched to goal clarity only to position myself, to better my resume.

If the work of goal clarity coaches is specifically instructional support and the district has identified this as a pipeline into administration, this would potentially create tension between goal clarity coaches and assistant principals. Assistant principals would view goal clarity coaches as positioning themselves for administrative roles. We should note that like many other issues views differed on whether or not the goal clarity coach was a potential principal candidate. An assistant principal commented, “The district made it sound as if... your chances are better of getting a principal job if you are goal clarity. The district made it sound as if that gives you a step up from someone else.” Though district leadership may envision the coach as a pipeline for principal, it is not clear that current principals agree with that notion. During our focus group, principals reflected on the notion that goal clarity coaches would become principals: “I don’t see it [moving to principal] as much with the goal clarity coach. They are typically people that really committed to being teachers and working with teachers.” Thus, these confusing messages toward goal clarity coaches about their potential for administration may also be a source of tension between their role and that of the assistant principal, as well as another reason for the lack of clarity in roles.

A person’s role impacted his/her view of the work of assistant principals. It also appears that whether the principal communicated the assistant principal’s responsibilities impacted how staff saw that role. We completed an additional analysis to determine whether the communication of the responsibilities of assistant principals to the staff has any impact on the work of the AP scales. In order to complete comparative analysis, we created two groups based on respondent reporting of communication – group one reported that the principal did not communicate the duties of assistant principal at all, while group two reported that the principal did communicate the duties of the assistant principal via any method (ex. staff meeting, handbook, etc.). We then compared these two groups with regard to their mean



response on each of the four domains on the work of the AP scales.

The analysis showed a difference in mean responses on all of the work of the AP scales when comparing the two groups. In each case, the mean responses on the work of the AP scales by those staff who indicated they received no communication about the assistant principal role were lower than those who indicated having had the duties of the assistant principal communicated in any manner. With regard to practical significance, it is interesting that in all cases when the duties of the assistant principal were not conveyed, the respondent also indicated a lower frequency of the assistant principal engaged in any domain of the work of the assistant principal scales. This seems to indicate that either respondents are unable to identify the work of the AP because they have not been made aware or that respondents whose principals did communicate the assistant principals' responsibilities were more likely to reflect such communication in their survey responses.

This analysis illustrates that, while there is overall consensus about the work of assistant principals, there are differences in how people serving in different roles see the work – particularly with counselors and goal clarity coaches, who view the work differently than individuals in other roles. Principals and assistant principals largely share similar views of the work. Further, whether the work of assistant principals was communicated to staff impacted their perception of the work.

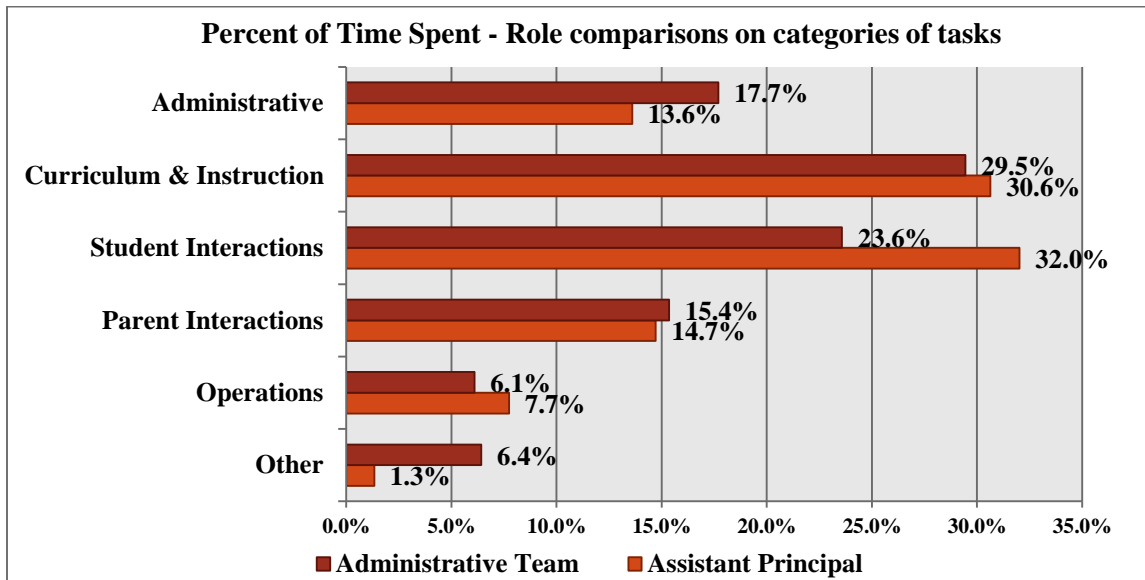
7.1.4 Alignment of Work with Time Spent

Part of the rationale for the addition of assistant principals at the elementary level was to

allow both principals and counselors to engage in more of the essential work of their roles, teacher support and student support, respectively. According to the JCPS logic model, the addition of assistant principals will allow principals more time to focus on instructional leadership and counselors more time to focus on the emotional, social and academic needs of students. Our analysis on the work of the AP scales provided some information about what tasks encompass the work of assistant principals, but it was also important to assess how assistant principals spent their time. Further, we needed to examine whether the time spent on tasks corresponded to the work described above. Therefore, to ascertain what proportion of time the APs spend on various work domains, we asked a series of questions on the survey that prompted assistant principals to quantify the percentage of their time, on average, that was spent doing certain categories of work – administrative tasks, curriculum and teaching related tasks, student interactions, parent interactions, operations tasks, and other. We also asked these questions to principal and counselors. We have provided descriptive statistics for time spent in Figure 9 and provided information regarding how all administrators (principals, assistant principals, and counselors) spend their time across these domains. Our data indicates that on average more time is devoted to instruction (curriculum and teaching) and student interactions than any other categories. Figure 9 also contains the averages for assistant principals only, who also spend more time on instruction and student interactions. But, in the case of student interactions, assistant principals indicate they are spending almost 10% more of their time in this domain than for the three roles combined.



Figure 9: Percent of Time Spent – Assistant Principals



Data was collected on how assistant principals spend their time to see whether reporting of time spent aligned with perceptions of the frequency in which assistant principals are engaged in certain work. The work of the AP scales reflect the relative frequency of assistant principals engaging in certain tasks, while the percent of time spent address on average how much assistant principals are engaged in certain tasks. If an assistant principal is spending a greater amount of time on certain tasks, we expected to see high correlations with the scale indicating relative frequency of engaging in those tasks. For example, if the majority of the assistant principal’s time is spent on student interactions, then we expected to see a high correlation with the student support scale. It seems logical to us that spending more time on those tasks related to student interactions would result in reporting of higher frequency of engagement in related tasks on the work of the AP. Therefore, we completed correlation analysis between the work of the AP scales and the responses on time spent using only assistant principal data. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis).

Overall, we did not find *strong* relationships between the frequency of engagement in tasks related to the work of the AP scales and the percent time spent on work by assistant principals. In a few cases, we did find

statistically significant correlations indicating higher frequencies were associated with greater percentages of time spent in similar areas of work (such as instructional leadership and curriculum and teaching tasks) or where higher frequencies were associated with smaller amounts of time spent in different areas of work (such as student support and curriculum and teaching tasks). This finding may suggest that assistant principals lack a clear sense of the percent of time spent in particular areas of work or possibly that the frequency of work visible to all staff is not necessarily indicative of how assistant principals spend their time.

7.1.5 Summary of Key Findings

Based on the data analysis described above, we are able to draw some conclusions regarding the work of assistant principals within JCS. First, the definition of the assistant principal role varies widely across the district. The principal plays a critical role in how this role is realized at the building and whether that is in line with the district plan for assistant principals. Second, the work of assistant principals as defined by administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support is in fact work in which assistant principals are engaged. The tasks that were identified to comprise each of these



areas of work do in fact measure the work of assistant principals. There is also overall consistency in the ranked importance of the work of assistant principals with student support and instructional leadership being the most important categories of work. Yet, while we are able to determine the most prominent areas of work for the assistant principal, there was only minimal connection between these findings and how assistant principals spent their time. The link between the work in which assistant principals are engaged and the percent of time they spend on particular work domains is moderate to weak for administrative support and instructional leadership. There is no such relationship for the school operations or student support scales.

We also found that not all roles view the work of assistant principals in the same manner. While principals and assistant principals never differed in their view of the work of assistant principals, counselors and goal clarity coaches expressed views that were quite different. In most cases counselors indicated a lower frequency of assistant principals engaged in work than those serving in other roles. Further, when it comes to the instructional leadership scale in particular there is wide variation in views of the work of assistant principals – assistant principals indicated a higher frequency of involvement in instructional leadership work than counselors, goal clarity coaches, and teachers. This finding was further supported by the fact that goal clarity coaches ranked the importance of instructional leadership for assistant principals as lower than other areas of work.

7.2 To What Extent Does the Assistant Principal Influence Other Roles?

The logic model proffered by JCS administration indicates that the work of the AP should influence the work of principal and counselor in order to drive desired outputs and outcomes. Specifically, the logic model asserts the expectation that assistant principals will be “assisting principals with building operations, teacher evaluations, teacher professional

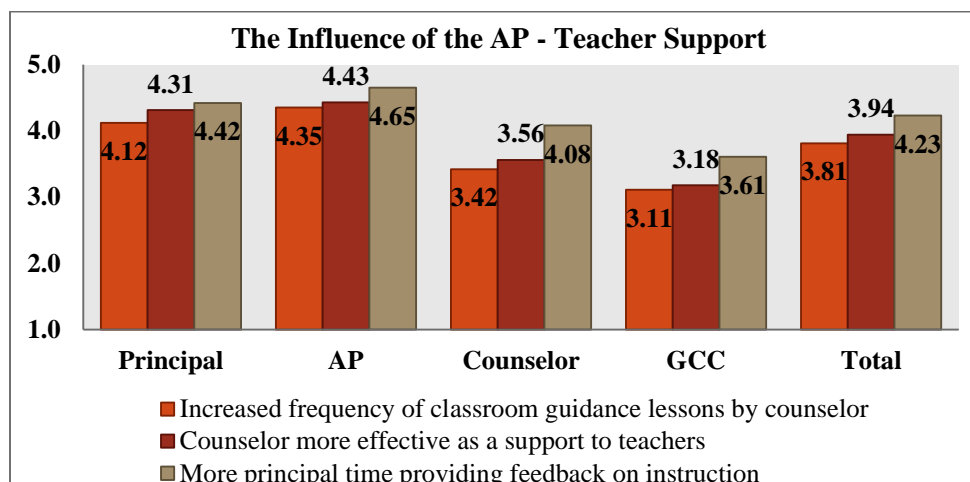
development, student behavior intervention,” thereby, “allowing counselors more time to focus on emotional, social & academic student needs” (JCS, 2014). As such, we investigated if, in practice, the work of assistant principals was influencing the work of the principals and counselors as envisioned such that survey respondents would perceive differences in their ability improve teacher and student support.

Our survey instrument provided data on how the work of the AP related to principals and counselors being able to improve teacher support, student engagement, and the amount of time they were spending on these areas. In our initial interviews with principals, assistant principals, counselors, and goal clarity coaches, common themes emerged regarding the assistant principal’s work as a means of *principal support* and enabler of *counselor productivity*. Again, we reviewed the data to identify differences between the employee groups in terms of their perceptions of the assistant principal’s influence on the work of the principal and counselor. We also triangulated these perceptions with the work of the AP scales and with how principals and counselors reported spending their time on related tasks. Thus, our analysis determined if the work of the AP was able to influence the activities of the principal and counselor.

7.2.1 Teacher Support

Using survey instruments, we asked certified elementary staff to reflect how the role of the assistant principal had affected the work of principals and counselors in terms of teacher support. As seen in Figure 10, the respondents were generally favorable regarding the influence of the assistant principal role on these dimensions of teacher support. All four groups offered stronger agreement for the suggestion that principals were able to provide more feedback regarding instruction than the statements regarding counselors’ effectiveness in supporting teachers or in providing additional classroom guidance lessons.



Figure 10: The Influence of the AP – Teacher Support

This agreement that principals were more effective in their primary role of delivering teacher support was highlighted during our interviews. We found strong evidence that the assistant principal was successfully supporting principals to be able to better engage instructional leadership work with teachers.

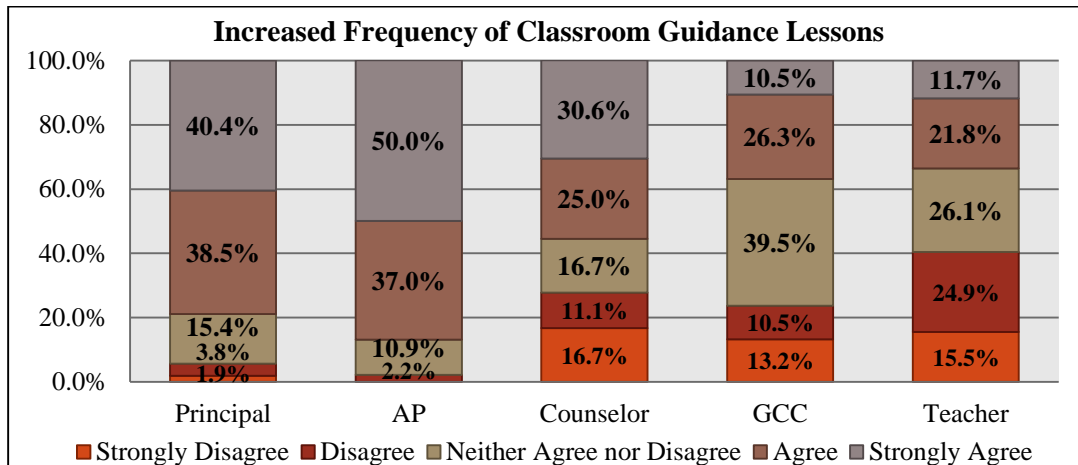
In terms of *principal support*, interview participants consistently acknowledged the relief that principals felt in terms of their overall workload, such that we identified it as a key theme in our cluster matrix. One elementary assistant principal noted, “I think that having another person in the [AP] role, however it’s used, just frees up the other administrators to be able to do more of their job.” This comment was also reflected in the principal’s use of the assistant principal as a resource to help complete the myriad of job duties to which the principal was assigned. As we have mentioned earlier, one principal remarked, “My Assistant Principal is just that – an *assistant* principal – she is involved in all of the work I do.”

The notion of the assistant principal as an “extra set of hands” to support the principal was universally recognized as a priority focus of the role. The principal’s job is seen as one that can be overwhelming with both managerial and

instructional demands. As such, principal support was broadly viewed as the ability of the assistant principal to influence the principal’s capacity to do his or her job more effectively with regard to student needs, teacher support, and instructional leadership. One assistant principal illustrated, “The AP role provides extra support for the principal – someone else can take on tasks to meet more kids’ needs.”

We were interested in the group comparisons in the context of how they functioned in the unit of the administrative team and in terms of the timing of their roles’ inclusion on the administrative team. Thus, we completed independent samples t-tests to determine if there were statistically significant differences between groups regarding their responses to the influence of the assistant principal role on the teacher support provided by principals and counselors. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.) Figures 11, 12 and 13 show the distribution of responses for each of the three items we included on our survey regarding teacher support. It is clear that teachers were far less likely to indicate agreement with the notion that assistant principals had influenced the ability of counselors to more frequently engage in guidance lessons. The analysis for other groups follows below.

Figure 11: Teacher Support – Classroom Guidance Lessons



The principal and assistant principal are considered the core of the administrative team, as almost all survey respondents stated that they were on the administrative team. These two roles operate as a partnership to “divide and conquer” across all tasks associated with school leadership. The principal and assistant principal function as generalists, spanning all the domains of leadership work – administration, instruction, operations, and student support. We found that principals and assistant principals were in general agreement regarding the influence of the assistant principal’s work on the principals and counselors ability to better support teachers. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.)

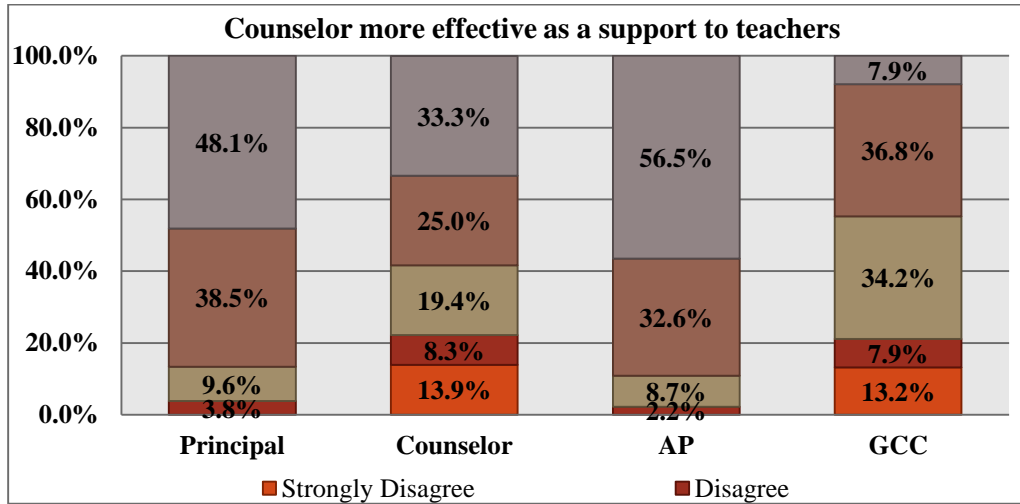
In contrast, the counselor and goal clarity coach, though members of the administrative team, were more likely to be seen primarily as student and instructional support, respectively. They could be deemed specialists based on our conversations with other school staff. As one counselor described it, “The goal clarity coach is primarily instructional, interventions. The AP – I don’t know if that was quite as defined. They have had impact on all areas of the school – instruction, intervention, discipline, parent contact, some of the maintenance/running of the building.”

Through our analysis, it was apparent that both counselors and goal clarity coaches were somewhat less inclined to indicate strong agreement with the statements regarding teacher support than principals and assistant principals. Moreover, there were no statistical differences in their viewpoint.

We also specifically compared the perspectives of the prior administrative team – the principal and the counselor – versus the new additions – the assistant principal and the goal clarity coach. Principals and counselors seemed to disagree on the amount of influence the assistant principal’s work had on the counselor’s ability to provide more frequent classroom guidance lesson and provide more effective support to teachers, as these differences were statistically significant at conventional levels. Figure 11 highlights the differences in the distribution of responses on the question of increased classroom guidance lessons. However, both groups seemed to have similar views and agreed that assistant principals had enabled the principal to spend more time providing feedback on instruction, as the differences in their mean response on that element of teacher support was not statistically significant at conventional levels.



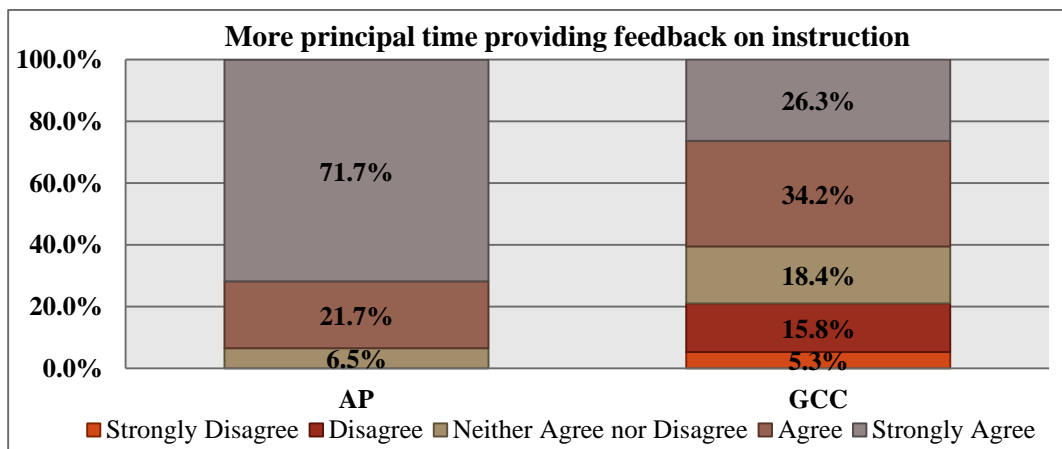
Figure 12: Teacher Support – Counselor Support to Teachers



The differences between assistant principals and goal clarity coaches were rather large and were statistically significant for all three items related to teacher support. Goal clarity coaches were generally ambivalent on the question of the assistant principal’s impact on teacher support from their view of the counselor’s work. Even when considering the principal’s ability to provide more time giving teachers feedback on their instruction, goal clarity coaches diverged from assistant principals, counselors, and

principals, who all indicated similar levels of agreement on this point. The divergent perspective of the goal clarity coaches is interesting, as we noted in our review of the findings regarding the definition of the administrative team. Figure 12 includes a distribution of survey respondents regarding increased counselor support for teachers, and Figure 13 contains the distribution of responses regarding principals providing more time giving instructional feedback.

Figure 13: Teacher Support – Principal Instructional Feedback



In summary, the survey respondents generally supported the finding that the work of the AP has influenced the work of the principal and the counselor in terms of teacher support. Principals and assistant principals tended to more strongly agree that the work of the AP had

increased the frequency of classroom guidance lessons, effective counselor support of teachers, and principal time providing feedback on instruction. Counselors tended to agree that the assistant principal role had positively influence the principal having more time to provide instructional



support, but they were less inclined to express agreement that the assistant principal had helped them be more effective as counselors in their support of teachers via classroom guidance lessons. Goal clarity coaches and teachers expressed the least support for the notion that assistant principals were enabling counselors to provide more effective teacher support. In addition, goal clarity coaches were generally tepid regarding the assertion that principals were spending more time providing teachers feedback on instruction.

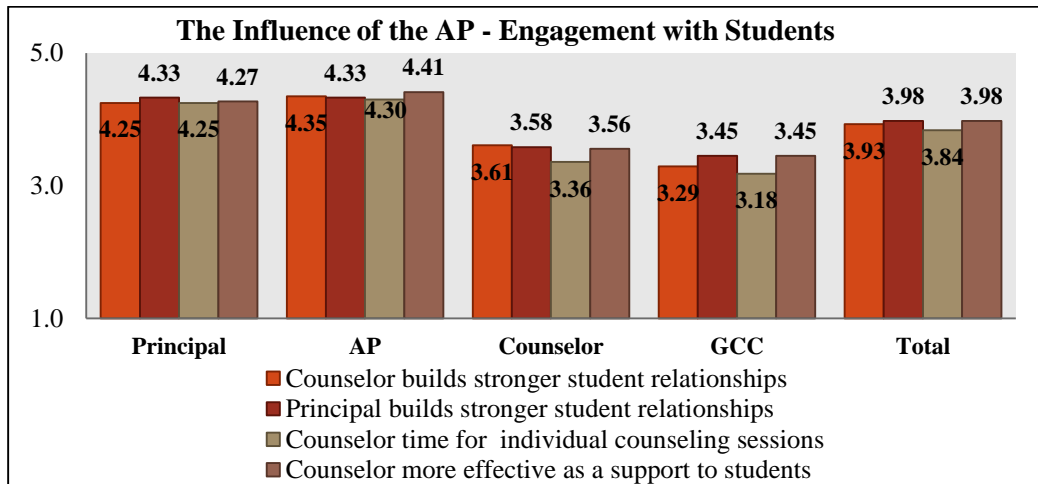
The work of the AP (administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support) as reported across all four groups did have a positive, statistically significant relationship with the elements of teacher support provided by the counselor and the principal. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.) These scales had stronger correlations to principal time spent providing instructional feedback than to the ability of the counselor to support teachers through

classroom guidance lessons. Thus, there is some evidence that the work of the AP was resulting in improved perceptions of teacher support.

7.2.2 Student Engagement

As we found with teacher support, the survey respondents were generally favorable regarding the influence of the assistant principal role on the dimensions of student engagement. When reviewing the means across all four groups (Figure 14), there was agreement with the statements regarding the principal’s and counselor’s ability to build stronger relationships with students due to the work of the assistant principal. Moreover, survey respondents were supportive of the assertion that counselors were able to spend more time providing one-on-one counseling sessions and being a more effective support for students. Our interviews supported our survey findings regarding the counselor’s ability to provide greater student support

Figure 14: Student Engagement



Counselor productivity was a key theme that interview participants highlighted as directly influenced by the addition of the assistant principal to the administrative team. Counselors and principals spoke directly to the issue of using the counselor as an administrative (or principal support) in the absence of an assistant principal. A counselor remarked, “When there was no AP, many of the [administrative] tasks fell to the

counselor. Now I have more time to be in the classrooms.”

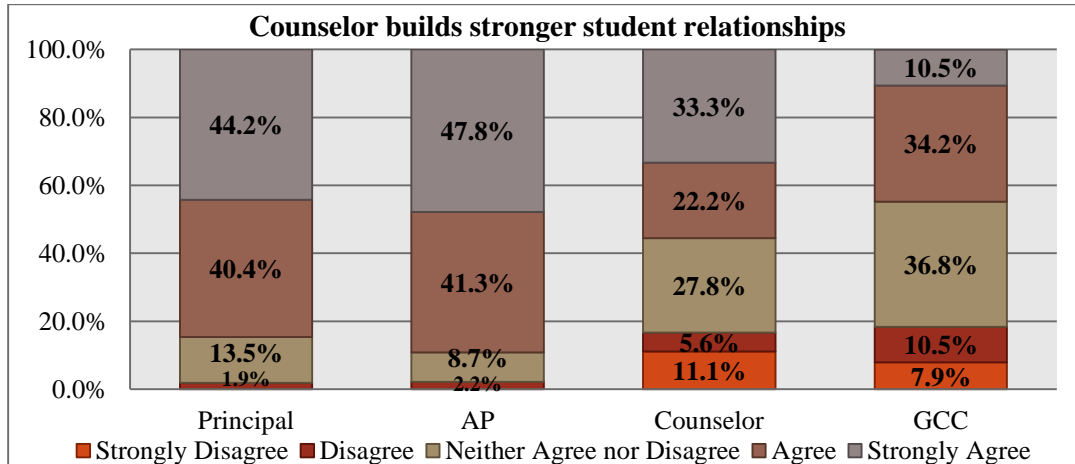
Interviewees clearly expressed that that the counselor was more administratively focused before the introduction of the assistant principal. Counselors often were the principal designee when the principal was absent from the building. In addition to working with students, many reporting tasks and related functions were



delegated to the counselor. Moreover, the counselor was involved in student behavior management more as a disciplinarian than in an emotionally supportive role. This dynamic was often seen as detrimental to the counselor’s ability

to form trusting, positive relationships with students. “The counselor did all the discipline [before the addition of the AP role]. They were the bad guy instead of the support [for students]. Now, they can be counselors,” noted one principal.

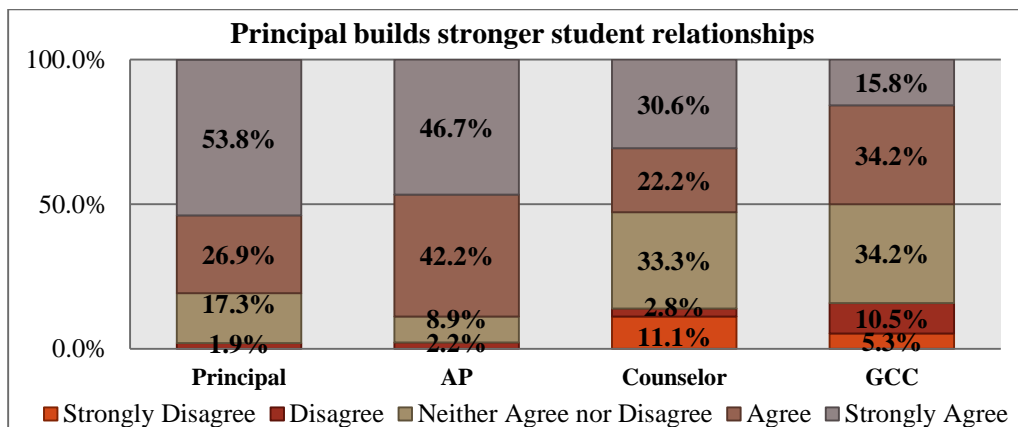
Figure 15: Student Engagement – Counselor-Student Relationships



Thus, the assistant principal role relieved the counselor from being primarily responsible for enforcing student discipline. Instead, counselors now have more freedom to engage students as a resource for support and meeting social, emotional, and academic needs. However, as was the case with teacher support, based on our survey, we also found that between groups, there

was not the same degree of agreement regarding how the assistant principal role was influencing the work of the principal and counselor in engaging with students. Figure 15, 16, 17, and 18 show the variation in responses between principals, assistant principals, counselors, and goal clarity coaches.

Figure 16: Student Engagement – Principal-Student Relationships



Again, we compared the perspectives of the core unit of the administrative team, its generalists, principals and assistant principals. Overwhelmingly, principal and assistant principals believed that principals and counselors were

building stronger student relationships and that counselors were able to be a more effective support to students through one-on-one counseling sessions. We found that they were in general agreement in their views regarding the

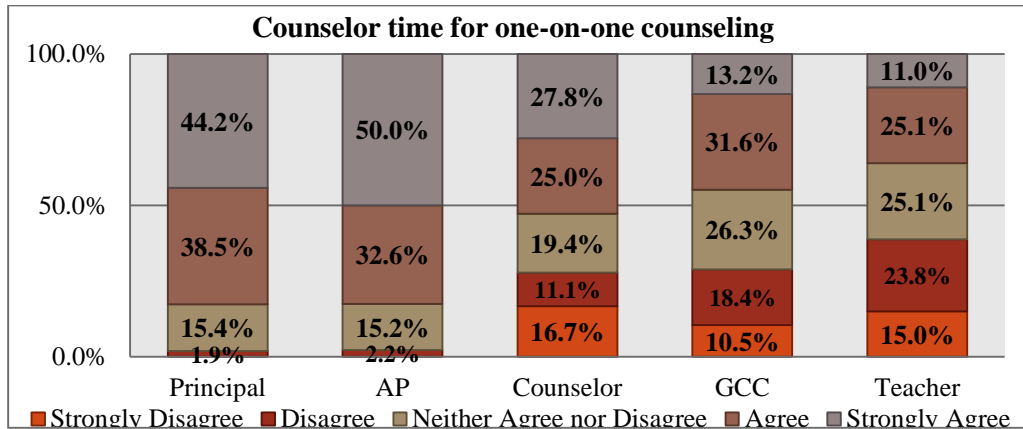


assistant principal’s influence on student engagement.

Then we compared the view of the two specialty roles, counselors and goal clarity coaches. Though counselors were marginally more

supportive of these statements, none of the differences were statistically significant at conventional levels. Both groups hovered between agreement and ambivalence on these items related to student engagement.

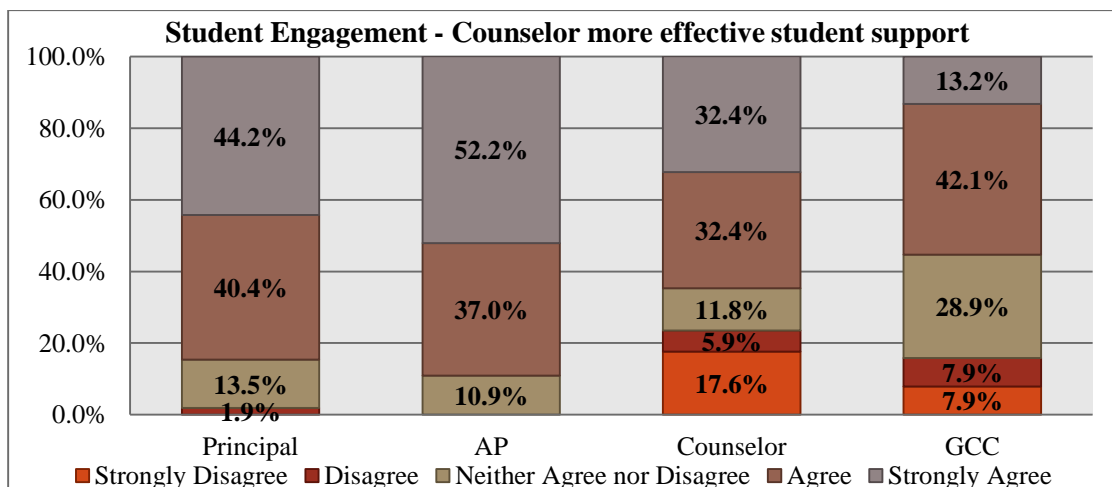
Figure 17: One-on-One Counseling



Finally, we compared the views of principals and counselors, as long-standing roles in the administration of elementary schools versus the comparison between the newly added roles of assistant principal and goal clarity coaches. Unlike teacher support, where the principals and counselors appeared to agree on one of the three elements for which we collected data, their views were completely divergent on the issue of student engagement based on these results. Principals

tended to express agreement for each statement much more strongly than counselors. Counselors tended to be split between agreement and ambivalence on the proposition that the role of the assistant principal had enabled either them or the principal to offer greater support to students through their engagement in relationship building and direct counseling. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.)

Figure 18: Student Support



In summary, the survey responses supported the finding that the work of the AP has influenced the work of the principal and the

counselor around student engagement. Principals and assistant principals tended to more strongly agree that the work of the AP helped principals and



counselors build stronger relationships with students. Moreover, the principal and assistant principal also agreed that the assistant principal role was helping the counselor to conduct more one-on-one counseling with students and be more effective in supporting students. Counselors did not express the same level of agreement with the notion that the assistant principal role was positively affecting engagement with students. Thus, counselors were not aligned with the principal and assistant principal viewpoint. As we noted earlier, goal clarity coaches and teachers expressed the least support for the notion that assistant principals were enabling principals and counselors to engage with students more meaningfully and frequently.

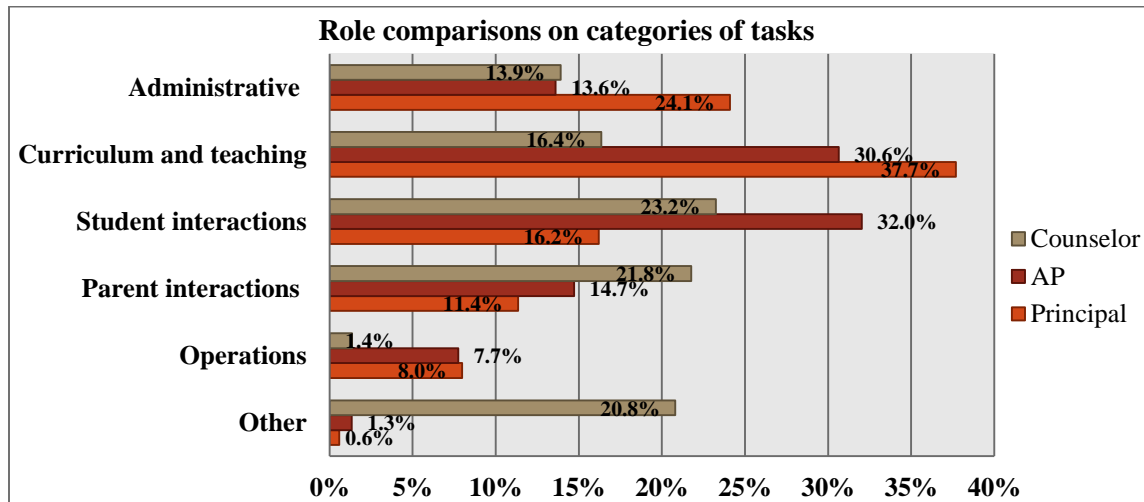
The work of the AP scales did have a positive, statistically significant relationship with the elements of student engagement included in our survey. The correlation coefficients ranged

from .34 to .62 and were significant at conventional levels. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.) Thus, we conclude that although the work of the AP has positively influenced the principal’s and counselor’s ability to engage in support for students, that influence is less pronounced with counselors.

7.2.3 Alignment of Work with Principal and Counselor Time Spent

In addition to activities related to teacher support and student engagement, we also sought to ascertain if the work of the AP was actually influencing the way the principals and counselors spent their time on various tasks spanning the work of the administrative team. Figure 19 details how principals and counselors responded to this prompt compared to assistant principals.

Figure 19: Percent of Time Spent – Principals and Counselors



Not surprisingly, principals and assistant principals spent more of their time on curriculum and teaching related tasks, while counselors were more involved with parents and students. Assistant principals reported a notable amount of time spent on student interaction, which included discipline-related issues. This reported level of student interaction by assistant principals eclipsed that reported by counselors. Interestingly, both counselors and assistant principals reported spending about 14% of their time on

administrative tasks. Counselors frequently reported a significant amount of their time was spent on “other tasks.” Counselors commonly considered the work related to the Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) as separate from regular administrative duties or student related work, as most of their open-ended descriptions of “other” referenced the ARC and Exceptional Child Education (ECE, special education) process.

In addition, the building assessment coordinator was referenced on several occasions



in this category of “other” work for counselors. During a focus group, one counselor highlighted this issue, “I am the building assessment coordinator. That’s where we spend the time. That’s what we have to spend time on.” Moreover, contrary to the belief that the counselor role is specialized around student support, some staff seemed to see that role as being more of a generalist as well. A principal explained “It’s kinda one of those assignments where a lot of times if you are not sure where this job goes – it goes with the counselor.”

Beyond simply collecting data on the average time spent on broad categories of work tasks, we also investigated to see if there was any relationship between how principals and counselors responded to this prompt and their reporting of the work of the AP in their buildings. To glean insight on this front, we completed correlation analysis to determine if there were any statistically significant relationships between the work of the AP scales (administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations and student support) and the percent of time spent on tasks. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.) The one statistically significant relationship was moderate and negative, and led us to conclude that the higher the percent of time the principal or counselor reported being spent on “other” tasks, the less likely that he or she was to report that his assistant principal was engaged in school operations. It appears that principals and counselors deemed some of this “other” work as school operations. As such, when assistant principals were less frequently engaged in those tasks, they may have been taking on more of that work.

To summarize, the principals reported spending the majority of their time on administrative and curriculum and teaching-related tasks. Assistant principals also reported spending a significant amount of time on curriculum and teaching related tasks. Meanwhile, counselors and assistant principals reported spending similar amounts of time administrative tasks. In addition, assistant principals reported higher levels of student interaction than counselors. Counselors more frequently classified

their work in the “other” category, and described this work as comprising the ARC process, ECE services, and building assessment coordinator. Almost none of the scales for the work of the AP had a statistically significant relationship with the self-reporting by principals and counselors of how they spent their time on varying tasks.

7.2.4 Summary of Key Findings

Our analysis indicates that the introduction of the assistant principal role at elementary schools in JCS did intersect with the roles of principals and counselors in ways that benefited those positions. Overall, the work of assistant principals has influenced the work of counselors and principals to allow for increased teacher support (increased frequency of classroom guidance lessons, effective counselor support of teachers, and principal time providing feedback on instruction) and increased student support (principals and counselors building stronger relationships with students, one-on-one counseling sessions with students, and effective support of students). Principal and assistant principals shared similar views regarding these areas of influence and were generally more favorable, whereas the goal clarity coach and counselor expressed more disagreement. As such, our findings were stronger with regard to the assistant principal’s influence on the work of the principal than for the influence on the work of counselors. Though we found positive support for both principals and counselors, there seemed be less agreement and greater variability in participant responses regarding the affirmative benefit to the work for counselors.

7.3 What is the Perceived Value of the Work of Elementary Assistant Principals?

Our analysis then turned to the second research question: *what is the perceived value of the work of elementary assistant principals; what is the school community’s perception of the impact of the elementary assistant principal role; and what, if any, relationship is there between the type of work the assistant principal is performing and*



student suspensions, attendance, and overall school climate? To address the initial component of this question, we analyzed perception data gathered from interviews, surveys, and focus groups to determine the overall impact on school outcomes, job satisfaction, time management, and resource allocation. To analyze the second component of this research question, we utilized JCPs data on suspensions and attendance, while using survey instruments to gather information about the relationship between the role of the assistant principal and the perceptions of school climate.

The following analysis reviews the perception data of school outcomes as related to the four dimensions of the assistant principal's work: administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support. This data was primarily gathered through our survey but was also bolstered through our interviews and focus groups. We completed an additional review of outcomes based on perceptions of job satisfaction, time management, and resource allocation. A few key themes

emerged from our conversations regarding the perceived value of the assistant principal which included *greater overall capacity, more support for more work, student behavior support, AP involvement in attendance, and the role of the building assessment coordinator*. We also investigated if there was any relationship between staff perceived value of the assistant and their reporting on the assistant principal's activities via the work of the AP scales.

7.3.1 School Outcomes

We included items on our survey instrument that asked directly about the impact of the assistant principal's work on various elements of school and student outcomes. Figure 20 details the top five responses for each staff group. The relatively highest rated areas of impact across all groups were *student progress monitoring, consistent rule enforcement, teacher collaboration, student achievement, and school safety*.

Figure 20: School Outcomes – High Impact Areas

Perceived Value of the Assistant Principal - High Impact						
Rank	Principal	AP	Counselor	GCC	Teacher	Overall
1	Frequency of Instructional Feedback	Consistent Rule Enforcement	Student progress monitoring	Consistent Rule Enforcement	Consistent Rule Enforcement	Student progress monitoring
2	Student progress monitoring	Student progress monitoring	Frequency of Instructional Feedback	School Safety	Student progress monitoring	Consistent Rule Enforcement
3	Teacher Collaboration	Teacher Collaboration	Teacher Collaboration	Behavior in Classroom	Student Achievement	Teacher Collaboration
4	Quality of Instructional Feedback	Frequency of Instructional Feedback	Student Achievement	Teacher Collaboration	School Safety	Student Achievement
5	Student classroom engagement	Quality of Instructional Feedback	Principal Visibility	Access to Principal	Teacher Collaboration	School Safety
Mean	2.88	2.84	2.69	2.66	2.59	2.64

A quick scan of the color coding on the chart indicates teacher collaboration was the only positive impact that was ranked in the top five for all groups. This consensus view was strong in our

focus group conversations as well. One principal championed,

“Goal clarity coaches and APs work together in PLCs. They work together in identifying barriers to kids’ success, in

providing PD to teachers. Not a clear definition that says 'this is your job; this is your job.' They work together to make sure THE JOB, which is student success, is accomplished."

In addition, an assistant principal talked about her work with goal clarity coaches, "We work hand in hand on PLCs." So, the qualitative and quantitative findings seem to reflect a consensus viewpoint of the assistant principal's contribution to teacher collaboration through PLCs.

The assistant principal's engagement in PLCs was also related to the notion of *more support for more work*, which fully crystallized as a key theme during the focus group process. A principal described how critical the role of assistant principal is in light of the changing context for elementary schools:

"The big thing is the work is different. The job we are being expected to do now is not the same that was done prior to their implementation. What's being done now – statewide assessment, the requirements from program reviews to testing, to other standards that have increased, PLCs, other things that we are being asked to do. Different work. Because it is different work, you have to have different resources to get the work done. Exactly what we are talking about – the AP and goal clarity coach."

The expectation that professional learning communities (PLCs) would become integrated into the work of all elementary teaching staff drove teacher demand for additional administrative support. Interviewees indicated that assistant principals have facilitated greater participation in PLC meetings and improved access to an administrator on other issues as well. Moreover, the demands on elementary staff to improve student learning through use of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process was often cited as a reason that the assistant principal was needed. As such, *more support for more work* was a recurring theme in our conversations. The higher perceptions of assistant principal's impact on both teacher collaboration and student progress

monitoring among the survey responses seem to reflect this qualitative feedback.

In further conversations with the interview participants, the role of the assistant principal was generally perceived as being a valuable asset to the elementary school. One key theme that we identified was the assistant principal's contribution to *greater overall capacity*. As one of the elementary counselors succinctly stated, "I want to be crystal clear, there is tremendous value there." The interview participants insisted that assistant principals were vital to both student learning and teacher support. "We need to have... qualified, good people helping facilitate the process of learning. And the assistant principal position does that," an elementary counselor explained. A principal expanded on this point, "More people help...if you are getting quality people, and they are targeted toward the right type of issues." The assistant principal helped to provide another supervisory staff member to whom teachers can escalate issues and ask for additional support. A newly appointed goal clarity coach remarked, "It was so great to have someone else as an administrator that I could go to as a teacher...One of them was always there." With both teachers and students needing more interaction with the principal and counselor, there was a noticeable strain that many felt was near a tipping point before the deployment of assistant principals. A principal expressed the urgency for the assistant principal to help manage the workload in his focus group comments:

We could barely hold it together [with just principal and counselor] before all these new standards and evaluation. We are doing a better job serving students. Why? Because we have more resources.

The survey also revealed comparatively strong perceptions of the assistant principal's impact on consistent rule enforcement and school safety, both of which are not directly related to instruction or academic outcomes. Similarly, we found that though most focus group and interview participants highlighted the assistant principal's role in teaching and learning, some commented on the assistant principal's contribution to *student behavior support*. These reported experiences



were wide-ranging. Several staff members reported that assistant principals were helping to manage discipline, through enforcement of rules and procedures and handling of teacher referrals on discipline related matters. One goal clarity coach commented, “Teachers see the AP’s value in discipline but are not aware of his role in relation to instruction.” Yet, one elementary assistant principal insisted, “My job is number one to support the teachers...be more of an instructional leader. I don’t feel like [being a disciplinarian] is my job.” So, there were differing opinions among the members of the administrative team regarding the most valued work priorities for assistant principals.

Although the perceptions for the top areas of assistant principal impact were relatively strong, we did note that the mean for the top five impact statements was decidedly lower for teachers than

for the other groups. Most often, teacher responses to these items were different from the other groups. Interestingly, on the matter of student achievement, only the view of teachers and principals was statistically different. Nonetheless, all the staff, including teachers, believed that the assistant principal was helping to improve school safety.

We also studied those areas where survey respondents offered the least indication that assistant principals were having a positive impact. As seen in Figure 21, there was quite a bit of agreement among the five staff groups on the relative rank of the five areas upon which the assistant principal was perceived as having the least impact: *facility conditions, student tardiness, student attendance, student time with counselor, behavior on the bus.*

Figure 21: School Outcomes – Low Impact Areas

Perceived Value of the Assistant Principal - Low Impact						
Rank	Principal	AP	Counselor	GCC	Teacher	Overall
18	Facility Conditions	Facility Conditions	Facility Conditions	Student Attendance	Facility Conditions	Facility Conditions
17	Student Tardiness	Student Tardiness	Student Tardiness	Student Tardiness	Student Tardiness	Student Tardiness
16	Student Attendance	Student Attendance	Student Attendance	Facility Conditions	Student Time with Counselor	Student Attendance
15	Student Time with Counselor	Student Time with Counselor	Behavior on the Bus	Student Time with Counselor	Student Attendance	Student Time with Counselor
14	Behavior on the Bus	Behavior on the Bus	Behavior in Other School Areas	Job Satisfaction	Student Classroom Engagement	Behavior on the Bus
Mean	2.47	2.18	2.27	2.24	2.34	2.34

Our focus group participants were not surprised by these results in terms of attendance and tardiness. We noted in particular that there was little evidence of assistant principals participating in attendance management. A theme emerged around *AP involvement in attendance* that essentially dismissed such work as being a low value proposition. One principal stated as much, in commenting, “The [attendance committee and follow-up time] is not the best use of the assistant principal’s time.” Simultaneously, another

principal acknowledged, “Chairing the attendance committee is one of the jobs that is defined in the job description for the AP. So mine does.” As a counselor explained, “The attendance committee... That is a designated job. The counselor is following up after six absences. And the family resource center.” As such, there was qualitative support for this perception that assistant principals were having limited impact on attendance rates. Though district leadership may have intended for assistant principals to be

involved in attendance management based on the job description and the logic model, this was not always accepted by principals as an area in which the AP should be focused.

We found that there was a full range of expectations and beliefs about the highest value use of the assistant principal based on the specific needs of the building and vision of the principal. Similar to managing attendance, the *role of building assessment coordinator* was not broadly accepted as a function in which the assistant principal could add the most value. A principal and counselor from the same school agreed on this point. A principal asserted, “I have my counselor as the BAC because she has the background, knowledge and skills to do it the best.” The counselor agreed saying, “I have heard that they are trying to push the BAC into the AP role. That wouldn’t work for us.”

In the end, as we have found throughout our study, the role of the assistant principal and its perceived value may differ in every building and may depend upon disparate views of the various employee groups. As one principal summarized during the focus group, “The AP job is going to evolve based on the needs of the school and based on the talents of the people that you have there.”

Finally, we investigated if there were any relationships between the four work of the AP scales (administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support) and those areas where assistant principals were perceived to have relatively high and relatively low impact. We performed the correlation analysis isolating teachers from the four groups that comprised the administrative team – principals, assistant principals, counselors, and goal clarity coaches. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.)

We generally found that teacher perspectives were different from that of the other groups. When we asked focus group participants about this conflict between administrative team views and that of teachers, most nodded in agreement with a principal who said, “They [teachers] have no idea what the principal does. It doesn’t affect their daily job. There are in there with the door shut working with 24 kids. They

don’t know I do all that, and I don’t spend a lot of time telling them because it doesn’t affect student achievement.” On the areas of higher impact, there were no statistically significant relationships between teacher responses on the work of the AP scales and their perceptions of the assistant principal’s impact on those outcomes.

In terms our analysis using just the responses from the administrative team, the strongest relationship we found indicated that the more frequently the assistant principal was reported to be involved in instructional leadership activities, the greater his or her impact was in the areas of student progress monitoring and teacher collaboration. (See Technical Appendix for further details.) This statistical relationship seems to be validated by focus group responses wherein a principal remarked that the assistant principal was very involved in support for PLCs:

I think that [PLCs] have had an impact on the student scores. We can provide the data for them – the APs, the goal clarity coach. We are able to provide support and feedback. Make sure that it’s student-centered. How have our scores gone up? I think it’s indisputable that it’s teacher collaboration.

In summary, when principals, assistant principals, counselors, goal clarity coaches, and teachers were asked to reflect on specific outcomes that the assistant principal role had impacted, they reported similar relative rankings of 18 outcomes in terms of the comparatively highest and lowest ranked areas of impact. Those areas where the assistant principal was deemed to have had the greatest relative impact were *student progress monitoring, consistent rule enforcement, teacher collaboration, student achievement, and school safety*. Principals and assistant principals generally agreed in their perspective on these five areas, while teachers had a divergent view based on their mean responses versus that of the other groups. Teacher responses reflected no significant relationships between their views of the assistant principal’s impact on certain outcomes and their perceptions on the four work of the AP scales (administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support). The



administrative team's responses yielded positive, statistically significant relationships between all dimensions of the work of the AP scales and those outcome areas of which they deemed the assistant principal had relatively higher impact. These relationships were weak to moderate in magnitude.

The areas where the AP was perceived to have less of an impact by certified staff were more consistent across the groups. Overall, the lowest five ranked areas were *facility conditions*, *student attendance*, *student tardiness*, *student time with counselor*, and *behavior on the bus*. Teacher perceptions revealed only a couple of small relationships between these areas and the work of the AP scales, with the student support scale having a weak, negative, statistically significant relationship with student attendance and tardiness. The more teachers reported their assistant principal was involved in activities included in the student support scale, the less likely they were to respond that the assistant principal was having a positive impact on attendance and tardiness.

The administrative team data exhibited a few statistically significant and positive relationships between the work of the AP and those areas ranked the lowest in terms of the perceived impact of the assistant principal. The administrative team reported that as assistant principals were more involved in student support activities, the greater was their perceived impact on student misbehavior on the bus. The student support scale was also the only one among the work of the AP that had a significant relationship with student attendance. (This relationship was opposite from that reported by teachers.) We also isolated the counselor responses to determine

that those counselors who reported that their assistant principal was more involved with administrative support activities also reported that the assistant principal was having a greater impact on student time with the counselor.

7.3.2 Predicting Perceived Impact

Based on our findings regarding the perceived impact of the work of the assistant principal on the various outcomes for the school, we thought it would be useful to determine exactly what work activities of the assistant principal were driving these results. We decided to delve more deeply into these relationships by using *linear regression analysis* to examine each of the five areas that teachers and the administrative rated as those where the assistant principal had the greatest comparative impact: (1) student progress monitoring, (2) consistent rule enforcement, (3) teacher collaboration, (4) student achievement, and (5) school safety. We created models based on the perceptions of the administrative team, principals, assistant principals, counselors, and goal clarity coaches, as these staff had more opportunities to observe the discrete activities of the assistant principal across the four domains of administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support. Finally, we also investigated more closely one of the lowest rated areas of impact, student time with the counselor, to see if we could explain why this might be the case. Recall that increasing student time with the counselor was one of the key intended outcomes based on the JCPS logic model for the role of the assistant principal. Figure 22 summarizes the regression models used to predict perceptions of impact discussed below.



Figure 22: Impact Regression Models

Dependent Variable	Student Progress Monitoring	Consistent Rule Enforcement	Teacher Collaboration	Student Achievement	School Safety	Student Time with Counselor (Counselor Only)
Adjusted R-Square	0.30	0.38	0.29	0.19	0.25	0.47
Standard Error Estimate	0.38	0.35	0.37	0.44	0.42	0.37
N	172	172	172	172	172	36
Constant	1.42	1.09	1.42	1.48	1.00	1.45
BAC						0.38***
Budget						0.28**
Master Schedule		-0.07		0.09		
Hiring		-0.20**				
Support Staff		0.13*				
School Policies		0.11*				
Student Data			0.34***	0.24***		
PLCs	0.28***					
School Safety					0.31***	
Behavior Consequences			0.16**	0.14*	0.15	
Behavior Interventions	0.23***	0.19**				
Parent engagement		0.45***			0.16	

* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 *** p < 0.001

The linear regression analysis used to predict the administrative team perceptions of the impact of the work of the assistant principals yielded some meaningful results. We found that we were able to build models that specified discrete activities of the assistant principal that would then explain 20 - 40 percent of the variation in the administrative team's perceptions of the highly ranked impact areas. Moreover, we were able to isolate the work activities that counselors find as the most important in shaping their perceptions of increased counselor time with students - building

assessment coordinator and budget manage – which explained 47% of the variation in counselor responses. (See Technical Appendix for more analysis details.)

7.3.3 Job Satisfaction

To evaluate job satisfaction, we computed cross-tabulations of the groups on each item as detailed in Figure 23. (See Technical Appendix for more analysis details.)



Figure 23: Job Satisfaction

Variable	Response	Role					
		Principal	AP	Counselor	GCC	Teacher	All
Increased Counselor Job Manageability	% Disagree	1.9%	0.0%	25.0%	13.2%		8.8%
	% Neither	7.7%	2.3%	16.7%	26.3%		12.4%
	% Agree	90.4%	97.7%	58.3%	60.5%		78.8%
Increased Principal Job Manageability	% Disagree	1.9%	0.0%	8.6%	7.9%	3.5%	3.7%
	% Neither	5.8%	0.0%	17.1%	7.9%	20.1%	16.3%
	% Agree	92.3%	100.0%	74.3%	84.2%	76.4%	80.1%
Increased Principal Job Attractiveness	% Disagree	5.8%	9.1%	41.7%	26.3%	40.4%	33.8%
	% Neither	15.4%	4.5%	38.9%	28.9%	32.3%	28.7%
	% Agree	78.8%	86.4%	19.4%	44.7%	27.3%	37.6%
Increased Overall Job Satisfaction	% Disagree			25.0%	13.2%		13.5%
	% Neither			16.7%	31.6%		17.5%
	% Agree	86.5%		58.3%	55.3%		69.0%

The job satisfaction items showed that all the groups had strong agreement with the assertion that the addition of the assistant principal role made the job of the principal more manageable with all groups at or above 80% agreement. The question of counselor job manageability registered more varied responses, with less than 60% of counselors and coaches agreeing that the addition of the assistant principal role had made the counselor job more manageable, while over 90% of principals and assistant principals agreed with the statement. Improved overall job satisfaction was highest among principals at over 86%, while counselors indicated the highest level of disagreement with this statement at 25%.

Group differences manifested more prominently between teachers and the other groups, with teachers indicating less agreement regarding improved job satisfaction. Principals and assistant principals did not have statistically significant differences in their mean responses, nor did counselors and goal clarity coaches. There was less between group differences regarding principal job manageability versus counselor job manageability. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.)

The relationship between the work of the AP scales and the counselor and principal job manageability were all positive and moderately statistically significant for the administrative team. As such, when members of the administrative team indicated that their assistant principal was more frequently involved with the activities related to administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support, they also responded more favorably to the notion that the assistant principal was helping the job of the principal or counselor to be more manageable. When isolating teachers, there were no statistically significant, positive relationships between the work of the AP scales and the job satisfaction items.

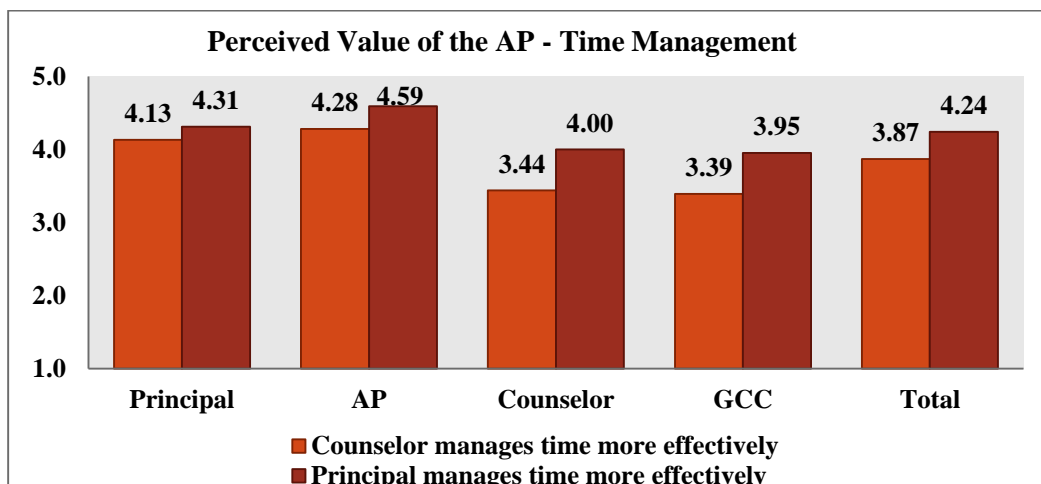
7.3.4 Time Management

Our first step in analyzing this potential value and impact of the assistant principal was to review the mean responses across the groups (Figure 24). All groups of administrative staff, principals, assistant principals, counselors, and goal clarity coaches were, to varying degrees, in agreement with the statement that principals were able to manage their time more effectively since the addition of the assistant principal. On the



question of counselor time management, there was less support for the notion that assistant principals had an impact on their time.

Figure 24: Time Management



We found that the principals, assistant principals, counselors and coaches tended to agree with the assertion that the assistant principal role had a positive impact on time management for counselors and principals. The level of agreement was greater and more consistent across groups when reflecting on the principal's time versus the counselor. However, as we have noted in earlier analyses, principals and assistant principals tended to have the strongest alignment in their views, while counselors and goal clarity coaches tended to indicate slightly lower levels of agreement that were aligned with each other. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.)

The responses to the question of the assistant principal's impact on the principal's and counselor's ability to manage his or her time more effectively were positively and significantly correlated with the four scales on the work of the AP (administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support). As such, the more frequently survey respondents indicated that their assistant principal was involved in those streams of work, the more likely they were to agree that the assistant principal was having a positive impact on the principal's and counselor's ability to manage his or her time more effectively.

In order to derive a deeper understanding of the perspective of principals and counselors, we isolated the responses of these two groups to determine how they related the work of the AP to the impact on their time management. Principal reporting of the work of the AP had a weaker relationship to their agreement on the issue of the counselor time management. The relationships between their understanding of the assistant principal's work tasks had a slightly stronger relationship to their view of the assistant principal's impact on their own time management but still not at the levels of the overall group. To the contrary, counselors reporting on the work of the AP had a stronger correlation to their reporting of the assistant principal's impact on the counselor's and the principal's ability to more effectively manage their time.

The strongest such relationship for counselor responses was between the administrative support scale in the work of the AP and the assistant principal's impact on the counselor's time management. In deconstructing the administrative support scale, the counselors who indicated that their assistant principal was involved in supervising support staff, managing attendance, acting as building assessment coordinator, updating and managing school



policies, and managing budgets (in that order) also indicated stronger agreement with the statement that the assistant principal's role had impacted their ability to manage their time more effectively. One assistant principal reflected on this shift in duties, "In my first year, the counselor had previously been doing the work of the AP...she started releasing things she had been doing to me. Now, the counselor pulls small groups, has guidance lessons in each grade level." A counselor from another building that is staffed with a second counselor in addition to the assistant seemed to confirm this transference of duties, "[Since the addition of the AP,] I can spend more positive time being more proactive with students." Thus, we found qualitative and quantitative evidence that the assistant principal's involvement in administrative support activities seem to have a positive impact on the counselor's ability to spend more time with students.

7.3.5 Resource Allocation

We believe that the ultimate indicator of the perceived value of the assistant principal role may be in the willingness of the administrators to allocate this resource over others or even in exchange for a different resource in order to maintain the assistant principal role. We thought to include this concept in our survey instrument after some attitudes expressed by administrative team members in our initial interviews. For example, a goal clarity coach mused about the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the assistant principal role versus that of other personnel:

I don't really think that at the elementary level every school needed an AP, some have minimal discipline...I was at a school where they had a TLC (behavior person) for years, the district did away with that role and now the AP is doing that same job for more money. We also had a SAM, and the AP role is exactly the same as the SAM for twice the money.

The various iterations of support personnel in elementary schools was a recurring topic among interview participants. A counselor lamented that funds were diverted away from

counseling personnel for other uses, "We've used the budget for the other counselor to get a part-time reading recovery person and for other personnel." As we noted earlier, the assistant principal and goal clarity coaches were deployed to elementary schools in much the same timeframe. We have also found that the perspective of assistant principals and goal clarity coaches are very different. Some of that divergence may be related to differing views on how the resources are allocated and used in a building. Another goal clarity coach reflected on this issue:

I feel like a lot of times there are two of us somewhere when they don't necessarily need two of us there. And there are definitely some things that need to be done that aren't done. 'That's a lot of money in buildings...' Those are questions that you hear murmured through schools. 'Are we getting this much [money's] worth from having this person in the building?'

Though some interviewees expressed concern about the efficient use of resources, others were extremely supportive of the assistant principal role as the right investment to make. One principal stated emphatically, "Adding the AP has been the best money spent in JCPS!" Some staff acknowledged that prioritizing resources for building level responsibilities was one that made sense from a district-wide perspective. "Because it really gets down to the bottom line which is streamlining resources toward where resources are most needed. Put them right back in the schools," was the sentiment of a counselor who believed directing system-wide positions to elementary schools in order to fund goal clarity coaches and assistant principals was a prudent decision. Another principal noted, "Elementary school is the most critical. An extra person is needed for evaluation and behavior." Thus, some personnel made the case that these additional investments in schools should be directed toward the elementary level in particular.

This varied discussion led us to attempt to determine the exact breakpoints in terms of prioritizing the elementary assistant principal role over other potential uses of the resources. Our survey tool helped in this regard through a series



of questions that asked principals and counselors how they would respond to a forced choice between the assistant principal role and another position to serve their school. Principals and

counselors largely agreed on the top prioritization of the assistant principal role as seen in Figure 25. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.)

Figure 25: Resource Allocation

Role	Choose one?		Choose one?		Choose one?		Choose one?		School Funding?		Cut certified position?	
	Coun- selor	Keep AP	GCC	Keep AP	Teach- er	Keep AP	SAM	Keep AP	No	Yes	No	Yes
Principal	3.8%	96.2%	5.8%	94.2%	1.9%	98.1%	3.8%	96.2%	29.4%	70.6%	76.9%	23.1%
Counselor	38.9%	61.1%	8.3%	91.7%	5.6%	94.4%	16.7%	83.3%	26.5%	73.5%	88.6%	11.4%
Overall	18.2%	81.8%	6.8%	93.2%	3.4%	96.6%	9.1%	90.9%	28.2%	71.8%	81.6%	18.4%

The series of resource allocation questions further illuminated the perceived value of the assistant principal role from the perspectives of counselors and principals, the administrative team in place before the addition of the assistant principal role. Both generally prioritized the position of the assistant principal over other roles when presented with a choice. However, 40% of counselors indicated that they would prefer a second counselor over the assistant principal role. Neither principals nor counselors were inclined to eliminate a certified position to fund the assistant principal if the district removed funding for it. Though both groups strongly indicated that they would advocate for funding the assistant principal from school based funds, if district funding was removed.

When evaluating the relationships between the resource allocation choices and the work the AP scales, there were statistically significant relationships between all four scales and all the resource trade-offs except the choice to eliminate a certified position. The correlations were weak to moderate and all positive. The administrative scale had the strongest correlation to the resource allocation choices. When we isolated the principal and counselor responses, we found far less statistically significant relationships based on principal responses to trade-off questions.

In terms of counselors, nearly all the work of the AP scales had statistically significant

relationships with the resource allocation trade-offs that were stronger than those resulting from the combined principal and counselor responses. The relationships were moderate to strong, with counselors indicating that the more the assistant principal was involved in administrative support activities, the more likely they were to choose the assistant principal role over others, as well as prioritizing school-based funding. Our investigation revealed individual items in the administrative support scale that were driving these resource allocation findings. Counselors were more likely to choose to sustain the assistant principal role if their assistant principal was engaged in supervising support staff, creating the master schedule, managing attendance, managing school policies, managing budgets and serving as the building assessment coordinator, which are listed in order of relationship strength and significance.

7.3.6 Summary of Key Findings

There was a high level of consistency in the data with regard to the areas of impact of the assistant principal. The areas where the assistant principal was deemed to have had the greatest relative impact were *student progress monitoring*, *consistent rule enforcement*, *teacher collaboration*, *student achievement*, and *school safety*. The areas where the assistant principal was perceived to have less of an impact were *facility conditions*, *student attendance*, *student tardiness*,

student time with counselor, and behavior on the bus. Despite overall consistency, teachers often differed in their view of the impact of assistant principals from those serving in other roles. In an attempt to explain this difference in perception of the comparatively high impact areas, we built models that included activities of the assistant principal that explained 20 - 40 percent of the variation in the administrative team's perceptions. Thus, we are able to use the work of the AP to predict variation in perception of high impact areas of work. When examining impact as measured by the manageability of the principal and counselor jobs, we found that survey respondent made a distinction between those roles. There was strong evidence that the addition of the assistant principal role made the job of principals more manageable, however, the evidence was weaker for counselors.

The expressed belief that the assistant principal role has brought value to the school level was further supported by both principals and counselors agreement that they would allocate resources for an assistant principal over other uses of the funds. The majority of principals and counselors also indicated they would advocate the use of their school-based funds for an assistant principal should district funds be unavailable. There were only a few exceptions to the view on resource allocation, counselors were more willing than principals to expend money on a counselor or a SAM over an assistant principal. Counselors attitudes on resource allocation decisions that prioritized the assistant principal was driven by their perceptions on the frequency of the assistant principal's engagement in work related to administrative support. For counselors, the most important work that assistant principals do are administrative tasks that appear to result in the counselor's perception of being able to spend more time with students.

7.4 What is the Relationship between the Work of Assistant Principals and Non-Academic Outcomes?

In order to answer this subpart to the second research question – *what, if any, relationship is there between the type of work the*

assistant principal is performing and student suspensions, attendance, and overall school climate – we utilized data gathered through the surveys and focus groups, as well as data JCPs has gathered over time. The logic model regarding the elementary assistant principal indicated that the addition of this role would provide student support, which would lead to decreased classroom disruption, increased student academic achievement, as well as increased attendance. In order to measure the impact on classroom disruption, analysis was conducted with school suspension rates (number of suspension incidents per building per year). To measure the impact on student attendance, we employed yearly attendance rates (the mean daily attendance percentage) and the number of students with 25 or more absences. For both suspension and attendance data, we utilized the two years of results (academic years 2012-13 and 2013-14) after the implementation of assistant principals. We also used data from the 2011-12 school year compared to the 2013-14 school year for both suspensions and attendance to look at the trend before and after assistant principal deployment. To evaluate the impact on school climate, we analyzed teacher responses on climate-related items from our 2014 survey, as well as student climate perceptions using the JCPs Comprehensive School Surveys from spring 2012 (before assistant principals were deployed) and spring 2014 (two years after deployment). The analysis of relationship between the assistant principal role and non-academic outcomes finds that there are small, but statistically significant findings with all three outcomes – suspension, attendance, and climate.

7.4.1 Suspensions

To begin examining the relationship between the addition of assistant principals and suspensions, we completed correlations between the suspension data from 2013-14 and 2012-13 with each of the work of the AP scales. The administrative support, instructional leadership, and school operations scales did not have statistically significant correlations with suspensions in either school year. Yet in 2013-14



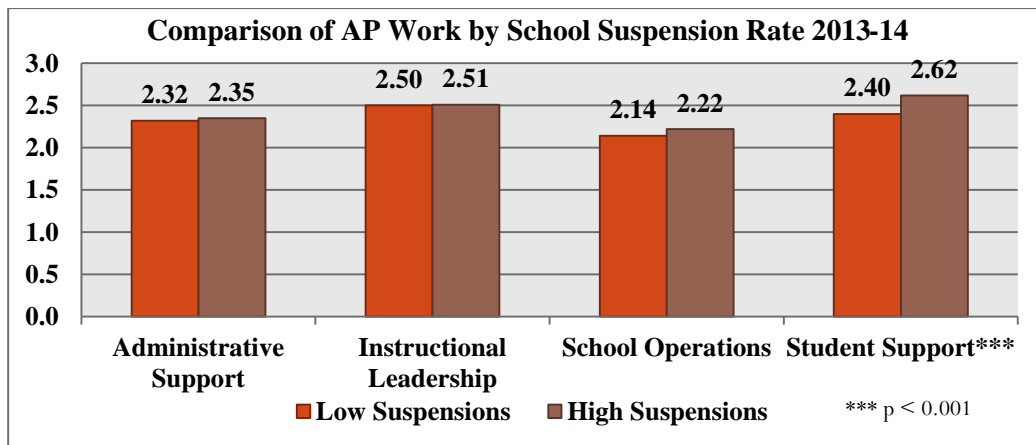
there was a weak, statistically significant relationship between suspensions and the student support scale ($r = 0.12$). Though there were minimal relationships between suspensions and the work of the AP scale, our analysis yielded stronger relationships when examining the relationship between suspensions and time spent.

Through our analysis of this relationship between suspensions and time spent, we found statistically significant correlations of similar magnitudes in both 2012-13 and 2013-14 ($r = .41$, $r = .43$). These results indicate that when assistant principals reported spending of higher proportions of their time on student interactions, their schools experienced higher rates of suspension. This correlation of moderate strength implies that if an assistant principal is spending more time on student interactions, they are likely spending more time addressing student behavior, which may result in higher suspension rates. We also found a relationship between the percent time spent on curriculum and teaching tasks and suspensions in both years. In both 2012-13 and 2013-14 the negative correlations ($r = -.34$, $r = -.38$) suggest that higher levels of time spent by assistant principals on instructional tasks (curriculum and teaching) are associated with lower suspension rates. Practically, this finding indicates that if a school experiences fewer student behaviors resulting in suspensions, the assistant principal may have more time to spend on curriculum and teaching

related tasks. Of course, we might also conclude that the relationship works in reverse, such that if assistant principals are spending more time on those instructional tasks, they are spending less time dealing with behavior which results in fewer suspensions. We cannot conclude causation in either direction based on the correlation, but we do know the relationship exists between suspension rates and time spent on curriculum and teaching tasks, and it is not by chance.

We conducted additional analyses to find if there were differences between schools with relatively high incidents of suspension (top quartile) and those with relatively low incidents of suspension (bottom quartile). These groups were then compared through independent t-tests evaluating differences in means on the work of the AP scales. The data for the 2013-14 school year is compiled in Figure 26. With regard to the administrative support, instructional leadership, and school operations, the difference between means for low-suspension schools and high-suspension schools are not statistically significant. Yet, when comparing the means for the student support scale, the difference in means is significant at conventional levels, where the mean of 2.40 for schools with low suspensions is statistically different from the mean of 2.62 for high suspension schools. (See Technical Appendix for 2012-13 results.)

Figure 26: Comparison of Suspension Rate



These findings on suspensions, while not necessarily strong, are consistent and provide

some support that the addition of assistant principals may be addressing the goal of decreased



classroom disruption. The increase in suspensions could be a result of the assistant principal's targeted focus on behavior rather than an indication of deteriorating behavior. While suspensions are not a direct measure of classroom disruptions, if students with disruptive behavior are being suspended, this increase in suspensions may be associated with an overall decrease in classroom disruptive behavior. Further investigation that includes specific information on office discipline referrals or other discipline data would be advantageous in clarifying the impact of the assistant principal on classroom disruption.

7.4.2 Attendance

To analyze attendance data and determine any relationship to the work of the assistant principal role, we first examined the relationship between attendance rates and work of the AP. Small, statistically significant correlations were found in both 2012-13 and 2013-14 for attendance rate with the school operations and student support. Similarly, chronic absenteeism (students with 25+ absences) had weak positive relationships with the work of the AP, but in this case the relationships were statistically significant for all four domains. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.) Though there were minimal relationships between attendance and the work of the AP scale, our analysis yielded stronger relationships when examining the relationship between attendance and time spent.

Through our analysis of this relationship between attendance and time spent, we found no statistically significant relationships between reported percent of time spent on particular domains of work and the average attendance rates. However, we did find some statistically significant relationships that were moderate in strength between percent of time spent and the number of students with chronic absenteeism ($r = -.34$, $r = -.33$). As such, when assistant principals reported spending higher percentages of their time on curriculum and teaching related tasks, their schools tended to have fewer students with chronic absenteeism. One explanation for this relationship may be that if there were fewer students with high rates of absenteeism, then

assistant principals have more time available to spend on instructional tasks such as curriculum and teaching. It may also be the case that as assistant principals are engaged in instructional work, the resulting increase in the quality of instruction could lead to increased student engagement and decreased chronic absenteeism. We also found a statistically significant relationship between chronic absenteeism in 2013-14 and percent of time spent on student interactions. This relationship was positive, with a correlation of .32. So, assistant principals reporting higher percentages of time spent on student interactions were working in schools with more students who were chronically absent. This is another finding that runs counter to our initial expectation that if assistant principals spent more time in student interactions, this would lead to decreased rates of high absenteeism among students. However, our data suggests that the reverse is true.

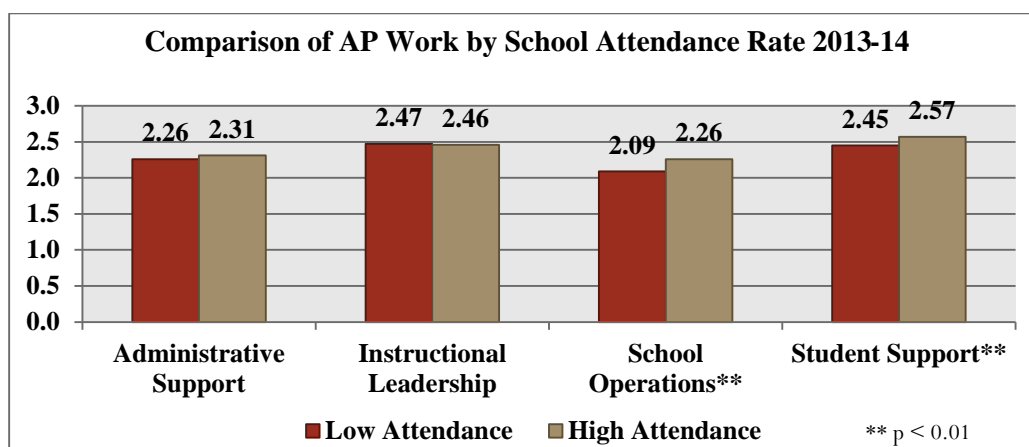
We conducted additional analyses to determine if there were differences between schools with high attendance rates (greater than or equal to 95%) and those with low attendance rates (less than 95%). Using the 2013-14 attendance rate data, we did not find statistically significant differences between the means for the administrative support or the instructional leadership scale. The difference in means for both the school operations scale and the student support scale were significant at conventional levels. Schools with low attendance rates had lower mean responses on both the school operations and student support scales when compared to schools with high attendance rates. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.) This suggests that in schools with higher attendance rates, assistant principals were more frequently engaged in school operations and student support work. These mean responses for the two groups are shown in Figure 27. These findings were consistent in 2012-13 as well. These findings for the student support scale are not surprising. We would expect that schools where assistant principals are spending more time working with students, perhaps building stronger relationships, would have higher rates of attendance. The finding linking attendance to school operations is less



clear. However, it is possible that students might have higher rates of attendance when they find

their school facility more physically appealing and well-equipped.

Figure 27: Comparison of Attendance Rates



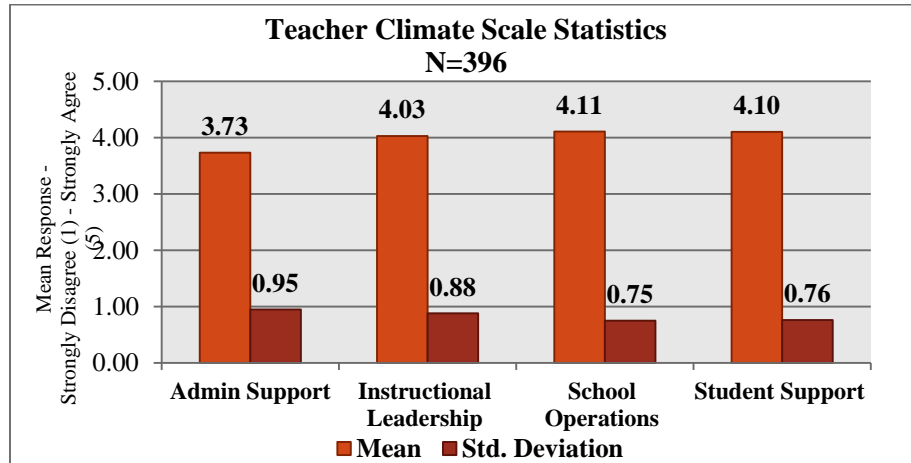
Overall, the evidence we found for the impact of assistant principals on attendance data is mixed. There is some data that indicates the work of assistant principal is associated with increased attendance, but there is also evidence that their work is associated with higher rates of students with chronic absenteeism. In an effort to better understand what may be driving this seemingly conflicting data on attendance, we completed correlation analysis between the attendance metrics and the school's percent of free and reduced lunch (FRL) students. For the attendance rate across four years of data (2010-11 through 2013-14), we did not find a statistically significant relationship between attendance rates and FRL. However, we did find such a relationship between the number of chronically absent students and the percent of FRL students in all years of data. As such, schools with higher rates of FRL students tend to have higher rates of chronically absent students. This may explain the seemingly contradictory findings with regard to the impact of assistant principals on attendance, where there is a positive relationship between the frequency of assistant principals engaged in certain work and the number of chronically absent students. In schools that are higher poverty, assistant principals may be working to help address the rates of chronic absenteeism. As such, their increased frequency of work in the student

support domain would not manifest in lower rates of chronic absenteeism, as that metric appears to be attributable to the school demographics. Moreover, interview and focus group participants reported assistant principals had limited direct involvement and impact on student attendance. Those qualitative results lead us to conclude that assistant principals may be having a more indirect impact on attendance through their activities related to student support as opposed to specifically engaging in administrative support activities, such as chairing the attendance committee.

7.4.3 School Climate

School climate is the final non-academic outcome that was examined in relationship to the work of assistant principals. In order to complete the analysis on the school climate, scales were created based on the school climate questions from the teacher survey. A total of 16 items were included across the four domains that aligned with the work of the AP. The means displayed below in Figure 28 indicate that the majority of teachers agreed that their schools exhibited a positive climate in the areas of administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support.

Figure 28: Teacher Climate

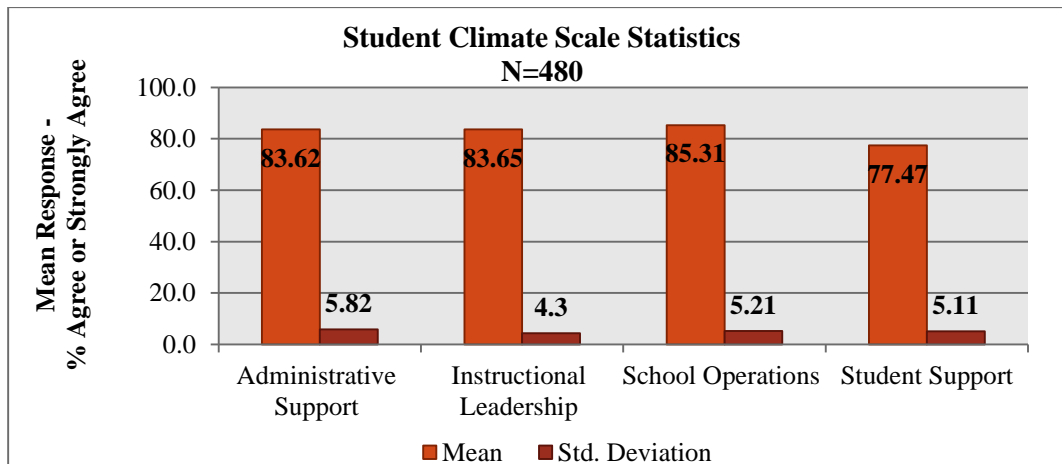


Correlations were then run to identify any significant relationships between teacher perceptions of their school and their responses to the work of the assistant principal items. We found statistically significant relationships between all the teacher climate scales and work of the AP scales. We expected that the scales based on similar constructs would demonstrate the strongest relationships. This was true for the administrative support, instructional leadership, and school support scales but not for school operations scales. These correlation results mean that as teachers reported more frequent engagement by their assistant principals in the work activities defined by each scale, the more

likely teachers were to report strong agreement with school climate questions based on the same constructs.

Our next phase of analysis used school climate data from the JCPs Comprehensive School Survey in 2014. We determined that of the 51 items from the student level survey, 43 of the items were related to the constructs by which we had defined the work of the AP, as well as the teacher climate questions. As such, we were able to use these questions to create scales based on the student perceptions of school climate. Figure 29 details the mean of each student climate scale for 2014. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.

Figure 29: Student Climate



We sought to determine if there was any relationship between the change in student climate perceptions from 2012 to 2014 and the

work of the AP scales. Figure 30 includes the mean values and ranges for the change in student climate scales.



Figure 30: Change in Student Climate

<i>Change in Student Climate Scale from 2012 to 2014</i>	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Δ Student Climate Administrative Support Scale	480	-18.35	17.61	0.78	5.28
Δ Student Climate Instructional Leadership Scale	480	-9.61	8.95	-0.07	3.94
Δ Student Climate School Operations Scale	480	-16.22	11.9	-1.15	4.53
Δ Student Climate Student Support Scale	480	-14.23	14.36	-0.84	4.26

We found that the change in the student climate student support scale did have a small, but statistically significant, positive relationship with the work of the AP student support scale ($r = .12$). This means that as teachers reported their assistant principal was more frequently involved in activities related to the student support scale, the greater the increase in student perceptions of support from 2012 to 2014.

When considering the relationship between student climate perceptions and staff perceptions of the impact of the assistant principal, there were statistically significant relationships between student climate perceptions of instructional leadership and the assistant principal's impact on student progress monitoring and student achievement. The change in student perceptions from 2012 to 2014, had small but statistically significant relationships with the perceived impact of the work of the AP. Increases in student climate perceptions of instructional leadership had a positive relationship with staff perceptions of the assistant principal's impact on student progress monitoring and teacher collaboration. Moreover, increases in student climate perceptions of student support had a positive relationship with staff perceptions of the assistant principal's impact on student progress monitoring, teacher collaboration and student achievement.

The work of the AP did appear to have some relationship with overall school climate based on the perceptions of teachers and students. The more frequently that teachers reported that their assistant principal was engaged

in the work activities defined by the four scales, the more positive were their perceptions of school climate in the same four domains. With respect to student climate survey data in 2014, there were no relationships between student perceptions of climate and the work of the AP scales. However, when considering the change in student climate perceptions from 2012 to 2014, there was a small, positive, statistically significant relationship between the change in student perceptions of support and the work of the AP student support scale.

7.4.4 Predicting Outcomes

Non-Academic

In an effort to see if the work of the AP could be used to predict non-academic outcomes, regression models were created to examine the degree of linear relationship between the dependent variables of suspension and attendance with the independent variables of the work of the AP scales. We conducted this analysis because we did find some data to suggest that assistant principals were having an impact on the outcomes desired by JCPS – student behavior and attendance. Therefore, the next logical step would be to see if predictions could be made. These models helped us determine that to a minimal extent, suspension or attendance outcomes can be predicted based on what activities the assistant principal is engaged in through the work of the AP scales. We tested models for both suspension and attendance with each of the four work of the AP scales. The best-fit models for both suspension and attendance can be found in Figure 31.



Figure 31: Using Work of the AP to Predict Non-Academic Outcomes

Model	1	4	7	8
Dependent Variable	Suspension Rate (13-14)	Suspension Rate (13-14)	Attendance Rate (13-14)	Attendance Rate (13-14)
Adjusted R-Square	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.03
Standard Error Estimate	15.45	15.49	0.79	0.80
N	627	627	627	627
Constant	31.46	17.02	94.67	94.54
FRL	-1.16	-0.76	-.12**	-0.12**
Achievement	-3.45**	-3.44**	0.23***	0.23***
Administrative Support Scale	-2.53*			
School Operations Scale			.19**	
Student Support Scale		2.91*		0.22**
* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 *** p < 0.001				

The regression models show a relationship between work of assistant principals and outcome data such as suspensions and attendance, but they only explain a small amount of the variance for the dependent variable (ranging from 3-6%). This finding is consistent with our expectations; as there are many factors both within and outside of schools that would impact these outcomes, the work of assistant principals would not explain a large proportion of the variance in suspensions and attendance. The models also indicate that when controlling for FRL and achievement, that a one unit increase on some of the work of the AP scales (administrative support, school operations, or student support) is associated with an increase or decrease in suspension or attendance. (See Technical Appendix for further analysis.) Even as a small factor, it is interesting to consider how assistant principals are impacting these outcomes variables, particularly with attendance. Attendance was considered a task under the administrative support scale, yet, as we have discussed, our data seems to indicate that the impact assistant principals may have on this outcome is more likely through their student support work.

7.4.5 Summary of Key Findings

When examining the impact of assistant principals on non-academic outcomes, there are

some consistent findings – in most cases the assistant principal role is associated with positive non-academic outcomes. In term of suspensions, there is a positive relationship between suspensions and the work of assistant principals, which provides some support of progress toward the goal of decreased classroom disruption. Higher numbers of suspension were associated with assistant principals more frequently engaged in student support work and time spent on student interactions. These findings are consistent with the qualitative and quantitative data which indicate the perceived value of assistant principals in the area of student discipline. In the area of attendance, when assistant principals were reported to be more frequently engaged in school operations and student support work, their school tended to have higher attendance rates. However, while the quantitative data support the link between the assistant principal role and increased student attendance, the qualitative data indicated assistant principals have minimal direct involvement in attendance work at the school level. We conclude that it may be that assistant principals indirectly influence student attendance rates via their work in student support. The regression models built to explain variation in suspension and attendance rates based on work of the AP were not compelling, but they were statistically significant. One of the models to



predict attendance rates did provide further evidence that the assistant principals' engagement in work related to the student support scale was the mechanism by which they seemed to be making some impact on student attendance.

The final area of non-academic outcomes is school climate. The findings around school climate indicate a relationship between the assistant principal role and both teacher and student perceptions of school climate. For teachers, higher frequencies of assistant principals engaged in the work of the AP scales were associated with more positive perceptions of school climate for all four domains. For students, we found a relationship between the student support scale and the change in climate

perceptions of support from 2012 to 2014, after the addition of assistant principals. We also found increases in the student perceptions of the instructional leadership climate over this two-year period were associated with increased reports of assistant principal impact on student progress monitoring and teacher collaboration. In addition, increases in student perceptions of the student support climate were positively correlated with perceptions of assistant principal impact on student progress monitoring, teacher collaboration, and student achievement. Thus, these findings illustrate support for the notion that assistant principals are having some impact on non-academic outcomes.





8 Discussion

The focus of our research study and the analysis herein is based on the logic model originally posed by JCPS regarding the addition of the assistant principal role to elementary schools in JCPS. The district expressed a concern regarding increasing academic and emotional needs of students in elementary school, as well as the increasing demands on the elementary principal as both a school manager and instructional leader. As a result, the district invested in the elementary assistant principal role as a resource allocation designed to address these needs.

The district expected that the work of the assistant principal would address administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support. These work activities would relieve the demands on the principals while also allowing counselors to focus on the social, emotional and academic needs of students. Moreover, these work activities were to result in increased teacher support, student instructional engagement, and social and emotional support for students. Thus, the district expected that the addition of the assistant principal would ultimately lead to increased academic achievement, improved behavior in the classroom, and increased student attendance.

Our research questions were designed to analyze the logic model in practice, at each juncture, from needs assessment to ultimate outcomes. Having detailed the findings of our analysis, we will now turn to a discussion of how these findings validate or conflict with the assumptions of these key components of the logic model.

8.1 Matching Resources to the Defined Need

JCPS identified two very distinct needs in the decision-making process that led to an assistant principal in every elementary school. The assistant principal role was intended to address the principal support – in terms of instructional leadership and building management, while also relieving the counselor of some administrative

duties such that the counselor would be able to focus on the increasing social, emotional and academic needs of students. To fund the additional assistant principals, the district made a choice to eliminate the additional half-time counselor positions that were allocated to some larger elementary schools. District leaders presumed that these funds would be better spent to support the assistant principal role. Did this resource allocation choice actually address the defined needs?

At the highest level, the district was reallocating resources to focus on schools versus system-wide functions, with an emphasis on elementary students in particular. The genesis for the elementary assistant principal was due to the perceived inequitable distribution of administrative staff, favoring middle schools and high schools. Of course, middle and high schools tended to be much larger than the average elementary school. The demands of new initiatives (e.g., the response to intervention model, professional learning communities, teacher evaluation, etc.) and the growing number of students requiring more intensive social and emotional support increased the need for elementary resources, notwithstanding their smaller enrollments. The district recognized that principals needed more support to successfully manage these demands.

Though district leaders initially intended to only staff assistant principals at elementary schools with enrollments of greater than 400 students, ultimately all 90 elementary schools, including those seven schools with smaller enrollments, were staffed with this additional role. These assistant principals were allocated to schools along with the goal clarity coaches, which was also a new position that the district created by eliminating system-wide instructional coach roles to fund this site-based resource. JCPS committed to increasing resources at the school and classroom level as an overall resource strategy of decentralization and school-based management (O’Neil and Strembinsky, 1996). The goal clarity coach role was designed to support instructional leadership, exclusively, by helping teachers



improve their practice through PLCs and one-on-one professional development.

As such, the elementary administrative team doubled its membership in many schools to include assistant principals and goal clarity coaches in addition to the principal and counselor. This increase in non-teaching staff follows national trends of the same (NCES, 2012; Roy, 2012). These larger administrative teams were most likely inevitable given the growing pressure toward equitable distribution of resources between schools within urban districts (Baker and Elmer, 2009).

We found in our interviews that there was mixed support for the addition of the assistant principal role as the ideal position to address the need for increased principal support and student social/emotional support. In particular, the counselors felt that reducing counseling staff to fund the assistant principal did not actually address the need to increase support for students. This sentiment was borne out in our survey as nearly 40% of counselors who responded stated that they would choose an additional counselor over the assistant principal role. Other staff believed that perhaps the school administrative manager, or SAM, was a less costly resource that would still be able to support the principal, and potentially save enough funds to sustain or increase the prior levels of counseling staff.

Furthermore, coaches expressed a concern that the assistant principal was a duplicative function if the assistant principal was primarily focused on instructional leadership. With the addition of goal clarity coaches and assistant principals to elementary schools, there may reasonably be some concern that if one of those positions is more effective or leads to better student outcomes, then a position could be reallocated or repurposed. “The political frame stresses that the combination of scarce resources and divergent interests produces conflict” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 206). Our study did not directly investigate this tension, but the reality of the scarcity of resources is likely the source of such between the two roles. Hence, JCPS leadership may need to spend more time ensuring members of the administrative team function cohesively,

where all individuals understand their role and how they interact (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

In addition, other questions of resource allocation were raised in terms of the district formulas for assigning staff. One assistant principal was unilaterally assigned to schools ranging in size from under 300 to over 900 students. In addition, some schools were staffed with Family Resource Center Coordinators while others were not. Participants in interviews and focus groups wondered if behavior coordinators and success coaches were better choices to address the defined needs rather than assistant principals. Overall, there was a sense that staffing formulas didn’t efficiently or equitably support student needs unique to school context, as well as not being adjusted based on total school enrollment. Generally, the staff we spoke to indicated a preference for weighted-student formula staffing versus a fixed allocation as a more equitable and efficient means of determining school-based personnel resources (Baker & Duncombe, 2004).

8.2 Leveraging the Inputs to Achieve Intended Outcomes

8.2.1 Work of the Assistant Principal

A recurring theme in the analysis of the data on the assistant principal role was that student support and instructional leadership were the main foci of the work. This work was done with more frequency, was allotted more daily time, and was ranked the most important. While assistant principals were still engaged in school operations and administrative leadership, those areas were not the core of the work or the work in which they were most frequently engaged. The work of principals is becoming more demanding as instructional leadership becomes a primary responsibility. As a result of this increased demand in principal responsibilities, the work of assistant principals is widening, moving from a focus on discipline and attendance to instructional leadership (Glanz, 1994; Hausman, Nebeker, McCreary, & Donaldson Jr, 2002; National Association of Secondary School Principals), which creates a need for professional development to support growth in this area (Oliver, 2005). While



this trend in terms of the scope of the assistant principal work is widespread, this is not the case everywhere. There are still places where assistant principals are focused almost exclusively on discipline and administrative tasks (Militello, Fusarelli, Alsbury, & Warren, 2014; Petrides, Jimes, & Karaglan, 2014). In JCPS this same discrepancy in the work of assistant principals exists. Some assistant principals are involved in instructional leadership and others were not. Some of the assistant principals who are minimally involved in instructional leadership revealed that they would prefer a reallocation of their responsibilities – they do not want to focus solely on discipline and administrative tasks. Instead they want to be more involved with instructional leadership.

While some assistant principals in JCPS are not highly engaged in instructional leadership work, the findings from the majority indicate that JCPS is following the national shift where assistant principals are increasingly working in the area of instructional leadership (Kaplan & Owings, 1999). The inclusion of assistant principals in the teaching and learning work – shared instructional leadership – allows schools to be more successful learning organizations (Kaplan & Owings, 1999). The findings in JCPS reflect these larger trends in the role of assistant principals; in many cases their work has expanded well beyond discipline and administrative work. Ironically, one of JCPS leadership goals for assistant principals was to address some of the administrative support work, so that principals could focus more on instructional leadership and counselors could focus on student support. However, in reality, assistant principals are not generally addressing administrative support work – their focus has been student support and instructional leadership. If assistant principals are not engaged in administrative support work then it is likely that principals and counselors are still carrying much of this workload.

8.2.2 Communication of the Roles

Much of the scope of instructional leadership involves setting the direction for the building. When the principal sets that direction for the building, it is critical that the focus is student-centered (Knapp, Copland, & Talbert, 2003;

Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, & Porter, 2006). Part of that student-centered direction involves ensuring all individuals understand how their role and how the roles of others impact student learning. What is conveyed to teachers about the work of administrators and what teachers see in terms of how that work makes an impact at the building level is what teachers will identify as the essential work (O'Donnell & White, 2005). Teacher indication of administrators focused on improving the school learning climate is a predictor of student achievement (O'Donnell & White, 2005). In JCPS, we found differences in the perceptions of the work of assistant principals were dependent upon whether the principals had shared the tasks that were assigned to the assistant principal with the staff. In all areas of the work of assistant principals, when staff indicated there was no communication regarding the role of assistant principals, they also indicated lower frequencies of assistant principals engaged in specific work activities across all domains. These lower frequencies could be a result of the fact that teachers and other staff are unclear about what work the assistant principal is doing.

The district has a vision for the assistant principal role as conveyed in the logic model. Principals were made aware of the goals for the assistant principal role. However, the district vision has not largely translated into the principal vision for their school. Principals are utilizing the assistant principal in the way they see fit to make the largest impact for their building, which may or may not result in the district's desired outcomes. The principals are not acting as change agents for this role in the larger scope of the district work (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Without some level of consistency in the utilization of this resource, the district may never realize the intended outcomes. Furthermore, the lack of communication around the role and how the assistant principal's work relates to those larger goals can create uncertainty (Bolman & Deal, 2008). This lack of clarity could result in reduced student outcomes as the assistant principal resource is not being utilized in the optimum manner.



8.2.3 Assignment of Duties

When considering structural design of an organization there are two central issues – how to allocate work and how to coordinate efforts once responsibilities have been assigned (Bolman & Deal, 2008). When JCPS added the assistant principal role, the district created a logic model that addressed the implementation of the role and the desired outcomes. JCPS also created an explicit job description that addressed the work of assistant principals. Despite these factors, principals have almost complete autonomy in how they assign tasks to assistant principals (Marshall & Hooley, 2006) and counselors (Clemens, Milsom, & Cashwell, 2009). It is possible that in considering the structure of the elementary administrative team, the role of the assistant principal was not designed (and/or trained) to actually address the student need for increased social/emotional support. Indeed, we found scant evidence that the addition of the assistant principal role was actually focused on the defined need of increasing social and emotional support for students. Our findings repeatedly confirmed the elevation and prioritization of instructional leadership work versus the other potential administrative functions of the assistant principal. If the assistant principal had taken on other administrative functions, he may have provided more opportunities for the counselor to engage directly with students. In interviews and focus groups, participants regularly expressed that JCPS placed a premium on instructional leadership. As such, the prioritization of that function for assistant principals may be in response to a perceived directive from the district.

One prominent example of a similar miscommunication of district intent is the building assessment coordinator function, which was included as a duty of assistant principals in the job description. Yet, in many cases, it remains the work of the counselor. Consistently, in our findings related to impact and outcomes, we confirmed that counselors believe that the assistant principals' work in administrative support is most important in driving the counselors' perceived value of the assistant principal's contribution. Moreover, counselors who reported that their assistant principal was more engaged in

administrative support functions also reported being able to spend more time with students. But, we still do not find any evidence that a large proportion of principals are transferring the building assessment coordinator to from counselors to assistant principals.

Overall, this study revealed that the job of an assistant principal is not the same building to building across the district. In some cases how the principal assigned duties does not align with the district goals. The assistant principal role is not likely to have an impact on attendance or tardies if assistant principals are not engaging with students and parents around these issues. Compounding this lack of alignment between district goals and duty assignment is the fact that if an assistant principal was unclear of his role, he would likely engage in work they are interested in, regardless of if that work aligns with district goals (Bolman & Deal, 2008). In some cases, assistant principals indicated that the gradual release process for them to learn their assigned duties came not from the principal but from the counselor. As assistant principals were tasked with duties that had previously belonged to counselors, such as student support and parent communication, they were provided support and training from the counselor. Thus, the assistant principal role developed based on a various influences among which the district's vision seemed to have the least impact.

The district-wide goal, expressed in the logic model, was that assistant principals would allow both principals and counselors to be more involved in the primary work of their respective roles. Part of this rationale stemmed from the fact that principals were spending more time managing than being instructional leaders (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Counselors also needed to be released from "back-up administrator" duties such that they could devote more time to meeting the social and emotional needs of students. What seems to have occurred is that assistant principals have largely engaged in sharing instructional leadership with principals, while less support has been provided to counselors. In order for JCPS to fully exploit the elementary assistant principal role and achieve the intended goals, there will need to be more consistency in the work of assistant principals.



However, this need for tighter definition of the assistant principal role toward greater interdependence and integration with the counselor may be in conflict with desire for principal autonomy to define the role as he or she sees fit (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

8.2.4 Role Ambiguity and Tension

The role of coach in education is a relatively recent phenomenon (Sturtevant, 2003), while the role of assistant principals has had a much longer existence. However, in JCPS elementary schools, these two roles were introduced at similar times. Originally, the goal clarity coach position was a district position in the academics office that supported schools district wide. Then those positions became site-based – assigned to one specific school. Similarly, assistant principals were hired for each individual school. The fact that both of these positions are site-based allows principals to have unilateral control over the work that defines each role. The introduction of both of these roles at the building level has created a phase of role transition – functional boundaries are being crossed where assistant principals and goal clarity coaches are learning the new tasks that comprise the individual roles, and, in many cases, assistant principals are also crossing hierarchical boundaries because that position is also a supervisor (Schein, 1971). This phenomenon of role transition and boundary crossing is perhaps key to understanding the differences in perceptions of the assistant principal's work.

These differences in how individuals serving in different roles viewed the work of assistant principals became clear in our examination. While principals and assistant principals were aligned in every aspect of the assistant principal work and outcomes, this was not true of goal clarity coaches and counselors – when considering these two roles together or when comparing them to other roles. In many instances, goal clarity coaches differed from all other roles in how they saw the work of assistant principals, particularly around instructional leadership. Counselors had many differences as well. Goal clarity coaches indicated assistant principals were less involved in instructional

leadership work, and counselors indicated that assistant principals were less involved in student support work. These findings in JCPS not only highlight that their views were different, but the findings also imply that there are some inherent differences between each role that affects how they view the work of the assistant principals.

In JCPS, our study revealed a dividing line between those in generalist roles versus those in specialist roles. Principals and assistant principals are generalists in that they require a grasp of all aspects of the work in their buildings. In contrast, counselors and goal clarity coaches have more specialized roles where they are focused on a more narrow scope of work within the building. These findings are not unique to JCPS. Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor (2003), in a study of building leaders, found that both principals and assistant principals were in fact generalists. Individuals in these positions were able to be highly effective across all functions of their work. Coaches and other leaders were found to be more specialized – they were only highly engaged in some of the work at the building level. Our findings regarding the work of assistant principals and their impact demonstrated a continued divide between these two types of roles. This conflict was also seen in a study of New York schools where administrative positions (principal and assistant principal) and professional development positions (goal clarity coach) experienced conflict regarding their knowledge base and skill set. Administrators were perceived as not knowing curriculum and instruction, while professional development specialists were believed to not understand the day to day operations of schools (Fink & Resnick, 2001). In many cases, districts have found it necessary to redefine the assistant principal role from non-instructional to instructional (B. F. Hall, 2008). This movement to create additional capacity for principals and assistant principals to really understand and support teaching and learning means that the role of goal clarity coaches may be diminished, which may create conflict.

Role ambiguity arises when roles and duties are ill-defined or inconsistent (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). Role clarity is affected by task structure, prior experience, and external



dependencies (Yukl, 2002). If both goal clarity coaches and assistant principals are unclear about the difference between their roles in terms of instructional support, this confusion can create ambiguity and tension. We also observed this role tension between counselors and assistant principals with respect to the administrative support and student support work. Counselors expressed some level of frustration because the movement of administrative work from their role to the assistant principal role had yet to materialize.

One method for addressing the role ambiguity between assistant principals and goal clarity coaches would be to create clearer job descriptions for each position and provide guidance to principals on the district's view for how these roles should be implemented. Consideration of all building personnel and the work that they do is essential in ensuring that the shared work is intentional and that all areas are covered. Kaplan & Owings (1999) suggest a model for the assistant principal role, whereby the number of assistant principals is reduced and the number of administrative assistants and deans is increased, thereby allowing assistant principals to focus on instructional leadership. Emphasizing the distinction in instructional leadership between assistant principals as evaluators and coaches as support for teachers may relieve some of the tension as well. A collaborative, instead of competitive, relationship between coaches and assistant principals must be fostered in order to effectively lead schools and improve instruction (Wren & Vallejo, 2009).

The role of coaches in education has expanded in an effort to provide embedded and ongoing support of teachers. As conveyed by principals and teachers, coaches have helped teachers grow by providing professional development, delivering specific feedback on instructional strategies, fostering collaboration, completing data analysis, and modifying and improving of instructional practices (Doby-Holmes, 2011). "The administrator and coach are teammates in this venture. And like teammates in any sport, their roles are sometimes distinct, sometimes quite similar, and sometimes

overlapping, but the goal is the same" (Hall & Simeral, 2008). Dividing instructional responsibilities into two distinct areas, (a) developing instructional capacity and (b) setting goals toward monitoring improvement, is a possible resolution to reduce role ambiguity in schools (Camburn et al., 2003).

Resolving some of the tension between administrative roles (principals and assistant principals) and coaches lies in the ability to evaluate teachers. Coaches are not administrators nor are they typically licensed for such, such that they cannot and do not evaluate teachers. This allows coaches to be more supportive versus principals who are evaluative and monitor improvement (Camburn et al., 2003; Wren & Vallejo, 2009). Camburn et al. examined role ambiguity in regard to instructional leadership between head principals and coaches, but their findings are still applicable to the conflict between assistant principals and coaches in JCPS. We found that there is still tension between the roles, but both goal clarity coaches and assistant principals acknowledged that the non-evaluative status of goal clarity coaches allow them to help support teachers. The feedback provided by the coaches is received differently – in a non-threatening manner. "When the collaborative partnership between the instructional coach and the building administrator is effective, the positive results are clear. The school community benefits from the expansion of the teachers' instructional capacity, and, as a direct consequence, the school makes progress toward its ultimate goal of increased student achievement" (Hall & Simeral, 2008).

A lack of clarity and tension between goal clarity coaches and assistant principals can lead to stymied school improvement. District leadership and principals must effectively analyze these two roles and determine what each role should be responsible for and how they should interface. "The management challenge is to recognize and manage interface conflict" (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 207). The individual work of principals, assistant principals, counselors, and coaches, as well as the intersection between these roles, allows us to evaluate how these inputs impact the outputs and outcomes as conceived in the JCPS logic model.



8.2.5 Work of Principals and Counselors

The role of the principal today is quite different than in years past. The work of principals has been shifting from managerial to leadership responsibilities, specifically focused on instruction and teacher support (Ferrandino, 2001; Hallinger, 2005; Kaplan & Owings, 1999). Despite this shift in focus, principals are still responsible for three core areas in their building: politics, management, instruction (Hallinger, 2005). Effective principals must be able to address all these aspects in their building despite a finite amount of time in which to do so. When considering elementary principals, the challenges can be even greater. Most elementary schools have only a principal and counselor as administrative staff, which further constrain a principal's ability to meet the competing time demands (Ferrandino, 2001). Counselors, as has been true of assistant principals, are often assigned tasks and duties by their administrator, regardless of the specialized work their role entails (House & Hayes, 2002). According to the National Standards for School Counseling Programs (NSSCP), counselors should be involved in activities that highly promote students' academic, career, and personal/social development with minimal time spent on non-counseling related activities (Foster, Young, & Hermann, 2005). Therefore, the role of counselor should be highly involved in student support activities.

The reality of the span of work for principals and counselors at the elementary level in JCPS led in part to the adoption of the assistant principal role and the logic model that defined this district-wide strategy. The addition of assistant principals was aimed at increasing principal time in the classroom and therefore increasing building level instructional leadership. The assistant principal was also intended to absorb some of the historical duties and responsibilities of the counselor such that those individuals could focus on providing individual student support, as well as classroom level resources. "Systemic change in the education of all students will not occur without the sustained involvement of all of the critical players in the school setting, including school counselors" (House & Hayes, 2002, p. 250). The intended result

of the assistant principal role was improved student outcomes – academic achievement, attendance, and behavior. In order for those outcomes to be realized, all administrative team members (principal, assistant principal and counselor) must be involved in improvements (Dahir & Stone, 2003; House & Hayes, 2002).

How the assistant principal spends his/her time and how those duties were communicated to the staff has a large impact on the work of both principal and counselor. When examining how counselors spend their time, the categories where the majority of their time was spent were student interactions, parent interactions, and 'other' activities. The common activities that counselors mentioned falling under 'other' where serving as the building assessment coordinator, coordinating the admissions release committee, and other responsibilities associated with exceptional children education. Many of these duties that counselors labeled as 'other' are considered administrative support duties. Considering the time allotted to administrative support combined with the 'other' category, which also contained many administrative activities, counselors report spending about a third of their time on these non-student focused duties. The building assessment coordinator role is once again highlighted as a duty that was intended to move to the assistant principal role to allow counselors more time to spend with students. It is likely the time spent with students would increase if some of these duties were to be reallocated. This would also fall in line with the guidance from the NSSCP.

Principals in JCPS indicate that the majority of their time is spent in instructional leadership, administrative support, and student interactions. Over 60% of their time is spent in administrative and instructional activities alone. This data follow the research that indicates that principals are moving from management (administrative support) to instructional leadership. Our findings indicate that the assistant principal role is associated with principals spending more time on instructional leadership, but counselors are not spending a comparable amount of time student support. Thus, the logic model has only been partially realized.



8.2.6 Job Satisfaction of Principal and Counselor

As the role of assistant principal was aimed at allowing principals and counselors to focus on the core functions of their roles, one seemingly natural outgrowth of that appears to be that the principal and counselor would have higher rates of job satisfaction. The vast majority of survey participants indicated that the addition of the assistant principal made the principal's job more manageable, but the same was not true for counselors. While principals and assistant principals believe the assistant principal addition has made the counselor's job more manageable, counselors and goal clarity coaches do not overwhelmingly share that belief. It is becoming evident that the assistant principal may not be taking on a mix of duties that equally impact the principal and counselor. However, we did observe that the frequency of engagement in particular work by assistant principals resulted in higher rates of job manageability for both principals and counselors. The role of assistant principal also impacted the time management of both principals and counselors. As with manageability, our findings were more positive for principals, though there were positive findings for counselors. When delving deeper into the areas of assistant principal work, when assistant principals were more frequently engaged in administrative support work, counselors were more likely to report an increase in their ability to manage time more effectively. Principals and assistant principals are largely consistent in how they view the assistant principal role and its impact, and, overall, it appears that all groups agree that the assistant principal role has benefitted principals more than counselors. If assistant principals, as we found, are focused more on instructional work (Kaplan & Owings, 1999), then these findings logically follow.

The universally shared goal in public education is meeting the needs of all students. Principals delineate the roles of their administrative team in an effort to meet the needs their students. In the case of JCPS, principals indicated time and again the district focus is on instructional outcomes. Moreover, the increase in academic accountability for schools creates an

environment where principals make certain choices to meet these expectations. This context may be the key driver behind the frequency of assistant principals engaged in instructional leadership duties. However, the district must also inform principals about the optimal role for school counselors toward meeting the needs of all students (Janson, Militello, & Kosine, 2008), as social and emotional development is often the foundation for increased academic outcomes.

8.3 Intermediate Outputs for Teachers and Students

8.3.1 Increasing Teacher Support

Based on our findings, the work of the assistant principal is heavily focused on instructional leadership and student support. Consequently, we would have expected the most significant outputs to be related to those dimensions of the work. Teacher perceptions of school climate were aligned with their perceptions of how frequently assistant principals were involved in related work domains. As such, teachers were more likely to respond favorably about the quality of instructional leadership in their schools, if their experience with the assistant principal reflected a high level of involvement in that domain. Teachers specifically reflected that the work of the assistant principal had a relatively greater impact on teacher collaboration and student progress monitoring. These activities bode well for future student achievement results, as these components of instructional leadership are key drivers of student performance (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003).

Moreover, we found that teachers recognized that assistant principals were helping to protect their instructional time with students through student behavior management. Teachers feel as though the addition of the assistant principal has increased consistent rule enforcement, which allows them to focus on teaching. Not surprisingly, school safety was another factor in which teachers believed the assistant principal role had facilitated improvement. The ability of assistant principals to contribute to the safe and orderly environment is



important dimension of leadership present in effective schools (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008) and is a foundational prerequisite for student success.

However, in terms of the direct support from counselors in the form of classroom guidance lessons or increased classroom engagement with students, teachers did not report evidence of such. Consistently, teachers reported the role of the assistant principal as an enabler of the principal to better support their work but not as an enabler of the counselor to do the same. Teachers did not report greater job satisfaction as a result of the assistant principal's addition to the staff. These gaps in teacher support present an opportunity to bolster the assistant principal's impact on student achievement (Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, & Porter, 2007). The administrative team's ability to support teachers in increasing student engagement and in increasing teacher engagement toward improved job satisfaction are essential factors increasing student learning (Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010).

Another area of teacher support where we found limited evidence of assistant principal impact was related to the notion of increased frequency and quality of instructional feedback. Though principals, assistant principals, and, to a lesser extent, counselors, reported that these were areas where the assistant principal had relatively positive impact, teachers and goal clarity coaches did not agree with this assessment. Empirically, monitoring of the instructional program is a cornerstone of school improvement initiatives (Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). This difference in perception between the administrative team members and, most importantly, teachers, is an area of concern that could ultimately undermine the primary theory of action within the logic model in terms of increased instructional support ultimately leading to improved student achievement outcomes.

8.3.2 Increasing Student Support

The JCPS logic model suggests that increased student support will result from the activities of the assistant principal and their

influence on the work of principals and counselors. District leadership has prioritized not only academic but social and emotional learning (SEL) for students. SEL is the process by which students "integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving to achieve important life tasks" (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2007). To achieve this objective, the assistant principalship was structured such that counselors would be able to facilitate more SEL for all students (Van Velsor, 2009). To broaden student support as envisioned, counselors will need to release administrative duties such as assessment coordination and building the master schedule (Van Velsor, 2009). Student perceptions of positive school climate should increase if these interactions between the work of the assistant principal and the work of the counselor actually result in increased SEL.

In reviewing the student climate data, we found no statistically significant relationships between the work of the assistant principals, as reported by teachers, and the spring 2014 student climate survey results across the four scales. However, when we evaluated the change in student climate survey responses from spring 2012, before the addition of assistant principals, to the spring 2014, two years after they were allocated, we did find some notable relationships. There was a small, positive, statistically significant relationship between the change in student climate perceptions of student support from 2012 to 2014 and the work of the assistant principal student support scale. The student climate scale for student support includes items that reflect a sense of belonging and positive relationships with teachers and staff. Student feelings of peer acceptance and teacher support have a meaningful impact on student achievement, particularly in high needs schools (Ostermann, 2000). Thus, these correlations do support the assertion that the work of the assistant principal has made difference for student perceptions of key dimensions of climate as indicators of increased SEL (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2007).

Our analysis of the relationship between teacher perceptions of the impact of the assistant principal and the change in student perceptions of



climate also yielded interesting results. We found small, but significant, positive relationships between the change in student perceptions of instructional leadership and the perceived assistant principal impact on student progress monitoring and teacher collaboration. It seems that students did recognize the impact of the work of the assistant principal based on the reported change in their perceptions on related school climate items. Similarly, the change in student climate support scale had a small, positive relationship with perceptions of assistant principal impact on student progress monitoring, teacher collaboration, and student achievement. Based on research findings, this change in student perceptions is in alignment with vital elements of instructional leadership that eventually lead to quantitative evidence of student achievement (Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998; Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, & Porter, 2006; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008).

8.4 Realizing Academic and Non-Academic Outcomes

8.4.1 Academic Impact

Our study did not include an analysis of student achievement trends on the K-PREP assessment, as the timeframe for the introduction of the assistant principal role had only been a short two years. Such an analysis seemed premature to render a true finding on the quantitative relationship between the work of the assistant principal and student achievement based on assessment results. However, we did gather evidence about the work of the assistant principal and its *perceived* impact on student achievement. Moreover, we asked about other areas of instructional leadership and student support that have been affirmatively linked as having a causal relationship with student learning gains. Through this indirect evidence, we are able to glean some information about how the assistant principal role may be driving student achievement.

First, our survey respondents indicated that student achievement was among the areas where assistant principals were perceived to be making an impact on the school. Specifically, the

assistant principal's frequency of engaging specifically in creating the master schedule, reviewing student data and setting goals, and determining student discipline consequences explained nearly 20 percent of the change in perception of the assistant principal's impact on student achievement as reported by the administrative team - principal, assistant principal, counselor, and goal clarity coach. This model validates the overall feedback that the work of the assistant principal was thought to have a relatively greater impact on student progress monitoring, teacher collaboration, and consistent rule enforcement. All these areas have a proven impact on student academic achievement as measured by results on state assessments (Knapp, Copeland, & Talbert, 2003; Murphy, Elliot, Goldring, Porter 2006; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Thus, this early evidence portends of future gains on state assessments as a result of the elementary assistant principal role.

8.4.2 Non-Academic Impact

Unlike our indirect approach to evaluating the impact of the assistant principal on student achievement, with regard to non-academic factors, we used actual data on suspension and attendance, as well reviewing data from our survey in the fall 2014. In using these multiple sources, we were able to uncover some evidence of the impact of the assistant principal role on classroom disruption and student attendance, as the logic model indicated were primary outcomes expected from the role of the assistant principal.

First, we reviewed the perception data regarding the assistant principal's impact on classroom disruption. Respondents to our survey rated consistent rule enforcement as one of the areas where the relative impact of the assistant principal role was the greatest. Moreover, our regression analysis found that nearly 38 percent of variation in the respondent's perception of the assistant principal's impact on consistent rule enforcement could be explained by their perceptions regarding the frequency of assistant principal engagement in behavior interventions, parent contact, creating the master schedule, staff



hiring, management of support staff, and maintenance of school policies. Thus, to the extent that consistent rule enforcement leads to decreased classroom disruption and greater student engagement (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009; Robinson, Lloyd, & Row, 2008), we have found evidence that the assistant principal is having a positive impact as intended.

Moreover, we have reviewed the data on suspensions and also found that the assistant principal's frequency and percent of time spent on student interactions leads to an increased rate of suspensions. This validates and confirms our findings from the perception data. As assistant principals engage in student behavior activities, there is a positive, small correlation with the rate of suspension. This reality is being perceived by teachers and administrators alike. Though not a direct measure of classroom disruption, this evidence does seem to provide some indication of the downstream effect of such.

Next, we considered the perception data on student tardiness and student attendance. The responses from teachers and the administrative team indicated that these were areas where the role of the assistant principal had the least impact. Moreover, our conversations in focus groups and interviews also indicated that assistant principals were not directly involved in attendance monitoring and that principals did not feel that managing attendance was an assistant principal duty. However, to the extent that principals are engaged in elements of student support, they may have an indirect impact on student attendance and tardiness. For example, increased SEL learning is associated with lower rates of student absenteeism (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2007; Van Velsor, 2009). These

mediating factors may explain some of the mixed results from our review of actual attendance data.

Our findings were that the assistant principal's engagement in work activities in the school operations and student support scales was associated with higher attendance rates generally, though the correlations were weak. However, the work of the assistant principal in those areas was also associated with higher rates of students with chronic absenteeism (absent more than 25 days). The number of students deemed chronically absent had a strong correlation with the percent of students in the school who were receiving free or reduced lunch. It is probable that those higher poverty schools purposefully engaged assistant principals in working with chronically absent students as a strategy to try to manage a persistent problem. It is likely that the assistant principal's work may not have had time to produce a reduction in the number of chronically absent students in high needs schools, or it may be that a different support structure or other personnel would be better suited to make an impact in this area.

Overall, there is some directional evidence to support the notion that role of the assistant principal is having a positive impact on academic and non-academic outcomes. The impact on academic outcomes is evidenced by perception data in which respondents report that the assistant principal is primarily involved in instructional leadership activities and student behavior support. The impact on non-academic factors, however, is limited by the assistant principal's ability to influence the work of the counselor to focus more broadly on SEL for all students (Van Velsor, 2009). In addition, the lack of direct involvement by the assistant principal in attendance management is another limitation to their impact on this area.





9 Recommendations

Our analysis of interview, survey, and focus group data, as well as our review of the literature has led us to several recommendations for JCPS' subsequent structure and continued implementation of the elementary assistant principal role. Overall, our findings suggest that JCPS is faced with a decision with regard to the assistant principal role – either update the practice surrounding the assistant principal role so the logic model can be fully realized or continue with the current implementation and practice regarding assistant principal role with an updated logic model to reflect that decision. Regardless of which choice JCPS makes regarding its logic model, two other recommendations are also included with regard to communication and the goal clarity coach role.

9.1 Adjust practice to align with current logic model.

- **Reduce assistant principal time on instructional leadership and engage goal clarity coaches to backfill their capacity.**

It is important for the assistant principal to participate in instructional leadership. This includes supporting PLCs and monitoring instruction via the formal evaluation process. However, when this involvement also means that the assistant principal is facilitating intervention groups and leading multiple PLCs across grade levels, the assistant principal has likely crossed into the domain of the goal clarity coach. Universally, focus group and interview participants agreed that the sole focus of the goal clarity coach was instruction. The assistant principal was deployed to be generalist. Yet, our findings indicate that many assistant principals are supporting student behavior and teacher instruction exclusively. We have already discussed how this focus leads to the counselor continuing to carry a heavy load of administrative duties. As such, the assistant principal needs to shift some of their time spent on instructional leadership to administrative support. In doing

so, goal clarity coaches will be able to engage in their primary, specialized responsibility toward instruction. This should resolve some to the tension between the role of the assistant principal and the goal clarity coach. This shift will also better align practice to the logic model.

- **Improve teacher and coach perceptions of frequency and quality of feedback.**

Though assistant principals have fully engaged in PLCs and supported teacher collaboration, it is less clear that they have been able to directly or indirectly influence perceptions on the frequency and quality of feedback about teaching. It may be that in releasing some elements of the PLC work, assistant principals can instead participate in more formal evaluations or informal walk-throughs. In addition, they can indirectly support PLCs by reinforcing strategies introduced in PLCs through observation and follow-up in the classroom. The principal and assistant principal may need to make a concerted effort to coordinate their work on evaluation and co-observe to build understanding of the new evaluation rubric.

- **Understand the involvement of assistant principals in increasing suspension rates.**

Our study was able to confirm that the work of assistant principals was associated with increasing rates of suspension in elementary schools. However, it was unclear if this was a positive or negative in terms of improved classroom behavior and order. We believe that the district should track and analyze data related to classroom office referrals and other discipline incidents that did not necessarily result in suspension. It is important for JCPS to determine if the assistant principal is legitimately helping to enforce the consequences around offenses that clearly warrant suspension or if he is increasing suspensions for behavior that may not



necessarily rise to such action. If the assistant principal's involvement in discipline is meant to support social emotional learning and behavior interventions, more work will need to be done to confirm if that is the case.

- **Increase assistant principal involvement in behavior interventions rather than simply doling out consequences.**

As noted in the above discussion, the increase in suspension rates may be a concern based on the trend data from discipline incidents or office referrals. This trend may reveal a need to for assistant principals to invest more time in student behavior interventions to proactively avoid issues that rise to the level of suspension. Our study found that the frequency of participation in behavior interventions led to more positive perceptions of the impact of the assistant principal on student achievement and teacher collaboration. We believe that the prioritization of intervention above punishment may help to reverse the trends around suspension and help students be more academically successful.

9.2 Prioritize principal autonomy through revamped theory of action.

- **Provide building leaders with autonomy regarding role responsibilities.**

With the implementation of assistant principals at the elementary level, JCPS had specific intentions for the role outlined in the job description, as well as specific goals outlined in the logic model. However, in implementation, the district has granted complete autonomy to principals at the building level as to how the assistant principal resource is utilized. Research indicates that this is often the case for supportive roles in the building where principals utilize those roles in a manner they deem best for their building (Clemens, Milsom, & Cashwell, 2009; Marshall & Hooley, 2006). Currently in JCPS, the assignment of duties for assistant principals is completely defined by the principal. They

define the need and allocate assistant principal resources to meet that need. Additionally, other building positions such as counselors and goal clarity coaches are assigned roles based on school need. Therefore, building to building the mix of responsibilities between assistant principals, counselors, and goal clarity coaches differs. In this reality, there is no set logic model – there is only additional school support provided and utilized differently in each building.

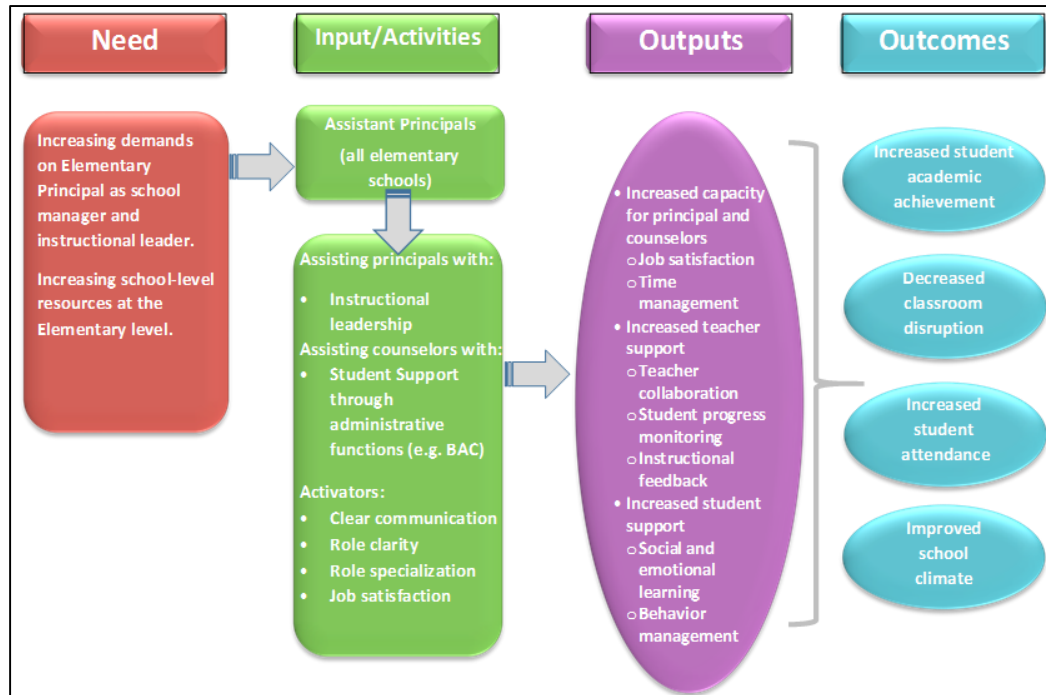
- **Provide building principals a certain number of FTEs that they can allocate to any support position.**

If JCPS is supportive of allowing buildings complete autonomy in the allocation of responsibilities to roles, then the district can continue to allow principals to assign duties based on the needs of their building regardless of the overall district goals for the additional building support. One option would be to allow principals to have a given number of full time employee (FTE) positions that they can allocate to any role they want. So, perhaps a principal wants a counselor and two coaches, while another principal wants a counselor, a coach, and an assistant principal. With the principal defining the FTEs that they need in advance, the job postings and job descriptions would match that need. This would allow individuals who apply for that given position to know that the work outlined in the job description is in fact the work in which they will be engaged. Currently this is not the case, as individuals who apply for an assistant principal or coach role in different buildings may or may not be doing the work outlined in the job description. This change allows building supports to meet building needs; those needs are not predefined by the district.



9.3 Update logic model to achieve current goals for AP role.

Figure 32: Fully-Developed Logic Model for Elementary Assistant Principal



- **Add instructional leadership to assistant principal responsibilities.**

Instructional leadership is a key component to the work in JCS. Part of the rationale for the addition of the assistant principal role was to take some responsibilities from principals to allow them to focus on instructional leadership. However, with the large scope of instructional leadership, including teacher support with regard to PLCs and instructional strategies, it is reasonable that schools would need principals, assistant principals, and goal clarity coaches to all be involved in the instructional leadership function. This could in part drive the current allocation of responsibilities. In this case, instructional leadership might need to be identified in a future logic model as an input where assistant principals are taking on the responsibility. Further, because our study indicates that assistant principals are minimally involved in attendance and tardy monitoring, this may

need to be removed as a primary expectation for assistant principals from the logic model.

- **Shift work of the AP to include more administrative support.**

Consistently, counselors indicated that the balance of work activities deemed administrative support were not re-distributed, such that they could spend more time with students. Specifically, counselors cited the work of building assessment coordinator as a role that took considerable amounts of time and was not aligned to the social and emotional support of students. The American School Counselor Association has highlighted assessment coordination as one of the areas that should be removed from counselor duties to align with their student-centered model of the role (Van Velsor 2009). Moreover, counselors are engaged in attendance and tardiness (the attendance committee) and other administrative duties. Instead of the counselor being a specialist,

exclusively focused on student support, the counselor almost functions as a “back-up assistant principal” even after introducing the AP role to the building. In order to align practice with the logic model, counselors will need to be released from general administrative duties (that can be completed by others) to focus on specialty work like the ARC, ECE services, individual counseling, and classroom guidance lessons. The district must liberate counselors to spend more time on individual counseling and classroom guidance lessons.

- **Distinguish and divide special education assessment (for ECE identification) from general education assessment.**

In order to resolve the question or conflict around the building assessment coordinator role, it may be advisable to distinguish general education assessment from special education assessment. This distinction would allow counselors to continue to engage with school psychologists in completing assessment for identification of specific learning disabilities or emotional behavioral diagnoses. General education assessments such as universal screening, district benchmark assessments, or state assessments would all shift to the assistant principal. This division of assessment coordination would allow assistant principals to continue their direct involvement in data collection and reporting in support of PLCs. However, it would also allow counselors to focus on those students who have or will be provided ECE services, including consulting on accommodations for general education assessment programs.

- **Gather feedback from counselors on how to increase their time on direct student interactions toward enhanced social and emotional supports.**

The original logic model clearly indicated the expectation that the assistant principal role would change the work of the counselor. Unfortunately, many counselors reported their work had not been influenced in such a

way that they were able to be a better support to students. Repeatedly, all respondents indicated that they primarily saw the assistant principal as a resource that has improved the work of the principal. The assistant principal is perceived as helping to increase job satisfaction, effectiveness, and time management for the principal. These sentiments were less intense or absent when focused on counselors. As such, more dialogue with counselors will help to identify what they actually need to truly realize the vision of the logic model as proposed.

9.4 Clearly communicate roles and responsibilities of administrative team.

- **Clearly articulate building and district expectations regarding roles.**

Regardless of which approach to the logic model JCPS chooses to take, there needs to be clearer communication to all staff about duties and responsibilities. This includes clear communication to those hired as to what their duties and responsibilities are as well as to other staff in a building as to which responsibilities are associated with which roles.

If JCPS is going to allow building principals autonomy in defining the roles in their schools, there is still a need for principals to communicate the duties of those roles within the building. To aid in effective use of building support, teachers and staff need to know who to contact about certain issues. When there is a deficit of clear communication around the roles and the responsibilities associated with each role, teacher perceptions are impacted. Our findings show that when teachers were not communicated with regarding the duties for which assistant principals were responsible, they indicated assistant principals were less engaged across all work domains.



- **Provide professional development regarding role responsibilities.**

JCPS needs to communicate with principals regarding the expectation of the work of each role. For example, if district leadership continues to have the expectation that the building assessment coordinator role should be served by assistant principals, that needs to be made clear and JCPS needs to ensure that principals are following that directive. Further, if JCPS is going to define the roles at the district level, then professional development must be provided. For example, there may be assistant principals who need training with regard to building assessment coordinator or student response team responsibilities.

9.5 Address goal clarity coach concerns.

- **Clarify the goal clarity coach role as a pipeline to assistant principal or principal.**

Our study uncovered numerous tensions between the assistant principal and goal clarity coach role. Another interesting note was the confusion around the goal clarity coach as pipeline to principalship. Though we spoke to several coaches who believe that that this position would provide a competitive advantage in applications for assistant principal, the principals and counselors that we spoke with seemed to believe that the goal clarity coach was more of a career pathway for teachers who want to advance but do not want to joint administration. The perception of the

goal clarity coach as more akin to a teacher than an administrator may also explain the reluctance to have coaches take ownership for PLCs and other areas of instructional leadership. JCPS needs to clearly communicate the positioning of the goal clarity coach for future administrative opportunities and that should inform how they are interact with or are integrated into the administrative team.

- **Communicate that the goal clarity coach is a member of the administrative team.**

In considering the positioning of the goal clarity coach for future leadership positions, the district much also clearly communicate how the role fits within the larger picture of school leadership. Our study found that goal clarity coaches were the least likely to be deemed part of the administrative team by teachers and administrators alike. This lack of standing, so to speak, may impede their ability to influence teacher behavior in terms of PLC engagement and continuous instructional improvement. It is important for teachers to know and understand that the coach is not a formal evaluator. However, teachers should also know and understand that the coach has the authority to drive instructional improvement through PLCs and individual feedback. Goal clarity coaches should be included in the administrative team and should take ownership of the PLC and supporting teachers toward improving their instructional practice.





10 Conclusion

The assistant principal role is one that has long been implemented at the high school and middle school level in JCS. The district identified a need at the elementary level for additional school-based support. This support was operationalized through the addition of an assistant principal position in each of its 90 elementary schools. Our study explored this deployment of the elementary assistant principals in JCS, specifically gathering descriptive information around the functioning of this role, as well as its perceived and realized impact.

Our study found that overwhelmingly assistant principals are involved in work within the instructional leadership and student support domains. These are the aspects in which most of their time is spent, where they are engaged in tasks with the highest frequency, and that were prioritized as the most important work for their role. There was consistent agreement between principals and assistant principals with regard to the work of assistant principals, but counselors and goal clarity coaches did not always share the same viewpoint. Our analysis revealed that some of this disagreement regarding the assistant principal role stems from a lack of role clarity at the district and building level.

Our findings show that the logic model that JCS created for the assistant principal role has yet to be fully realized. The addition of the assistant principal was intended to allow both principals and counselors to spend more time focused on the core of their work. Yet, it is clear that the work of the assistant principal has not had the same impact for principals and counselors.

While there is evidence that the assistant principal role has benefited principals with many aspects of their work (instructional leadership and student support), counselors have not experienced a similar benefit. We found minimal data to suggest that assistant principals are absorbing responsibilities that would allow counselors to focus on student support. Further, there is only limited, preliminary evidence to indicate assistant principals are having the intended impact on outcomes. We did find that assistant principal

work in the domain of student support is associated with higher attendance rates. Additionally, our analysis indicates that the assistant principal work in student support is associated with increased suspension rates. Moreover, we also confirmed some evidence that the work of the assistant did impact student and teacher perceptions of school climate. The perceived impact of the work of the assistant principal was also related to the frequency with they were reported to be engaged in certain work domains. However, these perceived results centered on instructional leadership. There was no indication that the addition of the assistant resulted in more student time with the counselor, more individual counseling sessions, or increased frequency of classroom guidance lessons. Thus, we conclude that the one of the critical needs as defined by the logic model, greater support for student social and emotional development, is not being addressed as a result of the counselors' inability to focus on this central charge of their work.

Therefore, our investigation found that the elementary assistant principal role as currently in practice in JCS is not leading to all the desired outcomes articulated by JCS. Therefore, the district is faced with a choice regarding how to move forward with this role. JCS leadership must either ensure that the work of the assistant principal aligns with its original logic model to fully realize the intended district-wide outcomes or continue to allow the assistant principal role to be defined at the building level and identify individualized outcomes associated with the specific domains of work for that particular school context. Regardless, the district will need to address the conflict between goal clarity coach role and that of the assistant principal in terms of instructional leadership and career positioning. Further, the responsibilities for all members of the administrative team must be clarified and communicated, such that teachers recognize and understand them.

Overall, we conclude that elementary assistant principals are making a substantive



impact on the work of their schools. The challenge for JCPS is to determine if these results represent the optimal resource allocation choice based on the identified needs of students and staff at the

elementary level. In so doing, JCPS leadership will ensure continued progress toward the district's goals and priorities.



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12 Appendix A – Interview Protocol

1. On a typical day, how is your time spent?
2. Tell me more about how you support:
 - a. Instruction (PD, PLCs, teacher eval obs, walk-thrus, curriculum, etc.),
 - b. Administrative functions (scheduling, logistics, hiring, registration, budget/finance, etc),
 - c. Students (discipline, counseling, attendance, extra-curriculars, SpEd, etc.) and/or
 - d. Operations (transportation, food service, maintenance, etc.)?
3. How do the principal, assistant principal, coach, and counselor work together as an administrative team? Do these roles define administration in your building? How do you work together generally?
4. What are the duties of the assistant principal, as you understand them or have directly observed?
5. How has the addition of the assistant principal role in your building added value to the school environment or your work personally?





13 Appendix B – Interview Concept Matrix

Concepts	Themes and Quotes				Evidence
	Theme	Theme	Theme	Theme	Documents/ Observations
Value-Add/ Impact of the AP	<p>Greater Overall Capacity C2: “We need to have... qualified, good people helping facilitate the process of learning. And the AP position does that.” C2: “I want to be crystal clear, there is tremendous value there.” GCC3: “It was so great to have someone else as an administrator that I could go to as a teacher...One of them was always there.” AP2: “I think that having another person in the [AP] role, however, it’s used, just frees-up the other administrators to be able to do more of their job.”</p>	<p>Counselor Productivity C1: “When there was no AP, many of the tasks fell to the counselor. Now I have more time to be in the classrooms.” P1: “Tough to do the counselor role with just the principal and counselor.” C2: “The counselor role before [the AP] was overburdened with too much.” P3: “The counselor did all the discipline. They were the bad guy instead of the support [for students]. Now, they can be counselors.”</p>	<p>Principal Support AP1: “The AP role provides extra support for the principal – someone else can take on tasks to meet more kids’ needs” GCC3: “Principals have so much to do. And a lot of times they can’t always meet the needs of all the teachers in the building. They just can’t.” P3: “I have a partner...to have instructional conversations and bounce-off [ideas]. It’s helpful to have someone...so I don’t have to do all this by myself.”</p>	<p>Barriers to Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly defining the role Choosing the right people (background characteristics and skill match) Principal leadership Not having ultimate authority to make changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JCPS strategic plan
Defining the role of the AP	<p>Principal Attitudes AP1: “I was first hired by the principal as she was looking for someone opposite from her – she was a visionary, but lacking in instructional expertise.” P2: “My Assistant Principal is just that an assistant principal – she is involved in all of the work I do.” P3: “It was hard to transition some principals, they did not want to give away power.” AP2: “Our principal, definitely, he likes to have his hand in everything...It’s a little wishy-washy knowing what the expectation...of who’s covering what. We would love to try to pull our principal in [to administrative meetings with AP, counselor, and coach] a little more.” P3: “I think it is very important that [me and the AP] think alike.</p>	<p>Division of Labor P2: “If the principal’s job is to ensure there is more effective instruction in more classrooms more of the time, then we need for counselors to work on mental health, we need a manager for the building, need a behavior person – the amount of stress you are under to do your job effectively.” P1: “When I was hired as an AP, I sat down with my principal, we took all three roles [principal, counselor, and AP] and listed the responsibilities of each person, then we gave that to the staff.” P3: “I am taking the assessment grades – grades 3, 4, 5.” C3: “I had asked for me to be relived of assessment duties, but that was turned down.” GCC3: “We do walk-throughs together. So, the three of us go</p>	<p>Unclear Roles GCC1: “This job is what the principal wants you to do, not the job I was hired to do” GCC1: “In the first year with the AP no one’s role was clear, you would just get in and be utilized in whatever role” C3: “The AP role is not defined. So, if the principal doesn’t define it, it’s really kind of difficult.” GCC4: “The position of the GCC and the position of the AP were added at about the same time... Sometimes the way that it went was that the person with the most [initiative] to get things done [ended up with more responsibility].” GCC4: “I don’t know if the district set-out defined roles of ‘here’s how we imagine you using your APs... I think there is a double-edged</p>	<p>Primary Responsibilities GCC1: “Teachers see the AP’s value in discipline, but not aware of his role and relation to instruction.” GCC3: “I think having the AP role as an instructional support is so important.” C3: “I think the AP should be an instructional support to principal and teachers as well. Support for behavior, general running of the school type of stuff.” C3: “Testing is very time consuming.” C3: We are both first-line support for behavior referrals. It just depends on the relationship [with teacher and/or student].” GCC4: “I always heard that the AP position was the three b’s: behavior, buses, and budgets’ ...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP Job description Assistant principal does same work as principal – share responsibilities Assistant principal does different work from principal – split responsibilities Role defined based on prior experience

	<p>That we have the same values and beliefs.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong principal leadership helps to clearly define roles 	<p>together sometimes [principal, AP, and GCC]. We talk about needs and develop tools together.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overlap with coaches. Some APs work with small group intervention and individual teacher coaches. • GCC instructionally focused 	<p>sword in saying ‘Here, we’re giving you an AP, we know your job’s so stressful...Use them.’ But, I think it should have been “our [district] expectation is that [APs]...do walk-throughs, that they do provide best practices, feedback to teachers, that some of the behavior issues...”</p>	<p>AP2: “My job is number 1 to support the teachers...be more of an instructional leader. I don’t feel like [being a disciplinarian] is my job.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear messaging about AP as an instructional support role • AP typically involved in behavior referrals. 	
<p>Allocating administrative resources in elementary schools</p>	<p><i>Administrative Support</i> P2: “We had a SAM, then we were given an AP. The AP can focus on instruction, but there are so many managerial aspects that need to be handled. I would like to have both an AP and a SAM.” C3: “I’ve got just as much or more on my plate than I ever did. Because we had a [half-time] counselor who did a lot of the ECE [administrative] stuff and now we don’t.” C3: “When we had the half-time counselor, I was able to concentrate on children before. Now, I am really bogged down with [administrative] things.”</p>	<p><i>Efficiency</i> GCC2: “I don’t really think that at the elementary level every school needed an AP, some have minimal discipline” GCC2: “I was at a school where they had a TLC (behavior person) for years, the district did away with that role and now the AP is doing that same job for more money. We also had a SAM and the AP role is exactly the same as the SAM for twice the money.” C3: “We’ve used the budget for the other counselor to get a part-time reading recovery person and for other personnel. GCC4: “I feel like a lot of times there are two of us somewhere when they don’t necessarily need two of us there. And there are definitely some things that need to be done that aren’t done.” GCC4: “That’s a lot of money in buildings...Those are questions that you hear murmured through schools. ‘Are we getting this much [money’s] worth from having this person in the building?’”</p>	<p><i>Prioritizing resource investment</i> P1: “Adding the AP has been the best money spent in JCPS” P3: “Elementary school is the most critical, an extra person is needed for evaluation and behavior” C2: “Because it really gets down to the bottom line is streamlining resources towards where resources are most needed. Put them right back in the schools...”</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin team typically includes Principal, AP, and Counselor. • Either coach or family resource coordinator rotate into the admin team depending on type of school (high poverty or low poverty)
<p>Qualifications/ Background/ Characteristics of the AP</p>	<p><i>Gender Balance</i> GCC2: “I wasn’t considered for an AP role because I am a woman.”</p>	<p><i>Grade-level Experience</i> GCC2: “I have noticed that a lot of people certified to be administrators at the elementary level are being passed over for high school or middle school</p>	<p><i>Specific Skills & Competencies</i> GCC3: “[Our AP last year]...is very strong in math. And I have a very strong literacy background. The two of us, we really balance each other well... If there was a</p>	<p><i>Talent Pipeline</i> GCC3: “A lot of GCCs do transition to [AP]. A lot of GCCs do have administrative certificates, and they take this job [GCC] as a step towards becoming an AP. I</p>	

		<p>candidates. The site based decision making leads to cronyism – they just hire their friends.”</p> <p>GCC1: “First time administrators are often sent the elementary level, even if don’t have elementary experience”</p> <p>GCC3: “[Our current AP] came from middle school, so his strengths are different, too. He’s getting into the elementary role.”</p> <p>GCC4: “There have been a lot of elementary schools that have had middle and high school people placed in the AP position... To me, that speaks to the district saying you don’t have to be an instructional leader... It’s kind of reflective that [the AP] position is more a process, procedures, policy position than it is an instructional position.”</p>	<p>math thing, she would sometimes take on that role, helping teachers with math and go into classrooms to do that.”</p> <p>GCC4: “People tend to stick to what they’re most comfortable with.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and coaching experience versus counselor or other experience 	<p>think that this role [GCC] would definitely prepare me for AP role.”</p> <p>AP2: “The AP position seemed like a great fit [for my background as an instructional coach]. It was a great way to feel out a leadership role without having the ultimate responsibility.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP seems to be the only career path for GCC. • No other obvious pipeline beyond teachers in secondary schools looking for administrative responsibilities 	
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14 Appendix C – Survey Protocols

14.1 Principal Survey Protocol

JCPS AP Project-Principal

Q1 Does the Assistant Principal at this school have prior experience (in any role) at the elementary level?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)
- I don't know. (99)

If Yes Is Not Selected, Then Skip To How long has the Assistant Principal ...

Q2 In what role was the Assistant Principal's prior experience at the elementary level?

- Teacher (1)
- Coach (2)
- Family Resource Coordinator (3)
- Counselor (4)
- Administrator (5)
- Other: Please explain. (6) _____
- I don't know. (99)

Q3 How long has the Assistant Principal been in this role at this school?

- It is his/her first year. (1)
- It is his/her second year. (2)
- It is his/her third year. (3)
- He or she has been an Elementary Assistant Principal at this current school for more than three years. (4)
- I don't know. (99)

Q4 How long has this school's Assistant Principal been an Assistant Principal (at any grade level) with Jefferson County Public Schools?

- It is his/her first year. (1)
- It is his/her second year. (2)
- It is his/her third year. (3)
- He or she has been an Assistant Principal in JCPS for more than three years. (4)
- I don't know. (99)



Q5 As I understand it, the long-term career goal of the current Assistant Principal is to:

- Remain as an elementary Assistant Principal (1)
- Attain a classroom teaching position (2)
- Attain a coaching position (3)
- Attain a counselor position (4)
- Attain an Assistant Principal position at a middle or high school (5)
- Attain a Principal position at an elementary school (6)
- Attain a Principal position at a middle or high school (7)
- Attain a district administrator role (8)
- Attain a state level position (9)
- Other: Please explain. (10) _____
- I don't know. (11)

Q6 Administrative Support - The Assistant Principal at this school does the following work:

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	Frequently (3)
Creates the master schedule (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participates in teacher and staff hiring (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supervises school support staff (teaching assistants and school support services) (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manages attendance data (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manages budgeting (e.g. grants, Title I, fundraising accounts, or other school funds) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Serves as the testing coordinator for the building (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Updates school policies for staff and students, including school handbooks (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q7 Instructional Leadership - The Assistant Principal at this school does the following work:

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	Frequently (3)
Helps to set and communicate vision and mission (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participates in development of school improvement plan (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reviews data and helps to communicate goals on student learning outcomes (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leads or participates in professional development sessions, including professional learning communities (PLCs) (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completes classroom walk-throughs and provides feedback (informal observations) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completes teacher evaluations and provides feedback (formal observations) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensures teachers' instruction is aligned to curriculum standard (e.g. reviewing lesson plans) (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Co-teaches or models in classrooms for instructional support (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leads small group interventions for struggling students (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 School Operations - The Assistant Principal at this school does the following work:

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	Frequently (3)
Oversees facilities reservation/booking for outside groups (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manages custodians and food service staff (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handles facilities issues and building maintenance requests (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handles technology and equipment maintenance requests (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Oversees scheduling for bus and/or lunch duty (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coordinates coverage for student transitions (e.g. lunch duty, bus duty, recess) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coordinates school safety activities (e.g. safety plan, fire drills, etc.) (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handles school supplies inventory (e.g. ordering, monitoring, etc.) (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9 Student Support - The Assistant Principal at this school does the following work:

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	Frequently (3)
Handles discipline referrals from teachers within classroom/school setting (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handles discipline from bus referrals (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participates in behavioral interventions (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handles student de-escalation for severe behavior disruptions (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Determines and executes discipline consequences (e.g. detention, suspension and/or expulsion) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leads admissions and release committee (ARC) process (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leads student response team (SRT) process (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coordinates after-care (extended school services) and extra-curricular activities (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engages with parents regarding student issues (e.g. conferences or phone calls regarding academics, attendance and/or behavior, etc.) (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q10 In my building, the work of the Assistant Principal is prioritized as follows: (Please rank from 1 - 4, with 1 being most important and 4 being least important. Click with your mouse and drag the options to rank them.)

_____ Administrative Support (e.g. attendance, scheduling, testing, communications, budgets, hiring) (4)

_____ Instructional Leadership (e.g curriculum, coaching, evaluation, goal setting, progress monitoring, PLCs, PD) (3)

_____ School Operations (e.g. facilities, custodial, food service, technology, equipment, maintenance) (2)

_____ Student Support (e.g. discipline, positive behavior supports, parent contact, ARC, SRT, extra-curricular, extended learning) (1)

Q11 How did the following areas influence the duties/priorities of the Assistant Principal role in this school?

	No Influence (1)	Some Influence (2)	Strong Influence (3)
Assistant Principal job description provided by JCPS human resources (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assistant Principal's prior skills and experiences (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School needs and opportunities for improvement (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My needs, as a principal, for a complementary skillset (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My preferences, as a principal, for the work I like to do (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
District training/ communications about the function of the AP role (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
JCPS Strategic Plan: Vision 2015 goals (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assistant Principal's preferences for the kind of work he or she likes to do (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A "divide and conquer" system between the members of the administrative team (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q12 Which staff members are included on the "administrative team" at this school? Check all that apply.

- Principal (1)
- Assistant Principal (2)
- Family Resource Coordinator (3)
- School Counselor (4)
- Goal Clarity Coach (5)
- Other: Please explain. (6) _____



Q13 In terms of specific duties and responsibilities, there is a clear distinction between:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
The role of the Principal and the role of the AP. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The role of the counselor and the role of the AP. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The role of the goal clarity coach and the role of the AP. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q14 How did you, as the principal, communicate the responsibilities of the Assistant Principal to the school staff? Check all that apply.

- I have not formally communicated to staff regarding the Assistant Principal responsibilities. (1)
- I included Assistant Principal responsibilities in the staff handbook. (2)
- I included Assistant Principal responsibilities in a staff email/memo/newsletter. (3)
- I shared Assistant Principal responsibilities in a staff/faculty meeting. (4)
- I met with teachers individually or in small teams to share the Assistant Principal responsibilities. (4)
- Other: Please explain. (6) _____

Q15 The Assistant Principal and I have discussed the responsibilities assigned to them.

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Q16 I feel confident in the Assistant Principal's ability to perform his or her assigned responsibilities.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q17 Since the addition of an AP to the school staff, how have the following areas been impacted?

	Has worsened (1)	Has not changed (2)	Has improved (3)
Student attendance rates (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student tardiness (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff access to the principal (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visibility of the principal in hallways and classrooms (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaboration among teachers (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Progress monitoring of student learning (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Frequency of feedback on instruction (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quality of feedback on instruction (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student achievement outcomes (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Condition of furniture, computers and other equipment (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School safety (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consistent enforcement of the rules for student behavior (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student misbehavior causing disruption to teaching (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student misbehavior while riding the bus (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student misbehavior outside of the classroom or bus (e.g. in the hallways or recess) (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student participation and engagement in the classroom (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Individual student time with the counselor (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My overall job satisfaction (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q18 On average throughout the school year, what percentage of time do you estimate that you spend on the following tasks in this school? (Please indicate percent of time in increments of 5%, being sure that the total equals 100%.)

_____ Internal administrative tasks, including scheduling, attendance, human resource/personnel issues, regulations, reports, school budget (5)

_____ Curriculum and teaching-related tasks, including teaching guidance lessons, lesson preparation, classroom observations, PLCs, mentoring teachers (6)

_____ Student interactions, including discipline and academic guidance (7)

_____ Parent interactions, including formal and informal interactions (8)

_____ Operations tasks, including facilities, custodial, food service, technology, equipment, maintenance, etc. (9)

_____ Other: Please explain. (10)

Q19 Job Satisfaction. The addition of the AP role has.....

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Made the job of the counselor more manageable (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Made the job of the principal more manageable (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Made the job of the principal more attractive to me as a long-term career option (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helped me to be a more effective leader as principal. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Improved my overall job satisfaction. (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Q20 Teacher Support. The addition of the AP role has.....

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Increased the frequency of classroom guidance lessons led by the counselor. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enabled the counselor to be more effective as a support to teachers. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enabled me, as the principal, to spend more time providing feedback to teachers on instruction. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q21 Student Engagement. The addition of the AP role has.....

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Enabled the counselor to build stronger student relationships. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enabled me, as the principal, to build stronger student relationships. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increased the time that the counselor spends engaged in individual, one-on-one, student counseling sessions. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enabled the counselor to be more effective as a support to students. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q22 Time Management. The addition of the AP role has.....

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Helped the counselor to manage his or her time more effectively. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helped me, as the principal, to manage my time more effectively. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q23 If I were asked to consider the value of the AP role in exchange for an additional counselor I would prefer:

- To keep the AP role (1)
- To exchange the AP role for an additional counselor (0)

Q24 If I were asked to consider the value of the AP role in exchange for an additional goal clarity coach I would prefer:

- To keep the AP role (1)
- To exchange the AP role for an additional goal clarity coach (0)

Q25 If I were asked to consider the value of the AP role in exchange for an additional teacher I would prefer:

- To keep the AP role (1)
- To exchange the AP role for an additional teacher (0)

Q26 If I were asked to consider value of the AP role in exchange for an office manager (or School Administration Manager) I would prefer:

- To keep the AP role (1)
- To exchange the AP role for an office manager or SAM (0)

Q27 Did your building lose any positions (full or part-time) in order to gain an Assistant Principal?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Q28 If the district no longer funded the Assistant Principal role, would you advocate continuing to fund that role out of your school budget?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Q29 Would you eliminate an existing certified position (teacher, librarian, counselor, etc.) to add a second AP position?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Q30 What proportion of students qualify for free-reduced lunch in your school based on the most recent data available?

- Less than 40% (5)
- At least 40 and less than 60% (4)
- At least 60% and less than 80% (3)
- At least 80% and less than 90% (2)
- 90% or greater (1)



Q31 What is the level of achievement for the most recent year available in reading K-PREP?

- Less than 20% proficient or advanced (1)
- At least 20% and less 40% proficient or advanced (2)
- At least 40% and less than 60% proficient or advanced (3)
- At least 60% and less than 80% proficient or advanced (4)
- 80% or greater proficient or advanced (6)

Q32 What neighborhood context most closely reflects your school location?

- Rural (1)
- Suburban (2)
- Urban (3)

Q33 How many students are enrolled in your building this school year?

- Less than 400 students (1)
- Between 400 - 600 students (2)
- Between 600 - 800 students (3)
- Between 800 - 1,000 students (4)
- More than 1,000 students (5)

Q34 Does your school have Family Resource Center?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Q36 Did or does this school have a SAM (School Administration Manager)?

- Yes, this school currently has a SAM. (2)
- Yes, this school previously had a SAM, but no longer has one. (1)
- No, this school has never had a SAM. (0)
- I don't know. (99)

Q37 How long have you worked in K-12 education in any certified position?

- This is my first year. (1)
- 1-2 years (2)
- 3-5 years (3)
- 6-10 years (4)
- 11-15 years (5)
- 16-20 years (6)
- More than 20 years (7)



Q38 How long did you work as an assistant principal before becoming a principal?

- 1-2 years (1)
- 3-5 years (2)
- 6-10 years (3)
- 11-15 years (4)
- 16-20 years (5)
- More than 20 years (6)
- I never worked as an assistant principal. (0)

Q39 How long have you been working as a principal?

Q40 How long have you been working as a principal at your current school?

14.2 Assistant Principal Survey Protocol

Derived from the Principal Survey Protocol.

14.3 Counselor Survey Protocol

Derived from the Principal Survey Protocol.

14.4 Goal Clarity Coach Survey Protocol

Derived from the Principal Survey Protocol.



14.5 Teacher Survey Protocol

JCPS AP Project-Teacher

Q1 Does the Assistant Principal at this school have prior experience (in any role) at the elementary level?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)
- I don't know. (99)

If Yes Is Not Selected, Then Skip To How long has the Assistant Principal ...

Q2 In what role was the Assistant Principal's prior experience at the elementary level?

- Teacher (1)
- Coach (2)
- Family Resource Coordinator (3)
- Counselor (4)
- Administrator (5)
- Other: Please explain. (6) _____
- I don't know. (99)

Q3 How long has the Assistant Principal been in this role at this school?

- It is his/her first year. (1)
- It is his/her second year. (2)
- It is his/her third year. (3)
- He or she has been an Elementary Assistant Principal at this current school for more than three years. (4)
- I don't know. (99)

Q4 Administrative Support - The Assistant Principal at this school does the following work:

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	Frequently (3)	I don't know. (99)
Creates the master schedule (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participates in teacher and staff hiring (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supervises school support staff (teaching assistants and school support services) (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manages attendance data (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manages budgeting (e.g. grants, Title I, fundraising accounts, or other school funds) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Serves as the testing coordinator for the building (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Updates school policies for staff and students, including school handbooks (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q5 Instructional Leadership - The Assistant Principal at this school does the following work:

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	Frequently (3)	I don't know. (99)
Helps to set and communicate vision and mission (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participates in development of school improvement plan (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reviews data and helps to communicate goals on student learning outcomes (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leads or participates in professional development sessions, including professional learning communities (PLCs) (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completes classroom walk-throughs and provides feedback (informal observations) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completes teacher evaluations and provides feedback (formal observations) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensures teachers' instruction is aligned to curriculum standard (e.g. reviewing lesson plans) (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-teaches or models in classrooms for instructional support (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leads small group interventions for struggling students (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If Helps to set and communicat... Is Selected, Then Skip To School Operations - The Assistant Pri...

Q6 School Operations - The Assistant Principal at this school does the following work:

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	Frequently (3)	I don't know. (4)
Oversees facilities reservation/booking for outside groups (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manages custodians and food service staff (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handles facilities issues and building maintenance requests (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handles technology and equipment maintenance requests (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Oversees scheduling for bus and/or lunch duty (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coordinates coverage for student transitions (e.g. lunch duty, bus duty, recess) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coordinates school safety activities (e.g. safety plan, fire drills, etc.) (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handles school supplies inventory (e.g. ordering, monitoring, etc.) (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q7 Student Support - The Assistant Principal at this school does the following work:

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	Frequently (3)	I don't know. (4)
Handles discipline referrals from teachers within classroom/school setting (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handles discipline from bus referrals (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participates in behavioral interventions (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handles student de-escalation for severe behavior disruptions (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Determines and executes discipline consequences (e.g. detention, suspension and/or expulsion) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leads admissions and release committee (ARC) process (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leads student response team (SRT) process (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coordinates after-care (extended school services) and extra-curricular activities (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engages with parents regarding student issues (e.g. conferences or phone calls regarding academics, attendance and/or behavior, etc.) (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 Which staff members are included on the “administrative team” at this school? Check all that apply.

- Principal (1)
- Assistant Principal (2)
- Family Resource Coordinator (3)
- School Counselor (4)
- Goal Clarity Coach (5)
- Other: Please explain. (6) _____

Q9 How did the principal communicate the responsibilities of the Assistant Principal to the school staff? Check all that apply.

- The Principal has not formally communicated to staff regarding the Assistant Principal responsibilities. (1)
- The Assistant Principal responsibilities were included in the staff handbook. (2)
- The Assistant Principal responsibilities were included in a staff email/memo/newsletter. (3)
- The Assistant Principal responsibilities were shared in a staff/faculty meeting. (4)
- The Principal met with teachers individually or in small teams to share the Assistant Principal responsibilities. (5)
- Other: Please explain. (6) _____



Q10 In terms of specific duties and responsibilities, there is a clear distinction between:

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
The role of the Principal and the role of the AP. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The role of the counselor and the role of the AP. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The role of the goal clarity coach and the role of the AP. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q11 I feel confident in the Assistant Principal’s ability to perform his or her assigned responsibilities.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q12 Since the addition of an AP to the school staff, how have the following areas been impacted?

	Has worsened (1)	Has not changed (2)	Has improved (3)
Student attendance rates (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student tardiness (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff access to the principal (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visibility of the principal in hallways and classrooms (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaboration among teachers (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Progress monitoring of student learning (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Frequency of feedback on instruction (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of feedback on instruction (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student achievement outcomes (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Condition of furniture, computers and other equipment (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School safety (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consistent enforcement of the rules for student behavior (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student misbehavior causing disruption to teaching (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student misbehavior while riding the bus (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student misbehavior outside of the classroom or bus (e.g. in the hallways or recess) (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student participation and engagement in the classroom (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Individual student time with the counselor (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My overall job satisfaction (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q13 The addition of the AP role has made the job of the principal more manageable.

Q14 The addition of the AP role has made the job of the principal more attractive to me as a potential career option.

Q15 The addition of the AP role has increased the frequency of classroom guidance lessons led by counselors.

Q16 The addition of the AP role has increased increased the time that the counselor spends engaging in individual, one-on-one, student counseling sessions.

Q17 In thinking about the impact of your administrative team on your school since the addition of the AP, what are your overall perceptions in the area of Administrative Support?

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
When I have a problem, I am able to reach my principal in a timely manner to resolve. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My principal provides effective leadership. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal consistently supports teachers. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like the way things are run at this school. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Routine duties and paperwork do not interfere with my job of teaching. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q18 In thinking about the impact of your administrative team on your school since the addition of the AP, what are your overall perceptions in the area of Instructional Leadership?

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
The principal facilitates using data to improve student learning. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers receive feedback that can help them improve teaching. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional development is differentiated to meet the needs of individual teachers. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal has worked with staff to meet curriculum standards. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q19 In thinking about the impact of your administrative team on your school since the addition of the AP, what are your overall perceptions in the area of School Operations?

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
The school environment is clean and well maintained. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Custodial staff responds promptly to my requests. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cafeteria operations allow students to be fed in a timely, organized manner. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student dismissal procedures, including bus and car transportation, ensure student safety. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20 In thinking about the impact of your administrative team on your school since the addition of the AP, what are your overall perceptions in the area of Student Support?

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
The principal backs me up on student discipline when I need it. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe students at my school can easily access a counselor to talk to when needed. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This school provides a caring and supportive environment for students. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q21 How long have you been working as a teacher?

- This is my first year. (1)
- 1-2 years (2)
- 3-5 years (3)
- 6-10 years (4)
- 11-15 years (5)
- 16-20 years (6)
- More than 20 years (7)



Q22 How long have you been working as a teacher at your current school?

- This is my first year. (1)
- 1-2 years (2)
- 3-5 years (3)
- 6-10 years (4)
- 11-15 years (5)
- 16-20 years (6)
- More than 20 years (7)

Q23 What is your current role?

- Core content teacher in grades pre-K - 2 (1)
- Core content teacher in grades 3 - 5 (2)
- Special education teacher (3)
- English as a Second Language teacher (4)
- Physical education teacher (5)
- Art teacher (6)
- Music teacher (7)
- Technology teacher (8)
- Librarian (9)
- Family Resource Center coordinator (10)
- Other teaching role (i.e., reading recovery, intervention) (11)
- Other Student Support Services (i.e., social worker, psychologist, behavior liaison) (12)
- Other: Please explain. (13) _____





15 Appendix D – Focus Group Protocols

15.1 AP/GCC Focus Group Questions

1. GCC and APs were added to all elementary schools at about the same time. What is/was your understanding of how these two roles would interact to help support the principal and counselor at the school, as well as improve student outcomes? Was there any guidance provided by the district or your principal with regard to the interaction of these two roles?
2. Is the GCC a natural pipeline for principal and AP? Do you see the roles being related in terms of career progression?
3. Where do you see areas of overlap in your roles? Are these intersections of duties helpful? Are teachers able to properly distinguish the roles?
4. How did the principal communicate the role/responsibilities of the AP or the GCC in your building? Was there a formal communication or presentation about your roles with the staff?
5. What changes would you make to the structure of your role (AP/GCC) that would enable you to be more effective? Are there areas in which you would devote more of your time? Less of your time?
6. In terms of providing instructional feedback, are there bright lines between evaluative feedback and formative (developmental) feedback? How do each of roles contribute to these two distinct forms of instructional feedback? How do teachers view this distinction in your roles?
7. In the survey, the majority of APs and GCCs felt that there was no improvement regarding the following areas. What, if anything, could the AP be doing to help improve these areas?
 - a. Student attendance rates
 - b. Student tardiness
 - c. Individual student time with the counselor
8. In the survey, the majority of APs and GCCs felt that the following areas had improved since the addition of the addition of AP. Are these improvements of result of direct AP involvement, or indirect due to the AP's impact on another job or area?
 - a. Consistent enforcement of the rules for student behavior
 - b. Collaboration among teachers
9. However, in the survey, APs and GCCs had different opinions about the other areas of greatest impact: Why do you think this is case? What might explain the difference in perspective on these areas of APs and GCCs?
 - a. APs:
 - i. Increased progress monitoring of student learning
 - ii. Increased frequency of feedback on instruction
 - iii. Increased quality of feedback on instruction
 - b. GCCs:
 - i. School safety
 - ii. Student misbehavior causing disruption to teaching
 - iii. Staff access to the principal
10. What, if any, other personnel resources do you think would be helpful in your school?

15.2 Principals/Counselors Focus Group Questions

1. GCC and APs were added to all elementary schools at about the same time. What is/was your understanding of how these two roles would interact to help support the principal and counselor at the school, as well as improve student outcomes? Was there any guidance provided by the district with regard to the interaction of these two roles? Or did you, as the principal, define such for your building?

2. Have your expectations for the AP role and its impact on your work been met?
3. Is the GCC a natural pipeline for principal and AP? Do you see the roles being related in terms of career progression? Do you think this is a better pipeline than the counselor role?
4. Based on your experience with the AP, how might you change the role to be of greater value to you as principal/counselor and/or to the school as a whole? What might they spend more of time doing or less of their time doing?
5. In the survey, 39% of counselors indicated that they would prefer a second counselor versus the AP role. Why do you think this may be the case? What responsibilities of the counselor might the AP be able to offset such that more counselors find value of the AP to their work?
6. In the survey, 91% of principals felt they formally communicated the AP responsibilities to their staff. However, only 58% of counselors and 64% of teachers believe this information was communicated. To what do you attribute this disconnect? How might the responsibilities of the AP be more broadly and effectively communicated?
7. In thinking about overall personnel, the majority of Principals and Counselors indicated that they would be willing to fund the AP out of existing school-based budget. If you were asked to do so at your school, where would you seek to reallocate funds in order to pay for the AP?
8. What, if any, other personnel resources do you think would be helpful in your school?
9. In the survey, the majority of Principals and Counselors felt that the following areas had improved since the addition of the addition of AP. Are these improvements of result of direct AP involvement, or indirect due to the AP's impact on another job or area?
 - a. progress monitoring of student learning
 - b. collaboration among teachers
 - c. frequency of feedback on instruction
10. In the survey, the majority of Principals and Counselors felt that there was no improvement regarding the following areas. What, if anything, could the AP be doing to help improve these areas?
 - a. Student attendance rates
 - b. Student tardiness
 - c. Individual student time with the counselor
11. With the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system, how has/will the AP role support this system within your building? Is the AP in your building involved in the evaluation process OR are they taking on responsibilities that allow you as the principal to evaluate all of the teachers?



16 Appendix E – Focus Group Concept Matrix

Concepts	Themes and Quotes			
	Theme	Theme	Theme	Theme
Value-Add/ Impact of the AP	<p>Greater Overall Capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> P2 – I think that {PLCs} have had an impact on the student scores. We can provide the data for them – the APs, the goal clarity coach. We are able to provide support and feedback. Make sure that it's student-centered. How have our scores gone up? I think it's indisputable that it's teacher collaboration. P1 – Every arrow is up since they added the AP role and GCC. C1 – The AP has had the most impact on the entire school. P2 – More people help...if you are getting quality people and they are targeted towards the right type of issues. 	<p>Counselor Productivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> P2 – I was a counselor, a high school counselor about 10 years ago. The job has gotten more complex and more difficult. It's kinda one of those assignments where a lot of times if you are not sure where this job goes – it goes with the counselor. We have more mental health issues...it sure seems that way. There are more assessments given. Counselors have typically always done assessments – in many cases. I know not every case. AP “In my first year, the counselor had previously had been doing the work of the AP...she started releasing things she had been doing to me” AP “Now the counselor pulls small groups, has guidance lessons in each grade level” C1 - I can spend more positive time and being more proactive with students. {Has a second counselor} 	<p>Principal Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP “I can't understand how my principal was able to do her job before having an AP.” P2 – The assistant principal's job description really is an extension of the principal. 	<p>More Support for More Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> P1 – The big thing is the work is different. The job we are being expected to do now is not the same that was done prior to their implementation. What's being done now – statewide assessment, the requirements from program reviews to testing, to other standards that have increased, PLCs, other things that we are being asked to do. Different work. Because it is different work, you have to have different resources to get the work done. Exactly what we are talking about – the AP and GCC. P1 – We could barely hold it together [with just principal and counselor] before all these new standards and evaluation. We are doing a better job serving students. Why? Because we have more resources. C2- This extra support is, I guess you could say, long overdue. It has a purpose.
Defining the role of the AP	<p>Based on the needs of the school/staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GCC “I think it is just building to building. Coaches meet regularly and my job looks totally different from someone else's” P1 – The AP job is going to evolve based on the needs of the school. And based on the talents of the people that you have there. P1 – You cannot define the role as a one size fits all. Different skill sets. Different talents. I appreciate the freedom to be able to select and assign the role as I see fit. <p>The Building Assessment Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP “I became the BAC” 	<p>Communicating the Role of the AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP “I was given a list of jobs I was in charge of day 1. My staff knew automatically day one if they had an issue with behavior to come to me” AP “My principal took me around to each classroom and introduced me, indicated that if they couldn't find her they could come to me” P2 – When you work in a school, people typically only look at how they're affected. They look at their job. Everybody has a handbook. Everybody goes over what everybody does. P2 – I define the roles at the beginning of the year, and I base them around the job 	<p>Role tension/overlap between GCC/AP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> P1 – GCC and APs work together in PLCs. They work together in identifying barriers to kids' success, in providing PD to teachers. Not a clear definition that says 'this is your job; this is your job.' They work together to make sure “THE JOB” which is student success is accomplished. Their jobs overlap. The GCC is 100% instruction. {The GCC} is not an evaluator, they are a supporter 	<p>Undefined Roles – Counselor as a generalist?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C1 – The APs job is not as defined and focused as the goal clarity coach, the librarian, the music teacher – you know what they're doing. People would say same thing about the counselor role – they do a lot of different things. But they may not be able to pinpoint because we are doing whatever comes our way. C1 – GCC is primarily instructional, interventions. AP – I don't know if that was quite as defined. They have had impact on all areas of the school – instruction, intervention, discipline, parent contact, some of the maintenance/running of the building.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1 – I have heard that they are trying to push the BAC into the AP role. That wouldn't work for us. • P1 – I have my counselor as the BAC because she has the background, knowledge and skills to do it the best. • C2 – I am the building assessment coordinator. That's where we spend the time. That's what we have to spend time on. 	<p>description. The district has a job description for elementary assistant principal. One of the things I know that is on elementary assistant principals is keeping up with textbooks, so I have mine doing that.</p> <p>AP involvement in Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P1 – That [attendance committee and follow-up time] is not the best use of the assistant principal's time. • P2 – Chairing the attendance committee is one of the jobs that is defined in the job description for the AP. So mine does. But, I think what is stressed, what is valued – I want instruction to be first for my assistant principal. • C1 – The attendance committee... That is a designated job. The counselor is following up after six absences. And the family resource center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP “No one ever told us we were supposed to interact together” • GCC “I came from two different schools... the goal clarity and the AP there was more of a hierarchy, she was my boss in a way. Where in my new school, I am looked at as an equal” • AP “The goal clarity coach was working mainly with instruction and I know that part of my role as AP is supposed to be being an instructional leader, but in the last two years our behavior has been uncontrollable, so I have rarely been able to get into the classroom for instruction” • AP “Now goal clarity and I work together on numerous things... we work hand in hand on PLCs • AP “Yes they can see the difference. GCC can do a walkthrough and I do the evaluation” • GCC “it is more of a partnership” • GCC “we all own the children instructionally and behaviorally” <p><u>When the Defined Role Strays Too Far</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP “It seems that your principals have released a lot of their power and work to you, while mine has not” “I am in the cafeteria, wiping the tables” “You guys to me sound as if you have been able to grow more” • GCC “I would like a clearer breakdown because I have done everything from the principal's evaluation to the spelling bee” • The GCC role at the building is what my principal gives me to do, when it was a district role it was the job description – GCC who served in both capacities agreed 	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP “The responsibilities that I was assigned when I originally got there and I have to account for every year in my evaluation, that I am really allowed to do them” 	
<p>Allocating administrative resources in elementary schools</p>	<p>Balancing Resource Allocation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCC “To me I think we are on to something where so much administration is put up at the middle and high school level. How are we going to start them out right if we don’t have the resources we need at the elementary level” • GCC “I think we need two assistant principals – one for instruction and one for behavior” • AP “I think our staff would see that I am more of a resource for students and GCC is more of a resource for teachers” • C1 – We have both (second counselor and AP). AP has more of an impact schoolwide. 	<p>Resource Allocation Formulas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCC “I think support should be somehow structured to the number of students in the building” (this got a lot of support from the group) • P1 - What they are budgeting now is that they are budgeting positions. They are questioning “selling position back” because your school needs. You are going to have to give up something to fund a different position. I can’t cut a teaching position. You’re robbing Peter to pay Paul there. • P2 – I’d hate to pick between a goal clarity coach or counselor or AP. That would be a tough decision • P1 – The second counselor comes after 660 students. I was automatically allocated that second counselor position. 		
<p>Pipeline for principalship</p>	<p>The GCC is the AP/Principal Pipeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP “She has said from day one she is grooming me to be a principal” • AP “The district made it sound as if... your chances are better of getting a principal job if you are goal clarity. The district made it sound as if that gives you a step up from someone else” “To me goal clarity is the same thing as resource teacher” • AP “We do have teachers in our building who have said that maybe they should become goal clarity because it seems as if they pull [administrators] from goal clarity instead of the classroom” • GCC “if you look across the district at APs, they tend to come from GCC” • GCC “I purposefully went from the instructional coach, which was the 	<p>No. The GCC is specialist. Not pipeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2 – I don’t see it as much (principal pipeline) as the goal clarity coach. They are typically people that really committed to being teachers and working with teachers. • P1- They [the GCC] enjoy instruction. That’s not the typical career path to principal, in my experience. • C1 –Prior to the AP, the counselor did [move to the principal role]. But, I don’t see that with the goal clarity coach. 		

	<p>same thing as the goal clarity coach...When I went on an interview for principal, a young teacher asked what's an instructional coach was. She didn't know what it was but she did know goal clarity. So I felt maybe I need to switch my title for the pipeline to principal because the younger people who started in the last few years knew goal clarity." "I switched to goal clarity only to position myself, to better my resume"</p>			
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17 Appendix F – Technical Appendix

17.1 What is the Work of the Elementary Assistant Principal?

17.1.1 Defining the Role

17.1.2 Work of the Assistant Principal

Approximately 70% of the items produced means that were between 2 and 3, indicating that assistant principals engaged in that work with some frequency. The remaining items had means between 1 and 2, signifying that these aspects of work were done with less frequency. However, each of those means was above 1.5 indicating the frequency was closer to sometimes (value 2) than to never (value 1).

The creation of scales allowed us to measure the internal consistency of the related concepts – to see if the items about work in each area worked together to measure the concepts – and to increase the reliability and validity (Scheerens, 2010). Each scale was found to be highly reliable; all Cronbach's Alpha values are above 0.7. Further analysis was conducted to examine the reliability of the scale if items on a given scale were removed. In each instance there were one or two items on each scale that if removed would create an even higher level of reliability for the scale. The decision was made to continue to include those items in the given scale. The rationale for the continued inclusion of those items was the fact that the overall reliability with the item(s) was above the standard of 0.7 and that the individual aspects those items addressed are important when considering the overall work of assistant principals. Additionally, they bring certain facets regarding the lack of clarity and consistency of the work of assistant principals to light that will be addressed in this report. The item discussed above, BAC, was one that if removed from the administrative support scale the reliability would increase (from 0.75 to 0.89). As discussed previously this item addresses an aspect that was supposed to be part of the work of the assistant principal, yet data are coming to light that contradict that and we feel it is important to highlight. The other items of note that would have increased the reliability of the scales are interventions from the instructional leadership scale, school safety from the school operations scale, as well as Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) and after school activities from the student support scale. The identification of these items is in an attempt to call attention to work that may be viewed quite different building to building or may not be part of the assistant principal work with great consistency.

We conducted an ANOVA to determine if statistically significant differences existed. The results of the ANOVA test indicate that there are differences between groups with respect to the ranking of administrative support and instructional leadership. Further tests were conducted to ascertain exactly where the differences exist. We determined that there were differences between the mean responses of principals and goal clarity coaches that were significant ($p < 0.01$). In regard to the administrative support scale, the mean response for goal clarity coaches was 2.54 while the mean response for principals was 3.14. The fact that these differences are significantly different indicate that goal clarity coaches ranked administrative support higher than did principals when it comes to the work of assistant principals within their building. In the case of instructional leadership, the data indicate that there are differences between the mean response of goal clarity coaches and all other roles. The goal clarity coach mean of 2.77 was found to be different at conventional levels of significance from that of the principal at 1.73, the assistant principal at 1.84, and the counselor at 1.89.



17.1.3 Differences in Perception by Role

In this analysis, the independent variable is an individual's role (principal, assistant principal, counselor, goal clarity coach, and teacher), while the dependent variables are the work of the AP scales (administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support). We completed this analysis by using an ANOVA (*analysis of variance*) test. This test evaluated the within group variance versus the between group variance to see which was larger and significant.

The results from this test indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the means of the five groups, which means it is unlikely that these differences are due to chance. The hypothesis that we would find differences between the groups, given our qualitative data from the interviews, was corroborated. Substantively, this data indicates that individuals serving in different roles differ in their perception of the frequency with which the assistant principal is engaged in the work activities within each scale. However, we are not able to determine which groups specifically contributed to the differences through the ANOVA test alone. Because we survey five different staff groups, it is possible that differences only exist between some of the groups. We conducted post-hoc tests to determine where the actual differences exist.

We completed Tukey post-hoc tests to determine between which groups the differences existed. These results, displayed in Figure 7, mean that there are only significant differences between a few of the groups on some of the scales. Each scale ranged in value from 0-3, with 3 being an indication of the most frequent engagement in the activity. For the administrative support scale, the principal mean of 2.11 was significantly different from the teacher mean of 2.35. For JCPS, this means that teachers reported a greater frequency of assistant principals engaging in administrative support work than did principals.

In the case of the instructional leadership scale, many of the roles had differences in means that were significant at conventional levels. The assistant principal response mean was statistically *different* from all other roles except the principal. The assistant principal mean was higher than that of the counselor, goal clarity coach, and teacher. From this data, we conclude that assistant principals perceive that they are engaged in instructional leadership work at higher frequency than what is observed by counselors, goal clarity coaches, and teachers. The assistant principal mean of 2.70 was statistically different from the counselor mean of 2.36, the goal clarity coach mean of 2.16, and the teacher mean of 2.47. Principal responses were not statistically different from assistant principals, which means these two groups share a similar view of the frequency with which assistant principals are engaged in instructional leadership work. Goal clarity coaches' response means were statistically different from principals and teachers. The goal clarity coach mean of 2.16 was statistically different from the principal mean of 2.51 and the teacher mean of 2.47. In both cases, the goal clarity coach mean was lower. These coaches indicate a lower frequency of assistant principals engaged in instructional leadership work. As we discussed earlier, goal clarity coaches are in a unique position in terms of observing and reporting on the work of the AP.

On the school operations scale, the mean for counselors was statistically different from the mean of both the assistant principal and teacher. The counselor response mean of 1.93 is lower than both the assistant principal response mean of 2.35 and the teacher response mean of 2.24, and this difference is statistically significant. These findings suggest that those serving in a counselor role perceived a lower frequency of assistant principals engaged in school operations work from both assistant principals and teachers.

Finally, on the student support scale, there were again differences between groups, and these differences mirror those found with the school operations scale. We found the counselor mean to be statistically different from both assistant principals and teachers. The counselor mean of 2.24 is lower than the assistant principal mean of 2.63 and the teacher mean of 2.56. Counselors report a lower



frequency of assistant principals engaged in student support work than do assistant principals themselves and teachers. As we will discuss in later sections, the counselor perspective on the assistant principal's engagement in student support may be influenced by their direct involvement in this domain of work. As such, counselors may be more aware of the expectation that assistant principals would supposed to increase the level of student support that counselors would be able to provide. Our interviews support this assertion, as one counselor noted that "when there was no AP, many of the tasks fell to the counselor. Now I have more time to be in classrooms." In addition, the specialization of counselors as student support resource may mean that counselors and assistant principals simply view student support and associated activities differently. Moreover, the difference in viewpoint expressed by counselors may be explained by the fact that in some cases counselors are the individuals training assistant principals. One assistant principal indicated "In my first year, the counselor had previously had been doing the work of the AP...she started releasing things she had been doing to me." As such, counselors may have a clearer understanding of the work in which assistant principals are engaged. We will explore this more fully as we progress through our research questions, including the intersection of the work of the AP and the counselor.

Comparisons were made between those who indicated their principal had communicated the duties of the assistant principal and those who indicated there was no such communication. This comparison was completed via a statistical test – the *independent samples t-test*. The independent samples t-test compared the mean response of group one and group two for each of the four scales. The differences in those means was then evaluated for statistical significance.

The administrative support scale means were 2.07 for those who received no communication and 2.32 for those who received communication. The instructional leadership scale means were 2.29 for those receiving no communication and 2.48 for those receiving communication. With school operations the means were 2.02 and 2.23 respectively. Finally, for student support, the means were 2.33 and 2.55. These differences were all statistically significant at conventional levels ($p < 0.05$ or $p < 0.01$).

17.1.4 Alignment of Work with Time Spent

Statistical analysis was run to determine the relationship between how principals indicate their time is spent with the rating of frequency of assistant principals engaged in tasks by school staff. This *correlation analysis* produced Pearson correlation coefficients indicating the strength and the direction of the relationship between variables.

The instructional leadership scale produced statistically significant correlations with time on curriculum and teaching tasks ($r = .44$) such that higher percentages of time on curriculum and teaching tasks are associated with higher frequency of engagement on the instructional leadership scale. The instructional leadership scale was also significantly correlated with student interactions ($r = -.44$), where higher percentages of time spent on student interactions were associated with lower reports of frequency of engagement in work on the instructional leadership scale. Substantively, this finding indicates that increased time spent on curriculum and teaching is associated with higher frequency of engaging in instructional leadership tasks, likewise the more time spent on student interactions is associated with less frequency in regard to instructional leadership tasks. The only other significant relationship we found ($r = .40$) was between the time spent 'other' category and the administrative support scale, where higher percentages of time spent on other tasks was associated with higher frequencies of work reported on the administrative support scale. We provided space for write-in responses on the "other" category. In reviewing those write-ins, we found numerous references to the building assessment coordinator role. In our work of the AP scale, the BAC was a work task within the administrative support domain. Thus, it is not surprising we found a positive correlation between the administrative support scale and the "other" category in the time spent items. Interestingly, we did not



find a statistically significant relationship between time spent on administrative tasks and the administrative support scale (perhaps due to the distinction many respondents made between administrative work and the BAC duties), nor was there a statistically significant relationship between time spent on operations tasks and the school operations scale. In the same vein, time spent on student interactions did not have a statistically significant relationship with the student support scale. So, with regard to some of the aspects of the work of assistant principals, there were no significant relationships with the self-reported percent of time spent on that work.

17.2 To What Extent Does the Assistant Principal Influence Other Roles?

17.2.1 Teacher Support – Differences in Perception by Role

We first compared the responses of principals and assistant principals. Assistant principals were slightly more positive than principals, with a mean difference ranging from .13 to .23 on a five-point Likert scale indicating increasing levels of agreement with the statements on teacher support. Yet, none of these differences in means was statistically significant at conventional levels. As such, we conclude that principals and assistant principals were in general agreement regarding the influence of the assistant principal's work on the principals and counselors ability to better support teachers. We next compared the responses of counselors and goal clarity coaches.

In reviewing the responses of counselors and goal clarity coaches, it was apparent that both groups were somewhat less inclined to indicate strong agreement with the statements regarding teacher support than principals and assistant principals. Although counselors mean responses were higher than that of goal clarity coaches, ranging from .31 to .48, those differences were not statistically significant at conventional levels. Thus, we conclude that counselors and goal clarity coaches had similar perspectives regarding the influence of the assistant principal role on teacher support provided by principals and counselors.

As we have discussed, prior to the addition of assistant principals and goal clarity coaches, every elementary school was staffed only with the principal and the counselor as the building administrators. We next compared the perspectives of principals and counselors in an effort to glean the perspective of the administrators who experienced the workload before the administrative team expanded.

Principal and counselor responses regarding teacher support had mean differences ranging from .34 to .75. Principals reported higher levels of support for the statements regarding the influence of the assistant principal role on teacher support. Principals and counselors seemed to disagree on the amount of influence the assistant principal's work had on the counselor's ability to provide more frequent classroom guidance lesson and provide more effective support to teachers, as these differences were statistically significant at conventional levels. Figure 11 highlights the differences in the distribution of responses on the question of increased classroom guidance lessons. Counselors, on average, were split between indicating agreement or ambivalence with the assertions specifically related to their position. However, both groups seemed to have similar views and agree that assistant principals had enabled the principal to spend more time providing feedback on instruction, as the differences in their mean response on that element of teacher support was not statistically significant at conventional levels.

Assistant principals and goal clarity coaches were both new additions to the elementary school's administrative team in the 2012-13 school year. As such, they have only have experience as members of elementary building administration since expanded to include these additional roles. We completed an independent samples t-test to compare the perspectives of the relative newcomers to elementary school administration.

It is immediately apparent that the differences between these two groups were rather large. Assistant principals were much more likely to express strong agreement regarding the influence of their



role in counselor's or principal's ability to provide more teacher support. The differences in their mean responses ranged from 1.04 to 1.25. These differences were all statistically significant at conventional levels. Goal clarity coaches were generally ambivalent on the question of the assistant principal's impact on teacher support from their view of the counselor's work. Even when considering the principal's ability to provide more time giving teachers feedback on their instruction, goal clarity coaches diverged from assistant principals, counselors, and principals, who all indicated similar levels of agreement on this point. The divergent perspective of the goal clarity coaches is interesting, as we noted in our review of the findings regarding the definition of the administrative team. Figure 12 includes a distribution of survey respondents regarding increased counselor support for teachers, and Figure 13 contains the distribution of responses regarding principals providing more time giving instructional feedback.

The work of the AP (as defined by the four scales covering administrative support, instructional leadership, school operation, and student support) helps to explain some of the responses given by members of the administrative team regarding teacher support. We found that there were moderate but statistically significant correlations to the activities of the assistant principal, as reported by the survey respondents, and their view of the assistant principal's influence on the teacher support provided by the counselor and principal. The strongest correlation was that between the instructional leadership scale and the principal spending more time on instructional feedback. This relationship had a positive correlation coefficient of .60. This means that the more involvement the assistant principal was reported to have in instructional leadership, the stronger the agreement with the statement that the assistant principal enabled the principal to spend more time providing instructional feedback to teachers. The weakest correlation was between the school operations scale and the increased frequency of classroom guidance lessons with a correlation coefficient of .32. The correlations between the work of the AP and the principal spending more time on instructional feedback were the strongest overall, while the relationship between the work of the AP and counselor support to teachers was weaker.

Though we did not survey teachers on all three of teacher support items, we did gather information about their experience in terms of the frequency of classroom guidance lessons provided by counselors. Teachers were far less likely to indicate agreement with the notion that assistant principals had influenced the ability of counselors to more frequently engage in guidance lessons. Teachers, on average, were neutral regarding their view of the assistant principals' influence on this element of counselor support to teachers.

17.2.2 Student Engagement – Differences in Perception by Role

We conducted an independent samples t-test to determine that principals and assistant principals were very closely aligned in their view the assistant principal role's influence on principals and counselors work activities related to student support. Overwhelmingly, these administrators believed that principals and counselors were building stronger student relationships and that counselors were able to be a more effective support to students through one-on-one counseling sessions. The mean differences were very small ranging from .01 to .14, with principals indicating slightly higher levels of agreement with the notion that assistant principals were driving higher levels of engagement with students. None of these differences were statistically significant at conventional levels, so we can safely conclude that there were no disparities in the viewpoints of principals of assistant principals on this issue.

We then compared the perspective of counselors and goal clarity coaches on these same dimensions of student engagement using the independent samples t-test. We found that the mean differences were larger than those found between principals and assistant principals (ranging from .11 to .32). However, though counselors were marginally more supportive of these statements, none of the differences were statistically significant at conventional levels. Both groups were between agreement



and ambivalence on these items related to student engagement. Thus, counselors and goal clarity coaches were generally aligned in their views about the assistant principal role's influence on the principal's and counselor's work.

The comparison of principals to counselors regarding their perspectives on the intersection of the work of the AP with their work engaging with students were of interest because of their status as the long-standing elementary administrative roles. Unlike teacher support, where the principals and counselors appeared to agree on one of the three elements for which we collected data, their views were completely divergent on the issue of student engagement based on these results. The differences between the mean responses of principals and counselors on the four items related to student engagement ranged from .64 to .89, which is a relatively large difference. Moreover, these differences were all significant at conventional levels. Principals tended to express agreement for each statement much more strongly than counselors. Counselors tended to be split between agreement and ambivalence on the proposition that the role of the assistant principal had enabled either them or the principal to offer greater support to students through their engagement in relationship building and direct counseling.

While over 84% of principal respondents agreed that the role of the assistant principal had enabled counselors to build stronger relationships with students, only 55% of counselors agreed, as shown in Figure 15. A similar distribution emerged when reviewing perspectives on the strength of principal relationships with students (Figure 16). Counselors were least likely to agree with the statement that their role was able to spend more individual counseling time with students, as only 52% of them agreed with that statement and nearly 28% disagreed. Thus, from the counselor perspective, the work of the assistant principal has not convincingly enabled greater principal and counselor engagement with students.

We also compared the views of assistant principals and goal clarity coaches on the issue of principal and counselor engagement with students, as these roles are the newest additions to the administrative team. Not unlike the findings for teacher support, goal clarity coaches were much less likely to indicate strong agreement for the proposition that assistant principals were influencing the work of principals and assistant principals. The results of the data analysis confirmed the differences in the mean responses ranging from .89 to 1.12. These are notably large differences given the range of the response scale. Moreover, the differences were all statistically significant at conventional levels. Thus, we can again conclude that the assistant principals and goal clarity coaches view the influence of the assistant principal role very differently with regard to principals and counselors engagement with students.

Across each of the items related to student engagement, over 80% of assistant principals responded with support. Less than 50% of goal clarity coaches typically expressed agreement with the statements related to student engagement. These coaches were slightly more inclined to agree with the assertion that counselors were a more effective support for students, as just over 55% of survey respondents indicated such. Overall, goal clarity coaches were also more likely to indicate disagreement with the suggestion that assistant principals were helping to facilitate greater engagement with students. Particularly in considering counselor time spent providing individual counseling; over 28% of goal clarity coaches disagreed with that statement. These trends are detailed in Figure 17 and Figure 18.

Based on the similar findings with teacher support, we also decided to investigate how the work of the assistant principal (as defined by the four scales covering administrative support, instructional leadership, school operation, and student support) influenced student engagement. With the exception of the student support scale, all the dimensions of the work of the AP were moderately but statistically significantly (at conventional levels) correlated to the counselors' and principals' work engaging with students. There was no statistically significant relationship between the student support scale and more effective counselor support for students. The strongest correlation was between the responses on



instructional leadership scale and the perception of principals building stronger relationships with students, which has a positive correlation ($r = .62$) at conventional significance levels. The weakest correlation, among those which were statistically significant, was between the administrative support scale and the perception of counselors as a more effective support for students. This relationship had a positive correlation ($r = .34$) at conventional significance levels.

We also surveyed teachers on one of the items related to student engagement. We asked them about the time that counselors had for individual counseling sessions from their perspective. Like their response on classroom guidance lessons, teachers did not generally feel that the assistant principal role had enabled counselors to spend more time completing one-on-one counseling. Teachers, on average, were neutral regarding their view of the assistant principal's influence on the ability of the counselor to engage in individual counseling more often.

17.2.3 Alignment of Work with Principal and Counselor Time Spent

First, we completed the analysis with responses from principals, counselors, and assistant principals combined. Only one statistically significant relationship was found between the school operations scale and the time spent on "other" tasks. The relationship was moderate and negative ($r = -.33$), which was significant at conventional levels. Thus, the higher the percent of time the principal or counselor reported being spent on "other" tasks, the less likely that he or she was to report that his assistant principal was engaged in school operations. We may conclude that some of the tasks the respondents considered "other" were part of the school operations scale. As such, when assistant principals were less frequently engaged in those tasks, the respondent may have to take on more of that work.

Because our earlier analysis demonstrated that principals and counselors often diverged in their perspective on the work of the AP, we thought it prudent to complete the correlation analysis for the principal responses and counselor responses separately. When isolating the principal responses, our analysis found only one statistically significant correlation between the instructional leadership scale and the percent of time principals reported spending on administrative tasks. The correlation was $-.29$ ($p < .05$), which means that the more involvement that the principal reported assistant principal had in instructional leadership, the less time he or she reported spending on administrative tasks. This may be a reflection of the fact that principals who were more likely to be engaged in instructional leadership tasks were also engaging their assistant principals in the same type of work. In a focus group, one principal stated, "The assistant principal's job description really is an extension of the principal." Otherwise, there were no statistically relationships between the work of the AP scales and how principals reported spending their time.

Next, we isolated the counselor responses to see if any additional significant relationships emerged. Only the reporting of time spent on "other" had any statistically significant correlation to the work of the AP scales. Specifically, the relationship between the school operations scale and other work tasks for counselors has a correlation coefficient of $-.47$ ($p < .01$). As such, the more involvement that the counselor reported the assistant principal had in school operations, the less likely he was to report spending time on other work tasks he or she defined as outside the options the survey provided.

17.3 What is the Perceived Value of the Work of Elementary Assistant Principals?

17.3.1 School Outcomes

We completed an ANOVA between the groups on the top five areas of impact from the overall survey sample. We found that the between group differences were statistically significant for these impact areas at conventional levels. Further analysis found that, as we have observed in other areas, the



principal and assistant principal were generally consistent in their view of the assistant principal's impact on certain areas. Most often, teacher responses to these items were different from the other groups. It is interesting to note that the on the matter of student achievement, only the view of teachers and principals was statistically different. The remaining groups were in similar agreement regarding the perceived impact of the assistant principal on student achievement. Regarding student safety, no group differences were statistically significant at conventional levels. All the staff, including teachers, believed that the assistant principal was helping to improve school safety.

We next completed a correlation analysis to determine which, if any, of these outcomes were linked based on respondent feedback. We found positive relationships between all 18 of the impact factors with correlations ranging from .21 to .86. All the relationships were statistically significant at conventional levels. The frequency and quality of feedback demonstrated the strongest relationship at .86, meaning that when a respondent felt the assistant principal had positively impact the frequency of feedback, they also believed that the quality of feedback improved. In addition, student progress monitoring had a moderate to strong relationship with the other outcomes that were teaching and learning related. In terms of discipline and safety, consistent rule enforcement had the strongest relationship with behavior in the classroom. School safety had somewhat modest, positive relationships with behavior and rule enforcement.

We completed an ANOVA to ascertain the differences between the groups of respondents based on their role for the lowest areas of impact. There were no statistically significant differences on the issue of behavior on the bus. However, unlike our analysis in other areas, principals and assistant principals had different mean responses in the areas of facility conditions, student tardiness, and student attendance. Principals responded much more favorably that these areas were positively impacted by the assistant principal. There were also no statistically significant differences between the mean responses of assistant principals, counselors, goal clarity coaches, and teachers with regard to the assistant principal's impact on student time with the counselor. Only principals and teachers were found to have a significant difference on this outcome. Principals were more favorable in their view that assistant principals did help increase student time with the counselor, while teachers reported that assistant principals had no impact on this outcome. In short, principals, though their relative rank of these areas was in line with the other groups, still tended to express a belief that assistant principals did help to improve the areas in which they had the least impact.

We continued our evaluation with a correlation analysis on these perceived areas of low impact. The relationships, although positive and significant, were somewhat weaker than those noted for the higher impact areas. The only exception was student tardiness and attendance, which had a correlation of .78 and was statistically significant at conventional levels. Respondent views on the assistant principal's impact on tardiness seemed to follow their perception of the role's impact on attendance. Respondents generally perceived that assistant principals had little to no impact on both areas. We continued our evaluation with a correlation analysis on these perceived areas of low impact. The relationships, although positive and significant, were somewhat weaker than those noted for the higher impact areas. The only exception was student tardiness and attendance, which had a correlation of .78 and was statistically significant at conventional levels. Respondent views on the assistant principal's impact on tardiness seemed to follow their perception of the role's impact on attendance. Respondents generally perceived that assistant principals had little to no impact on both areas.

Finally, we investigated if there were any relationships between the four work of the AP scales (administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support) and those areas where assistant principals were perceived to have relatively high and relatively low impact. We performed the correlation analysis isolating teachers from the four groups that comprised the administrative team – principals, assistant principals, counselors, and goal clarity coaches.



We generally found that teacher perspectives were different from that of the other groups. When we asked focus group participants about this conflict between administrative team views and that of teachers, most nodded in agreement with a principal who said, “They [teachers] have no idea what the principal does. It doesn’t affect their daily job. There are in there with the door shut working with 24 kids. They don’t know I do all that, and I don’t spend a lot of time telling them because it doesn’t affect student achievement.” On the areas of higher impact, there were no statistically significant relationships between teacher responses on the work of the AP scales and their perceptions of the assistant principal’s impact on those outcomes.

In terms our analysis using just the responses from the administrative team, there were several statistically significant relationships in areas that respondents reported as those in which the assistant principal had some positive impact. The relationships ranged from weak to modest, with positive correlations of .16 to .45. The strongest relationships were between the instructional leadership scale and both student progress monitoring and teacher collaboration. This means that administrative team members reported that the more frequently the assistant principal was involved in instructional leadership activities, the greater his or her impact was in the areas of student progress monitoring and teacher collaboration.

For the areas where assistant principals were perceived to have less of an impact, we completed a similar analysis of correlations with the four work of the AP scales. Again, we analyzed the teacher responses separately from those of the administrative team.

For teachers, the only statistically significant relationships were between the student support scale and student attendance and tardiness. These relationships were weak, at $-.15$ and $-.10$, respectively. Also, these were negative relationships, meaning that, in the view of teachers, the more involved the assistant principal was in the student support activities, the less of an impact his or her work was having on student attendance or tardiness. This may be a result of teacher perceptions that assistant principals were only involved in student discipline issues and the fact that many assistant principals did not serve on the attendance committee, as we found from our interviews and focus groups.

The administrative team responses yielded more positive, statistically significant relationships between the work of the AP and areas of perceived low impact. These relationships ranged from small to moderate at the accepted levels of significance, with correlations ranging from $.16$ to $.44$. The strongest relationship was between the student support scale and behavior on the bus; as assistant principals were reported to be more frequently involved in student support activities, the greater their perceived impact on student misbehavior on the bus. The only significant relationship with student attendance was the administrative support scale. This seems to be a logical outcome as attendance management was included as one of the items in the administrative support scale.

We also isolated the counselor responses to see if their perspective would illuminate any relationships between the work of the AP and the perceived impact on student time with the counselor. The strongest relationship between counselor’s perceptions of the work of the AP and their impact on student time with the counselor was the administrative support scale. The more involved assistant principals were in activities related to administrative support, the greater the impact the counselor reported that the assistant principal had on increasing student time with the counselor.

17.3.2 Predicting School Outcomes Using the Work of the AP

We began our modeling with perceived impact on student progress monitoring, where we focused on activities within the instructional leadership and student support scales, which had the strongest correlations with this impact area. We defined a model that included the perceived frequency of the assistant principal’s engagement in professional development, such as PLCs, and his participation



in student behavioral interventions as the independent variables. The perceived impact of the assistant principal on student progress monitoring was the dependent variable. This model explained 30 percent of the variation in administrative team responses to the perceived impact of the assistant principal on student progress monitoring. A one-unit increase in the reported frequency of assistant principal involvement in PLCs and behavior interventions, results in a .28 and .23 unit increase, respectively, in the perceived impact on student progress monitoring.

Next, we examined models for the assistant principal's perceived impact on consistent rule enforcement. We focused our modeling on specific activities of the assistant principal within the administrative support and student support scales based on the correlations of those two scales to this area of impact. We created a model that explained nearly 38 percent of the variation in administrative team perceptions of the impact of the work of the assistant principal on consistent rule enforcement. The independent variables (unstandardized coefficients) included creation of master schedule (-.07), participation in hiring (-.20), management of support staff (.13), maintenance of school policies (.11), student behavior intervention (.19), and parent contact (.45). The dependent variable, consistent rule enforcement, had a negative relationship with two activities in the administrative support scale - creating the master schedule and participation in hiring. Otherwise all variables had a positive relationship with the perceived impact of the assistant principal's work on consistent rule enforcement.

The model that we constructed to predict the perceived impact of the assistant principal's work on teacher collaboration, focused on discrete activities in the instructional leadership and student support scales. The two independent variables, reviewing data setting goals and executing discipline consequences, explained 29 percent of the variation in administrative team perceptions in the impact of the assistant principal on teacher collaboration.

Perceptions of the assistant principal's impact on student achievement was the next model that we created. The independent variables included creating the master schedule (.09), reviewing student data and goal setting (.24), and executing discipline consequences (.14). This model explains 19 percent of the variation in the administrative team's perception of the impact of the assistant principal on student achievement. For every unit increase in any of the three independent variables, the perceived impact on student achievement would increase .09, .24, and .14, respectively.

Our last regression model regarding perceptions of the assistant principal's impact sought to predict perceptions of impact on school safety. For this regression, we included only activities from the school operations and student support scales, again, based on the relative strength of correlations between those scales and this impact area. Our best model explained 24 percent of the variation in administrative team responses. The independent variables in this model were coordinating school safety activities, executing discipline consequences, and contacting parents. The greatest influence in this model was school safety activities for which a one unit increase in the reported frequency resulted in a .31 unit increase in the perceived impact of the assistant principal's role on school safety. The remaining two variables coefficients of .15 and .16 respectively.

As we have noted in earlier analysis, those areas are perceived as being impacted the *least* by the work of the assistant principal include student time spent with the counselor. Given that the counselor's ability to provide enhanced social and emotional support for students is a key goal of the JCPS logic model for the assistant principal, we wanted to determine if we could find any specific work activities that may have a positive relationship with this impact area. We examined this notion through focusing our regression analysis exclusively on counselor responses, as the staff members who would have the most direct knowledge of what may be impeding the counselor's ability to spend more time with students, even after the addition of the assistant principal role. Given the strong correlations we found between the administrative support scale and other intersections with the counselor role, we focused our modeling around the specific activities within that scale. We were able to identify two independent variables that explained over 47 percent of the variation in the dependent variable – the



counselor's perceptions of the impact of the assistant principal's role on their ability to spend more time with students. These two variables were the frequency of the assistant principal's engagement as building assessment coordinator and in managing budgets, both components of the administrative support scale. For every one unit increase in the frequency of the assistant principal as BAC or budget manager, the counselor's perception of the assistant principal's impact on their ability to spend more time with students increased by .38 and .28 units, respectively.

17.3.3 Job Satisfaction

Overwhelming, the groups surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that the addition of the assistant principal had made the principal's job more manageable, with a combined response rate of 80.1%. However, counselors and goal clarity coaches were less inclined to say that the same was true for counselors (only 60% agreed), though principals and assistant principals tended to register a similar level of agreement on both points at over 90% in agreement. The combined group was split on whether the addition of the assistant principal role made the principal's job a more attractive career option, with 38% indicating agreement and 34% registering disagreement. With regard to the assistant principal role helping to increase overall job satisfaction, 86% of principals agreed with the statement, while less than 60% of counselors and goal clarity coaches were inclined to agree. Counselors registered the highest disagreement with this statement at 25%.

We next completed a comparison of mean responses and ANOVA analysis to determine the extent of the between group differences on this front. In reviewing the mean comparisons, principals and assistant principal tended to respond with more agreement to the job satisfaction prompts, and the ANOVA confirmed there were no statistically significant differences between their mean responses. Teachers tended to have statistically significant differences with the principals and assistant principals. Counselors and goal clarity coaches had differences in means that were not statistically significant.

We completed further analysis on the administrative team responses on the question of counselor and principal job manageability. The analysis determined that the counselors and goal clarity coaches had no statistically significant differences, as did the principals and assistant principals with regard to counselor job manageability. The between group differences with regard to principal job manageability were slightly more mixed. There was no statistically significant difference between the mean responses of principals and goal clarity coaches, as was the case between counselors and goal clarity coaches. Counselors, however, still had statistically significant differences with both principals and assistant principals.

We continued our analysis by exploring relationships between the views on principal and counselor job manageability and the four work of the AP scales (administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support). We first considered the responses of the administrative team separate from that of teachers.

The responses for counselor and principal job manageability had positive, statistically significant relationships with each of the four work of the AP scales. The relationships were generally moderate, with correlations ranging from .37 to .50. This means that more frequently respondents indicated their assistant principal was engaged in the activities associated with the scale, the more likely they were to indicate that the assistant principal had positively impacted the principal and counselor job manageability.

We isolated the correlation analysis to the counselor to determine if the relationships changed from the perspective of the counselor. Just as with the overall administrative team, all the relationships were statistically significant and positive. They were also moderate in strength. The strongest relationship was between counselor job manageability and the administrative support scale, with a



correlation of .63. As such, the more frequently that counselors reported the work of AP included activities related to administrative support, the more likely those counselors were to say that the assistant principal had helped make the counselor job more manageable. When considering only teacher responses, we only asked teachers about the principal's job manageability. On that single item, the teacher responses yielded no statistically significant relationships to any of the four work of the AP scales.

17.3.4 Time Management

In order to determine if there were differences between groups in their responses to these questions of time management, we chose to look at all four groups in an ANOVA test to compare between group and within group differences. The results of the ANOVA test revealed that there were statistically significant differences between groups.

As we have noted in other analyses, principals and assistant principals typically align in their agreement with various statements regarding the impact or influence of the assistant principal role. This was the case in terms of their view of the counselor and principal being able to manage their time more effectively as a result of the assistant principal role. However, in this case, counselors and goal clarity coaches were aligned with each other regarding the principal's time management with small differences in means that are not statistically significant at conventional levels. Though counselor and coaches had mean differences that are slightly larger when compared to the principal, these were still not statistically significant differences on the question of principal time management. Only the assistant principal responses appeared different (higher) from that counselors and goal clarity coaches, with mean differences hovering around .60 that were statistically significant (at conventional levels). There was broader variation on the question of counselor time management, as counselors and goal clarity coaches appeared to align with each but not with the principal and assistant principals.

We next examined the relationship between responses regarding time management and the work of AP scales (administrative support, instructional leadership, school operations, and student support). Our correlation analysis uncovered positive, statistically significant relationships (at conventional levels) between all the scales and both counselor and principal time management. As such, the more likely that the respondents were to report their assistant principal was involved in the work defined by the scale, the more agreement they indicated with statements that the assistant principal was helping the counselor and principal to be more effective at managing his or her time. The correlations were all moderate in nature, hovering around .50. The weakest relationship reported was between the student support scale and principal time management at .42. The strongest was between the administrative support scale and counselor time management at .52.

Given the differences we found in the perspectives of principals and counselors, we also reviewed the correlation statistics isolating the responses of those two groups. Some interesting finding emerged. When focusing only on principals, all the correlation statistics declined, ranging from .31 to .44. Moreover, the relationships between the counselor time management and both the instructional leadership and student support scales were no longer statistically significant. That is to say, that principals' reporting of what type of work the assistant principal was engaged in as defined by the scales has weaker relationship with their perceptions of the assistant principal impact on the principal's and counselor's time management than for the overall group (including principals, assistant principals, counselors and goal clarity coaches).

When we completed the correlation analysis including only counselor responses, we found that the relationships appeared to be stronger than those using the responses of the overall group and of the principal alone. Correlations ranged from .45 to .68 across all four scales and the time management items, where all relationships were statistically significant at conventional levels. It is notable that the



counselors seemed to indicate that the more the assistant principal was involved in the work on the administrative support scale, the more likely they were to respond with agreement that the role of the assistant principal had helped them to manage their time more effectively. This presented a finding which we wanted to know more about, as it appeared that counselors were expressing less support for the role of the assistant principal having an impact on their work and their ability to better support students as originally envisioned. As such, we wanted to isolate which activities in the administrative support scale were driving this relatively strong, positive correlation on the perception of counselors.

In deconstructing the work of the AP administrative support scale, we are able to more clearly pinpoint which items are driving the relationships for the counselor responses. Once we completed the correlation analysis for the individual items in the administrative support scale, using only the counselor responses, we were able to determine those work tasks that seemed to have the largest impact from the counselor's perspective. When considering counselor time management, the strongest, statistically significant correlation was with supervision of school support staff yielding a correlation of .49. Managing attendance data had the next strongest relationship at .48. In addition, test coordination and updating school policies were the next two tasks with moderate correlations of .46 that were statistically significant at conventional levels. Budgeting was also a moderately strong relationship at .44 ($p < .05$). The assistant principal's involvement in scheduling and hiring tasks did not have any statistically significant relationships with the counselor's perception of his or her time management.

17.3.5 Resource Allocation

This varied discussion led us to attempt to determine the exact breakpoints in terms of prioritizing the elementary assistant principal role over other potential uses of the resources. Our survey tool helped in this regard through a series of questions that asked principals and counselors how they would respond to a forced choice between the assistant principal role and another position to serve their school. Principals and counselors largely agreed on the top prioritization of the assistant principal role as seen in Figure 25. The only points of departure were related to the counselors' higher likelihood to indicate replacing the assistant principal with an additional counselor as a preferred choice. In fact, nearly 40% of counselor respondents felt this way with regard to the assistant principal or counselor choice, while less than 4% of principals agreed.

Another point of notable difference was the counselor's desire to have a SAM versus an assistant principal. Nearly 17% of counselors indicated they would choose a SAM over an assistant principal, while, again, less than 4% of principals indicated the same preference. On the other hand, principals were much more likely to agree to cut another certified position to fund the assistant principal. Twenty-three percent indicated they would make this choice versus only 11% of counselors. About 30% of both counselors and principals were hesitant about advocating for school-based funds to sustain the assistant principal role if the district chose not to fund the position in the future.

When we asked focus group participants about these resource allocation choices, they largely echoed the sentiments implied by the survey results. A principal talked about the district policy on funding administrative positions, "What they are budgeting now is that they are budgeting positions. ...You are going to have to give up something to fund a different position. I can't cut a teaching position. You're robbing Peter to pay Paul there." Another principal admitted that it is challenging to consider trade-offs, "I'd hate to pick between a goal clarity coach or counselor or AP. That would be a tough decision."

We next examined how the work of the AP as measured by the four scales interacted with the prioritization of principals and counselors with regard to resource allocation. All of the scales were positively and significantly (at conventional levels) correlated with the resource allocation choices except for the choice to cut another certified position to fund the assistant principal. There was no



statistical significance between the respondents' choice on that measure and the work they indicated the assistant principal was involved with in their building. However, the other relationships had correlations ranging from .23 to .50. After noting these moderate relationships, we again chose to look at counselors independently of principals.

When we isolated the principal responses, we found that the strength of the correlations declined and many were no longer statistically significant. The relationship between the administrative support scale or the instructional leadership scales and the choice to keep the assistant principal over a teacher or a SAM were significant. In addition, the school operations scale was significantly correlated with the choice between the teacher and assistant principal. Finally, the student support scale was significantly correlated with the choice between a counselor and an assistant principal as well as the choice between a teacher and an assistant principal. Thus, for those scales, the more involved that the principal indicated the assistant principal was in those related work activities, the more likely he or she was to prioritize keeping the assistant principal over another position.

Next, we reviewed the data for counselor responses in isolation. As we noted in other analyses, the counselor responses on the resource allocation items had stronger correlations to their reporting on the work of the AP that were also statistically significant. In this case, almost all the work of the AP scales were positively and significantly (at conventional levels) correlated with the resource allocation choices made by counselors. The notable exceptions included the relationship between eliminating another certified position and all the scales. In addition, the school operations scale was not significantly correlated with the decision to keep an assistant principal versus a teacher. Finally, the resource choice between the SAM and the assistant principal was not significantly correlated with the instructional leadership scale. The correlations ranged from .31 to .70 for those relationships that were statistically significant. The strength of the correlations between the administrative scale and the resource allocation choices for counselors again led us to investigate more fully which particular tasks within that scale were driving this result.

The counselor view of the value of the assistant principal role becomes clearer in considering the individual drivers of the allocation choice. On the question of using school-based funds to sustain the assistant principal role, counselors were more likely to choose to do so if they indicated that their assistant principal was involved in supervising support staff, creating the master schedule, managing attendance, updating/managing school policies, managing budgets and serving as the building assessment coordinator, listed in order of relationship strength and significance.

17.4 What is the Relationship between the Work of Assistant Principals and Non-Academic Outcomes?

17.4.1 Suspensions

The correlation is positive indicating that when respondents reported higher frequencies the assistant principal engaged in student support work, the school tended to have higher levels of suspension. This finding seems reasonable, in that if assistant principals are engaged in student support work with greater frequency, this engagement can lead to higher rates of suspension because assistant principals are addressing behavior issues with students. However, the magnitude of the correlation indicates this relationship is not strong. The fact that we only found significant relationships in 2013-14 may be an indication that the assistant principal's role in student behavior was not fully realized in that first year of implementation or it may be that the weak correlation was just not large enough to be statistically significant in the first year.

When examining the relationship between schools with high rates of suspension and those with low rates of suspension the pattern found in 2013-14 was also found in the 2012-13 school year. We



found that the only significant difference between means was on the student support scale. The mean for high suspension schools was 2.56, while the mean for low suspension schools was 2.46. As such, we conclude that schools with higher suspension rates report a higher frequency of assistant principals engaged in student support work, and this relationship is not due to chance.

In our final examination of suspension data, we sought to determine if there was any relationship between the change in suspensions from 2012 to 2014 and the work of the AP scales. Our analysis found that the change in suspensions did have a significant, small positive relationship with the student support scale in work of the AP. We found a very weak, but statistically significant correlation of 0.10. This relationship indicates that the increased frequency of the assistant principal engaged in work on the student support scale is associated with an increase in suspension rate.

To ensure that the number of suspensions for a school was not simply a factor of the size of the school correlations were run between school enrollment and suspension rate per year. Across the two most recent years of data, the correlation was only statistically significant in 2013-14 and the correlation was very weak at -0.08. To dig a bit deeper to determine if the relationships we found with suspensions were related to enrollment, we created a per pupil suspension rate for each school (total number of suspensions per building divided by total enrollment) and reran all of the statistical analysis. Almost identical findings were found. Therefore, we concluded that suspension rate was not a factor of enrollment size and we utilized the raw suspension data in our analysis.

17.4.2 Attendance

When considering a school's attendance rate in 2013-14, there were statistically significant correlations with the school operations scale ($r = .15$) and the student support scale ($r = .12$). We found this same pattern when examining the attendance rates for 2012-13. The statistically significant correlations were slightly higher for school operations ($r = .17$) and student support ($r = .12$). These positive correlations indicate that the reporting of higher frequencies of assistant principals engaged in school operations and student support work were associated with higher attendance rates. While these correlations are weak, this data still provides some evidence of increased student attendance since implementation of elementary assistant principals in that their work is positively correlated with attendance rate.

To look beyond a school's attendance rate and see if the role of elementary assistant principal was having an impact for students with chronic absenteeism, we completed correlations between the work of the AP scales and the data on students with 25 or more absences in a given school year. In 2013-14, there are statistically significant correlations with all four of the work of the AP scales – administrative support ($r = .17$), instructional leadership ($r = .16$), school operations ($r = .10$), and student support ($r = .24$). Again, while these correlations are weak they suggest that when assistant principal are more frequently engaged in the activities included in the work of AP scales, their school has more students with chronic absenteeism. This seems counter to our earlier findings for average daily attendance rates, which indicated that higher frequencies of assistant principals engaged in certain work activities was associated with an *increase* in attendance. Chronic absenteeism should result in lower attendance rates. So, while assistant principals are helping to increase the overall average daily attendance rates, their work maybe resulting in higher numbers of chronically absent students. (See Technical Appendix for 2012-13 analysis.)

When reviewing the 2012-13 data for students with 25 or more absences, we only found a statistically significant correlation ($p < 0.001$) with the student support scale ($r = .18$). Again, this finding is counter to our expectation based on our results for average daily attendance rates.

When examining the relationship between low attendance schools and high attendance schools patterns emerge where there are statistically significant differences between the means on both the



school operations and student support scales. Schools with low attendance rates had a mean response of 2.08 on the school operations scale, while schools with high attendance rates had a mean response of 2.26. On the student support scale, low attendance rate schools had a mean response of 2.45, while high attendance rate schools had a mean response of 2.57. When examining the relationship between low attendance and high attendance school the 2012-13 data revealed the same pattern as 2013-14. The differences in means for the administrative support and instructional leadership scales were not statistically significant, while the differences were significant for school operations and student support.

17.4.3 Climate

A total of 16 items were included across the four domains that aligned with the work of the AP. All the original items were based on a five-point Likert scale indicating increasing agreement with the statement.

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	Items (Teacher Survey form)
Teacher Climate Admin Support Scale	.901	.910	5	Q17_1 ; Q17_2 ;Q17_3 Q17_4 ;Q17_5
Teacher Climate Instructional Leadership Scale	.898	.907	4	Q18_1; Q18_2 ; Q18_3; Q18_4
Teacher Climate School Operations Scale	.805	.804	4	Q19_1 ; Q19_2 ; Q19_3; Q19_4
Teacher Climate Student Support Scale	.738	.769	3	Q20_1; Q20_2; Q20_3

Our next phase of analysis related to school climate used data from the JCPS Comprehensive School Survey. We gathered the results from the student level survey which included 51 items in 2014. We determined that 43 of the items were related to the constructs by which we had defined the work of the AP as well as the teacher climate questions. As such, we were able to use these questions to create scales based on the student perceptions of school climate. The JCPS Comprehensive School Survey asked students to rate their level of agreement with the school climate questions. The data files reported the mean percent of positive responses at each school. We then linked these mean responses for the school to our teacher survey data files based on the respondent's assigned location.

Reliability Statistics				
Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	Items (JCPS CSS Elementary Student Survey form)
Student Climate Administrative Support Scale	.824	.866	4	B18 B19 E4 E16
Student Climate Instructional Leadership Scale	.831	.849	6	E2 E3 E7 E8 E11 E13
Student Climate School Operations Scale	.859	.900	7	B14 B15 E17 E18 E21 E24 E25
Student Climate Student Support Scale	.919	.950	21	E5 E6 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10 B11 B12 B16 B17 B21 B22 B23 E19 E22 E23



To compare student response pre- and post- the assistant principal, we considered the 2012 CSS data versus the 2014 CSS data. We used the same student climate scales and computed them for 2012 data. Finding no meaningful differences between the mean values over the two years, we then created a new variable to calculate the change from 2012 to 2014 (2014 minus 2012).

We then completed the correlation analysis to determine if there were any statistically significant relationships between the student climate scales and the work of the AP scales. We found no statistically significant relationships. To validate that our constructs for the student scales were indeed similar in nature to that of the AP scales, we completed a correlation analysis between teacher climate and student climate scales. Almost all of the relationships were statistically significant, and, as such, we concluded that the constructs for the scales did appear to be directionally the same, though the magnitude of the correlations were small ranging from .10 to .23.

Next, we considered the relationship between student climate perceptions and the highest areas of the impact of the assistant principal as reported by principals, assistant principals, counselors, goal clarity coaches, and teachers. As we determined in our earlier analysis, those areas were student progress monitoring, consistent rule enforcement, teacher collaboration, student achievement, and school safety. The results of the correlation analysis indicated small, positive, statistically significant relationships between the student climate instructional leadership scale and student progress monitoring and student achievement. So, the more school staff agreed that the work of the AP had a positive impact on student progress monitoring and student achievement, the more students at their schools indicated a positive climate of instructional leadership.

We also investigated if there was any relationship between the change in student perceptions from 2012 to 2014 and the areas that school staff indicated the assistant principal had the most positive impact. We found that several small, but statistically significant relationships emerged. The change in the student perceptions of the instructional leadership climate had statistically significant relationships with student progress monitoring and teacher collaboration. The change in the student perceptions of the student support climate had statistically significant relationships with student progress monitoring, teacher collaboration, and student achievement. Thus, as school staff perceptions of the assistant principal's impact on student progress monitoring and teacher collaboration increased, so did their students' perceptions of the instructional leadership climate from 2012 to 2014. Moreover, as staff perceived that assistant principals had a greater impact on student progress monitoring, teacher collaboration, and student achievement, their schools experienced larger increases in the student support climate scale from 2012 to 2014.

17.4.4 Predicting Non-Academic Outcomes

The first set of regression models used suspension data for 2013-14 as the dependent variable, using poverty as measured by the percent of free and reduced lunch (FRL) students and achievement as measured by passing rates on the 2013-14 English Language Arts K-PREP as independent, control variables. Each model also includes one of the work of the AP scales as an independent variable, but none of the regression models that utilized the instructional leadership scale or school operations scale resulted in a statistically significant relationship between those scales and the suspension data. We did find statistically significant relationships in the models utilizing the administrative support scale and student support scale. Model 1 indicates that for a one unit increase in the administrative support scale, the suspension rate decreases 2.53 days, controlling for FRL and achievement. However, only 6% of the variation in suspension rates is accounted for by this model which includes FRL, achievement, and the administrative support scale. As such, this is not a good model for explaining the variation in suspension rates.



Model 4 finds that for a one unit increase in the student support scale, the suspension rate increases 2.91 days, controlling for FRL and achievement. This finding aligns with our previous finding where higher rates of time on student support was associated with higher levels of student suspension. Only about 6% of the variation in suspension data is accounted for by this model which includes FRL, achievement, and the student support scale. As such, this is not a good model for explaining the variation in suspension rates.

The second set of regression models used attendance rates for 2013-14 as the dependent variable, with poverty as measured by the percent of free and reduced price lunch (FRL) students and achievement as measured by the passing rate on 2013-14 English Language Arts K-PREP used as independent, control variables. Each model also includes one of the work of the AP scales as an independent variable. We did not find a statistically significant relationship with attendance data for the regression models that utilized the administrative support and instructional leadership scales. With the models utilizing the school operations scale and the student support scale, we did find significant relationships. Model 7 finds that for a one unit increase in the school operations scale, the attendance rate increases 0.19%, controlling for FRL and achievement. Just under 4% of the variation in attendance data is accounted for by this model which includes FRL, achievement, and school operations scale. As such, this is not a good model for explaining the variation in attendance rates.

Model 8 finds that for a one unit increase in the student support scale, the attendance rate increases .22%, controlling for FRL and achievement. Only about 3% of the variation in attendance data is accounted for by this model which includes FRL, achievement, and the student support scale. Similar to previous findings, this is also a weak model for explaining the variation in attendance rates.

