

**An Exploratory Case Study of an Assistant Principal's Roles and Responsibilities
That Helped Turn Around a Priority School**

by

Linda Natalia Saffold

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Auburn University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Auburn, Alabama
August 8, 2026

Keywords: assistant principals, school turnaround, instructional leadership, priority
schools, school improvement, exploratory case study

Copyright 2026 by Linda Natalia Saffold

To be Approved by

Lisa Kensler, Chair, Emily R. and Gerald S. Leischuck Endowed Professor in
Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology
Ellen Hahn, Professor of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology
Amy Serafani, Associate Professor and Program Coordinator of Educational Leadership
in Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology
Jason Bryant, Clinical Professor and Director, Truman Pierce Institute, Department of
Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology

Abstract

Assistant principals serve important leadership roles within schools and are often positioned to support school improvement efforts associated with accountability and instructional leadership responsibilities; however, limited peer-reviewed research has examined the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals within turnaround school contexts. The purpose of this exploratory case study was to explore the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal during the turnaround of a previously designated priority high school in central Alabama.

The study was guided by the following central research question: What are the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a priority school? The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework guiding the study. A qualitative exploratory case study design was utilized to examine participant perceptions regarding the assistant principal's leadership roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

Participants included one principal, one assistant principal, and four teachers who experienced the turnaround process at the study site. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted via Zoom and review of archival documents obtained from the Alabama State Department of Education, including school report cards and Alabama Priority School Lists. Data were analyzed using a thematic analysis process guided by the Alabama School Turnaround Principles.

Findings indicated that participants perceived the assistant principal as serving a multifaceted leadership role during the turnaround process through instructional leadership, coordination of assessment preparation activities, facilitation of data-informed instructional decision-making, reinforcement of instructional expectations, support of positive school climate and culture, and communication with teachers and students regarding accountability expectations and student performance goals. Findings also suggested that the assistant principal contributed to teacher collaboration, instructional consistency, and organizational support associated with school improvement efforts during the turnaround process.

This study contributes to the limited body of research examining assistant principals' roles and responsibilities within turnaround school contexts and provides insight into how assistant principals may support school improvement efforts in priority schools.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Disclosure

In the preparation of this dissertation, the following Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool was used: ChatGPT. This tool was used primarily to assist with editing, grammar, mechanics, and the development of a figure included in this study. The author acknowledges full responsibility for the intellectual content of this work and has ensured that all AI-assisted sections have been reviewed and revised for accuracy and appropriate academic style. All AI-generated content was reviewed and validated for relevance, appropriateness, and accuracy before incorporation into the final document to maintain the scholarly integrity of this research.

Disability Accessibility Disclosure

In the preparation of this dissertation, the following digital accessibility tools were used to ensure this document complies with federal requirements: Microsoft Accessibility Checker. The author acknowledges full responsibility for the intellectual content of this work and has made a good faith effort to comply with digital accessibility requirements in publishing, wherein the nature of the content does not significantly change in order to do so. Furthermore, all content has been reviewed and revised to meet these requirements prior to final publication.

Acknowledgments

Throughout this challenging yet rewarding journey, I gained a deeper understanding of the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals during the school turnaround process. More importantly, I learned a great deal about myself.

First and foremost, I thank God for providing me with the strength, perseverance, wisdom, and favor needed to complete this journey. Without His guidance and grace, this accomplishment would not have been possible.

I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Lisa Kensler for graciously agreeing to serve as my dissertation chair and for her patience, kindness, encouragement, and guidance throughout this process. I would also like to thank Dr. Ellen Hahn, Dr. Jason Bryant and Dr. Amy Serafini for their willingness to serve on my committee and for their support throughout my doctoral journey.

I am especially thankful for the love and support of my family. To my husband, I love you dearly, and I thank you for your love, encouragement, patience, and financial support throughout this process. I know this journey was not always easy, but you remained by my side every step of the way.

To my children and family, thank you for your love and for always being proud of me. Your encouragement motivated me more than you will ever know. I love each of you dearly. I am grateful that, even during this demanding process, I was still able to share many special moments with all of you.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	2
Artificial Intelligence Use of Disclosure.....	4
Disability Accessibility Disclosure.....	5
Acknowledgments	6
List of Tables.....	13
List of Figures.....	14
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	15
Background of the Problem	15
Problem Statement.....	20
Purpose of the Study.....	21
Conceptual Framework	22
Research Questions	23
Assumptions	24
Delimitations.....	25
Significance of the Study	26
Definition of Terms	27
Research Design	28
Organization of the Study	28
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	30
ESEA Flexibility Turnaround School Principles Background	30

Alabama Timeline on Implementing Federal Policies	33
Policy Structure	35
Conceptual Framework	37
Alabama Eight Turnaround School Principles	40
School Leadership	41
School Climate and Culture	43
Effective Instruction	46
Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System	49
Effective Staffing Practices	51
Enabling Effective Use of Data	53
Effective Use of Time.....	55
Effective Family and Community Engagement	57
Assistant Principals	59
Roles and Responsibilities of the Assistant Principal	60
Assistant Principals as Instructional Leaders.....	62
Challenges and Experiences of the Assistant Principal.....	63
Research Gap and Specific Problem.....	65
Chapter 3: Methodology	67
Research Design	68
Research Questions	69
Role of the Researcher.....	70
Research Site and Participants	71
Data Collection and Analysis	73

Documents.....	73
Document Collection	74
Document Analysis	74
Semi-Structured Interviews.....	75
Interview Process.....	75
Interview Transcript Analysis	77
Credibility and Trustworthiness.....	78
Limitations	79
Chapter 4: Findings	81
Participants.....	82
Principle 1: School Leadership	84
Evidence Summary.....	85
Evidence of Roles.....	85
Evidence of Responsibilities	86
Supporting Participant Evidence.....	87
Principle 2: School Climate and Culture	88
Evidence Summary.....	89
Evidence of Roles.....	89
Evidence of Responsibilities	90
Supporting Participant Evidence.....	90
Principle 3: Effective Instruction.....	92
Evidence Summary.....	92
Evidence of Roles.....	93

Evidence of Responsibilities	94
Supporting Participant Evidence	94
Principle 4: Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System.....	96
Evidence Summary.....	97
Evidence of Roles	97
Evidence of Responsibilities	98
Supporting Participant Evidence	99
Principle 5: Effective Staffing Practices	101
Evidence Summary.....	101
Evidence of Roles	102
Evidence of Responsibilities	103
Supporting Participant Evidence.....	103
Principle 6: Enabling Effective Use of Data	104
Evidence Summary.....	105
Evidence of Roles	106
Evidence of Responsibilities	106
Supporting Participant Evidence.....	107
Principle 7: Effective Use of Time.....	109
Evidence Summary.....	109
Evidence of Roles	110
Evidence of Responsibilities	111
Supporting Participant Evidence.....	111
Principle 8: Effective Family and Community Engagement	113

Evidence Summary.....	114
Evidence of Roles.....	114
Evidence of Responsibilities	115
Supporting Participant Evidence.....	116
Cross Participant Findings Summary	118
Summary of Findings by Research Questions.....	120
Research Question 1	120
Research Question 2.....	121
Research Question 3.....	122
Summary	122
Chapter 5: Discussion	124
Summary of the Study.....	125
Summary of the Findings.....	127
Discussion of the Findings.....	129
Research Question 1	129
Research Question 2.....	131
Research Question 3.....	133
Recommendations for Practice.....	135
Recommendations for Assistant Principals.....	135
Recommendations for Principals	136
Recommendations for School Districts	137
Recommendations for Leadership Preparation Programs	138
Recommendations for Future Research.....	139

Limitations	140
Conclusion.....	142
References.....	145
Appendix A Auburn University Institutional Review Board Approved Research Protocol	170
Appendix B Interview Protocol Instrument for the Assistant Principal	180
Appendix C Interview Protocol Instrument for the Principal	182
Appendix D Interview Protocol Instrument for the Teachers	184

List of Tables

Table 1 Study Participants and Roles in the Turnaround Process	72
Table 2 Summary of Data Used in the Study	83

List of Figures

Figure 1 Alabama School Turnaround Principles Framework	40
---	----

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of the Problem

According to Childs and Russell (2017), the federal policy guideline requires states to detect schools performing in the bottom 5% to receive school improvement grants. Schools' accountability usually is gathered from state testing, attendance, and dropout rates (Rudo, 2001). The descriptions for turnaround schools and chronically low-performing schools are not the same (Hansen & Choi, 2012). According to Calkins et al. (2007), "turnaround requires dramatic changes that produce significant achievement gains in a short period (within two years), followed by a longer period of sustained improvement" (p. 4). Low-performing schools are constantly looking for ways to turn around their schools (Herman et al., 2008).

According to Brown et al. (2004), there is a difference between low-performing schools and high-performing schools. In low-performing schools, students face challenges from low socioeconomic status, which causes them to struggle with learning (Oakes et al., 2017). Teachers and school leaders work hard to improve learning and raise achievement scores at low performing schools, but it is challenging for them (Greenlee & Brown, 2009). In a high-performing school, it is easier to attain high achievement because of students' affluent backgrounds (Owens, 2018). High poverty has been linked to low-performing schools (Hirn et al., 2018).

However, research has shown that principals have an impact on student success in a turnaround school (Day et al., 2016; DiPaola & Wagner, 2018), but there is little to indicate if assistant principals have an impact on student success in turnaround schools (Day et al., 2016). The impact on improvement that the principal has on student success

makes principals essential to school turnaround (Branch et al., 2013; Day et al., 2016; Mendels, 2012; Meyers & Hambrick Hitt, 2017), but it is unclear what impact assistant principals have on student achievement (Branch et al., 2013; Mendels, 2012). Although the ranking of assistant principals' contributions to student learning in schools has yet to be explained (Leithwood et al., 2004), classroom instruction ranked above the principal in student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004; Meyers & Hambrick Hitt, 2017). Effective principals are more than administrators and managers; they are instructional leaders (Krasnoff et al., 2015). Low-performing schools and Priority Schools need effective principals that can help change their poor school performance and make them high-performing schools (Hitt et al., 2018).

Under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001), ineffective principals were removed from schools that continued to perform poorly and were replaced (Branch et al., 2013; Herman et al., 2017; Kutash et al., 2010). However, the NCLB did not describe what happens to assistant principals in poorly performing schools nor did it describe what the assistant principals' roles were in making improvements. The performance of the principal in a priority school was reviewed for determination to remove or keep at the school in need of turnaround (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Priority Schools are Title I schools performing in the bottom 5% (Meyers et al., 2022). According to Ordu and Ordu (2012), the state, school system, school, principal, teachers, parents, and students were all listed as different levels of accountability for student success, but assistant principals were not listed. Research currently does not describe the perceptions of assistant principals in a turnaround school, including their roles in turning around low-performing schools (U. S. Department of Education, 2014).

There is no clear answer to what assistant principals do to help turn around low-performing or Priority Schools (Ordu & Ordu, 2012). There is literature defining the roles and responsibilities for principals and teachers in turnaround schools, but not for assistant principals (Hitt et al., 2018).

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), an education policy passed in 2015, states must establish a plan showing how their schools will be accountable for their academic performance (Feng et al., 2018). School turnaround efforts across the United States were influenced by flexibility provisions within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which allowed states to develop customized approaches for improving persistently low-performing schools. Under ESEA flexibility guidelines, priority schools were identified as Title I schools performing in the lowest 5% of the state based on indicators such as academic achievement and graduation rates (Hemelt & Jacob, 2017; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Federal turnaround efforts emphasized leadership effectiveness, instructional improvement, use of data, school climate, instructional time, and stakeholder engagement as important components of school improvement initiatives (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Although federal turnaround principles guided school improvement efforts nationally, states were granted flexibility to develop accountability systems and turnaround frameworks aligned with local educational priorities and state accountability goals.

In Alabama, school turnaround efforts were supported through the Alabama State Department of Education's (ALSDE) implementation of Alabama Plan 2020 and the ESEA Flexibility Waiver framework approved in 2012 (ALSDE, 2012). Under this accountability framework, schools identified as priority schools received targeted

support and intervention strategies designed to improve student achievement, school climate, instructional practices, and organizational effectiveness. The Alabama School Turnaround Principles provided guidance for leadership, instruction, data use, staffing, and family engagement practices associated with school improvement efforts within priority schools.

The assistant principal is often overlooked as one of the agents who helps turn around a low-performing school. The assistant principal position is often viewed as the entry-level position within school administration, but it is a very important position in schools for several reasons (Hausman et al., 2002; Kelly, 2019; Marshall & Hooley, 2006). It is a position from which most administrators get their start (Glanz, 1994; Marshall, 1992; Marshall & Hooley, 2006), and this is where assistant principals prepare for principalship (Hitt et al., 2012). Oleszewski et al. (2012) described “the assistant principal as a person who serves directly underneath the principal” (p. 266). Oleszewski et al. (2012) also used the terms “vice principal and deputy teacher” as indistinguishable to assistant principal (p. 266). Assistant principals assist the principal in overseeing the school, and they must be able to fulfill the principal’s duties when the principal is off the school campus (Kelly, 2019). Assistant principals not only assist the principal, but they work closely with the principal (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). The assistant principal role does not have a universally defined set of responsibilities (Scoggins & Bishop, 1993). The job description of an assistant principal varies according to the needs of the school (Sun, 2011).

Usually, the assistant principal does not have the authority of the principal (Houchens et al., 2018; Marshall, 1992; Marshall & Hooley, 2006). The duties of the

assistant principal mostly consist of managing the schools (Barnett et al., 2012). According to Marshall and Hooley (2006), a 1988 survey was analyzed to find commonality among assistant principals. One of the analyses was comparing assistant principals' tasks in 1988 to the tasks of assistant principals in 1965 (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). It was noted in this study that the assistant principals' responsibilities were the same in 1965 as they were in 1988 except for four additional duties which were "graduation, instructional methods, staff in-service, and teacher motivation and incentives" (Marshall & Hooley, 2006, p. 15). Another task that assistant principals had in common was handling student discipline (Clayton & Bingham, 2018) which ranked first on the 1965 and 1998 surveys (Marshall & Hooley, 2006).

Clayton and Bingham (2018) examined assistant principals' experiences with overwhelming responsibilities and discipline within a near-turnaround Title I school setting. Clayton and Bingham (2018) discussed how school discipline responsibilities reduced assistant principals' opportunities to focus on instructional leadership. Assistant principals keep peace within the school while dealing with chaotic situations such as fights and the day-to-day basic tasks such as monitoring the lunchroom (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). In addition to handling discipline, there are other common duties that are performed by assistant principals, including grade-level teams, security, in-school suspension, and supervising front office staff (Clayton & Bingham, 2018). The assistant principal's role also consists of "monitoring student activities and attendance" (Kaplan & Owings, 1999, p. 82). Managing substitutes and buses as well as coordinating textbooks were also found to be common duties among assistant principals (Marshall & Hooley, 2006).

Research on turnaround schools has focused primarily on principals' leadership roles and school improvement practices (Meyers & Hambrick Hitt, 2017). Studies have identified turnaround principals as leaders who support school culture, instructional improvement, strategic leadership, teacher recruitment, and academic growth within low-performing schools (Faas et al., 2018; Friedman, 2020; Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2019). Turnaround principals have also been recognized for their ability to influence organizational change and promote student achievement outcomes (Rattley, 2016). However, limited peer-reviewed research has examined how assistant principals contribute to turnaround efforts or how assistant principals' roles and responsibilities are perceived by assistant principals, principals, and teachers within turnaround school settings (Clayton & Bingham, 2018). Therefore, examining the perceptions of school leaders and teachers regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during implementation of improvement strategies aligned with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles may provide insight into how assistant principals contribute to successful school turnaround efforts.

Problem Statement

Currently, there is a lack of peer-reviewed evidence that explores what assistant principals do to help turn around low-performing schools, including their roles and responsibilities based on the perceptions of assistant principals, principals, and teachers from schools that have been through a turnaround process (Bukoski et al., 2016; Clayton & Bingham, 2018). According to Goldring et al. (2021), there is insufficient evidence describing how assistant principals influence the turnaround of low-performing schools, although assistant principals' roles "such as coaching teachers or

being visible in the classroom” may contribute to student outcomes (p. 76). There are limited studies examining assistant principals’ influence on overall school performance in turnaround settings (Houchens et al., 2018). Additional research is needed to examine how assistant principals’ roles and responsibilities contribute to school improvement efforts within turnaround school settings (Goldring et al., 2021).

Within Alabama, priority schools implement improvement strategies aligned with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles to support increases in student achievement and overall school performance. However, little research has examined how assistant principals contribute to implementation of these turnaround strategies from the perspectives of school leaders and teachers working within priority-school contexts. The importance of addressing this problem is that examining how assistant principals support turnaround efforts may help clarify leadership responsibilities associated with successful implementation of improvement strategies in low-performing schools. Understanding assistant principals’ roles and responsibilities during implementation of turnaround strategies may provide insight for school districts, policymakers, and leadership preparation programs seeking to strengthen administrative leadership and support structures within priority schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to explore the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal in helping turn around a priority school based on the perceptions of one assistant principal, one principal, and four teachers who experienced the turnaround process. The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework guiding the development of interview questions,

organization of data analysis procedures, and interpretation of findings related to the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was the Alabama School Turnaround Principles developed by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) as part of Alabama Plan 2020 and the state's ESEA Flexibility Waiver framework approved in 2012 (ALSDE, 2012). The Alabama School Turnaround Principles were developed to guide improvement efforts within Alabama Priority Schools identified for targeted support and school turnaround initiatives. These principles provided a structured framework for guiding school improvement efforts and leadership practices within Alabama Priority Schools. In 2012, the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) received approval for its Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver, allowing the state to implement a customized accountability system designed to support school improvement and increase college and career readiness outcomes for students (ALSDE, 2012). As part of this effort, ALSDE established eight School Turnaround Principles to guide improvement efforts in priority schools across the state.

The Alabama School Turnaround Principles include School Leadership; School Climate and Culture; Effective Instruction; Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System; Effective Staffing Practices; Enabling Effective Use of Data; Effective Use of Time; and Effective Family and Community Engagement (ALSDE, 2012). Collectively, these principles emphasize leadership, instructional improvement, collaboration,

accountability, data-informed decision making, family engagement, and organizational practices associated with school turnaround efforts.

The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework for examining assistant principals' roles and responsibilities within a turnaround school setting. The framework supported exploration of participants' perceptions of assistant principals' contributions to leadership, instructional support, communication, data use, school climate, and other responsibilities associated with turnaround efforts. The framework also guided development of the interview questions, organization of data analysis procedures, and interpretation of findings throughout the study. The Alabama School Turnaround Principles provided a structured framework for identifying improvement priorities and supporting implementation of targeted strategies in schools identified as needing additional assistance (Perlman, 2013).

The Alabama School Turnaround Principles were appropriate for this study because the research focused on an assistant principal who participated in turnaround efforts within an Alabama Priority School context. The framework provided a structure for examining how assistant principals supported school improvement efforts associated with leadership, instruction, intervention systems, staffing, data use, school climate, instructional time, and family and community engagement during the turnaround process. The framework also guided the development of interview questions, organization of data analysis procedures, and interpretation of findings related to assistant principals' roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following primary research question:

What are the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a priority school?

Three research questions (RQs) further directed the study:

RQ1: How does one assistant principal perceive their roles and responsibilities in helping turn around a priority school?

RQ2: How does one principal perceive the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a priority school?

RQ3: How do teachers perceive the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a priority school?

Assumptions

Several assumptions guided this qualitative exploratory case study. One assumption was that participants would respond openly and honestly to the interview questions and accurately describe their perceptions and experiences related to the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process. Another assumption was that participants selected for the study had sufficient experience and knowledge of the school turnaround process to provide meaningful insight into assistant principal leadership practices within a priority school setting.

This study also assumed that the semi-structured interview questions were appropriate for exploring participants' perceptions and experiences related to assistant principal roles and responsibilities during school turnaround efforts. In addition, it was assumed that archival documents, including Alabama State Department of Education school report cards and priority school identification records, accurately reflected the

school's turnaround status and performance data associated with the turnaround process.

Consistent with qualitative research and a social constructivist perspective, this study assumed that participants' experiences and perceptions would contribute to understanding how assistant principals supported turnaround efforts within a priority school context (Creswell, 2013).

Delimitations

Several delimitations established the boundaries of this qualitative exploratory case study. This study focused specifically on the roles and responsibilities of one assistant principal who participated in turnaround efforts within an Alabama Priority School context. The assistant principal served as the bounded case because the purpose of the study was to explore how assistant principals contributed to school turnaround efforts rather than to examine the roles of all school stakeholders involved in the turnaround process.

This study was limited to one rural high school in Alabama that experienced the turnaround process and included one assistant principal, one principal, and four teachers who participated in or experienced the turnaround efforts within the school setting. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who could provide meaningful insight related to assistant principal leadership during the turnaround process (Berg & Lune, 2012; Schwandt, 2007).

Another delimitation of the study was that findings were not intended to be generalized to all assistant principals or all turnaround schools. Because the study focused on one priority school within a specific Alabama context, findings may not

reflect the experiences of assistant principals in other school settings, districts, or states.

Significance of the Study

Literature on assistant principals in turnaround schools has been limited (Balikçi, 2020; Baskett, 2020). This study adds to the literature by examining the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals in supporting the turnaround of a priority school. Specifically, this study contributes to understanding how assistant principals support school turnaround efforts examined through the lens of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and how their leadership responsibilities may influence school improvement, student learning, and achievement outcomes. This study also adds to existing findings that emphasize the importance of assistant principal leadership in schools (Baskett, 2020). The results of this study are intended to contribute to the educational research literature related to assistant principals' roles during school turnaround efforts.

This study also provides insights that may help inform the practices of superintendents and principals in identifying, selecting, and developing assistant principals who are prepared to support improvement efforts in low-performing schools. Findings from this study may serve as a resource for university leadership preparation programs working to prepare future school administrators for leadership responsibilities associated with turnaround contexts. In addition, the results of this study may serve as a guide for school districts seeking to strengthen support structures for assistant principals implementing improvement strategies aligned with accountability expectations in priority schools. Finally, this study may assist assistant principals in better

understanding leadership responsibilities associated with supporting school turnaround efforts.

Definition of Terms

Assistant Principal: An assistant principal is a school administrator who supports school leadership responsibilities related to instruction, school management, student support, and organizational operations (Marshall & Hooley, 2006).

Instructional leader: An instructional leader is a school leader who supports effective teaching and learning practices and works to ensure that quality instruction occurs consistently within classrooms (Hoerr, 2016).

Priority schools: Priority schools are schools identified through Alabama's accountability system as requiring targeted support and improvement efforts based on factors such as academic achievement and school performance indicators (Alabama State Department of Education [ALSDE], 2012).

Title I program: According to Klein (2015c), Title I is a federal program that provides funding to school districts to support the education of disadvantaged children. The Title I program was originally established under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and continued through subsequent reauthorizations of federal education legislation.

Alabama School Turnaround Principles: The Alabama School Turnaround Principles are a framework established by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) to guide school improvement efforts within priority schools. The principles include School Leadership; School Climate and Culture; Effective Instruction; Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System; Effective Staffing

Practices; Enabling Effective Use of Data; Effective Use of Time; and Effective Family and Community Engagement (ALSDE, 2012).

Turnaround school: A turnaround school is a low-performing school implementing targeted improvement strategies designed to rapidly improve student achievement and overall school performance (Herman et al., 2008).

Research Design

This study used a qualitative exploratory case study design to examine the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal during a school turnaround process. Case study methodology was appropriate because it allowed for an in-depth exploration of participants' perceptions within a real-world context (Yin, 2014). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with one assistant principal, one principal, and four teachers who experienced the turnaround process at a priority-designated high school in Alabama. Archival documents from the Alabama State Department of Education, including school report cards and priority school identification records, were also reviewed to confirm the school's turnaround status. The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework guiding data collection and analysis.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 introduces the background of the problem, problem statement, purpose of the study, conceptual framework, research questions, assumptions, delimitations, significance of the study, definitions of terms, and research design. Chapter 2 reviews literature related to school turnaround, the Alabama School Turnaround Principles, and assistant principal leadership. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology and procedures used in the study. Chapter 4 presents the

findings of the study. Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions, conceptual framework, and existing literature. The chapter also includes recommendations for educational leadership practice, recommendations for future research, limitations of the study, and a conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter reviews literature related to assistant principals' roles and responsibilities in school turnaround settings and presents the conceptual framework guiding this study. The chapter begins with a discussion of federal turnaround school reform efforts associated with ESEA flexibility provisions and the development of school turnaround principles designed to support improvement in low-performing schools. The chapter then examines Alabama's implementation of federal accountability policies, including the development of Plan 2020, priority schools identification processes, and the Alabama School Turnaround Principles.

The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework for this study and guided the organization of interview questions, data analysis procedures, and interpretation of participant perceptions regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process. Following the discussion of the conceptual framework and the eight Alabama School Turnaround Principles, the chapter reviews literature related to assistant principal leadership, including assistant principals' roles and responsibilities, instructional leadership practices, and leadership development experiences and challenges. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the research gap and the specific problem addressed in this study.

ESEA Flexibility Turnaround School Principles Background

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) represents one of several federal education policies developed to improve educational accountability and student achievement in the United States. President Lyndon Johnson signed the nation's first

education policy, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), into law in 1965. The ESEA was developed to help improve education and help with equality through funding (ESSA, 2017; Sanders, 2016). The ESEA impacts state and local policies through funding as well (Sanders, 2016). This law provides funding to schools serving children in poverty and provides states with funding for special education, textbooks, and library books (ESSA, 2017; Sanders, 2016). The ESEA has 10 divisions labeled from Title I through Title X. Title VI includes the Flexibility and Accountability Act, which distributes state grants for assessment and improvement for rural schools (Klein, 2015a). There have been changes to the ESEA through reauthorizations and provisions.

At the time of this study, the most recent renewal of the ESEA is the ESSA, but there were other reauthorizations and provisions added to the ESEA before the ESSA, including the NCLB Act in 2002, stimulus aid for education in 2009, and ESEA flexibility in 2011. The stimulus aid for education and ESEA flexibility were not reauthorizations of the ESEA, but they are provisions. President George W. Bush signed a reauthorization of the ESEA in 2002 known as the NCLB Act (ESSA, 2017; Klein, 2015a). The NCLB Act required an annual assessment of students' reading and math in third through eighth grades as well as once in high school (Klein, 2015a; U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Title 1 schools that are failing or have not improved the required achievements must offer school choice and free tutoring (Billings et al., 2018). School choice allows parents of children in a Title 1 school that is recognized for not making progress to remove their children to a more productive public school (U. S. Department of Education, 2009). Having highly qualified teachers was another requirement of the

NCLB (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 2006; Klein, 2015a, 2015b). Teachers who taught core subjects had to have at least a bachelor's degree, be state certified, and have knowledge in their subject (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 2006).

In 2009, the stimulus aid for education provision encompassed the competitive grants and Race to the Top, which furnished funds to schools that incorporated President Barack Obama's requirements (Klein, 2015a, 2015b; Rebell et al., 2010). The requirements include using school turnaround directives, utilizing state-wide data, incorporating Common Core State Standards and assessments, and testing the effectiveness of teachers (Sharp, 2016). States volunteering to receive ESEA flexibility upon approval must adapt college- and career-readiness standards, have principal and teacher evaluations, and enforce turnaround school principles (Klein, 2015b; Sharp, 2016).

In 2015, the ESEA was reauthorized when President Barack Obama signed the ESSA (ESSA, 2017; Klein, 2015a, 2015b; Sanders 2016; U. S. Department of Education, 2025.; Young et al., 2017). The ESSA replaced the NCLB when it was enacted (ESSA, 2017; Klein, 2015a, 2015b; Sanders 2016; U. S. Department of Education, 2025). The ESSA yields more flexibility and yet still has a focus on accountability (Sharp, 2016; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). The ESSA includes many of the mandates required by President Obama and holds students to higher achievement standards that make them ready for success in college and career settings (U. S. Department of Education, 2025).

The ESEA flexibility turnaround school principles were a guide from the U.S. Department of Education (2016) during President Obama's term to help turn around

failing schools called priority schools. Schools identified for turnaround support were often considered at risk due to very low academic achievement and high numbers of disciplinary problems (Nor & Roslan, 2009). Downey et al. (2008) claimed that failing schools are typically differentiated by their low achievement scores and not by their learning or impact. According to Downey et al. (2008), “conventional wisdom suggests that failing schools tend to be urban public schools that serve predominantly poor or minority students” (p. 252). Schools that were receiving federal Title I funds and performing in the bottom 5% of the state and schools that had less than two thirds of their students graduating were identified for improvement and were also called comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) schools (Rentner & Lober, 2019). The ESSA gives the state more control of distinguishing schools that are low performing schools and allows the school districts to determine the evidence-based strategies for improving the performance of the underperforming school (Rentner & Lober, 2019). According to Meyers et al. (2022), states developed letter Grades A to F to categorize the schools based on their summative data. The development of letter grades for categorization met the requirements of ESSA (Meyers et al., 2022).

The ESEA flexibility turnaround school principles provided states with a framework for improving low-performing schools identified for intervention and support. These federal principles emphasized leadership, teaching and learning, use of time, rigorous instructional programs, data utilization, school climate, and stakeholder engagement as essential components of school improvement efforts (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Alabama later adapted these federal accountability expectations within its own educational accountability system through implementation of Plan 2020

and the Alabama School Turnaround Principles, which served as the conceptual framework guiding this study. Alabama incorporated many of these federal accountability expectations into its state accountability framework through Plan 2020 and related school improvement policies.

Alabama Timeline on Implementing Federal Policies

- May 2012: The Alabama Legislature passes ACT 2012-402, which mandates the creation of an A-F School Grading System based on school and district performance (Alabama Act No. 2012-402, 2012).
- May 2012: ALSDE adopts the Turnaround Principles, a set of federally aligned strategies (including leadership changes and increased learning time) required to qualify for NCLB flexibility waivers (ALSDE, 2012).
- June 2012: Alabama formally submitted its ESEA Flexibility Request to the U.S. Department of Education (Alabama State Board of Education, 2012).
- July 2012: The Alabama State Board of Education officially approved *Plan 2020*, establishing statewide goals focused on college and career readiness, improved graduation rates, and closing achievement gaps (Alabama State Department of Education, 2012).
- February 2013: The Alabama Legislature passed Act 2013-64, known as the *Alabama Accountability Act (AAA)*, which introduced tax-credit-funded scholarships for students assigned to schools identified as failing to attend other public or participating private schools (Alabama Legislature, 2013).
- May 2013: The U.S. Department of Education granted Alabama ESEA Flexibility, allowing the state to implement its *Plan 2020* accountability framework in place of

previous No Child Left Behind proficiency requirements (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

- September 2022: Alabama expanded its school improvement efforts through the Governor’s Turnaround Schools Initiative, which provided targeted support to a select group of the state’s lowest-performing schools while operating alongside the broader ALSDE priority school accountability structure (Office of the Governor of Alabama, 2022).
- April 2023: Under updates to the Alabama Accountability Act, schools receiving a grade of D or F on the state report card were identified as priority schools for purposes of school choice eligibility and intervention support (Alabama State Department of Education, 2023; Alabama Act 2023-418).

Together, these policy developments established Alabama’s accountability structure for identifying priority schools and guided the implementation of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles that framed improvement efforts across the state.

Policy Structure

In an effort to increase transparency and accountability in public education, the Alabama Legislature enacted Act 2012-402, which established a comprehensive school and district performance grading system, as well as the Legislative School Performance Recognition Program (Alabama Act No. 2012-402, 2012). This legislation was designed to provide stakeholders—such as parents, educators, and policymakers—with a clear and standardized method for evaluating the academic performance of schools and districts across the state. The legislation assigned letter grades (A-F) to educational institutions based on multiple performance indicators, including academic achievement,

academic growth, graduation rates, and college and career readiness metrics. The grading system defined school performance levels as follows: A is excellent progress; B is above average progress; C is satisfactory progress; D is less than satisfactory progress; and F is failing to make adequate progress. The Act aimed to foster continuous improvement and celebrate high-performing schools (Alabama State Department of Education, ALSDE, 2012). For students in failing schools, the Alabama ACT of 2013-64 allowed parents to transfer their student from a failing school to a higher-performing public school (ALSDE, 2017).

In 2012, the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) received approval for its Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver, allowing the state to implement a customized accountability system designed to support school improvement and increase college and career readiness outcomes for students (ALSDE, 2012). As part of this effort, ALSDE established eight School Turnaround Principles to guide improvement efforts in priority schools across the state.

As part of its ESEA Flexibility Request, the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) developed Alabama Plan 2020 to guide accountability, college and career readiness, and school improvement efforts across the state (ALSDE, 2012). As part of Alabama's accountability system, schools identified as priority schools received targeted support based on performance indicators such as assessment outcomes, graduation rates, attendance patterns, and subgroup achievement gaps. ALSDE later developed the Alabama School Turnaround Principles to guide improvement efforts in priority schools (ALSDE, 2012). These principles informed the implementation of

improvement strategies in priority schools across the state and provided a structure for examining leadership roles during the turnaround process.

In addition to the Alabama State Department of Education's accountability efforts under Plan 2020, Alabama later introduced the Governor's Turnaround Schools Initiative to provide intensive intervention and targeted support for a select group of persistently low-performing schools (Office of the Governor of Alabama, 2022). This initiative focused on a limited number of schools receiving additional state support beyond those identified through the broader ALSDE priority school accountability framework. The school examined in this study was identified as a priority school under the Alabama State Department of Education accountability system (ALSDE, 2012) but was not selected to participate in the Governor's Turnaround Schools Initiative. Therefore, this study focuses on leadership practices within the ALSDE priority school improvement framework rather than within the Governor's Turnaround Schools Initiative model.

Conceptual Framework

These policy developments established the accountability structure through which Alabama identified priority schools and implemented targeted school improvement efforts under its ESEA Flexibility framework. As part of this work, the Alabama State Department of Education adopted eight Alabama School Turnaround Principles to guide improvement planning and leadership practices in priority schools across the state. These principles provided a structured framework for guiding school improvement efforts and leadership practices within Alabama Priority Schools. In this study, the Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework

for examining how an assistant principal supported school turnaround efforts within a priority school context.

The conceptual framework guiding this study was the Alabama School Turnaround Principles developed by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) as part of the state's accountability and school improvement efforts under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility framework. These principles were designed to support improvement efforts in priority schools identified as persistently low-performing schools within Alabama's accountability system (ALSDE, 2012). The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework for examining leadership practices and school improvement efforts associated with turnaround schools.

The Alabama School Turnaround Principles were selected as the conceptual framework for this study because they aligned closely with the purpose of exploring the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal during a school turnaround process. Although the principles were originally developed to guide school improvement efforts, they also provided an appropriate analytic lens for examining participant perceptions regarding assistant principal leadership within a turnaround school context. The framework supported exploration of participants' perceptions of assistant principals' contributions to leadership, instructional support, communication, data use, and other responsibilities associated with turnaround efforts.

The conceptual framework guided the development of the interview questions, the organization of the data analysis procedures, and the interpretation of findings throughout this study. The Alabama School Turnaround Principles provided a structure

for examining participants' perceptions and experiences related to assistant principal leadership within turnaround school settings. Interview questions and data analysis procedures were aligned to the framework to explore leadership practices associated with the turnaround process while still allowing additional participant perspectives and experiences to emerge from the data.

The Alabama School Turnaround Principles include School Leadership; School Climate and Culture; Effective Instruction; Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System; Effective Staffing Practices; Enabling Effective Use of Data; Effective Use of Time; and Effective Family and Community Engagement (ALSDE, 2012). Together, these principles provided the conceptual structure for examining participant perceptions of the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

The following section describes each of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles that served as the conceptual framework for this study. Figure 1 provides an overview of the eight principles that guided development of the interview questions, data analysis procedures, and interpretation of findings.

Figure 1

Alabama School Turnaround Principles Framework



Note. Figure created by the researcher based on the Alabama School Turnaround Principles identified by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE, 2012).

Alabama Eight Turnaround School Principles

The Alabama School Turnaround Principles were developed by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) to guide improvement efforts in priority schools

identified through the state accountability system. In this study, the Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework for examining participant perceptions regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process. The framework also guided the organization of interview questions, data analysis procedures, and interpretation of findings.

The eight Alabama School Turnaround Principles include School Leadership; School Climate and Culture; Effective Instruction; Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System; Effective Staffing Practices; Enabling Effective Use of Data; Effective Use of Time; and Effective Family and Community Engagement (ALSDE, 2012). The following sections describe each principle and its relevance to school turnaround efforts.

School Leadership

School Leadership is the first of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and emphasizes the importance of strong leadership practices in supporting improvement efforts within priority schools (Alabama State Department of Education [ALSDE], 2012). Leadership within turnaround schools includes establishing a clear vision for improvement, supporting instructional practices, developing staff capacity, and promoting accountability for student achievement outcomes. Research has consistently identified school leadership as a critical component in successful turnaround efforts because school leaders influence school culture, instructional expectations, collaboration, and overall organizational improvement (Hitt et al., 2018; Meyers & Hambrick Hitt, 2017).

Moreover, for leadership, competencies of behavior practices and underlying drive motives are deemed important (Hitt et al., 2018). These behavioral practices pertain to how successful leaders demonstrate “being, thinking, feeling, acting, and speaking” within leadership settings (Steiner & Hassel, 2011, p. 4). Leaders need high performance to turn around failing schools (Meyers & Hambrick Hitt, 2017). Steiner and Hassel (2011) looked at the characteristics of leaders to determine if they have high-performing abilities. These characteristics included “persistence, achievement motivation, and self-confidence” (Steiner & Hassel, 2011, p. 4). Characteristics of how their thoughts and actions were carried out were not the only things that were observed; Steiner and Hassel (2011) also observed their habits, including “calculated risk taking, goal setting, and planning” (p. 4). Meyers and Hambrick Hitt (2017) found various characteristics of principals to be important in turnaround schools. Leaders also turned around their schools by communicating their vision, being actively involved in learning, hiring effective teachers, effectively using resources, supporting their teachers, and allowing teacher collaboration (DaVita et al., 2007). Leaders also improved their schools through collaboration, communication, professional development, and improvements to the overall school environment (Muti, 2019). Leaders promote changes by making sure the needs of others are a priority, letting others know their high expectations, making people feel important, and inspiring others to be innovators (Balyer, 2012).

According to Balyer (2012), as transformational leaders, they have the mindset to advance their schools in progress. Someone who is able to transform others is called a transformational leader. Transformational leaders encourage support for their vision goal not only from their organization (Nuel et al., 2021), but from the community as well

(Eranil & Özbilen, 2017). Leaders also need to have a balanced leadership that includes knowledge and skill. Transformational leaders know how to handle change while keeping the valuable aspects of their schools (Andriani et al., 2018). Transformational leaders know how to judge the strategies to use with change and how to support a learning environment (Waters et al., 2003).

Leadership within turnaround schools is often distributed across multiple administrative roles rather than centered solely on the principal. Assistant principals frequently support school improvement efforts through instructional leadership, teacher support, communication, discipline management, data discussions, and relationship building with staff and students. Collaborative leadership structures may strengthen turnaround efforts by allowing school leaders to share responsibilities associated with improving school culture, instructional practices, and student achievement outcomes (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018).

Effective leadership within turnaround schools requires collaboration, instructional support, communication, and the ability to guide organizational change efforts. Because assistant principals often share leadership responsibilities associated with school improvement, understanding how leadership practices function within turnaround settings may provide insight into the roles and responsibilities assistant principals assume during the turnaround process.

School Climate and Culture

School Climate and Culture is one of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and emphasizes creating a safe, supportive, learner-centered environment that promotes positive relationships, student belonging, and academic achievement

(Alabama State Department of Education [ALSDE], 2012). Having the teachers and students complete surveys on the climate and culture helps schools determine what areas need improvement, such as school environment, interpersonal relations, and sense of self-belonging; additionally, improving these areas also helps improve self-efficacy (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018). Self-efficacy positively affects student academic achievement (Zysberg & Schwabsky, 2021). To encourage academic learning, the school climate must be learner-centered (Doyle, 2008). To further encourage academic learning, schools must be a place where students feel safe in their environment (Ni et al., 2020). Having a safe environment is important to the school climate not only for safety, but also for students to be risk takers as well (Sullivan et al., 2020). Just as imperative to the school climate is the appearance of the school, which can help build school pride and help build relationships with stakeholders (Konold et al., 2018).

School culture also contributes to the overall school environment by supporting positive relationships and student connectedness within schools (Acosta et al., 2019; Robinson et al., 2007). Regardless of the limitations, principals make sure that students know what success feels like even if it includes activities that are not educational (Kutsyuruba et al., 2015). All programs geared to make schools better will fail if the needs of the students are not met (Nor & Roslan, 2009). Student needs within school environments may reflect components of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, including physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization needs (Taormina & Gao, 2013; Yahaya, 2017).

According to Nor and Roslan (2009), leaders turn schools around through creating a positive school environment that includes the physical, affective, social, and academic aspects of the school environment. Leaders pay attention to the physical environment of the school because the appearance of the school has a connection to learning and school pride (Shaari et al., 2020). Leaders use programs and plans that support an effective environment, meet student needs, and help students feel a sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2018). Celebrating successes is significant to building a positive social environment (Marzano, 2012). Another way leaders improve the social environment is by encouraging parent involvement within the school (Hill et al., 2018). School leadership also works to improve the academic environment by supporting increases in student achievement (Nor & Roslan, 2009). Leaders recognize that it is more feasible for students to demonstrate significant academic growth than to expect every student to exceed academically (Nor & Roslan, 2009).

School climate and culture improvement efforts within turnaround schools often involve shared leadership responsibilities among school administrators. Assistant principals may contribute to school climate and culture through supporting student discipline systems, building relationships with teachers and students, promoting communication, reinforcing behavioral expectations, and supporting a positive learning environment. Collaborative leadership practices that focus on relationships, trust, and student support may strengthen overall school improvement efforts within turnaround settings (Houchens et al., 2018; Goldring et al., 2021).

Leaders within turnaround schools work to improve school climate and culture by promoting positive relationships, supporting student belonging, maintaining safe

learning environments, encouraging family involvement, and fostering academic success (Hill et al., 2018; Nor & Roslan, 2009). Because school climate and culture influence student engagement and achievement, understanding how school leaders support these areas may provide insight into assistant principals' roles and responsibilities during school turnaround efforts (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018).

Effective Instruction

Effective Instruction is one of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and focuses on improving teaching and learning practices that support student achievement within priority schools (ALSDE, 2012). Effective instruction emphasizes high-quality teaching, collaborative instructional practices, professional learning opportunities, and instructional support systems designed to improve student learning outcomes. Teachers play an important role in the teaching and learning process because instructional practices may positively influence student achievement and academic growth (Ngware et al., 2014).

Research shows that a professional learning community (PLC) plays a big role in transforming schools (Maxwell et al., 2010). A PLC allows teachers to collaborate with each other to improve student learning (Maxwell et al., 2010). According to Dulin (2018), a PLC improves teaching and learning if implemented successfully. Research also suggests that communication among teachers is important (Maxwell et al., 2010). Teachers share in decision-making and developing instructional strategies to improve student learning (Stewart, 2014). Teachers need to have high expectations for student learning and support to implement a PLC (Dulin, 2018). Principals can facilitate and

provide time for learning and involvement in a PLC and communication for teachers in their schools (Dulin, 2018; Maxwell et al., 2010).

Leithwood et al. (2010) looked at how school leaders influence student learning, focusing on how school leaders have an impact on teaching and learning by having high expectations, creating a disciplined environment, creating collective teacher efficacy and trust, and by working with families (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). According to Sabastian and Allensworth (2012), leaders who create a strong learning climate have a significant impact on learning. Leadership can create a strong learning climate by having high-quality professional development for teachers (Sterrett & Richardson, 2020). “The indirect association of principal leadership on instruction is greater only through certain aspects of professional community—reflective dialogue, teacher socialization, and teacher collaboration” (Sabastian & Allensworth, 2012, p. 646).

Also, according to Goe et al. (2012), teacher evaluation can help improve effective instruction. Leaders must be trained to evaluate teacher performance and to analyze the findings to make decisions that yield better results or that help maintain teaching and learning success (Goe et al., 2012; Lejonberg et al., 2018). Trust and relationships must be in place in order for teachers to gain from evaluation dialogues (Arneson, 2014; Goe et al., 2012). Looking at teacher evaluation is very important in helping to improve teaching and learning (O’Brien, 2014). Teacher evaluation provides principals with information that help them discover teachers’ strengths and weaknesses (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2015). Knowing these strengths and weaknesses helps principals key into much needed and productive professional development that they need to provide for their teachers (Smylie, 2014). Knowing teachers’ strengths and weaknesses

also helps principals discover whether their teachers are effective and discover the area of focus to help ineffective teachers become more effective. For teaching and learning, teacher evaluation is a valuable tool in helping teachers improve their craft (O'Brien, 2014).

For teacher evaluation to help improve teaching and learning, principals must be qualified and skilled in judging teacher performance (Lejonberg et al., 2018). Classrooms that are well-managed and that have well-disciplined students do not always mean that effective learning is taking place. Principals must be able to identify purposeful and meaningful instruction and identify student learning. Immediate feedback from the evaluation must be given to the teacher after the evaluation has been performed (Neumerski et al., 2018). The principal should be able to identify one of the teacher's strengths as the ability to deliver effective instruction that reaches all students. The principal also should be able to provide meaningful and purposeful professional development for teachers who have a weakness in delivering effective instruction that reaches all students (O'Brien, 2014).

Effective instruction within turnaround schools often involves collaborative instructional leadership among school administrators and teachers. Assistant principals may support effective instruction through classroom walkthroughs, instructional coaching, teacher feedback, professional learning support, and collaboration with teachers regarding student learning needs. Shared instructional leadership practices may strengthen teaching and learning efforts within turnaround school settings by supporting continuous instructional improvement and teacher development (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018).

Effective instruction within turnaround schools relies on collaborative leadership, professional learning, instructional feedback, and continuous support for teaching and learning improvement efforts. Because instructional quality influences student achievement and school improvement outcomes, understanding how school leaders support effective instruction may provide insight into assistant principals' roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018).

Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System

Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System is one of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and emphasizes aligning curriculum, instruction, assessment, and intervention practices to support student learning and academic achievement within priority schools (Alabama State Department of Education [ALSDE], 2012). Effective curriculum and assessment systems are designed to meet student learning needs through rigorous instruction, data-informed decision making, targeted interventions, and standards-aligned instructional practices. Blackburn and Williamson (2009) defined rigor as maintaining high expectations while providing support for advanced student learning.

The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE, n.d.), a nonprofit organization that advocates for better education, offered their recommendations for the ESEA reauthorization: "It is extremely important that the goals and provisions of the ESEA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are carefully aligned to promote success for ALL students" (p. 2). The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE, n.d.) emphasized the importance of aligning curriculum, assessment systems, instructional practices, accountability measures, and college and career

readiness standards to support improved student achievement outcomes for all students. CASE also emphasized the importance of using research-based instructional strategies, effective data collection systems, and appropriate supports to meet diverse student learning needs. To improve student achievement, there must be a connection between the curriculum, learning and behavioral strategies, and assessments (CASE, n.d.). This combination is merged in the response to intervention (Rtl) and positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS), which yield improved student performance through data-driven, researched-based approaches.

Response to Intervention (Rtl) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are commonly used multi-tiered frameworks designed to support academic and behavioral improvement through data-driven and research-based intervention strategies (Dunlop, 2013; Lenski, 2011). These systems provide targeted instructional and behavioral supports intended to improve student performance and address individual student needs before more intensive interventions are required. Additional recommendations emphasized aligning curriculum to standards and implementing strategies designed to meet diverse student learning needs. For systems of data collection and management to ensure accountability and effective measurement of student performance and achievement, the Individual Education Plan (IEP) must line up with the accountability measures of ESEA in order to attend to the specific needs of students (CASE, n.d.).

Within turnaround schools, school leaders often support curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems through monitoring student progress, facilitating data discussions, coordinating intervention efforts, and supporting instructional alignment.

Assistant principals may contribute to these efforts by working with teachers to analyze assessment data, monitor student performance, support intervention planning, and reinforce instructional expectations designed to improve student achievement outcomes (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018).

Effective curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems support school turnaround efforts by aligning instruction, assessment practices, and targeted student supports with academic goals and accountability expectations. Because turnaround schools often rely on continuous monitoring of student progress and intervention planning, understanding how school leaders support these systems may provide insight into assistant principals' roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018).

Effective Staffing Practices

Effective Staffing Practices is one of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and emphasizes recruiting, developing, supporting, evaluating, and retaining effective educators to improve student achievement within priority schools (Alabama State Department of Education [ALSDE], 2012). Effective staffing practices within turnaround schools involve ensuring that students are supported by qualified and effective teachers while providing ongoing professional learning opportunities designed to strengthen instructional practices and school improvement efforts.

Teachers are important factors in the teaching and learning process because effective teaching practices may positively influence student learning and achievement outcomes (Ngware et al., 2014). Turnaround schools often focus on retaining effective teachers while limiting the placement of ineffective teachers within schools identified for

improvement (Grissom & Bartanen, 2019). Research has shown that some turnaround schools use financial incentives and supportive working conditions to recruit and retain teachers within low-performing schools (See et al., 2020; Springer et al., 2016). In addition to financial support, positive working environments and instructional support systems may help improve teacher retention within turnaround settings (See et al., 2020).

Teacher evaluation and professional development are also important components of effective staffing practices within turnaround schools. Teacher evaluations may help school leaders identify instructional strengths, instructional needs, and areas requiring professional support (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2015; O'Brien, 2014). Information gathered from teacher evaluations may guide professional development decisions intended to strengthen instructional effectiveness and improve student learning outcomes (Smylie, 2014). Ongoing professional development based on teacher needs assessments and evaluation feedback may help teachers continue developing instructional skills and improving classroom practices (Holmes et al., 2019; Range et al., 2014).

School leaders play an important role in supporting staffing practices within turnaround schools through mentoring, coaching, instructional feedback, and staffing decisions associated with school improvement efforts. Principals and other school leaders are often responsible for evaluating teacher effectiveness, supporting teacher growth, and helping create collaborative professional learning environments that support continuous improvement (Goe et al., 2012; Lejonberg et al., 2018). Effective staffing practices may also involve providing teachers with meaningful support,

collaborative opportunities, and professional learning structures that strengthen instructional capacity within schools.

Assistant principals may contribute to effective staffing practices within turnaround schools by supporting teacher evaluations, assisting with instructional feedback, coordinating professional development activities, mentoring teachers, and helping facilitate collaborative instructional support systems. Because turnaround efforts often require continuous instructional improvement and teacher support, assistant principals may play an important role in helping strengthen staffing practices associated with school improvement efforts (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018).

Effective staffing practices support turnaround efforts by ensuring that schools are staffed with effective educators who receive ongoing instructional support, evaluation, and professional learning opportunities. Because school improvement efforts often depend on teacher effectiveness and continuous professional growth, understanding how school leaders support staffing practices may provide insight into assistant principals' roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process (Goe et al., 2012; Goldring et al., 2021).

Enabling Effective Use of Data

Enabling Effective Use of Data is one of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and emphasizes the use of multiple forms of data to guide instruction, support decision making, monitor student progress, and improve school performance within priority schools (ALSDE, 2012). Effective use of data supports instructional planning, school improvement efforts, intervention decisions, and professional learning opportunities designed to improve student achievement outcomes. Utilizing aggregated

data collected from multiple sources helps schools identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement (Brittain & Blackstock, 2015). Evaluating data may help schools identify effective strategies as well as areas needing improvement. The data can also help determine what professional development teachers need (Lai & McNaughton, 2016).

According to Sun et al. (2016), data help principals in areas of “goal setting, developing teachers and their instructional capacities, improving instruction, and redesigning school organization” (p. 108). School leaders use data to guide instructional decisions, monitor school improvement efforts, identify areas of need, and support organizational planning within schools (Schildkamp, 2019). They need to have a strategic plan that includes what data to get, how to analyze and utilize that data (Sun et al., 2016), and how to train faculty to read and utilize data (Herman et al., 2008, pp. 14-15). Turnaround schools look at data on three levels: school, classroom, and student (Herman et al., 2017). For the school level, student achievement data are used to identify learning gaps, and student performance data are used to identify areas needing improvement for teaching and learning (Romero & Ventura, 2020). Data is used to help schools set goals to improve areas of focus (Herman et al., 2017). For the classroom level, disaggregated data are used to determine strengths and weaknesses of programs and classroom instruction to help with improvements, while observations are used to identify needs (Schildkamp, 2019). Data help teachers improve classroom teaching and learning and help them recognize each student’s individual education needs (Herman et al., 2017). For the student level, work samples and performance data provide insight on students’ needs and help to guide instruction (Setiawan, 2020). Data are also used in

other areas beyond academics, including attendance, discipline, school climate, and demographics (Sun et al., 2016).

Within turnaround schools, assistant principals may play an important role in supporting the effective use of data through monitoring student performance, facilitating data discussions, assisting with benchmark analysis, coordinating intervention efforts, and communicating academic progress to teachers and stakeholders. Collaborative data practices among school leaders and teachers may help schools identify instructional needs, target interventions, and support continuous school improvement efforts (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018).

Effective use of data supports turnaround efforts by helping school leaders and teachers make informed instructional, organizational, and intervention decisions. Because turnaround schools rely on continuous monitoring of student performance and school improvement indicators, understanding how school leaders use data may provide insight into assistant principals' roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process (Goldring et al., 2021; Schildkamp, 2019).

Effective Use of Time

Effective Use of Time is one of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and emphasizes maximizing instructional and collaborative time to support teaching, learning, and school improvement efforts within priority schools (ALSDE, 2012).

Effective use of time includes allocating instructional time for student learning, teacher collaboration, professional learning, intervention support, and leadership activities associated with school improvement efforts.

Classroom walkthroughs are commonly used by school leaders as a way to monitor instruction, observe classroom practices, and support teaching and learning efforts within schools (Grissom et al., 2013; Ovando, 2001). As instructional leaders, principals and assistant principals may use walkthroughs to identify instructional strengths and weaknesses, provide teacher feedback, inform professional development decisions, and support instructional improvement efforts (Neumerski et al., 2018; Zepeda, 2005). Research suggests that walkthroughs are most effective when they are connected to meaningful feedback, coaching, and professional learning opportunities that support teacher growth and student achievement (Grissom et al., 2013).

Researchers have identified several forms of instructional time associated with student learning and academic achievement, including allocated instructional time, engaged time, and academic learning time (Aronson et al., 1999; Silva, 2007). Effective use of instructional time involves maximizing opportunities for meaningful student engagement and minimizing disruptions that interfere with learning. Academic learning time is especially important because it reflects periods in which students are actively engaged in instruction aligned with their readiness and learning needs (Aronson et al., 1999). Research suggests that increased effective instructional time and student engagement may positively influence academic achievement outcomes (Dagli, 2019; Jez & Wassmer, 2015; Silva, 2007).

To get the most out of time in schools, there must be important aspects in place. These aspects are classroom management, appropriate instruction and curriculum, and student motivation (Aronson et al., 1999). Effective classroom management is important because it helps reduce the loss of instructional time caused by discipline issues,

transitions, and other classroom interruptions (Debreli & Ishanova, 2019; Iheoma & Uchenna, 2020). Having appropriate instruction and curriculum involves matching the lesson “to the readiness of the students to learn it” (Aronson et al., 1999, p. 11). The lesson must challenge students suitably and yield the experience of success (Herman et al., 2022; Matsumura et al., 2008). Student motivation is also an important aspect in which the students as well as teachers are responsible. Students must decide to put forth the effort and time in their learning, and teachers must provide instruction that is relevant and challenging (Aronson et al., 1999).

Effective Family and Community Engagement

Effective Family and Community Engagement is one of the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and emphasizes building positive relationships and partnerships among schools, families, community members, and stakeholders to support student learning and school improvement efforts within priority schools (ALSDE, 2012). Family and community engagement may strengthen school improvement efforts by increasing communication, collaboration, trust, and shared support for student achievement goals. Research suggests that successful turnaround efforts often require support from both internal and external stakeholders connected to the school community (Hines et al., 2017; Wood & Bauman, 2017). Stakeholders connected to schools may include families, teachers, administrators, district leaders, community members, and other individuals who support school improvement efforts (Lee, 2007; Paine & McCann, 2009).

School leaders need to involve families, community members, and other stakeholders in school improvement efforts to help support school success (Wood &

Bauman, 2017). Principals may encourage stakeholder involvement by communicating the school's vision and plans for improvement while building support for turnaround efforts (Nor & Roslan, 2009). Support and collaboration among stakeholders are important components of successful turnaround efforts because they help schools work toward shared improvement goals (Hines et al., 2017).

After looking at the previous research and interviewing leaders, DaVita et al. (2007) found that turning around a low-performing school into a high-performing school could be achieved by principals, but they do need support from the central office and from the state education department to help principals be more effective. The central office leaders can be supportive of their local school leaders by giving them the space they need to improve their schools and by not micromanaging (Meyers & Sadler, 2018). Because principals know more about what is needed at the local level, the district leaders need to provide principals with more autonomy in their schools (Dou et al., 2017). District leaders also need to support new principals with school turnaround by providing good quality mentors to help guide the new principals (Tingle et al., 2019).

According to Steiner and Hassel (2011; Valli et al., 2018), district leaders need to be dedicated to change by putting students' learning needs ahead of anything that blocks the turnaround. Steiner and Hassel further stated that policymakers need to be committed to turning around a school to improve student outcomes and to stay with it even if initial endeavors are not successful (Meyers, 2020). That includes allowing principals to hire and fire faculty members (Heffernan, 2018). It is important that district leaders get the community involved through communication of the vision and celebrating success (Stronge & Xu, 2021). However, for accountability, principals are

held to high expectations to make efforts and changes within months of beginning the turnaround process (Steiner & Hassel, 2011).

Assistant principals may also contribute to family and community engagement efforts within turnaround schools through communication with families, relationship building with students and stakeholders, participation in school events, and support of school-community partnerships. Collaborative leadership practices that involve families and community stakeholders may strengthen school improvement efforts by increasing trust, communication, and shared commitment to student success (Hines et al., 2017; Wood & Bauman, 2017).

Effective family and community engagement supports turnaround efforts by strengthening relationships, communication, and collaboration among schools, families, district leaders, and community stakeholders. Because turnaround schools often rely on collective support and shared commitment to improvement efforts, understanding how school leaders foster these relationships may provide insight into assistant principals' roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process (DaVita et al., 2007; Meyers & Sadler, 2018). In addition to understanding the Alabama School Turnaround Principles, it is important to examine the literature related to assistant principals and their leadership responsibilities within schools.

Assistant Principals

The role of the assistant principal evolved during the early 20th century as schools expanded and principals required additional administrative and instructional support personnel (Glanz, 1994; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). Early assistant principal roles developed from supervisory positions focused on supporting classroom instruction and

assisting principals with school management responsibilities. Over time, the assistant principal position evolved into a formal leadership role that included both administrative and instructional responsibilities within schools (Martin, 2018).

Contemporary assistant principals often assist principals with organizational management, instructional leadership, student discipline, teacher support, and school improvement efforts (Barnett et al., 2012). Research has suggested that assistant principals' responsibilities may vary depending on the needs of the school and the leadership expectations established by the principal and school district (Marshall & Hooley, 2006; Sun, 2011). Assistant principals may support both instructional and organizational functions within schools while also assisting principals with broader leadership responsibilities associated with school improvement efforts.

Within turnaround school settings, assistant principals may assume additional leadership responsibilities associated with instructional improvement, teacher support, student discipline, communication, relationship building, and data-informed decision making (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018). Because turnaround efforts often require collaborative leadership and continuous school improvement efforts, assistant principals may play an important role in supporting organizational and instructional change within low-performing schools (Clayton & Bingham, 2018; Goldring et al., 2021).

Roles and Responsibilities of Assistant Principals

The roles and responsibilities of assistant principals have evolved into complex leadership functions that include organizational, managerial, instructional, and student-support responsibilities within schools (Oleszewski et al., 2012; Scoggins & Bishop, 1993). Although assistant principal responsibilities may vary depending on school needs

and leadership structures, research suggests that assistant principals commonly support areas such as student discipline, attendance, parent communication, instructional support, teacher evaluation, and school operations (Kaplan & Owings, 1999; Marshall & Hooley, 2006). Assistant principals also frequently work with students, teachers, and families to address school-related concerns and support school improvement efforts (Abebe et al., 2010).

Sun (2011) found that the assistant principal's role had changed from 1994, based on a comparison of surveys from Glanz's (1994) study of assistant principals to the same survey used on assistant principals in Sun's (2011) study conducted in 2010. According to Sun, among the top five duties of assistant principals in 2010 was more teacher evaluations, administrative paperwork, and counseling students than were the duties of assistant principals in Glanz's (1994) study. Other duties that were listed in the top five in 2010 were disciplining students and parent conferences, which remained the same as in 1994 (Sun, 2011). Scoggins and Bishop (1993) identified several common assistant principal responsibilities, including student discipline, attendance, staff support and evaluation, school operations, scheduling, curriculum support, communication, and community relations. These responsibilities demonstrate the broad and multifaceted nature of the assistant principal position within schools.

Within turnaround school settings, assistant principals may assume expanded responsibilities associated with instructional improvement, data analysis, student support, teacher collaboration, communication, and school climate efforts. Because turnaround schools often require collaborative leadership structures and continuous improvement efforts, assistant principals may play a significant role in supporting

organizational change and school improvement initiatives within low-performing schools (Clayton & Bingham, 2018; Goldring et al., 2021).

The assistant principal role includes a wide range of responsibilities that support both organizational management and instructional improvement within schools (Marshall & Hooley, 2006; Oleszewski et al., 2012). Because turnaround efforts often require collaborative leadership, communication, and continuous school improvement practices, understanding assistant principals' roles and responsibilities may provide insight into how assistant principals contribute to turnaround school efforts (Clayton & Bingham, 2018; Goldring et al., 2021).

Assistant Principals as Instructional Leaders

Over time, the assistant principal position has evolved from primarily supporting school management and student discipline responsibilities to assuming greater instructional leadership responsibilities within schools (Gurley et al., 2015; Hausman et al., 2002). Instructional leadership involves supporting teachers' instructional practices and promoting improved student learning outcomes (Somoza-Norton & Neumann, 2021). Research has suggested that assistant principals who spend more time conducting teacher evaluations and supporting instructional improvement efforts may function more extensively as instructional leaders than assistant principals whose responsibilities focus primarily on student discipline management (VanTuyle, 2018). Assistant principals are often members of instructional leadership teams and may contribute instructional expertise, leadership experience, and collaborative support to school improvement efforts (Sharif et al., 2020).

Within turnaround school settings, assistant principals may support instructional leadership efforts through classroom walkthroughs, teacher feedback, instructional coaching, data analysis, intervention planning, and collaboration with teachers regarding student learning needs. Because turnaround schools often require continuous instructional improvement and increased accountability for student achievement outcomes, assistant principals may play a significant role in supporting instructional change efforts within low-performing schools (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018).

Assistant principals serving as instructional leaders may contribute to teaching and learning improvements through collaboration, instructional support, teacher development, and monitoring of student achievement efforts. Understanding assistant principals' instructional leadership responsibilities may provide insight into how assistant principals support school improvement and turnaround efforts within low-performing schools (Gurley et al., 2015; VanTuyle, 2018).

Challenges and Experiences of Assistant Principals

Many assistant principals find that transitioning from the classroom into a school leadership position is significantly different from what they initially expected (Hartzell, 1994). New assistant principals often expect the position to be less stressful and easier to manage; however, many discover that the role involves increased responsibilities, frequent interruptions, and complex leadership demands (Hoffert, 2015; Vail, 2018). Assistant principals may also experience changes in their relationships with teachers as they transition from classroom teacher to school administrator (Duggan, 2016). In addition, new assistant principals often find that they must learn many aspects of the

position while on the job and balance multiple responsibilities throughout the school day (Goldring et al., 2021; Vail, 2018). Although the position may involve significant pressure and stress, assistant principals often rely on support from principals and other school leaders as they adjust to their leadership responsibilities (Ellis & Brown, 2015).

In addition to adjusting to the responsibilities of the position, assistant principals often encounter challenges associated with workload management, student discipline, parent interactions, teacher concerns, and organizational demands within schools (Barnett et al., 2012). Assistant principals have reported difficulty completing tasks because additional responsibilities are frequently added throughout the workday (Bukoski et al., 2016). Determining appropriate disciplinary consequences for students may also present challenges, particularly when school leaders must make decisions with limited information (Cohen & Schechter, 2019). Assistant principals may also experience challenges related to difficult parent interactions, resistant staff members, and limited recognition for their work within schools (Barnett et al., 2012; Jackman, 2009).

Assistant principals working within turnaround school settings may experience additional challenges associated with instructional improvement efforts, increased accountability expectations, student discipline concerns, and organizational change initiatives. Because turnaround schools often require continuous improvement efforts and collaborative leadership practices, assistant principals may experience increased responsibilities and pressures associated with supporting school improvement efforts (Goldring et al., 2021; Houchens et al., 2018).

The experiences of assistant principals may include balancing multiple responsibilities, adapting to leadership expectations, and managing organizational and instructional challenges within schools. Understanding the experiences and challenges of assistant principals may provide insight into how assistant principals navigate the responsibilities associated with school improvement and turnaround efforts (Goldring et al., 2021; Marshall & Hooley, 2006).

Research Gap and Specific Problem

Current peer-reviewed literature provides limited evidence regarding how assistant principals support turnaround efforts within low-performing schools, including the roles and responsibilities assistant principals assume during the turnaround process as perceived by assistant principals, principals, and teachers (Yoon & Barton, 2019).

Existing turnaround school literature has focused primarily on principals' leadership practices and characteristics associated with school improvement efforts. Research has identified turnaround principals as leaders who communicate a clear vision, build organizational capacity, support positive school culture, and promote instructional improvement efforts within low-performing schools (Meyers & Hambrick Hitt, 2017; Rattley, 2016). Turnaround principals have also been recognized for their ability to recruit effective teachers, improve academic growth, and strengthen stakeholder trust within schools (Friedman, 2020). However, considerably less research has examined how assistant principals contribute to turnaround efforts and support school improvement initiatives within low-performing schools (Goldring et al., 2021).

According to Clayton and Bingham (2018), assistant principals spent most of their day taking care of discipline; managing grade-level teams, security, and in-school

suspension; and managing front office staff. Although Clayton and Bingham (2018) identified assistant principal responsibilities related to discipline, school management, and operational support, their study did not specifically examine how assistant principals contribute to turnaround efforts within low-performing schools.

According to Somoza-Norton and Neumann (2021), assistant principals “need to be made accountable for continuous school improvement and student achievement” and “leaving the AP [assistant principal] position unchanged in a time of high accountability, online learning, and growing needs of diverse communities is a misuse of resources and potential” (p. 49).

Researchers have suggested that assistant principals should play a greater role in continuous school improvement and student achievement efforts within schools (Somoza-Norton & Neumann, 2021); however, limited research has explored how assistant principals contribute to turnaround efforts within low-performing schools. Therefore, additional research is needed to examine assistant principals’ roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process from the perspectives of assistant principals, principals, and teachers.

This chapter reviewed literature related to ESEA flexibility turnaround principles, Alabama’s accountability framework, the Alabama School Turnaround Principles, and assistant principals’ leadership roles and responsibilities within schools. The literature identified a limited amount of research focused specifically on assistant principals’ roles and responsibilities within turnaround school settings. Chapter 3 describes the methodology and research design used to explore assistant principals’ roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The literature review in Chapter 2 demonstrated that prior research has focused primarily on principals' roles in school turnaround efforts (Leithwood & Strauss, 2008). Research related to assistant principals' roles and responsibilities within turnaround schools remains limited (Bukoski et al., 2016; Clayton & Bingham, 2018). The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodology and research design used to explore the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal during the turnaround process within an Alabama Priority School context.

This chapter describes the qualitative methodology, exploratory case study research design, participant selection procedures, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures utilized in the study. A qualitative methodology was appropriate because the purpose of the study was to explore participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process within a priority school setting. Qualitative research is appropriate when the goal is to understand participants' experiences and perspectives related to a phenomenon of interest (Merriam, 2009).

The study focused on one Alabama high school that was previously identified as a priority school and later demonstrated improvement sufficient to exit priority school status. The selected school also included an assistant principal who served at the school during both the low-performing period and the turnaround process. Semi-structured interview questions were developed to explore the perceptions of one assistant principal, one principal, and four teachers regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

Because research related to assistant principals' roles and responsibilities within turnaround schools remains limited, an exploratory case study design was appropriate for examining how assistant principals contributed to school improvement efforts within a real-world educational setting (Carpenter et al., 2017; Yin, 2014). The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework guiding development of the interview questions, organization of data analysis procedures, and interpretation of findings throughout the study.

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative exploratory case study research design. According to Creswell (2013), a case study is “a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information” (p. 97). Yin (2002) defined a case study as the study of “a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between a phenomenon and context are not clear and the researcher has little control over the phenomenon and context” (p. 13). A case study design was appropriate because the purpose of the study was to explore assistant principals' roles and responsibilities within the real-world context of a school turnaround setting (Yin, 2014).

An exploratory case study design was selected because limited research exists regarding assistant principals' roles and responsibilities within turnaround schools (Bukoski et al., 2016; Clayton & Bingham, 2018). The bounded case for this study was one assistant principal who participated in turnaround efforts within an Alabama Priority

School context. The study explored the perceptions of one assistant principal, one principal, and four teachers regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

The unit of analysis for this study was the assistant principal who served during the school turnaround process. The study focused specifically on understanding how the assistant principal contributed to school improvement efforts associated with leadership, instruction, school climate, data use, intervention systems, staffing practices, instructional time, and family and community engagement during the turnaround process. Because the study examined participants' perceptions of assistant principal leadership within a real-world turnaround setting, an exploratory case study design was appropriate for investigating the phenomenon in depth within its educational context (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014).

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following primary research question:

What are the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a priority school?

Three research questions (RQs) further directed the study:

RQ1: How does one assistant principal perceive their roles and responsibilities in helping turn around a priority school?

RQ2: How does one principal perceive the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a priority school?

RQ3: How do teachers perceive the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a priority school?

Role of Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). The role of the researcher in this study was to explore participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process within an Alabama Priority School context. Yin (2014) stated that researchers conducting case studies must be able to "ask good questions—and interpret the answers fairly" (p. 73). Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from participants, and interview questions were designed to address the research questions guiding the study. Although interviews were conducted through Zoom, participants were interviewed within comfortable and familiar environments selected by the participants.

I previously served as an assistant principal for five years before later serving as a principal within an Alabama rural school district. These professional experiences contributed to my understanding of assistant principal leadership responsibilities and school improvement efforts. Through these experiences, I observed the importance of assistant principals in supporting school operations, instructional practices, student discipline, communication, and organizational improvement efforts.

I acknowledge that prior professional experiences could influence interpretation of participants' responses and understanding of assistant principal leadership practices. I recognized personal beliefs regarding the importance of proactive leadership, initiative, innovation, and problem solving within assistant principal roles. Because qualitative research recognizes that researchers bring personal experiences and perspectives into the research process, reflexivity was important throughout the study (Creswell, 2013).

Several strategies were used to reduce the influence of researcher bias during the study. Semi-structured interview questions were used consistently across participants, multiple participant perspectives were included, and member checking procedures were utilized to help ensure accuracy of participants' responses. In addition, interview data, participant documents, and archival records were reviewed collectively to support credibility and strengthen interpretation of findings.

Research Site and Participants

To identify an appropriate turnaround school, I reviewed Alabama State Department of Education Priority School records and related accountability information to identify schools in Central Alabama that were previously identified as priority schools and later removed from priority school status. After identifying a qualifying school, permission to conduct the study was requested from the school district superintendent and school principal before participant recruitment procedures began.

The selected timeframe captured the period in which the school implemented turnaround practices associated with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and demonstrated measurable improvement, including an increase in school performance indicators and eventual removal from the priority school list. Participants who served during this timeframe were able to provide firsthand insight into the organizational changes, instructional improvements, leadership practices, and school culture shifts that occurred throughout the turnaround process.

After receiving approval from the Auburn University Institutional Review Board (IRB; Appendix A), participant recruitment procedures began. Participants were selected using purposive sampling because they had direct experience and involvement

in the turnaround process within the selected Alabama Priority School context (Josselson, 2013; Schwandt, 2007). Purposive sampling was appropriate because the study required participants who could provide meaningful insight into the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process. Participants in the study included one principal, one assistant principal, and four teachers who experienced the turnaround process within the selected priority school.

Participants were selected based on their direct involvement with the school during the period in which the school was identified as a priority school and later demonstrated sufficient improvement to exit priority status. Teachers selected for participation were employed at the school throughout the turnaround period and were chosen because they were able to provide classroom-level perspectives regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities associated with school improvement efforts. The study focused on participants who experienced the school's improvement efforts and could describe perceptions of the assistant principal's leadership roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

Additional descriptive information related to the school setting and participant characteristics was collected to provide contextual understanding of the turnaround school environment. Participant information included years of experience in education, years employed at the turnaround school, degree background, and instructional assignments for teacher participants. School information included student demographics, school size, staffing structure, and Title I status.

Table 1

Study Participants and Roles in the Turnaround Process

Participant	Role	Experience/Qualification
Principal	School Leader	Experienced administrator involved in turnaround initiatives
Assistant Principal	School Administrator	Assisted with implementation of turnaround strategies
Teacher A	Secondary Teacher	Veteran teacher involved in instructional improvement efforts
Teacher B	Classroom Teacher	Participated in school improvement initiatives during turnaround
Teacher C	Core Academic Teacher	Experienced teacher involved in data-driven instruction
Teacher D	Instructional Support Teacher	Participated in instructional interventions and student support services during the turnaround process

Note. Participant names and the school's name are pseudonyms used to protect confidentiality.

Data Collection and Analysis

Documents

Publicly available school accountability data obtained from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) website were reviewed to provide contextual information related to the school turnaround process. These data included school report card information used to confirm changes in school performance during the turnaround period. Yin (2014) noted that documentation may provide valuable contextual information that supports interpretation of findings within case study research.

Documentation evidence offers several strengths, including stability, repeated review opportunities, specificity, and broad coverage across time and settings (Yin, 2009). However, limitations of documentation include potential selectivity, author bias,

and incomplete accessibility of records (Yin, 2014). In this study, ALSDE accountability data were used to provide contextual support for participants' perceptions regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

Document Collection. Publicly available accountability data were collected from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) website to provide contextual information related to the turnaround process. These data included school report cards and accountability information used to examine changes in school performance during the turnaround period.

Alabama State Department of Education report cards and accountability data were reviewed to confirm the school's identification as a priority school and its subsequent removal from priority school status following documented improvement in accountability indicators. These data were used to provide contextual support regarding the school's turnaround status during the period examined in the study.

Document Analysis. Alabama State Department of Education report card data and accountability indicators were reviewed to provide contextual evidence of school improvement and to confirm the school's removal from priority school status. A matrix was developed to organize interview data according to the Alabama School Turnaround Principles, including School Leadership; School Climate and Culture; Effective Instruction; Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System; Effective Staffing Practices; Enabling Effective Use of Data; Effective Use of Time; and Effective Family and Community Engagement.

The matrix was used to organize interview responses according to recurring themes and turnaround-related categories associated with the conceptual framework.

Data analysis focused on identifying patterns within participant perceptions related to the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process. School report card data and accountability indicators were reviewed to provide contextual evidence of school improvement during and following the turnaround period.

Interview data served as the primary source for thematic analysis. Alabama State Department of Education accountability data were reviewed to provide contextual support regarding the school's identification as a priority school and its subsequent removal from priority school status during the turnaround period.

Semi-Structured Interviews

For this exploratory case study, I used semi-structured interviewing because it “focuses directly on case study topics” and “provides explanations as well as personal views” (Yin, 2014, p. 106). Using semi structured interviewing will help me explore how assistant principals help turn around low-performing schools. The interviews will be conducted with a principal, an assistant principal, and teachers in one of Central Alabama's turnaround schools.

Interview Process. After receiving permission to conduct the study, I contacted the superintendent, principal, assistant principal, and teachers at the turnaround school selected through purposive sampling to solicit participation in the study. Phone calls and emails were used to communicate with potential participants and explain the purpose of the study, interview procedures, and participant expectations. Participants were informed about the interview process, estimated interview length, and procedures used to maintain confidentiality.

All participants were provided with an informed consent form prior to participation in the study. After consent was obtained, interviews were scheduled through follow-up emails and/or phone calls at dates and times convenient for the participants.

I conducted individual interviews through Zoom with the principal, assistant principal, and each teacher participant. Interviews were conducted using Zoom because the platform allowed participants to select a private and convenient location while supporting secure recording procedures consistent with IRB approval. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the turnaround process during the period when the school was identified as a priority school and later removed from priority status.

Participants were asked questions from the respective interview protocol instruments developed for the assistant principal (Appendix C), principal (Appendix D), and teachers (Appendix E). Open-ended follow-up questions were used when needed to clarify or elaborate on participants' responses during the in-depth interviews. The number of interview questions included in each protocol was designed to allow participants sufficient opportunity to describe their perceptions and experiences related to the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process while maintaining interviews of manageable length. Questions were aligned with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles and developed to collect detailed responses related to the study's research questions.

The interview protocol included a limited number of open-ended questions designed to align with the study's research questions and the Alabama School Turnaround Principles conceptual framework. The number of questions was

intentionally selected to allow participants to provide rich, detailed responses while minimizing participant fatigue and maintaining focus during the interview process. Additional probing questions were used as needed to obtain clarification and deeper understanding of participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities in the turnaround process.

I recorded interviews via Zoom and transcribed the data for analysis purposes. All transcripts, recordings, consent documentation, and related study materials were securely stored in Auburn University's AU Box, a password-protected and encrypted cloud storage system. Only my dissertation chair and I had access to the data. Audio recordings were permanently deleted following transcription verification. Transcripts and study data will be maintained for a minimum of three years following completion of the study in accordance with Auburn University Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines.

Confidentiality was maintained through the use of pseudonyms for participants, the school, and the community. Identifying information was removed from transcripts and research records to protect participants' identities. The school was identified as the turnaround school; the principal and assistant principal will be identified by title as the principal and the assistant principal. The four teachers identified as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, and Teacher D. Each recorded interview was expected to last approximately 1 hour; however, participants were allowed additional time when needed to elaborate on their responses.

Interview Transcript Analysis. I reviewed the interview transcripts generated through Zoom multiple times and developed analytic memos by recording marginal notes related to observations identified during the coding process (Saldaña, 2016).

According to Saldaña (2013), “a code is a researcher-generated construct that symbolizes and thus attributes interpreted meaning to each individual datum for later purposes of pattern detection, categorization, theory building, and other analytic processes” (p. 4). A variety of coding methods were used to analyze the data.

First, the transcribed interview data were analyzed using eclectic coding in which words or phrases were assigned to lines or sections of the transcripts (Saldaña, 2016). In addition to analytic memos, notes related to participant emotions and processes were recorded during coding, and in vivo coding was used to capture participants’ exact words and phrases from the interview transcripts (Saldaña, 2016). Single codes were applied to units of data through holistic coding and were later examined to identify similarities and establish recurring themes.

Credibility and Trustworthiness

Credibility and trustworthiness were established through several qualitative research strategies. Member checking was conducted by providing individual interview transcripts to participants following transcription and preliminary review of the data. Participants were given the opportunity to review their transcripts, clarify responses, add additional information, and verify the accuracy of the interview content. Member checking helped support credibility by ensuring that participants’ perspectives and experiences were accurately represented within the study.

Trustworthiness was further strengthened through triangulation of multiple participant perspectives, including interview data collected from the assistant principal, principal, and teacher participants. Triangulation involved comparing and synthesizing participants’ perceptions to identify recurring patterns and themes related to the

assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process. Alabama State Department of Education accountability data were also reviewed to provide contextual support regarding the school's improvement status during the turnaround period. Yin (2014) stated that case study findings are more convincing when supported through multiple sources of evidence.

Credibility was also strengthened through the use of analytic memos, consistent interview procedures, framework-guided coding, and the inclusion of multiple participant perspectives related to the turnaround process. These strategies supported careful interpretation of the data and helped strengthen the overall trustworthiness of the findings.

Limitations

Several limitations were associated with this qualitative exploratory case study. One limitation was the possibility that participants may not have fully expressed their authentic perceptions or experiences during the interview process. Although participants were assured confidentiality, responses may still have been influenced by personal concerns, professional relationships, memory recall, or outside influences associated with the turnaround experience.

Another limitation was that some participants may not have recalled all events associated with the turnaround process or may have chosen not to answer certain interview questions fully. Because the study relied primarily on participants' perceptions and experiences, responses were subject to individual interpretation and recollection.

Additional limitations were associated with the exploratory case study design itself. Findings from this study were based on one priority school within a specific

Alabama context and therefore were not intended to be generalized to all assistant principals or all turnaround school settings. Case study research also presents challenges related to maintaining confidentiality while providing sufficient contextual detail to support understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Queirós et al., 2017).

I also recognized that prior professional experiences as an assistant principal and principal could influence interpretation of the data. Strategies such as member checking, triangulation, analytic memos, and consistent interview procedures were used to help reduce the potential influence of researcher bias and strengthen the credibility of the findings.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter presents the findings from this exploratory case study examining the perceptions of one principal, one assistant principal, and four teachers who experienced the turnaround process at a designated Alabama Priority School. The purpose of this study was to explore the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal who contributed to school improvement efforts during the turnaround process and supported the school's removal from priority school status.

Through analysis of interview data and supporting documents, recurring themes and patterns emerged across participant responses. The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework and analytic lens guiding organization and interpretation of the findings. The findings presented in this chapter describe participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities associated with school leadership, school climate and culture, effective instruction, curriculum, assessment and intervention systems, effective staffing practices, enabling effective use of data, effective use of time, and effective family and community engagement during the turnaround process.

Findings presented in this chapter were organized using the Alabama School Turnaround Principles as the conceptual framework guiding the study. Participant responses were analyzed and grouped according to recurring themes aligned with the eight turnaround principles, including School Leadership; School Climate and Culture; Effective Instruction; Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System; Effective Staffing Practices; Enabling the Effective Use of Data; Effective Use of Time; and Effective Family and Community Engagement. Each principle begins with an

introductory overview followed by sections summarizing evidence related to participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process. Supporting participant evidence, including interview excerpts, is presented to illustrate recurring perceptions identified across interviews.

Following presentation of findings aligned with each turnaround principle, the chapter concludes with a cross-participant findings summary to synthesize recurring themes identified across participant groups. A summary of findings organized by the study's research questions is then presented to demonstrate how participant responses addressed each research question guiding the study. The chapter concludes with a summary highlighting key findings related to participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

Participants

Each participant in this study experienced the turnaround process at the study site and was employed at the school while it was identified as a priority school and during the period in which it was subsequently removed from priority status. Participants included one principal, one assistant principal, and four veteran teachers who served at the school throughout the turnaround process and were able to provide insight into the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the school improvement efforts associated with turnaround. All participants were employed at the school for the duration of the turnaround period examined in this study.

The principal, identified by the pseudonym Principal, had served as the school's principal for 4 years at the time of the study. Prior to this position, he served as an assistant principal at another high school for five years. His leadership experience

provided insight into the administrative structures, leadership responsibilities, and decision-making processes associated with the turnaround effort.

The assistant principal, identified by the pseudonym Assistant Principal, served in this role at the study site for five years. Prior to becoming an assistant principal, she worked at the same school as a mathematics teacher and as an instructional coach for four years. Her experiences across instructional and leadership roles provided direct insight into the assistant principal’s responsibilities during the turnaround process.

Four teachers, identified by the pseudonyms Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, and Teacher D, also participated in the study. Each teacher had more than five years of teaching experience at the study site and remained employed at the school throughout the turnaround period. Their experiences provided classroom-level perspectives regarding the assistant principal’s leadership roles and responsibilities associated with the school turnaround process.

Multiple data sources were used to support this exploratory case study, including semi-structured interviews and archival records reviewed to confirm the school’s turnaround context and priority school status. Table 2 summarizes the sources of data used in this study.

Table 2

Summary of Data Used in this Study

Data Source	Participants / Documents	Purpose in Study
Principal Interview	Principal	Provided an administrative leadership perspective regarding the assistant principal’s roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process

Assistant Principal Interview	Assistant Principal	Provided direct insight into the assistant principal's leadership practices, coordination of school improvement efforts, and responsibilities associated with the turnaround process
Teacher Interviews	Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D	Provided classroom-level perspectives regarding the assistant principal's leadership roles and responsibilities associated with school improvement efforts during the turnaround process
Alabama State Department of Education School Report Cards	ALSDE website (2022–2023; 2023–2024)	Provided contextual evidence of improvement in accountability indicators associated with the turnaround period
Alabama Priority School Lists	ALSDE website (2022–2023; 2023–2024)	Verified the school's identification as a priority school and subsequent removal from priority status

Principle 1: School Leadership

Findings related to Principle 1: School Leadership described participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's leadership role during the turnaround process at the study site. Participants reported that the assistant principal maintained a visible presence throughout the school, supported communication between teachers and administration, and assisted with coordinating improvement strategies aligned with school turnaround goals. Across interviews, participants described leadership practices that reflected support for instructional expectations, accessibility to teachers and students, and collaboration with school leadership during the improvement effort. These

findings highlight participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's leadership responsibilities during implementation of turnaround strategies.

Evidence Summary

Participants consistently described the assistant principal as serving in a visible and supportive leadership role during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal maintained regular communication with teachers, monitored classroom instruction through informal walkthroughs, and supported school improvement efforts associated with the turnaround process. Teachers described the assistant principal as approachable and accessible, often serving as a liaison between teachers and the principal during the turnaround effort. Participants also reported that the assistant principal maintained a consistent presence across classrooms and hallways, which supported teacher engagement and helped reinforce expectations for teaching and learning during the improvement process. These leadership practices were described as contributing to coordination of instructional efforts and supporting school improvement efforts during the turnaround process.

Evidence of Roles

Participants described the assistant principal as serving in several leadership roles during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal maintained a visible leadership presence throughout the school and supported communication between teachers and school administration during school improvement efforts. Participants also described the assistant principal as serving as a liaison between teachers and the principal and as an instructional support leader who remained accessible to teachers throughout the turnaround effort. In addition,

participants reported that the assistant principal supported collaboration among teachers and helped coordinate implementation of expectations related to teaching and learning during the school improvement process. These leadership roles reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's involvement in supporting school improvement efforts during the turnaround process at the study site.

Evidence of Responsibilities

Participants described several responsibilities carried out by the assistant principal that supported leadership responsibilities during the turnaround process during the turnaround process. Participants reported that the assistant principal conducted informal classroom walkthroughs to monitor instruction and maintain visibility across the school. Teachers described the assistant principal as regularly checking in with teachers to provide support and maintain communication regarding instructional expectations and improvement efforts. Participants also reported that the assistant principal served as a liaison between teachers and the principal, helping to communicate concerns and expectations related to the turnaround process. In addition, participants described the assistant principal as maintaining accessibility to teachers and students throughout the school day and supporting coordination of school improvement effort aligned with the school's turnaround goals. These responsibilities reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's active involvement in supporting instructional leadership practices during implementation of the turnaround effort.

Supporting Participant Evidence

Participants described the assistant principal as maintaining strong relationships with teachers and supporting communication throughout the turnaround process. The principal emphasized the importance of relationship-building as part of the assistant principal's leadership role during the improvement effort, stating: "Building those relationships and having that, there is, this is first and foremost, and she did a fantastic job doing that" (Principal, Transcript lines 29–38). Participants also described the assistant principal as maintaining a visible instructional presence across classrooms during the turnaround process. The assistant principal explained that she regularly spent time working with teachers in instructional settings, noting: "I spent a lot of time with our teachers in their classrooms, and I was an instructional coach here" (Assistant Principal, Transcript lines 48–51). Teachers similarly described the assistant principal as maintaining consistent visibility and accessibility across classrooms. One teacher explained: "She came to my classroom at least twice a week just to check in and see how things were going" (Teacher D, Transcript lines 23–25). Another teacher described the assistant principal as taking a leadership role in coordinating meetings related to improvement efforts during the turnaround process: "She basically was the one who conducted all of the meetings" (Teacher A, Transcript lines 4–24). Together, these descriptions reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's leadership presence, accessibility, and coordination of improvement efforts during implementation of turnaround strategies.

Overall, participants consistently described the assistant principal as serving in a visible and supportive leadership role during the school turnaround process. Across

interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's accessibility to teachers, coordination of meetings related to improvement efforts, and instructional presence within classrooms. Participants also highlighted the assistant principal's role in maintaining communication between teachers and school leadership while supporting instructional expectations associated with school improvement efforts during the turnaround process. These findings suggested that the assistant principal contributed to the school's turnaround efforts through relational leadership, instructional support, and organizational coordination. The following section presents participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's role in supporting improvements in school climate and culture during the turnaround process.

Principle 2: School Climate and Culture

Participants also described the assistant principal's role in supporting school climate and culture during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's visibility throughout the school, encouragement of teachers and students, and support for maintaining a positive learning environment during the school improvement effort. Participants further described how the assistant principal contributed to establishing expectations for teaching and learning while supporting collaboration, communication, and staff morale throughout the turnaround process. These findings reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's influence on strengthening relationships, promoting a positive school environment, and supporting school climate and culture within the turnaround school context.

Evidence Summary

Participants described the assistant principal as playing an important role in supporting school climate and culture during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's efforts to encourage teacher collaboration, promote positive relationships among staff and students, and strengthen teacher buy-in toward school improvement efforts. Participants also described how the assistant principal maintained a visible presence throughout the school while reinforcing expectations for teaching and learning during the turnaround period.

One teacher explained that the assistant principal's leadership helped strengthen teacher commitment to the school improvement effort, stating: "She, her job, was more getting the teachers to buy in" (Teacher C, Transcript lines 42–60). These descriptions reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening morale, collaboration, and shared commitment to improvement goals within the turnaround school context.

Evidence of Roles

Participants described the assistant principal as serving in several roles that supported school climate and culture during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal maintained a visible presence throughout the school and encouraged positive relationships among teachers and students during the school improvement effort. Participants also described the assistant principal as an encourager who supported teacher morale and reinforced expectations for teaching and learning while allowing teachers flexibility in instructional approaches.

In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal promoted collaboration among teachers and supported staff commitment to shared school improvement goals throughout the turnaround period. These roles reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's influence on strengthening the learning environment, supporting positive relationships, and fostering a positive school culture within the turnaround school context.

Evidence of Responsibilities

Participants described several responsibilities performed by the assistant principal that supported school climate and culture during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal maintained a consistent presence throughout classrooms and hallways while encouraging teachers and students during the school improvement effort. Participants also described how the assistant principal supported innovative instructional practices by allowing teachers flexibility in instructional delivery while reinforcing expectations for active teaching and learning within classrooms.

In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal communicated expectations clearly and supported teacher collaboration throughout the turnaround period. These responsibilities reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to maintaining a positive learning environment, strengthening staff commitment, and supporting collaboration within the turnaround school context.

Supporting Participant Evidence

Participants described the assistant principal as supporting school climate and culture by encouraging teachers and reinforcing shared commitment to school

improvement goals during the turnaround process. One teacher explained that the assistant principal played an important role in strengthening teacher buy-in toward the school improvement effort: “She, her job, was more getting the teachers to buy in” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 42–60). Participants also described the assistant principal as maintaining a visible and encouraging presence throughout the school while supporting teachers and reinforcing instructional expectations. One teacher explained that the assistant principal consistently promoted a positive environment for both teachers and students during the turnaround period: “Our assistant principal was kind of charged with and did an excellent job of keeping things upbeat and very positive” (Teacher D, Transcript lines 5–16).

Teachers further described how the assistant principal reinforced expectations for teaching and learning while allowing flexibility in instructional approaches that supported a positive learning climate. One teacher explained: “She always was very clear that the expectation was that teaching and learning was taking place... however, we saw fit” (Teacher D, Transcript lines 44–45). These descriptions reflected participants’ perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening morale, encouraging instructional innovation, and supporting a positive learning environment within the turnaround school context.

Participants consistently described the assistant principal as contributing to improvements in school climate and culture during the turnaround process through encouragement, visibility, and support for teachers and students. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal’s role in strengthening teacher morale, reinforcing expectations for teaching and learning, and promoting collaboration among

staff throughout the school improvement effort. Participants also described how the assistant principal supported teacher buy-in and maintained a positive presence throughout the school environment during the turnaround period. These findings suggested that participants perceived the assistant principal as contributing to a positive learning environment and supporting staff commitment to school improvement goals within the turnaround school context.

The following section presents participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's role in supporting effective instruction during the turnaround process.

Principle 3: Effective Instruction

Participants described the assistant principal's role in supporting effective instruction during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's involvement in coordinating instructional support, maintaining communication with teachers regarding instructional expectations, and supporting practices intended to improve student learning and performance. Participants further described how the assistant principal encouraged instructional collaboration and helped facilitate resources and structures that strengthened teaching practices throughout the turnaround period. These findings reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's influence in supporting effective instruction and strengthening instructional practices within the turnaround school context.

Evidence Summary

Participants described the assistant principal as playing an important role in supporting effective instruction during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's involvement in coordinating

instructional supports and facilitating communication related to expectations for teaching and learning. Participants also described how the assistant principal supported department-level collaboration and helped organize instructional resources designed to strengthen student performance during implementation of improvement strategies. In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal assisted with coordinating outside instructional supports and maintaining communication with district-level personnel related to instructional initiatives. These descriptions reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening instructional practices during implementation of turnaround strategies.

Evidence of Roles

Participants described the assistant principal as serving in several roles that supported effective instruction during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal coordinated instructional support and served as a point of communication between school leadership, teachers, and district-level personnel throughout the school improvement effort. Participants also described the assistant principal as facilitating instructional collaboration and supporting academic programs intended to improve student performance. In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal helped connect teachers with external instructional supports and resources associated with school improvement goals. These roles reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's involvement in strengthening instructional practices within the turnaround school context.

One teacher described the assistant principal's role in coordinating instructional supports related to student performance initiatives, explaining: "She worked primarily

with the assistant superintendent as far as getting the outside programs to come in and do the ACT test prep” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 119–120).

Evidence of Responsibilities

Participants described several responsibilities performed by the assistant principal that supported effective instruction during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal coordinated instructional supports intended to improve student performance and assisted with academic programs associated with school improvement goals. Participants also described how the assistant principal supported department-level collaboration and maintained communication with district personnel regarding instructional initiatives during the turnaround period.

In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal helped organize instructional materials and assisted teachers with preparation of resources used to support student learning throughout the school improvement effort. These responsibilities reflected participants’ perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening instructional practices through coordination of instructional support and facilitation of resources within the turnaround school context.

Supporting Participant Evidence

Participants described the assistant principal as supporting effective instruction by coordinating instructional programs and assisting teachers with resources intended to improve student performance during the turnaround process. One teacher explained that the assistant principal worked closely with district personnel to coordinate outside instructional supports associated with school improvement goals: “She worked primarily

with the assistant superintendent as far as getting the outside programs to come in and do the ACT test prep” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 119–120).

Participants also described how the assistant principal assisted teachers with preparation of instructional materials used to support student learning throughout the turnaround period. One teacher explained: “She’s the one who found them. She’s the one who got the materials together and got them ready for me” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 174–175). Teachers further described the assistant principal as supporting schoolwide instructional initiatives by assisting with coordination of assessment preparation activities. One teacher explained: “She’s the one who handles the copies of the old tests and runs the answer documents through the scantrons” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 174–175).

Participants also described how the assistant principal supported effective instruction through regular department-level collaboration that strengthened communication among teachers during the turnaround process. One teacher explained: “We would have department meetings right on a regular basis, so that the lines of communication were very clear and always open” (Teacher D, Transcript lines 51–52). These descriptions reflected participants’ perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening instructional practices through coordination of instructional programs, preparation of instructional resources, and facilitation of collaborative communication structures within the turnaround school context.

Participants consistently described the assistant principal as supporting effective instruction during the turnaround process through coordination of instructional supports, facilitation of communication among teachers, and assistance with preparation of

instructional resources associated with school improvement goals. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's role in organizing instructional initiatives such as ACT preparation activities, supporting department-level collaboration, and assisting teachers with materials used to strengthen student performance. Participants also described how the assistant principal worked with district personnel to coordinate instructional programs that supported teaching and learning throughout the turnaround period. These findings suggested that participants perceived the assistant principal as contributing to strengthened instructional practices through coordination of resources, collaboration structures, and communication processes within the turnaround school context.

The following section presents participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's role in supporting curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems during the turnaround process.

Principle 4: Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System

Participants also described the assistant principal's role in supporting the curriculum, assessment, and intervention system during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's involvement in analyzing student performance data, supporting implementation of assessment strategies, and assisting with instructional planning aligned with improvement goals. Participants further described how the assistant principal helped identify areas of student need and supported the development of targeted strategies designed to improve student outcomes. These findings reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's

role in strengthening curriculum, assessment, and intervention practices as part of the school improvement process.

Evidence Summary

Participants described the assistant principal as playing an important role in supporting curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's use of student performance data to guide instructional decisions and support targeted interventions associated with school improvement goals. Participants also described how the assistant principal assisted teachers in identifying students who were close to meeting performance benchmarks and supported strategies intended to improve student outcomes.

One teacher explained how the assistant principal used data to guide targeted instructional decisions: "And so she was the one that balanced the data. And who is, you know, who is borderline? Who can we get to jump 2 points to get them to this next benchmark" (Teacher C, Transcript lines 154–158). These descriptions reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening curriculum, assessment, and intervention practices through data-informed decision-making and targeted instructional support within the turnaround school context.

Evidence of Roles

Participants described the assistant principal as serving in several roles that supported curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal supported the use of student performance data to guide instructional planning and identify

students in need of targeted interventions throughout the school improvement effort. Participants also described the assistant principal as serving as a resource for teachers when analyzing assessment results and planning instructional strategies aligned with curriculum expectations.

In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal helped coordinate assessment-related initiatives and supported efforts to align instructional practices with student performance goals during the turnaround period. These roles reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's involvement in strengthening curriculum, assessment, and intervention practices within the turnaround school context.

Evidence of Responsibilities

Participants described several responsibilities performed by the assistant principal that supported curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal analyzed student performance data to identify students who were approaching performance benchmarks and supported development of targeted strategies intended to improve student outcomes. Participants also described how the assistant principal assisted teachers with preparation of assessment-related instructional materials and supported mock ACT and Pre-ACT activities associated with school improvement goals.

In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal coordinated assessment preparation processes and supported instructional planning decisions based on student performance data throughout the turnaround period. These responsibilities reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal contributed

to strengthening curriculum, assessment, and intervention practices through data-informed instructional planning and coordination of assessment-related supports within the turnaround school context.

Supporting Participant Evidence

Participants described the assistant principal as supporting curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems through analysis of student performance data and coordination of assessment preparation activities associated with school improvement goals. One teacher explained how the assistant principal analyzed student performance data to identify students who were approaching performance benchmarks and supported targeted instructional strategies intended to improve student outcomes:

“And so, she was the one that balanced the data. And who is, you know, who is borderline? Who can we get to jump 2 points to get them to this next benchmark” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 154–158).

Participants also described how the assistant principal supported development of assessment structures intended to strengthen instructional alignment across courses. The assistant principal explained: “We’ve had some conversations about going through and doing common benchmark assessments in each course” (Assistant Principal, Transcript lines 120–126).

Participants further described how the assistant principal assisted teachers with preparation of assessment-related instructional materials used to support student learning during the turnaround process. One teacher explained: “She’s the one who found them. She’s the one who got the materials together and got them ready for me” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 174–175). Teachers also described how the assistant

principal supported mock ACT and Pre-ACT preparation activities by coordinating assessment logistics and instructional resources associated with school improvement efforts: “She’s the one who handles the copies of the old tests and runs the answer documents through the scantrons” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 174–175).

These descriptions reflected participants’ perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening curriculum, assessment, and intervention practices through benchmark planning, data analysis, preparation of assessment materials, and coordination of instructional supports within the turnaround school context.

Participants consistently described the assistant principal as supporting curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems during the turnaround process through analysis of student performance data, coordination of assessment preparation activities, and facilitation of benchmark-aligned instructional strategies. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal’s role in identifying students who were approaching performance benchmarks and supporting targeted instructional efforts intended to improve student outcomes. Participants also described how the assistant principal assisted with development of common assessment practices and preparation of instructional materials associated with school improvement goals. These findings suggested that participants perceived the assistant principal as contributing to strengthened curriculum alignment and assessment-based instructional planning within the turnaround school context.

The following section presents participants’ perceptions of the assistant principal’s role in supporting effective staffing practices during the turnaround process.

Principle 5: Effective Staffing Practices

Participants also described their perceptions of the assistant principal's role in supporting effective staffing practices during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reflected on the assistant principal's involvement in staffing-related responsibilities such as recruitment, teacher support, retention, and professional development throughout the school improvement effort. While some participants described limited direct involvement of the assistant principal in staffing processes, these perceptions provided important insight into the scope of the assistant principal's responsibilities associated with staffing practices during the turnaround period.

Participants generally perceived that primary responsibility for staffing decisions remained with the principal and district leadership. Although the assistant principal had limited staffing authority, participants described her participation in interview panel processes as part of collaborative administrative practice and leadership development opportunities.

These findings reflected participants' perspectives regarding the assistant principal's role in supporting staffing practices within the turnaround school context.

Evidence Summary

Participants described their perceptions of the assistant principal's role in supporting effective staffing practices during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reflected on the assistant principal's involvement in selected staffing-related responsibilities such as participation in interview processes and exposure to leadership decision-making opportunities as part of professional growth and administrative development. However, participants generally reported that the assistant principal had

limited direct responsibility for recruitment, hiring decisions, or staffing assignments throughout the school improvement effort.

One teacher explained: “I do not think she has had any impact on that at all” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 180–182). At the same time, the principal described including the assistant principal in interview processes as part of leadership development during the turnaround period: “I had her on my panel where she sat in on the interview, because I wanted to prepare her to be a principal, or to move on up out of that role” (Principal, Transcript lines 79–99).

These descriptions reflected participants’ perceptions that, although the assistant principal had limited direct responsibility for staffing decisions, she participated in selected staffing-related activities associated with leadership development and collaborative administrative practice within the turnaround school context.

Evidence of Roles

Participants described the assistant principal as serving in a limited supporting role related to staffing practices during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that primary responsibility for staffing decisions such as recruitment, hiring, and retention remained with the principal and district leadership. However, participants also described the assistant principal as participating in selected staffing processes as part of leadership development and administrative collaboration throughout the school improvement effort.

These descriptions reflected participants’ perceptions that the assistant principal’s role in staffing practices within the turnaround school context was primarily supportive and developmental rather than decision-making in nature.

Evidence of Responsibilities

Participants described limited direct responsibilities performed by the assistant principal related to staffing practices during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that responsibilities associated with recruitment, hiring decisions, and staffing assignments were primarily managed by school and district leadership rather than by the assistant principal. However, participants also described how the assistant principal participated in interview panel processes as part of leadership development and exposure to staffing-related decision-making throughout the school improvement effort.

These descriptions reflected participants' perceptions that staffing-related responsibilities were not a primary component of the assistant principal's role within the turnaround school context but were included as part of collaborative leadership preparation experiences.

Supporting Participant Evidence

Participants described limited involvement of the assistant principal in staffing-related responsibilities during the turnaround process. One teacher explained: "I do not think she has had any impact on that at all" (Teacher C, Transcript lines 180–182). However, the principal described including the assistant principal in interview panel participation as part of leadership development during the turnaround period: "I had her on my panel where she sat in on the interview, because I wanted to prepare her to be a principal, or to move on up out of that role" (Principal, Transcript lines 79–99).

These descriptions reflected participants' perceptions that, although the assistant principal did not serve in a primary staffing leadership role, she participated in selected

staffing-related activities through collaborative administrative processes within the turnaround school context.

Participants generally described the assistant principal as having limited direct responsibility for staffing practices during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants emphasized that staffing-related decisions such as recruitment, hiring, and placement were primarily managed by the principal or district-level leadership rather than by the assistant principal. However, participants also described the assistant principal's participation in selected staffing-related activities, such as serving on interview panels, as part of leadership development and collaborative administrative practice throughout the school improvement effort.

These findings suggested that participants perceived the assistant principal's role in staffing practices as primarily supportive and developmental rather than decision-making in nature within the turnaround school context.

The following section presents participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's role in enabling effective use of data during the turnaround process.

Principle 6: Enabling the Effective Use of Data

Participants also described the assistant principal's role in enabling effective use of data during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's involvement in communicating student performance data, supporting analysis of assessment results, and assisting teachers and students in understanding how performance outcomes related to school improvement goals. Participants further described how the assistant principal supported the use of data to guide instructional planning and monitor student progress throughout the turnaround

period. These findings reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's influence on strengthening data-informed decision-making within the turnaround school context.

Evidence Summary

Participants described the assistant principal as playing an important role in enabling effective use of data during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's involvement in tracking student performance data and communicating assessment results to teachers to support instructional decision-making associated with school improvement goals. Participants also described how the assistant principal supported the use of data from mock ACT assessments and other performance indicators to monitor student progress throughout the turnaround period.

One teacher explained how the assistant principal maintained and shared performance data with teachers during the school improvement effort: "She kept track of all that stuff in spreadsheets, and she would share whatever she needed to share with us as teachers, so like, she would share the results of the mock exam" (Teacher A, Transcript lines 228–253).

These descriptions reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening data-informed instructional planning through organization, monitoring, and communication of assessment results within the turnaround school context.

Evidence of Roles

Participants described the assistant principal as serving in several roles that supported effective use of data during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal supported communication of student performance data to teachers and students to help monitor progress toward school improvement goals. Participants also described the assistant principal as serving as a facilitator of data-informed instructional planning by helping teachers and students understand assessment outcomes and identify areas needing improvement.

In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal supported efforts to increase student awareness of their own performance data throughout the turnaround period. One teacher described how students were regularly informed of their performance levels and progress toward improvement goals: “I would be willing to bet out of my 11th graders that I taught 75 to 80% of them could tell you what their score was in each part of the ACT, because they knew this is what my score is, and this is what I gotta get it to” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 183–191).

These descriptions reflected participants’ perceptions that the assistant principal served as a facilitator of data communication and progress monitoring that supported both teachers and students within the turnaround school context.

Evidence of Responsibilities

Participants described several responsibilities performed by the assistant principal that supported effective use of data during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal maintained systems for tracking student performance data and communicated assessment results with teachers

to support instructional planning associated with school improvement goals. Participants also described how the assistant principal monitored results from mock ACT assessments and other performance indicators and shared those results with teachers to guide instructional decision-making throughout the turnaround period.

In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal supported efforts to increase student understanding of their own performance data by communicating progress toward improvement targets during the school improvement effort. These responsibilities reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening data-informed decision-making through organization, communication, and monitoring of assessment-related information within the turnaround school context.

Supporting Participant Evidence

Participants described the assistant principal as supporting effective use of data by organizing student performance information and communicating assessment results to teachers during the turnaround process. One teacher explained how the assistant principal maintained spreadsheets to monitor assessment outcomes and shared results with teachers to support instructional planning: "She kept track of all that stuff in spreadsheets, and she would share whatever she needed to share with us as teachers, so like, she would share the results of the mock exam" (Teacher A, Transcript lines 228–253).

Participants also described how the assistant principal supported efforts to increase student awareness of their own performance data during the school improvement effort. One teacher explained: "I would be willing to bet out of my 11th graders that I taught 75 to 80% of them could tell you what their score was in each part

of the ACT, because they knew this is what my score is, and this is what I gotta get it to” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 183–191).

Teachers further described how school leadership used additional performance indicators such as attendance data to support instructional decision-making and school improvement efforts. One teacher explained that attendance monitoring strategies supported increased student participation and contributed to improved academic outcomes during the turnaround process: “We saw improvements in overall schoolwide attendance which translated to more teaching, more learning, which translated to improved test scores” (Teacher D, Transcript lines 100–101).

These descriptions reflected participants’ perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening data-informed decision-making through organization, communication, and monitoring of assessment and attendance data within the turnaround school context.

Participants consistently described the assistant principal as supporting effective use of data during the turnaround process through organization, communication, and monitoring of student performance information associated with school improvement goals. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal’s role in maintaining systems for tracking assessment results, sharing performance data with teachers, and supporting students’ understanding of their own progress toward achievement targets. Participants also described how school leadership used additional indicators such as attendance data to support instructional planning and monitor school improvement efforts throughout the turnaround period.

These findings suggested that participants perceived the assistant principal as contributing to strengthened data-informed instructional planning and progress monitoring within the turnaround school context.

The following section presents participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's role in supporting effective use of time during the turnaround process.

Principle 7: Effective Use of Time

Participants also described the assistant principal's role in supporting effective use of time during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's involvement in coordinating instructional schedules, supporting structures for teacher collaboration, and protecting instructional time throughout the school improvement effort. Participants further described how time was allocated for assessment preparation activities and collaboration opportunities associated with school improvement goals. These findings reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's influence on supporting effective use of instructional and collaborative time within the turnaround school context.

Evidence Summary

Participants described the assistant principal's role in supporting effective use of time during the turnaround process through coordination of instructional schedules and reinforcement of expectations for maximizing classroom instructional time. Across interviews, participants emphasized the assistant principal's involvement in supporting structures that promoted consistent instructional engagement and efficient use of class time throughout the school improvement effort. Participants also described how the

scheduling of assessment preparation activities influenced the amount of instructional time available during the turnaround period.

One teacher explained that participation in assessment preparation workshops resulted in the loss of instructional time during the school day: “So I... lost what? 12 instructional days! Just with that” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 194–207). At the same time, the principal described the assistant principal’s role in reinforcing expectations for maximizing instructional time throughout the school day: “She played a vital role in making sure they were doing bell to bell” (Principal, Transcript lines 200–222).

These descriptions reflected participants’ perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to supporting structures designed to protect instructional time while also coordinating assessment preparation activities associated with school improvement goals within the turnaround school context.

Evidence of Roles

Participants described the assistant principal as serving in several roles that supported effective use of time during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal reinforced expectations for maximizing instructional time and supported scheduling structures that promoted consistent engagement in classroom instruction throughout the school improvement effort. Participants also described the assistant principal as serving as a facilitator of teacher collaboration through coordination of shared planning opportunities and structured meeting times associated with school improvement goals.

In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal supported organization of assessment preparation activities within the school schedule during the

turnaround period. These descriptions reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal served as a coordinator of instructional time and collaboration structures within the turnaround school context.

Evidence of Responsibilities

Participants described several responsibilities performed by the assistant principal that supported effective use of time during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants reported that the assistant principal reinforced expectations for maximizing instructional time by supporting structures that promoted consistent engagement in classroom instruction throughout the school day. Participants also described how the assistant principal helped coordinate scheduling of assessment preparation activities associated with school improvement goals while supporting opportunities for teacher collaboration through shared planning periods and structured meetings.

In addition, participants explained that the assistant principal supported efforts to reduce unnecessary classroom interruptions and maintain instructional continuity throughout the school improvement effort. These responsibilities reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening instructional effectiveness through coordination and protection of instructional and collaborative time within the turnaround school context.

Supporting Participant Evidence

Participants described the assistant principal as supporting effective use of time by reinforcing expectations for maximizing instructional engagement during the school day and coordinating structures that supported collaboration and assessment

preparation activities associated with school improvement goals. One teacher explained that participation in assessment preparation workshops resulted in a loss of instructional time during the turnaround process: “So I... lost what? 12 instructional days! Just with that” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 194–207).

At the same time, the principal described the assistant principal's role in reinforcing expectations for maximizing instructional engagement throughout the school day: “She played a vital role in making sure they were doing bell to bell” (Principal, Transcript lines 200–222). Participants also described how the assistant principal supported protection of instructional time by limiting unnecessary classroom interruptions and maintaining continuity of instruction during the turnaround period. One teacher explained: “She limited classroom interruptions... and was very protective of our classroom and our instruction time” (Teacher D, Transcript lines 105–109).

Participants further described how school leadership supported structures that allowed teachers opportunities to collaborate through aligned departmental planning schedules that strengthened communication among teachers throughout the school improvement effort. These descriptions reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening instructional effectiveness through protection of instructional time and coordination of collaboration structures within the turnaround school context.

Across participant interviews, the assistant principal was consistently described as playing an important role in supporting effective use of instructional time during the turnaround process. Participants explained that she helped protect classroom instructional time by limiting unnecessary interruptions, reinforcing expectations for bell-

to-bell instruction, and supporting scheduling structures that allowed teachers opportunities for collaboration within departments. While some participants noted challenges related to concentrated ACT preparation efforts that temporarily reduced instructional time in some classes, these efforts were still perceived as part of broader school improvement efforts intended to strengthen student performance outcomes.

Overall, participants' responses suggested that the assistant principal contributed to improving instructional focus and maximizing available learning time through organizational coordination and reinforcement of expectations associated with the turnaround school context.

Principle 8: Effective Family and Community Engagement

The eighth Alabama School Turnaround Principle emphasizes the importance of effective family and community engagement among teachers, students, parents, school leaders, and community members in supporting school improvement efforts.

Participants in this study described the assistant principal's role in fostering communication and collaboration among members of the school community during the turnaround process. Their responses reflected perceptions of how the assistant principal supported stakeholder understanding of school improvement priorities and contributed to engagement efforts involving parents and community partners connected to student achievement initiatives.

The following section presents participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities related to effective family and community engagement during the turnaround process.

Evidence Summary

The eighth Alabama School Turnaround Principle emphasizes the importance of effective family and community engagement among teachers, students, parents, school leaders, and community members in supporting school improvement efforts.

Participants in this study described the assistant principal's role in fostering communication and collaboration among members of the school community during the turnaround process. Their responses reflected participants' perceptions of how the assistant principal supported stakeholder understanding of school improvement priorities and contributed to engagement efforts involving parents and community partners connected to student achievement initiatives.

The following section presents participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities related to effective family and community engagement during the turnaround process.

Evidence of Roles

Participants described the assistant principal as serving as a key communicator and relationship builder among internal stakeholders during the turnaround process. Teachers explained that she helped strengthen collaboration among instructional staff and supported efforts to build shared understanding of school improvement priorities related to assessment performance and student expectations. Participants also described the assistant principal as serving as a liaison between administrators, teachers, students, and community partners by helping coordinate communication related to school improvement efforts occurring across the school.

In addition, participants noted that she contributed to strengthening stakeholder commitment by supporting teacher involvement in improvement planning discussions and helping students understand the importance of assessment benchmarks connected to school performance goals. Collectively, these descriptions reflected participants' perceptions of the assistant principal's role in supporting engagement across multiple stakeholder groups within the school turnaround context.

Evidence of Responsibilities

Participants described several ways the assistant principal supported effective family and community engagement through communication and coordination of school improvement efforts during the turnaround process. Teachers explained that she helped facilitate conversations with instructional staff regarding assessment expectations and improvement priorities connected to ACT performance and accountability outcomes. Participants also reported that the assistant principal supported communication with students by helping increase their understanding of benchmark expectations and how assessment results contributed to overall school performance goals.

In addition, participants described efforts by the assistant principal and school leadership to engage parents through informational meetings designed to share updates about progress during the turnaround period. Some participants further noted that the assistant principal helped coordinate partnerships with local businesses and community organizations that provided incentives to encourage student participation in assessment preparation activities.

Collectively, these descriptions reflected participants' perceptions that the assistant principal supported effective family and community engagement through

communication efforts, coordination of improvement-related activities, and collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders within the turnaround school context.

Supporting Participant Evidence

Participants described the assistant principal as playing an important role in supporting effective family and community engagement within the school community during the turnaround process, particularly through strengthening teacher collaboration and increasing student awareness of assessment expectations connected to school improvement goals. One teacher explained that the assistant principal helped build teacher commitment to school improvement efforts by encouraging instructional staff participation in planning conversations related to next steps following accountability results: “She, her job, was more getting the teachers to buy in” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 42–60).

Participants also described efforts to increase student understanding of assessment expectations and how performance outcomes contributed to school improvement goals. Teachers explained that helping students understand benchmarks strengthened student engagement in school improvement efforts during the turnaround period. Participants further described how the assistant principal supported communication with parents through informational meetings designed to share updates about progress during the turnaround process: “There were a few meetings throughout the course of the year... parents were invited to come in and meet in the auditorium, and they were given updates on where we were at in the process” (Teacher D, Transcript lines 121–123).

In addition, participants reported that the assistant principal helped coordinate partnerships with local businesses and community organizations that supported student motivation through incentives connected to assessment improvement efforts: “We would have various restaurants in the community that would provide food... any student that saw their mock ACT score go up by like three points received a free gift card” (Teacher D, Transcript lines 123–125). However, one participant noted that communication with stakeholders outside of the school campus was not always fully understood within the broader community: “I do not think that people in the community knew a lot of what was going on” (Teacher C, Transcript lines 211–230).

Together, these participant responses reflected both strengths and limitations in effective family and community engagement efforts during the turnaround process and illustrated the assistant principal’s role in supporting communication with teachers, students, parents, and community partners.

Across participant interviews, the assistant principal was described as supporting effective family and community engagement primarily through strengthening communication with teachers and students and contributing to efforts that increased awareness of assessment expectations connected to school improvement goals. Participants explained that the assistant principal helped encourage teacher collaboration and student understanding of benchmark performance expectations throughout the school improvement effort. Some participants also described efforts to engage parents and community partners through informational meetings and incentive-based partnerships designed to support student participation in assessment preparation activities. However, participants noted that communication with stakeholders outside of

the school campus was not always consistently understood within the broader community.

Overall, participant responses suggested that the assistant principal contributed most strongly to effective family and community engagement within the internal school community, while external engagement efforts with parents and community stakeholders occurred to a more limited extent during the turnaround process.

Cross-Participant Findings Summary

Analysis of interview data across the principal, assistant principal, and four teacher participants revealed consistent perceptions regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process. Participants described the assistant principal as serving as a central instructional leader who supported school improvement efforts associated with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles. Across interviews, participants consistently emphasized the assistant principal's involvement in strengthening teacher collaboration, supporting data-informed instructional decisions, coordinating assessment preparation efforts, and reinforcing expectations for student performance throughout the turnaround period.

Participants also described the assistant principal as playing an important role in supporting a positive school climate and culture by building relationships with teachers and students and encouraging shared ownership of school improvement goals. Teachers reported that the assistant principal contributed to strengthening communication among instructional staff and helped promote teacher participation in planning conversations connected to school performance expectations. In addition,

participants described her visibility throughout classrooms and hallways as supporting instructional engagement and student motivation during the turnaround process.

Across interviews, participants consistently identified the assistant principal as contributing to curriculum and assessment efforts through coordination of benchmark preparation activities, organization of assessment materials, and facilitation of conversations related to student performance data. Teachers explained that these efforts helped increase awareness of accountability expectations and supported instructional alignment with assessment benchmarks associated with school improvement efforts. Participants also reported that the assistant principal played an important role in enabling effective use of data by helping teachers and students understand assessment results and by supporting instructional adjustments based on student performance trends.

Participants further described the assistant principal as supporting effective use of instructional time by reinforcing expectations for bell-to-bell instruction and helping coordinate structures that allowed teachers opportunities for collaboration within departments. While some participants noted challenges associated with concentrated assessment preparation efforts that temporarily reduced instructional time in some classes, these efforts were still viewed as part of broader school improvement activities intended to strengthen student achievement outcomes during the turnaround process.

Findings also indicated that the assistant principal supported effective family and community engagement primarily through strengthening communication with teachers and students and contributing to efforts designed to increase awareness of performance expectations connected to accountability measures. Participants described additional

efforts to engage parents and community partners through informational meetings and incentive-based partnerships that supported student participation in assessment preparation activities. However, some participants noted that communication with external stakeholders outside the school campus was not always consistently understood within the broader community.

Overall, participant responses suggested that the assistant principal played a multifaceted role during the turnaround process through instructional leadership, relationship building, coordination of assessment preparation efforts, facilitation of data use, and reinforcement of expectations associated with school improvement goals. These findings reflected shared participant perceptions regarding the assistant principal's contributions within the turnaround school context and her involvement in school improvement efforts associated with the school's removal from priority status.

Summary of Findings by Research Question

Findings from this exploratory case study were organized using the Alabama School Turnaround Principles as the conceptual framework guiding data analysis and interpretation of participant responses. The following section summarizes how participants' perceptions addressed each of the study's research questions regarding the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal during the turnaround process within a previously designated priority school.

Research Question 1

How does one assistant principal perceive their roles and responsibilities in helping turn around a priority school? The assistant principal described her role as supporting instructional improvement efforts through coordination of assessment

preparation activities, facilitation of data-informed decision-making, and collaboration with teachers to strengthen alignment between instruction and accountability expectations. She reported working closely with instructional staff to monitor student performance trends and assist with planning strategies intended to improve benchmark outcomes connected to ACT performance and college and career readiness indicators. The assistant principal also described supporting conversations related to common assessments and participating in instructional planning efforts that strengthened consistency across classrooms.

These perceptions reflected the assistant principal's view of her responsibilities as supporting school improvement efforts associated with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles during the turnaround process.

Research Question 2

How does one principal perceive the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a priority school? The principal described the assistant principal as playing a central role in supporting instructional leadership efforts during the turnaround process. He explained that she contributed to strengthening teacher collaboration, supporting monitoring of instructional expectations, and reinforcing structures intended to improve student engagement and performance outcomes. The principal also described the assistant principal as supporting teacher development through participation in hiring conversations and leadership preparation opportunities and assisting with coordination of assessment preparation activities associated with accountability expectations.

These perceptions reflected the principal's view that the assistant principal contributed to school improvement efforts through instructional leadership, collaboration, and support of structures associated with the school's removal from priority status.

Research Question 3

How do teachers perceive the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a priority school? Teachers consistently described the assistant principal as supporting school improvement efforts through relationship building, coordination of assessment preparation activities, facilitation of data use, and reinforcement of expectations connected to instructional engagement and student performance outcomes. Participants explained that she contributed to strengthening communication among teachers, supported conversations related to benchmark expectations, and helped increase student awareness of performance goals connected to accountability measures.

Teachers also described her visibility throughout classrooms and hallways as contributing to a positive school climate and culture during the turnaround process. While participants noted that engagement with external community stakeholders occurred to a more limited extent, they consistently identified the assistant principal as playing a significant role in supporting internal school improvement efforts associated with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of an exploratory case study examining the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal during the turnaround of a previously

designated priority high school in central Alabama. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with one principal, one assistant principal, and four teachers who were employed at the school during the turnaround process. Archival data from the Alabama State Department of Education, including state report cards and Alabama Priority School Lists, were also reviewed to confirm the school's removal from priority status following documented improvement in overall performance.

Findings were organized using the Alabama School Turnaround Principles as the conceptual framework guiding the study. Across participant interviews, the assistant principal was consistently described as supporting school improvement efforts through instructional leadership, coordination of assessment preparation activities, facilitation of data-informed decision-making, reinforcement of expectations for effective instructional time use, and relationship-building efforts that strengthened school climate and culture. Participants also described the assistant principal's role in supporting communication with teachers and students regarding performance expectations connected to accountability outcomes, while engagement with parents and community stakeholders occurred to a more limited extent during the turnaround process.

Overall, participant responses reflected shared perceptions that the assistant principal contributed to school improvement efforts through multiple leadership responsibilities associated with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles. These findings provide insight into how assistant principals may support school improvement efforts within priority schools and serve as collaborative instructional leaders during the turnaround process.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to explore the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal during the turnaround of a previously designated priority school in Alabama. The study focused on the perceptions of one assistant principal, one principal, and four teachers who experienced the turnaround process while employed at the study site. The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework guiding development of interview questions, organization of data analysis procedures, and interpretation of findings related to the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

This study addressed the following primary research question: What are the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a low-performing school? Three additional research questions explored the perceptions of the assistant principal, principal, and teachers regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities in supporting the turnaround process.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted via Zoom with one principal, one assistant principal, and four teachers from a rural Title I high school in central Alabama that had previously been identified as a priority school. Archival documents, including Alabama State Department of Education report cards and Alabama Priority School Lists, were also reviewed to confirm the school's improvement in accountability indicators and removal from priority status. Interview data were analyzed using a thematic analysis process guided by the Alabama School Turnaround Principles.

Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions, conceptual framework, and existing literature reviewed in Chapter 2. The chapter also includes recommendations for educational leadership practice, recommendations for future research, limitations of the study, and a conclusion regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to explore the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal during the turnaround of a previously designated priority school in Alabama. Although previous research has examined leadership practices within turnaround schools, limited peer-reviewed research has specifically explored the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals during the turnaround process from the perspectives of assistant principals, principals, and teachers (Bukoski et al., 2016; Clayton & Bingham, 2018; Goldring et al., 2021). This study sought to address this gap by examining how an assistant principal supported school improvement efforts within a turnaround school context.

The study was guided by the following primary research question: What are the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal in helping turn around a low-performing school? Three additional research questions examined the perceptions of the assistant principal, principal, and teachers regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework for the study. These principles include school leadership; school climate and culture;

effective instruction; curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems; effective staffing practices; enabling effective use of data; effective use of time; and effective family and community engagement. The framework guided development of interview questions, organization of data analysis procedures, and interpretation of findings related to the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process.

This study utilized a qualitative exploratory case study design to examine participant perceptions within a real-world turnaround school context. The study site was a rural Title I high school located in central Alabama that had previously been identified as a priority school and was later removed from priority status following documented improvement in accountability indicators. Participants included one principal, one assistant principal, and four teachers who were employed at the school throughout the turnaround process.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted via Zoom and through review of archival documents obtained from the Alabama State Department of Education, including school report cards and Alabama Priority School Lists. Interview data were analyzed using a thematic analysis process guided by the Alabama School Turnaround Principles. Themes were developed through repeated review of interview transcripts, coding procedures, cross-participant comparison, and analytic memo development.

Findings from the study indicated that participants perceived the assistant principal as serving an important role in supporting school improvement efforts during the turnaround process through instructional leadership, coordination of assessment

preparation activities, facilitation of data-informed decision-making, reinforcement of instructional expectations, relationship building, and support of school climate and culture. Participants also described the assistant principal as supporting communication among teachers and students regarding performance expectations connected to accountability goals and assessment outcomes.

Summary of Findings

Findings from this exploratory case study revealed consistent participant perceptions regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process. Across interviews, participants described the assistant principal as serving in multiple leadership and support roles associated with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles. Findings related to Research Question 1 indicated that the assistant principal perceived her responsibilities as supporting instructional improvement efforts through coordination of assessment preparation activities, facilitation of data-informed decision-making, monitoring of student performance trends, and collaboration with teachers regarding instructional planning and benchmark expectations. The assistant principal also described participating in conversations related to common assessments and instructional alignment across classrooms.

Findings related to Research Question 2 indicated that the principal perceived the assistant principal as playing a central role in supporting instructional leadership efforts during the turnaround process. The principal described the assistant principal as contributing to teacher collaboration, monitoring instructional expectations, supporting assessment preparation efforts, and reinforcing structures intended to strengthen student engagement and academic performance outcomes.

Findings related to Research Question 3 indicated that teachers perceived the assistant principal as supporting school improvement efforts through relationship building, communication, facilitation of data use, coordination of assessment preparation activities, and reinforcement of expectations related to instructional engagement and student performance. Teachers consistently described the assistant principal as maintaining a visible presence throughout the school while supporting positive school climate and culture during the turnaround process.

Additional findings revealed that participants perceived the assistant principal as contributing to curriculum and assessment efforts through coordination of benchmark preparation activities, organization of assessment materials, and support of instructional planning related to student performance data. Participants also described the assistant principal as supporting effective use of instructional time by reinforcing expectations for bell-to-bell instruction, limiting unnecessary classroom interruptions, and supporting structures that allowed opportunities for teacher collaboration.

Findings related to effective family and community engagement indicated that participants perceived the assistant principal as contributing primarily to communication and engagement efforts within the internal school community. Participants described efforts to strengthen teacher collaboration, increase student understanding of benchmark expectations, and support communication regarding school improvement priorities. Although participants described some parent and community engagement efforts, external stakeholder communication was perceived as occurring to a more limited extent during the turnaround process.

Overall, findings from this study suggested that participants perceived the assistant principal as serving a multifaceted leadership role during the turnaround process through instructional support, relationship building, coordination of assessment preparation activities, facilitation of data-informed decision-making, and reinforcement of instructional and organizational expectations associated with school improvement efforts.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1

What are the assistant principal's perceptions of her roles and responsibilities in helping turn around a priority school? Findings related to Research Question 1 indicated that the assistant principal perceived her role as extending beyond traditional managerial responsibilities commonly associated with assistant principals and instead emphasized instructional leadership responsibilities associated with school improvement efforts during the turnaround process. The assistant principal described responsibilities related to coordination of assessment preparation activities, facilitation of data-informed decision-making, collaboration with teachers regarding instructional expectations, and support of instructional alignment across classrooms. These findings align with existing literature suggesting that assistant principals' roles have increasingly evolved from primarily managerial and disciplinary responsibilities toward instructional leadership responsibilities focused on improving teaching and learning (Gurley et al., 2015; Hausman et al., 2002).

Findings from this study also support research indicating that assistant principals often play an active role in supporting instructional improvement through teacher

collaboration, assessment coordination, and instructional support activities (Goldring et al., 2021; Sharif et al., 2020). Similar to findings reported by VanTuyle (2018), the assistant principal in this study described responsibilities associated with instructional leadership practices rather than responsibilities focused primarily on student discipline. Participants consistently described the assistant principal as actively involved in instructional planning conversations, assessment preparation efforts, and communication of performance expectations associated with school improvement goals.

The findings further support literature emphasizing the importance of data-informed instructional decision-making within turnaround school contexts (Schildkamp, 2019; Sun et al., 2016). The assistant principal described responsibilities associated with monitoring student performance trends, supporting benchmark preparation activities, and facilitating discussions related to student assessment data. Participants also described how data were used to identify students approaching benchmark performance levels and to support instructional planning decisions intended to improve student outcomes. These findings suggest that assistant principals within turnaround settings may play an important role in facilitating data-informed instructional practices associated with accountability expectations and school improvement efforts.

Findings related to Research Question 1 also aligned with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles, particularly principles associated with effective instruction; curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems; and enabling effective use of data. The assistant principal's perceptions reflected responsibilities associated with instructional collaboration, assessment coordination, communication of performance

expectations, and support of instructional planning practices connected to school improvement efforts during the turnaround process.

Overall, findings related to Research Question 1 suggested that the assistant principal perceived her role as multifaceted and strongly connected to instructional leadership responsibilities associated with school improvement efforts within the turnaround school context.

Research Question 2

What are the principal's perceptions of the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities in helping turn around a priority school? Findings related to Research Question 2 indicated that the principal perceived the assistant principal as serving a central instructional leadership role during the turnaround process. The principal described the assistant principal as supporting teacher collaboration, reinforcing instructional expectations, coordinating assessment preparation activities, and assisting with structures intended to strengthen student engagement and academic performance outcomes. These findings align with literature emphasizing that successful turnaround efforts often require collaborative leadership structures in which leadership responsibilities are distributed across multiple administrative roles rather than centered solely on the principal (Houchens et al., 2018; Meyers & Hambrick Hitt, 2017).

The principal's perceptions also support research suggesting that assistant principals increasingly contribute to instructional leadership responsibilities within schools through teacher support, communication, instructional monitoring, and facilitation of improvement efforts (Goldring et al., 2021). Similar to findings reported by Hitt et al. (2018), the assistant principal in this study was perceived as supporting school

improvement efforts through collaboration, reinforcement of instructional expectations, and coordination of organizational structures associated with accountability goals.

Findings from this study further reflected aspects of transformational and collaborative leadership identified within the literature on turnaround schools. The principal described the assistant principal as contributing to relationship building, teacher support, and leadership preparation opportunities that strengthened collaborative administrative practice during the turnaround process. These findings align with literature emphasizing that effective turnaround leadership often involves shared responsibility, communication, trust building, and collective commitment to school improvement goals (Balyer, 2012; Leithwood & Strauss, 2008).

Findings related to Research Question 2 also reflected alignment with several Alabama School Turnaround Principles, particularly school leadership, school climate and culture, effective instruction, and effective use of time. The principal's perceptions suggested that the assistant principal supported leadership structures associated with instructional improvement, teacher collaboration, communication of expectations, and reinforcement of organizational practices connected to school improvement efforts during the turnaround process.

Although the principal described the assistant principal as supporting multiple leadership responsibilities associated with instructional improvement efforts, findings also indicated that primary responsibility for staffing decisions remained with the principal and district leadership. Participants described the assistant principal's involvement in staffing-related activities as primarily supportive and developmental rather than decision-making in nature. This finding aligns with literature suggesting that

assistant principals often operate within leadership structures in which staffing authority remains primarily under the responsibility of principals or district administration (Clayton & Bingham, 2018).

Overall, findings related to Research Question 2 suggested that the principal perceived the assistant principal as an important collaborative instructional leader whose responsibilities extended beyond traditional managerial tasks and supported multiple aspects of school improvement efforts within the turnaround school context.

Research Question 3

What are teachers' perceptions of the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities in helping turn around a priority school? Findings related to Research Question 3 indicated that teachers perceived the assistant principal as playing a significant role in supporting school improvement efforts during the turnaround process through relationship building, instructional support, coordination of assessment preparation activities, facilitation of data use, and reinforcement of expectations related to student engagement and academic performance. Teachers consistently described the assistant principal as maintaining a visible presence throughout the school while supporting communication, collaboration, and instructional consistency associated with school improvement efforts.

These findings align with literature suggesting that assistant principals often contribute to school improvement efforts through instructional leadership, teacher support, communication, and relationship building within schools (Goldring et al., 2021). Similar to findings reported by Hausman et al. (2002), teachers in this study perceived the assistant principal as serving an important support role that extended beyond

managerial responsibilities and contributed to strengthening instructional practices and school climate during the turnaround process.

Findings from this study also support literature emphasizing the importance of school climate and culture within turnaround settings. Teachers consistently described the assistant principal as encouraging teacher collaboration, reinforcing instructional expectations, and promoting a positive learning environment for both students and staff. These findings align with research suggesting that positive relationships, collaborative communication, and supportive leadership practices contribute to improved school climate and organizational commitment within school improvement contexts (Houchens et al., 2018; Kutsyuruba et al., 2015).

Teachers additionally emphasized the assistant principal's role in facilitating communication related to assessment expectations and accountability goals. Participants described how the assistant principal supported understanding of benchmark expectations among both teachers and students and helped coordinate assessment preparation efforts associated with accountability measures. These findings align with literature emphasizing the importance of data-informed instructional planning, communication of expectations, and organizational coordination within turnaround schools (Schildkamp, 2019; Sun et al., 2016).

Findings related to Research Question 3 also reflected alignment with multiple Alabama School Turnaround Principles, particularly school climate and culture; effective instruction; curriculum, assessment, and intervention systems; enabling effective use of data; and effective family and community engagement. Teachers' perceptions suggested that the assistant principal supported multiple aspects of school improvement

efforts through communication, instructional collaboration, coordination of assessment-related activities, and reinforcement of expectations associated with student achievement and instructional engagement during the turnaround process.

Although participants described several efforts related to family and community engagement, findings indicated that engagement efforts were perceived as stronger within the internal school community than among external stakeholders. Teachers described communication and collaboration efforts involving teachers and students more consistently than broader community engagement efforts involving parents and external stakeholders. This finding suggests that assistant principal leadership responsibilities within turnaround contexts may focus more heavily on internal instructional and organizational support systems than on broader external engagement activities.

Overall, findings related to Research Question 3 suggested that teachers perceived the assistant principal as an important instructional and relational leader whose responsibilities supported multiple aspects of school improvement efforts within the turnaround school context.

Recommendations for Practice

Recommendations for Assistant Principals

Findings from this study suggest that assistant principals within turnaround school contexts serve leadership roles that extend beyond traditional managerial and disciplinary responsibilities. Participants consistently described the assistant principal as supporting instructional leadership, assessment preparation activities, data-informed

decision-making, teacher collaboration, and communication of instructional expectations associated with school improvement efforts.

Based on these findings, assistant principals serving within turnaround school contexts should actively seek professional learning opportunities related to instructional leadership, assessment literacy, collaborative leadership practices, and the use of student performance data. Assistant principals should also maintain a visible presence throughout the school and prioritize relationship-building efforts that support positive school climate and culture.

Recommendations for Principals

Findings from this study suggest that principals serving within turnaround school contexts may strengthen school improvement efforts by utilizing collaborative leadership structures that actively involve assistant principals in instructional leadership and school improvement initiatives. Participants described the assistant principal as contributing to multiple aspects of the turnaround process, indicating that leadership responsibilities associated with school improvement may be effectively shared across administrative teams.

Based on these findings, principals should intentionally provide assistant principals with opportunities to participate in instructional leadership, organizational planning, and administrative decision-making responsibilities. Principals should also consider involving assistant principals in leadership development experiences, such as interview processes, collaborative problem-solving, and school improvement planning efforts. Providing these opportunities may strengthen leadership capacity within

schools, support succession planning, and better prepare assistant principals for future leadership roles.

Recommendations for School Districts

Findings from this study suggest that school districts may strengthen turnaround efforts by recognizing assistant principals as important contributors to school improvement initiatives. Participants consistently described the assistant principal as supporting instructional leadership, assessment preparation efforts, teacher collaboration, communication of expectations, and data-informed decision-making throughout the turnaround process. School districts should therefore consider expanding assistant principal responsibilities beyond primarily managerial and disciplinary duties to include greater involvement in instructional leadership and school improvement activities.

Findings also suggest that assistant principals working within turnaround school contexts may benefit from targeted professional learning opportunities. School districts should provide professional development focused on instructional leadership, data analysis, collaborative leadership practices, school climate and culture, and assessment literacy to better prepare assistant principals for leadership responsibilities associated with school improvement efforts.

In addition, school districts should support collaborative leadership structures that encourage principals and assistant principals to work together in planning, implementing, and monitoring school improvement initiatives. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of communication, collaboration, and relationship-building throughout the turnaround process. Districts may therefore strengthen school

improvement efforts by promoting shared leadership practices that support organizational capacity and continuous improvement.

Recommendations for Leadership Preparation Programs

Findings from this study suggest that university leadership preparation programs may strengthen assistant principal preparation by placing greater emphasis on instructional leadership responsibilities associated with school improvement and turnaround contexts. Participants consistently described the assistant principal as supporting assessment preparation efforts, facilitation of data-informed decision-making, instructional collaboration, communication of expectations, and school climate and culture throughout the turnaround process. Leadership preparation programs should therefore consider incorporating coursework and field experiences focused on instructional leadership, accountability systems, data-informed decision-making, and collaborative school improvement practices.

Findings also suggest that aspiring assistant principals may benefit from opportunities to develop practical leadership skills associated with communication, relationship building, organizational leadership, and facilitation of teacher collaboration. Participants emphasized the assistant principal's visibility throughout the school and her role in supporting positive relationships among teachers and students during the turnaround process. Leadership preparation programs should therefore provide authentic field experiences that allow aspiring school leaders to practice relationship-centered leadership and collaborative communication strategies within school improvement settings.

In addition, leadership preparation programs should provide aspiring assistant principals with exposure to administrative leadership experiences associated with staffing practices, instructional planning, and school improvement coordination. Participants described the assistant principal as participating in interview panels and collaborative administrative decision-making during the turnaround process. Providing opportunities to engage in practical administrative experiences may better prepare future assistant principals to support multiple aspects of school improvement efforts within turnaround school contexts.

Recommendations for Future Research

Findings from this exploratory case study contribute to the limited body of research related to assistant principals' roles and responsibilities within turnaround school contexts. However, additional research is needed to further examine assistant principals' contributions to turnaround efforts within priority schools and other low-performing school settings.

First, future researchers should consider conducting similar studies across multiple turnaround schools and school districts to allow for broader comparison of assistant principals' leadership roles and responsibilities within different educational settings. This study focused on one rural Title I high school in central Alabama; therefore, additional research involving urban, suburban, and multiple rural school contexts may provide further insight into how assistant principal responsibilities vary across turnaround environments.

Second, future research should examine assistant principals' roles and responsibilities during turnaround efforts using larger participant samples that include

additional principals, assistant principals, teachers, district leaders, parents, and students. Expanding participant groups may provide a more comprehensive understanding of how assistant principals leadership practices are perceived across stakeholder groups.

Third, future researchers should consider conducting longitudinal studies examining assistant principals' leadership responsibilities across multiple years of the turnaround process. Longitudinal research may provide additional insight into how assistant principal responsibilities evolve during different phases of school improvement efforts and accountability processes.

Fourth, future research should explore assistant principals' instructional leadership responsibilities within turnaround school contexts using quantitative or mixed-methods research designs. Mixed-methods studies examining relationships among assistant principal leadership practices, school climate, instructional improvement, and student achievement outcomes may contribute additional evidence regarding the role of assistant principals within school improvement settings.

Limitations

Findings from this exploratory case study should be interpreted within the context of several limitations. First, this study was limited to one rural Title I high school in central Alabama that had previously been identified as a priority school and later removed from priority status. Because the study focused on one school setting, findings may not be transferable to all turnaround schools or to schools located in different geographic, demographic, or organizational contexts.

Second, the study included a small participant sample consisting of one principal, one assistant principal, and four teachers who experienced the turnaround process at the study site. Although the participants provided detailed perspectives regarding the assistant principal's roles and responsibilities during the turnaround process, the findings reflected the perceptions and experiences of a limited number of individuals within one school context.

Third, this study utilized a qualitative exploratory case study design that focused on participant perceptions rather than direct measurement of cause-and-effect relationships related to school improvement outcomes. As a result, findings from this study should not be interpreted as establishing causal relationships between the assistant principal's leadership responsibilities and the school's removal from priority status.

An additional limitation involved reliance on participant self-reporting during semi-structured interviews. Participants may have interpreted experiences differently, omitted information, or responded in ways influenced by personal experiences and perspectives related to the turnaround process. Although member checking procedures were used to enhance credibility and accuracy of participant responses, perceptions shared during interviews remained subjective in nature.

Researcher bias also served as a potential limitation of the study. The researcher's prior experience as both an assistant principal and principal within school leadership settings may have influenced interpretation of participant responses during data analysis. To reduce the influence of researcher bias, the study utilized member

checking, analytic memos, triangulation of participant perspectives, and alignment of coding procedures with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles.

Finally, contextual data used in this study were limited to Alabama State Department of Education report cards and Priority School identification records reviewed to confirm the school's turnaround status and documented improvement in accountability indicators. No additional quantitative measures of school improvement or student performance outcomes were analyzed as part of this study. If this study were conducted again, the researcher would begin the investigation while the school was actively engaged in the turnaround process rather than after it had exited priority status. Conducting the study during the turnaround process would allow for classroom and school observations to complement participant interviews and document analysis. Observing the turnaround process as it occurred could provide additional insight into the assistant principal's evolving roles and responsibilities throughout the implementation of school improvement efforts. Despite these limitations, this study contributes to the limited body of research examining assistant principals' roles and responsibilities within turnaround school contexts and provides insight into how participants perceived the assistant principal's contributions to school improvement efforts within a priority school setting.

Conclusion

This exploratory case study examined the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal during the turnaround of a previously designated priority high school in central Alabama. The study addressed a gap in existing literature related to assistant principals' leadership responsibilities within turnaround school contexts by exploring the

perceptions of one assistant principal, one principal, and four teachers who experienced the turnaround process. The Alabama School Turnaround Principles served as the conceptual framework guiding interpretation of participant perceptions regarding the assistant principal's leadership roles and responsibilities associated with school improvement efforts.

Findings from this study suggested that the assistant principal served in a multifaceted leadership role during the turnaround process through instructional leadership, coordination of assessment preparation activities, facilitation of data-informed instructional decision-making, reinforcement of instructional expectations, support of positive school climate and culture, and communication with teachers and students regarding accountability expectations and student performance goals. Participants consistently described the assistant principal as supporting collaboration, organizational communication, instructional consistency, and school improvement efforts throughout the turnaround process.

Participants' perceptions indicated that assistant principals within turnaround school contexts may contribute to school improvement efforts in ways that extend beyond traditional managerial and disciplinary responsibilities commonly associated with the assistant principalship. Participants perceived the assistant principal as actively involved in instructional collaboration, assessment coordination, communication of expectations, and support of organizational structures associated with accountability and instructional improvement efforts.

Although participants described family and community engagement efforts occurring to a more limited extent outside the internal school community, findings

suggested that the assistant principal contributed significantly to strengthening communication and collaboration among teachers and students during the turnaround process. Participants also consistently described the assistant principal's visibility, relationship-building practices, and support of instructional engagement as important aspects of her leadership responsibilities within the school improvement context.

This study contributes to the limited body of research examining assistant principals' roles and responsibilities within turnaround school contexts and provides insight into participants' perceptions of how assistant principals support school improvement efforts associated with accountability expectations and organizational change. Findings from this study may assist assistant principals, principals, school districts, and leadership preparation programs in better understanding the instructional, organizational, and relational leadership responsibilities associated with supporting turnaround efforts in low-performing schools.

Overall, findings from this study suggest that assistant principals may serve as important collaborative instructional leaders within turnaround school contexts through support of communication, instructional coordination, relationship building, and data-informed school improvement efforts associated with the Alabama School Turnaround Principles.

References

- Abebe, S., Lindsey, L., Bonner, M., & Heck, S. (2010). Assistant principals in Indiana as change leaders: The need for professional development. *Journal for the Liberal Arts and Sciences*, 14(2), 67–73.
- Acosta, J., Chinman, M., Ebener, P., Malone, P. S., Phillips, A., & Wilks, A. (2019). Evaluation of a whole-school change intervention: Findings from a two-year cluster-randomized trial of the restorative practices intervention. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 48(5), 876–890. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-019-01013-2>
- Alabama Act No. 2012-402, 2012 Ala. Laws 1046.
- Alabama State Department of Education. (2012). *Alabama Plan 2020: ESEA flexibility request*. U.S. Department of Education.
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/eseaflex/al.pdf>
- Alabama State Department of Education. (2017). *290-4-1 Flexibility For Students in Failing Schools*. Alabama Administrative Code.
<https://admincode.legislature.state.al.us/administrative-code/290-4-1-.04>
- Alabama State Department of Education. (2023, November). *AAA 2023 talking points*.
- Alabama State Board of Education. (2012, June 7). *Alabama: ESEA Flexibility Request*. U.S. Department of Education.
<https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/policy/eseaflex/al.pdf>
- Andriani, S., Kesumawati, N., & Kristiawan, M. (2018). The influence of the transformational leadership and work motivation on teachers' performance. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, 7(7), 19–29.

- Arneson, S. M. (2014). *Building trust in teacher evaluations: It's not what you say; it's how you say it*. Corwin Press.
- Aronson, J., Zimmerman, J., & Carlos, L. (1999). *Improving student achievement by extending school: Is it just a matter of time?* WestEd.
https://www2.wested.org/www-static/online_pubs/po-98-02.pdf
- Balikçi, A. (2020). Evaluation of assistant principal roles and jobs at school in the context of Henry Mintzberg's managerial roles. *Educational Policy Analysis and Strategic Research*, 15(3), 372–393. <https://doi.org/10.29329/epasr.2020.270.18>
- Balyer, A. (2012). Transformational leadership behaviors of school principals: A qualitative research based on teachers' perceptions. *International Online Journal of Educational Science*, 4(3), 581–591. [Transformational Leadership Behaviors of School Principals: A Qualitative Research Based on Teachers' Perceptions](#)
- Barnett, B. G., Shoho, A. R., & Oleszewski, A. M. (2012). The job realities of beginning and experienced assistant principals. *Leadership & Policy in Schools*, 11(1), 92–128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2011.611924>
- Baskett, P. (2020). *Assistant principals' leadership and perceptions of their roles: A qualitative case study* [Doctoral dissertation, Liberty University]. Scholars Crossing: Institutional Repository of Liberty University.
<https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/2723>
- Berg, B. L., & Lune, H. (2012). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (8th ed.). Pearson.

- Billings, S. B., Brunner, E. J., & Ross, S. L. (2018). Gentrification and failing schools: The unintended consequences of school choice under NCLB. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 100(1), 65–77. https://doi.org/10.1162/REST_a_00667
- Blackburn, B., & Williamson, R. (2009). The characteristics of a rigorous classroom. *Instructional Leader: Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association*, 22(6), 1–3. http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/M4-Slide_11_Characteristics_of_a_Rigorous_Classroom.pdf
- Branch, G. F., Hanushek, E. A., & Rivkin, S. G. (2013). School leaders matter. *Education Next*, 13(1), 62–69. <https://www.educationnext.org/school-leaders-matter/>
- Brittain, M., & Blackstock, C. (2015). *First Nations child poverty: A literature review and analysis*. First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. [First Nations child poverty: A literature review and analysis. First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada.](#)
- Brown, K. M., Anfara, V. A., Jr., & Roney, K. (2004). Student achievement in high performing, suburban middle schools and low performing, urban middle schools: Plausible explanations for the differences. *Education and Urban Society*, 36(4), 428–456. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124504263339>
- Bukoski, B. E., Lewis, T. C., Carpenter, B. W., Berry, M. S., & Sanders, K. S. (2016). The complexities of realizing community: Assistant principals as community leaders in persistently low-achieving schools. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 14(4), 411–436. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2015.1021053>

- Calkins, A., Guenther, W., Belfiore, G., & Lash, D. (2007). *The turnaround challenge: Why America's best opportunity to dramatically improve student achievement lies in our worst-performing schools*. Mass Insight Education & Research Institute.
- Callahan, K., & Sadeghi, L. (2015). Teacher perceptions of the value of teacher evaluations: New Jersey's ACHIEVE NJ. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 10(21), 46–59.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1060978.pdf>
- Carpenter, B. W., Bukoski, B. E., Berry, M., & Mitchell, A. M. (2017). Examining the social justice identity of assistant principals in persistently low-achieving schools. *Urban Education*, 52(3), 287–315. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085915574529>
- Childs, J., & Russell, J. L. (2017). Improving low-achieving schools: Building state capacity to support school improvement through race to the top. *Urban Education*, 52(2), 236–266. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916656899>
- Clayton, G., & Bingham, A. J. (2018). The first year: Assistant principals in Title I schools. *Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies*, 1(2).
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1226926.pdf>
- Cohen, R., & Schechter, C. (2019). Becoming an assistant principal: Mapping factors that facilitate or hinder entering the role. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 14(1), 99–112.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1218851.pdf>
- Council of Administrators of Special Education. (n.d.). *ESEA reauthorization recommendations*.
https://www.casecec.org/assets/docs/CASE_ESEA_Recommendations.pdf

- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Dagli, U. Y. (2019). Effect of increased instructional time on student achievement. *Educational Review*, 71(4), 501–517.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2018.1441808>
- Darling-Hammond, L., & Berry, B. (2006). Highly qualified teachers for all. *Educational Leadership*, 64(3). <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/highly-qualified-teachers-for-all>
- Darling-Hammond, L., & Cook-Harvey, C. M. (2018). *Educating the whole child: Improving school climate to support student success*. Learning Policy Institute.
https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Educating_Whole_Child_REPORT.pdf
- DaVita, M. C., Colvin, R. L., Darling-Hammond, L., & Haycock, K. (2007). *Education leadership: A bridge to school reform*. The Wallace Foundation.
<https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Bridge-to-School-Reform.pdf>
- Day, C., Gu, Q., & Sammons, P. (2016). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: How successful school leaders use transformational and instructional strategies to make a difference. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 52(2), 221–258.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X15616863>
- Debreli, E., & Ishanova, I. (2019). Foreign language classroom management: Types of student misbehaviour and strategies adapted by the teachers in handling

- disruptive behaviour. *Cogent Education*, 6(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2019.1648629>
- DiPaola, M., & Wagner, C. A. (2018). *Improving instruction through supervision, evaluation, and professional development*. Information Age Publishing.
- Dou, D., Devos, G., & Valcke, M. (2017). The relationships between school autonomy gap, principal leadership, teachers' job satisfaction and organizational commitment. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 45(6), 959–977. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143216653975>
- Downey, D. B., von Hippel, P. T., & Hughes, M. (2008). Are “failing” schools really failing? Using seasonal comparison to evaluate school effectiveness. *Sociology of Education*, 81(3), 242–270. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003804070808100302>
- Doyle, T. (2008). *Helping students learn in a learner-centered environment: A guide to facilitating learning in higher education* (1st ed.). Stylus Publishing, LLC.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003445067>
- Duggan, M. (2016). *6 challenges for a new assistant principal*. Center for Integrated Training and Education. <https://www.citeprograms.com/6-challenges-new-assistant-principal/>
- Dulin, C. (2018). *Exploring the relationship between professional learning communities and the growth in teaching quality and student achievement* [Doctoral dissertation, Texas Tech University]. Texas Tech University Libraries. <https://ttu-ir.tdl.org/handle/2346/73849>
- Dunlop, T. (2013). Why it works: You can't just “PBIS” someone. *The Education Digest*, 79(4), 38–40. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1464619030>

- Ellis, A., & Brown, C. G. (2015). Pursuing the principalship: Factors in assistant principals' decisions. *School Leadership Review*, 10(1), Article 4.
<https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/slr/vol10/iss1/4>
- Eraniil, A. K., & Özbilen, F. M. (2017). Relationship between school principals' ethical leadership behaviours and positive climate practices. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 6(4), 100–112. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v6n4p100>
- Every Student Succeeds Act. (2017, September). School choice: 2017-2018 policy debate. *Congressional Digest*, 96(7), 4–6.
<https://congressionaldigest.com/issue/school-choice-2/every-student-succeeds-act/>
- Faas, D., Smith, A., & Darmody, M. (2018). The role of principals in creating inclusive school environments: Insights from community national schools in Ireland. *School Leadership & Management*, 38(4), 457–473.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2018.1430688>
- Feng, L., Figlio, D., & Sass, T. (2018). School accountability and teacher mobility. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 103, 1–17.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jue.2017.11.001>
- Friedman, E. (2020). *Effective principals, effective turnarounds: Considering the role of the “turnaround principal” in public school transformation* [Unpublished education studies capstone]. Yale University.
- Ganon-Shilon, S., & Schechter, C. (2019). School principals' sense-making of their leadership role during reform implementation. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 22(3), 279–300. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2018.1450996>

- Glanz, J. (1994). Redefining the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals. *The Clearing House*, 67(5), 283–287.
- Goe, L., Biggers, K., & Croft, A. (2012). *Linking teacher evaluation to professional development: Focusing on improving teaching and learning* (Research & Policy Brief). National Comprehensive Centre for Teacher Quality.
<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED532775.pdf>
- Goldring, E., Rubin, M., & Herrmann, M. (2021). *The role of assistant principals: Evidence and insights for advancing school leadership*. Wallace Foundation.
- Greenlee, B., & Brown J. J., Jr. (2009). Retaining teachers in challenging schools. *Education*, 130(1), 96–109.
- Grissom, J. A., & Bartanen, B. (2019). Strategic retention: Principal effectiveness and teacher turnover in multiple-measure teacher evaluation systems. *American Educational Research Journal*, 56(2), 514–555.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831218797931>
- Grissom, J. A., Loeb, S., & Master, B. (2013). Effective instructional time use for school leaders: Longitudinal evidence from observations of principals. *Educational Researcher*, 42(8), 433–444. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X13510020>
- Gurley, D. K. Anast-May, L., & Lee, H. T. (2015). Developing the instructional leaders through assistant principals' academy: A partnership for success. *Education & Urban Society*, 47(2), 207–241. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124513495272>
- Hansen, M., & Choi, K. (2012). *Chronically low-performing schools and turnaround: Evidence from three states*. Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED535509.pdf>

- Hartzell, G. N. (1994, February). *Addressing the problems of first-year assistant principals* [Paper presentation]. Annual Meeting of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, New Orleans, LA, United States.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED369179.pdf>
- Hausman, C., Nebeker, A., McCreary, J., & Donaldson, G., Jr. (2002). The worklife of the assistant principal. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 40(2), 136–157.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09578230210421105>
- Heffernan, A. (2018). Power and the ‘autonomous’ principal: Autonomy, teacher development, and school leaders’ work. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 50(4), 379–396. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2018.1518318>
- Hemelt, S. W., & Jacob, B. (2017). *Differentiated accountability and education production: Evidence from NCLB waivers* (Working paper 23461). National Bureau of Economic Research.
https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w23461/w23461.pdf
- Herman, K. C., Reinke, W. M., Dong, N., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2022). Can effective classroom behavior management increase student achievement in middle school? Findings from a group randomized trial. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 114(1), 144–160. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000641>
- Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Greene, J., Maynard, R., & Redding, S. (2008). *Turning around chronically low performing schools: A practice guide* (NCEE 2008-4020). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of

Education.

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/Turnaround_pg_04181.pdf

Herman, R., Gates, S. M., Arifkhanova, A., Barrett, M., Bega, A., Chavez-Herrerias, E. R., Han, E., Harris, M. A., Migacheva, K., Ross, R., Leschitz, J. T., & Wrabel, S. L. (2017). *School leadership interventions under the Every Student Succeeds Act: Evidence review* (Updated and expanded). RAND Corporation.

<https://www.rand.org/pubs/>

research_reports/RR1550-3.html

Hill, N. E., Witherspoon, D. P., & Bartz, D. (2018). Parental involvement in education during middle school: Perspectives of ethnically diverse parents, teachers, and students. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 111(1), 12–27.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2016.1190910>

Hines, E. M., Moore, J. L., III, Mayes, R. D., Harris, P. C., Vega, D., Robinson, D. V., Gray, C. N., & Jackson, C. E. (2017). Making student achievement a priority: The role of school counselors in turnaround schools. *Urban Education*, 55(2), 216–237. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0042085916685761>

Hirn, R. G., Hollo, A., & Scott, T. M. (2018). Exploring instructional differences and school performance in high-poverty elementary schools. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, 62(1), 37–48.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988X.2017.1329197>

Hitt, D. H., Tucker, P. D., & Young, M. D. (2012). *The professional pipeline for educational leadership: A white paper developed to inform the work of the*

- National Policy Board for Educational Administration*. University Council for Educational Administration. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED533487.pdf>
- Hitt, D. H., Woodruff, D., Meyers, C. V., & Zhu, G. (2018). Principal competencies that make a difference: Identifying a model for leaders of school turnaround. *Journal of School Leadership*, 28(1), 56–81. <https://www.clearviewconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/principal-competencies-that-make-a-difference-journal-of-school-leadership-january-2018.pdf>
- Hoerr, T. R. (2016). Principal connection/how principals spark engagement. *Educational Leadership*, 74(2), 86–87. <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/how-principals-spark-engagement>
- Hoffert, M. M. (2015). *The experience of individuals who transitioned from teacher to assistant principal* [Doctoral dissertation, Eastern Michigan University]. DigitalCommons@EMU. <https://commons.emich.edu/theses/820>
- Holmes, B., Parker, D., & Gibson, J. (2019). Rethinking teacher retention in hard-to-staff schools. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 12(1), 27–33. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1203451.pdf>
- Houchens, G., Niu, C., Zhang, J., Miller, S. K., & Norman, A. D. (2018). Do differences in high school principal and assistant principal perceptions predict student achievement outcomes? *NASSP Bulletin*, 102(1), 38–57. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0192636518763105>
- Iheoma, N., & Uchenna, O. (2020). Effective classroom management: A panacea for enhancing students' learning experience and satisfaction in higher education.

British Journal of Education, 8(1), 10–19.

<https://doi.org/10.37745/bje/vol8.no1.pp10-19.2020>

Jackman, G. R. (2009). *Who knew? An autoethnography of a first-year assistant principal* [Doctoral dissertation, Utah State University].

<https://doi.org/10.26076/cb97-3885>

Jez, S. J., & Wassmer, R. W. (2015). The impact of learning time on academic achievement. *Education and Urban Society*, 47(3), 284–306.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124513495275>

Josselson, R. (2013). *Interviewing for qualitative inquiry: A relational approach*. The Guilford Press.

Kaplan, L. S., & Owings, W. A. (1999). Assistant principals: The case for shared instructional leadership. *NASSP Bulletin*, 83(610), 80–94.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/019263659908361012>

Kelly, M. (2019, March). *Why become an assistant principal in a middle or high school?*

<https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-an-assistant-principal-7652>

Klein, A. (2015a, March 31). ESEA's 50-year legacy a blend of idealism, policy tensions.

Education Week. [https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/eseas-50-year-legacy-a-](https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/eseas-50-year-legacy-a-blend-of-idealism-policy-tensions/2015/03)

[blend-of-idealism-policy-tensions/2015/03](https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/eseas-50-year-legacy-a-blend-of-idealism-policy-tensions/2015/03)

Klein, A. (2015b, March 31). The nation's main K-12 law: A timeline of the ESEA.

Education Week. [https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/the-nations-main-k-12-](https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/the-nations-main-k-12-law-a-timeline-of-the-esea/2015/03)

[law-a-timeline-of-the-esea/2015/03](https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/the-nations-main-k-12-law-a-timeline-of-the-esea/2015/03)

Klein, A. (2015c, April 10). No Child Left Behind: An overview. *Education Week*.

<https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/no-child-left-behind-an-overview/2015/04>

- Konold, T., Cornell, D., Jia, Y., & Malone, M. (2018). School climate, student engagement, and academic achievement: A latent variable, multilevel multi-informant examination. *AERA Open*, 4(4).
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858418815661>
- Krasnoff, B., Leong, M., & Siebersma, M. (2015). *Leadership qualities of effective principals* [Research brief]. Northwest Comprehensive Center at Education Northwest.
<https://www.compcenternetwork.org/sites/default/files/archive/research-brief-leadership-qualities-effective-principals.pdf>
- Kutash, J., Nico, E., Gorin, E., Rahmatullah, S., & Tallant, K. (2010). *The school turnaround field guide*. FSG Social Impact Advisors.
<https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/documents/the-school-turnaround-field-guide.pdf>
- Kutsyruba, B., Klinger, D. A., & Hussain, A. (2015). Relationships among school climate, school safety, and student achievement and well-being: A review of the literature. *Review of Education*, 3(2), 103–135. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3043>
- Lai, M. K., & McNaughton, S. (2016). The impact of data use professional development on student achievement. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 60, 434–443.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.07.005>
- Lee, K. (2007). Who are the stakeholders? *Journal of Technology Studies*, 33(1), 2–8.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.21061/jots.v33i1.a.1>
- Leithwood, K., & Strauss, T. (2008). *Turnaround schools and the leadership they require*. Canadian Education Association.

- Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *Review of research: How leadership influences student learning*. Wallace Foundation.
<https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/How-Leadership-Influences-Student-Learning.pdf>
- Leithwood, K., Patten, S., & Jantzi, D. (2010). Testing a conception of how school leadership influences student learning. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 46(5), 671–706. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X10377347>
- Lejonberg, E., Elstad, E., & Christophersen, K. A. (2018). Teaching evaluation: Antecedents of teachers' perceived usefulness of follow-up sessions and perceived stress related to the evaluation process. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 24(3), 281–296.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2017.1399873>
- Lenski, S. (2011). What RTI means for content area teachers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 55(4), 276–282. <https://doi.org/10.1002/JAAL.00034>
- Marshall, C. (1992). *The assistant principal*. Corwin Press.
- Marshall, C., & Hooley, R. M. (2006). *The assistant principal: Leadership choices and challenges*. Corwin Press.
- Martin, M. E. (2018). Qualities of instructional leadership among principals in high-performing Christian schools. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 27(2), 157–182. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219.2018.1500501>
- Marzano, R. J. (2012). The two purposes of teacher evaluation. *Educational Leadership*, 70(3), 14–19. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational->

leadership/nov12/vol70/num03/

The-Two-Purposes-of-Teacher-Evaluation.aspx

Matsumura, L. C., Slater, S. C., & Crosson, A. (2008). Classroom climate, rigorous instruction and curriculum, and students' interactions in urban middle schools.

The Elementary School Journal, 108(4), 293–312. <https://doi.org/10.1086/528973>

Maxwell, G. M., Huggins, K. S., & Scheurich, J. J. (2010). How one historically underperforming diverse rural high school achieved a successful turnaround.

Planning and Changing, 1(3-4), 161–186.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ952379.pdf>

Mendels, P. (2012). The effective principal: Five pivotal practices that shape instructional leadership. *Journal of Staff Development*, 33(1), 1–4.

<https://www.wallacefoundation.org/>

knowledge-center/Documents/The-Effective-Principal.pdf

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. Jossey-Bass.

Meyers, C. V. (2020). District-led school turnaround. A case study of one US district's turnaround launch for multiple schools. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 19(4),

710–729. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2019.1637902>

Meyers, C. V., & Hambrick Hitt, D. (2017). School turnaround principals: What does initial research literature suggest they are doing to be successful? *Journal of*

Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR), 22(1), 38–56.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10824669.2016.1242070>

- Meyers, C. V., & Sadler, J. (2018). District leaders engaged in school turnaround: Identified challenges and espoused responses. *NASSP Bulletin*, 102(2), 89–110.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0192636518786008>
- Meyers, C. V., Brandt, W. C., & VanGronigen, B. A. (2022). State ESSA plans and comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) status. *Educational Policy*, 37(5).
<https://doi.org/10.1177/08959048221087209>
- Muti, J. N. (2019). *Leadership strategies utilized by principals to support student academic achievement: A qualitative case study* (Publication No. 10975534) [Doctoral dissertation, Northcentral University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Neumerski, C. M., Grissom, J. A., Goldring, E., Rubin, M., Cannata, M., Schuermann, P., & Drake, T. A. (2018). Restructuring instructional leadership: How multiple-measure teacher evaluation systems are redefining the role of the school principal. *The Elementary School Journal*, 119(2), 270–297.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/700597>
- Ngware, M. W., Oketch, M., & Mutisya, M. (2014). Does teaching style explain differences in learner achievement in low and high performing schools in Kenya? *International Journal of Educational Development*, 36(2), 3–12.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.01.004>
- Ni, K. M., Mon, K. Y., & Mon, K. Y. (2020). A study of learning environment and student achievement in basic education high schools. *Journal of the Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science* 18(9), 261–269.
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, H.R. 1, 107th Cong. § 201 (2001).

- Nor, M. S., & Roslan, S. (2009). Turning around at-risk schools: What effective principals do. *The International Journal on School Disaffection*, 6(2), 21–29.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ853212.pdf>
- Nuel, O. I. E., Ifechi, A. N., & Emmanuella, U. I. (2021). Transformational leadership and organizational success: Evidence from tertiary institutions. *Journal of Economics and Business*, 4(1).
- O'Brien, K. (2014). An investigation of teacher evaluation systems and how they can be transformed to improve teaching and learning: A change leadership plan [Doctoral dissertation, National Louis University]. DigitalCommons@NLU.
[Dissertation on teacher evaluation systems and change leadership.](#)
- Oakes, J., Maier, A., & Daniel, J. (2017). Community schools: An evidence-based strategy for equitable school improvement. National Education Policy Center and Learning Policy Institute.
https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Community_Schools_Evidence_Based_Strategy_BRIEF.pdf
- Office of the Governor of Alabama. (2022, September 19). “Turnaround Schools Initiative” hoping to help 15 schools across Alabama. [Alabama Governor's Office Newsroom.](#)
- Oleszewski, A., Shoho, A., & Barnett, B. (2012). The development of assistant principals: A literature review. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 50(3), 264–286. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231211223301>

- Ordu, S. R., & Ordu, P. A. (2012). Seven levels of accountability for student success.
Source. <https://www.advanc-ed.org/source/seven-levels-accountability-student-success>
- Ovando, M. N. (2001). Teachers' perceptions of a learner-centered teacher evaluation system. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 15(3), 213–232.
<https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1012704809835>
- Owens, A. (2018). Income segregation between school districts and inequality in students' achievement. *Sociology of Education*, 91(1), 1–27.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040717741180>
- Paine, S., & McCann, R. (2009). *Engaging stakeholders: Including parents and the community to sustain improved reading outcomes* (Sustaining Reading First, Sustainability Series, No. 6). RMC Research Corp.
<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/support/stakeholderlores.pdf>
- Perlman, C. (2013). Summary of States' Strategies for ESEA Priority Schools. Solutions. Issue No. 6. *Building State Capacity and Productivity Center*.
- Queirós, A., Faria, D., & Almeida, F. (2017). Strengths and limitations of qualitative and quantitative research methods. *European journal of education studies*.
- Range, B. G., McKim, C., Mette, I. M., & Hvidston, D. J. (2014). Aspiring principals' perspectives about teacher supervision and evaluation: Insights for educational leadership preparation programs. *Education Leadership Review*, 15(1), 1–17.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1105573.pdf>
- Rattley, K. T. (2016). *A case study of turnaround principal identification and selection in one urban school district* [Doctoral dissertation, Gardner-Webb University].

DigitalCommons@Gardner-WebbUniversity. <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/>

[cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1163&context=education_etd](https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1163&context=education_etd)

- Rebell, M. A., Wolff, J. R., & Yaverbaum, D. A. (2010, February 8–9). *Stimulating equity? A preliminary analysis of the impact of the federal stimulus act on educational opportunity* [Paper presentation]. The Campaign for Educational Equity Fifth Annual Symposium, New York, NY, United States.
- Rentner, D. S., & Lober, N. (2019). District leader interviews: How school districts are responding to ESSA's evidence requirements for school improvement. Center on Education Policy.
- Robinson, V. M., Hohepa, M., & Lloyd, C. (2007). *School leadership and student outcomes: Identifying what works and why* (Vol. 41). Australian Council for Educational Leaders. <http://www.peersupport.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Student-leadership.pdf>
- Romero, C., & Ventura, S. (2020). Educational data mining and learning analytics: An updated survey. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Data Mining and Knowledge Discovery*, 10(3), e1355. <https://doi.org/10.1002/widm.1355>
- Rudo, Z. H. (2001). *Corrective action in low-performing schools and school districts*. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED459532.pdf>
- Sabastian, J., & Allensworth, E. (2012). The influence of principal leadership on classroom instruction and student learning: A study of mediated pathways to

- learning. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48(4), 626–665.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X11436273>
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). Sage.
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Sanders, C. R. (2016). Money talks: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the African American freedom struggle in Mississippi. *History of Education Quarterly*, 56(2), 361–367. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hoeq.12187>
- Schildkamp, K. (2019). Data-based decision-making for school improvement: Research insights and gaps. *Educational Research*, 61(3), 257–273.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2019.1625716>
- Schwandt, T. A. (2007). *The Sage dictionary of qualitative inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- Scoggins, A., & Bishop, H. L. (1993). *A review of the literature regarding the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals*.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED371436.pdf>
- See, B. H., Morris, R., Gorard, S., & El Soufi, N. (2020). What works in attracting and retaining teachers in challenging schools and areas? *Oxford Review of Education*, 46(6), 678–697. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2020.1775566>
- Setiawan, A. R. (2020). What is the best way to analyze pre–post data? *EdArXiv*.
<https://doi.org/10.35542/osf.io/h4e6q>
- Shaari, M. F., Ahmad, S. S., Ismail, I. S., & Zaiki, Y. (2020). Preschool physical environment design quality: Addressing Malaysia’s PISA rankings. *Asian Journal of Environment-Behaviour Studies*, 5(16), 45–57.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.21834/ajeb.v5i16.369>

- Sharif, U. M., Nanyangwe-Moyo, T., Moyo, N., Zheng, X., & Guo, C. (2020). The role of the principal is developing an instructional leadership team in school. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 15(11), 662–667. <https://doi.org/10.5897/ERR2020.4057>
- Sharp, L. A. (2016). ESEA reauthorization: An overview of the Every Student Succeeds Act. *Texas Journal of Literacy Education*, 4(1), 9–13. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1110854.pdf>
- Silva, E. (2007). *On the clock: Rethinking the way schools use time*. Education Sector. <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/publications/OntheClock.pdf>
- Smylie, M. A. (2014). Teacher evaluation and the problem of professional development. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, 26(2). <https://www.mwera.org/MWER/volumes/v26/issue2/v26n2-Smylie-POLICY-BRIEFS.pdf>
- Somoza-Norton, A., & Neumann, N. (2021). The assistant principal as instructional leader: The redesign of the AP position in the 21st century. *Journal of School Administration Research and Development*, 6(1), 43–51. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jsard.v6i1.2444>
- Springer, M. G., Swain, W. A., & Rodriguez, L. A. (2016). Effective teacher retention bonuses: Evidence from Tennessee. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 38(2), 199–221. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0162373715609687>
- Steiner, L., & Hassel, E. A. (2011). Using competencies to improve school turnaround principal success. *Public Impact*, 1–22. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED539544.pdf>

- Sterrett, W., & Richardson, J. W. (2020). Supporting professional development through digital principal leadership. *Journal of Organizational & Educational Leadership*, 5(2), Art. 4. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1261391.pdf>
- Stewart, C. (2014). Transforming professional development to professional learning. *Journal of Adult Education*, 43(1), 28–33.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1047338.pdf>
- Strayhorn, T. L. (2018). *College students' sense of belonging: A key to educational success for all students*. Routledge.
- Stronge, J. H., & Xu, X. (2021). *Qualities of effective principals* (2nd ed.). ASCD.
<https://files.ascd.org/staticfiles/ascd/pdf/siteASCD/publications/books/Qualities-of-Effective-Principals-2ed-sample-chapters.pdf>
- Sullivan, P., Bobis, J., Downton, A., Feng, M., Livy, S., Hughes, S., McCormick, M, & Russo, J. (2020). Characteristics of learning environments in which students are open to risk taking and mistake making. *Australian Primary Mathematics Classroom*, 25(2), 3–8.
- Sullivan, S., & Glanz, J. (2013). *Supervision that improves teaching and learning: Strategies and techniques*. Corwin Press.
- Sun, A. Q. (2011). *Exploring the role of assistant principals in an accountability-oriented environment in New York State public schools* (Publication No. 3460867). [Doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo]. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
- Sun, J., Johnson, B., & Przybylski, R. (2016). Leading with data: An increasingly important feature of school leadership. *International Studies in Educational*

Administration (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration & Management (CCEAM)), 44(3), 93–128.

Taormina, R. J., & Gao, J. H. (2013). Maslow and the motivation hierarchy: Measuring satisfaction of the needs. *The American Journal of Psychology, 126(2), 155–177.*

Tingle, E., Corrales, A., & Peters, M. L. (2019). Leadership development programs: Investing in school principals. *Educational Studies, 45(1), 1–16.*

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2017.1382332>

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Gareis, C. R. (2015). Principals, trust, and cultivating vibrant schools. *Societies, 5(2), 256–276.* <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc5020256>

U. S. Department of Education. (2009). *Public school choice non-regulatory guidance.* www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolchoiceguid.pdf

U. S. Department of Education. (2014, July 24). *ESEA flexibility request.*
<https://www.ed.gov/policy/eseaflex/approved-requests/miamendreq822.pdf>

U. S. Department of Education. (2016, May 12). *ESEA flexibility.*
www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html

U.S. Department of Education. (2025, September 23). *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).* <https://www.ed.gov/essa>

Vail, C. H. (2018). *The forgotten educator: Perceptions of veteran secondary assistant principals on the principalship and possible promotion* (Publication No. 107858460). [Doctoral dissertation, The George Washington University]. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

- Valli, L., Stefanski, A., & Jacobson, R. (2018). School-community partnership models: Implications for leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 21(1), 31–49. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2015.1124925>
- VanTuyle, V. L. (2018). Illinois assistant principals: Instructional leaders or disciplinarians. *Education Leadership Review*, 19(1), 1–20. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1200805.pdf>
- Waters, T., Marzano, R. J., & McNulty, B. (2003). Balanced leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement [Working paper]. McREL. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED481972.pdf>
- Wood, L., & Bauman, E. (2017). *How family, school, and community engagement can improve student achievement and influence school reform* [Literature review]. Nellie Mae Education Foundation. <https://uj9a82.p3cdn1.secureserver.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Final-Report-Family-Engagement-AIR-1.pdf>
- Yahaya, A. H. (2017). *Abraham Maslow: The needs hierarchy*. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/11782195.pdf>
- Yin, R. K. (2002). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Designs and methods* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Designs and methods* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.

- Yoon, I. H., & Barton, A. (2019). Turnaround leaders' shifting gears in *chronos* and *kairos* time. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 57(6).
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-08-2018-0139>
- Young, M. D., Winn, K. M., & Reedy, M. A. (2017). The Every Student Succeeds Act: Strengthening the focus on educational leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 53(5), 705–726. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X17735871>
- Zepeda, S. (2005). *The instructional leader's guide to informal classroom observations*. Eye on Education.
- Zysberg, L., & Schwabsky, N. (2021). School climate, academic self-efficacy and student achievement. *Educational Psychology*, 41(4), 467–482.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2020.1813690>

Appendix A

Auburn University Institutional Review Board Approved Research Protocol



EXEMPT RESEARCH PROTOCOL TEMPLATE

Exempt Categories

Please select the exempt category that best describes your research:		
	Exempt Category	Criteria
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Exempt 1: Normal Educational Practices	Research, conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings that specifically involves normal educational practices that are not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn required educational content or the assessment of educators who provide instruction. This includes most research on regular and special education instructional strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exempt 2: Educational Tests, Surveys or Interviews, or Public Observation	<p>Research that only includes interactions (<i>may not include interventions</i>) involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; (ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7). <i>The research is limited to educational tests or the investigator(s) do not participate in the activities being observed during observation of public behavior.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exempt 3: Benign Behavioral Intervention	<p>Research involving benign behavioral interventions in conjunction with the collection of information from an adult subject through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording if the subject prospectively agrees to the intervention and information collection and at least one of the following criteria is met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; (ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7). The benign behavioral interventions must be brief in duration, harmless, painless, not physically invasive, not likely to have a significant adverse lasting impact on the subjects, and the investigator has no reason to think the subjects will find the interventions offensive or embarrassing.

		<p>NOTE: If the research involves deceiving the subjects regarding the nature or purposes of the research, this exemption is not applicable unless the subject authorizes the deception through a prospective agreement to participate in research in circumstances in which the subject is informed that he or she will be unaware of or misled regarding the nature or purposes of the research.</p> <p><i>Children are not eligible for Exempt 3 research.</i></p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exempt 4: Secondary Use of Data or Specimens	<p>Secondary research for which consent is not required: Secondary research uses of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens, if at least one of the following criteria is met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens are publicly available; (ii) Information, which may include information about biospecimens, is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, the investigator does not contact the subjects, and the investigator will not re-identify subjects; For criteria (iii) and (iv), please visit https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/regulations/45-cfr-46/common-rule-subpart-a-46104/index.html <p>**If your research ONLY involves secondary use of data, please complete HRP 900 – APPENDIX – SECONDARY USE OF DATA. However, if your research involves any activities other than secondary use of data, documents, records, or specimens, continue with this form.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exempt 5: Federal Research and Demonstration Projects	<p>Research and demonstration projects that are conducted or supported by a Federal department or otherwise subject to the approval of department or agency heads (or the approval of the heads of other subordinate agencies that have been delegated authority to conduct the research and demonstration projects), and that are designed to study, evaluate, improve, or otherwise examine public benefit or programs, including procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs, possible alternatives to those programs or procedures, or possible changes in methods or levels of payment or services under those programs. For additional criteria please visit https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/regulations/45-cfr-46/common-rule-subpart-a-461</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exempt 6: Taste and Food Quality	<p>Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) If wholesome foods without additives are consumed, or (ii) If a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exempt 7: Storage or Maintenance of Secondary Research	<p>Storage or maintenance for secondary research for which broad consent is required: Storage or maintenance of <u>identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens</u> for potential secondary research use if an IRB conducts limited IRB review (see HRP-319 - WORKSHEET - Limited IRB Review and Broad Consent). For research involving secondary use of data, documents, records, or specimens, please attach the completed HRP-900 -APPENDIX – Secondary Use of Data under 'Local Site Documents'. Please note that at this time, AU does not have the institutional infrastructure to support this category of research.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exempt 8: Secondary Research	<p>Secondary research for which broad consent is required: Research involving the use of <u>identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens</u> for secondary research use (see HRP-319 - WORKSHEET - Limited IRB Review and Broad</p>

	Consent). For research involving secondary use of data, documents, records, or specimens, please complete and attach HRP-900 under 'Local Site Documents'. Please note that at this time, AU does not have the institutional infrastructure to support this category of research.
--	---

NOTES:

- Prisoners may not be included in exempt research, except for research aimed at involving a broader subject population that only incidentally includes prisoners.
- Exemption categories 7 and 8 require broad consent. The AU IRB has determined the regulatory requirements for legally effective broad consent are not feasible within the current institutional infrastructure. Exempt categories 7 and 8 will not be implemented at this time.



PROTOCOL TITLE: An Exploratory Case Study of an Assistant Principal's Roles and Responsibilities That Helped Turn Around an Alabama Priority School

VERSION DATE: 02/24/2025

ANTICIPATED START DATE: April 28, 2025

ANTICIPATED END DATE: August 31, 2025

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

Name: Dr. Lisa Kensler
Department: Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology
Email address: lak0008@auburn.edu

x PI is not a student.

I have read the PI eligibility statement in HRP 103 – INVESTIGATOR MANUAL and confirm that the above named PI meets criteria to be a PI on an IRB protocol at AU.

****ALL KEY PERSONNEL MUST BE ADDED THROUGH 'LOCAL STUDY TEAM MEMBERS' IN ENDEAVOR. PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL PERSONNEL HAVE COMPLETED THE NECESSARY MODULES TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AS SPECIFIED IN HRP-103 – INVESTIGATOR MANUAL. YOU CAN CHECK THE STATUS OF CITI TRAINING BY CLICKING ON THE 'TRAINING' TAB IN ENDEAVOR. TRAINING THAT OCCURS OUTSIDE OF CITI MUST BE UPLOADED UNDER THE 'LOCAL SITE DOCUMENTS' SECTION OF YOUR PROTOCOL.****

DEPARTMENT HEAD/CHAIR:

Name: Dr. William Murrah
Email address: wmm0017@auburn.edu

Please Note: Undergraduate and graduate students are not allowed to be the Principal Investigator on a research study. For further information on who is eligible to serve as a Principal Investigator, see HRP-103 – INVESTIGATOR MANUAL.

Is this study part of a dissertation or thesis? Yes No
Is this study part of a capstone project? Yes No

FUNDING INFORMATION:

Check all that apply.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not funded by any source.
<input type="checkbox"/> Internal funding. Provide the source/mechanism of internal support:
<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Federal government funding (i.e., DoD, NIH, NSF, etc.) via one or more direct awards or a sub-award. Provide the source of federal support:
<input type="checkbox"/> Other sources of funding (please specify):

Please complete the table below and identify all the study procedures that will be conducted in this study:

Check any applicable boxes:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Normal Educational Practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Taste and Food Quality
<input type="checkbox"/> Surveys	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Tests
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interviews	<input type="checkbox"/> Benign Behavioral Interventions
<input type="checkbox"/> Observation of Public Behavior	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary Use of Data or Specimens
<input type="checkbox"/> Deception	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):

1. Purpose and rationale of the study:

The purpose of this study is to explore the roles and responsibilities of an assistant principal that helped turn around a priority school, based on the perceptions of one assistant principal, one principal, and four teachers. The study will focus on an assistant principal who has been involved in a school turnaround process, moving the school from the priority school list to successfully exiting that designation. This study aims to answer the primary research question: What are the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal that helped turn around a priority school? To further guide the study, three research questions (RQs) will be examined:

- **RQ1:** How does one assistant principal perceive their roles and responsibilities that helped turn around a priority school?
- **RQ2:** How does one principal perceive the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal that helped turn around a priority school?
- **RQ3:** How do teachers perceive the roles and responsibilities of the assistant principal that helped turn around a priority school?

2. Study procedures:

Following permission from the district and IRB approval, I will email the superintendent the Information Letter with the IRB approval stamp to show that IRB has approved me to continue my research. I will email the principal the Information Letter with the IRB approval stamp and the School Permission to Conduct Research signed by the superintendent to show that I have permission from the superintendent and IRB to continue my research and to invite his participation in my research. I will email the assistant principal and four potential teachers the Information Letter to invite their participation in my study. After they agree to participate, I will schedule interviews via email with them. When I schedule the interviews with participants, I will provide a summary of the interview protocol and will request that they collect any available documents that they deem relevant to the conversation and bring those documents to the interview. During the interview they will have the opportunity to share their documents and speak about their relevance. The interviews will be conducted via Zoom and will last approximately one hour. If participants require additional time to answer the questions and they are willing to share their time, I will accommodate their needs. The total duration of the interview, including document sharing, will be approximately one hour and 15 minutes, with flexibility for additional time if needed and available.

Following the interviews, the transcripts will be prepared prior to inviting participants to member check their interviews. If clarification is needed before member checking, I will reach out via email to schedule a brief Zoom meeting. Once prepared, transcripts will be emailed to the participants for review/member checking. Participants may decline this opportunity, if they wish.

3. Study population:

- a) How many participants will be enrolled? **6**
- b) How many subject records will be obtained or received? **0**
- c) How many subject specimens will you receive? **0**

Does the study target any of these special populations (check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant people/fetuses	<input type="checkbox"/> Known interpersonal relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> At risk for/Experiencing substance use disorder	<input type="checkbox"/> LBGQTQIA+
<input type="checkbox"/> Minors	<input type="checkbox"/> At risk of/Experiencing homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/> Refugees	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native
<input type="checkbox"/> Prisoners/Justice-Involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Persons with economic disadvantages	<input type="checkbox"/> Disabled people/People with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/> AU faculty, staff, students
<input type="checkbox"/> Persons with educational disadvantages	<input type="checkbox"/> Decisionally or intellectually impaired	<input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorized immigrants	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-AU Students

4. Recruitment:

Recruitment Process:

Upon receiving IRB approval, I will send a recruitment email using the email recruitment script to the potential participants. If I have not heard from them, I will follow up with an email every three days for approximately 10 days. If there is no response to the emails, I will call each recruit one time to confirm their willingness (or not) to participate in the study. I will use the phone recruitment script for the phone call.

When and Where Participants Will Be Recruited

With district and IRB approval, potential participants (participant, assistant principal, and four teachers) will be recruited from Tallassee School District. I will recruit the principal by emailing him an information letter with the IRB approval stamp and the school permission to conduct research with the superintendent’s signature. I will recruit the assistant principal and the four teachers by emailing them the information letter. All potential participants, including the principal, assistant principal, and four teachers, will be recruited from Tallassee High School, located in East Central Alabama. All potential participants must had experienced the turn around process of the school being previously classified as a priority school but has since exited that designation. All initial recruitment efforts will occur during regular school hours through communication channels such as email and phone.

How Participants Will Be Recruited

Recruitment will begin with an email invitation that includes the information letter and then a phone call invitation to eligible participants, explaining the study's purpose, procedures, expectations, and voluntary nature. This email will include an attached Information letter about the study. A read-receipt will be activated to confirm receipt of the email. A follow-up email will be sent to address any questions participants may have.

Recruitment Strategies and Materials

- **Email and then a Phone Call:** An initial recruitment email with the information letter will be sent to potential participants, followed by a phone call to clarify study details if needed and to confirm willingness (or not).
- **Information letter:** This document will outline the study's purpose, expectations, confidentiality protections, and participants' right to withdraw at any time.
- **Site Permission to Conduct Research:** I will ask the superintendent for permission to do my research at one of the schools in his district.
- **Flexible Scheduling:** To encourage participation, I will offer flexible interview times during planning periods or after school to accommodate participants' schedules.

The information letter will be shared with participants via email, reviewed at the start of the interview, and then record participants' consent at the beginning of the recording.

5. Study Location(s):

With approval from the district Superintendent, this study location is Tallassee High School

Will this research occur at an external or non-AU entity? Yes No

If your research involves AU students' records, do you have permission from the AU Registrar to conduct the research?

- This research does not include AU students' records
- Yes
- No

6. Potential Risks to Participants:

Potential risks to participants are minimal. The minimal risks include discomfort in answering certain interview questions, mild fatigue from the interview process, or concerns about confidentiality and trustworthiness.

To minimize these risks:

- Interviews will be scheduled at a time convenient for participants to reduce disruption to their workday.
- Interviews will be conducted via Zoom, allowing participants to choose a private and comfortable setting.
- Participants may decline to answer any question that makes them uncomfortable and may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

- Pseudonyms will be used at the start and throughout the interview process to protect the identities of both participants and the school. A pseudonym key will be maintained separately from the data and discarded upon completion of data collection, transcription, and member checking.
- After transcripts are completed, participants will have the opportunity to review their individual transcript to verify accuracy, express concerns about trustworthiness, or provide additional thoughts.

Given these safeguards, the probability and magnitude of risk are low, and any potential discomfort is expected to be minimal, short-term, and reversible.

7. Benefits to Participants:

- While no direct benefits are guaranteed, participants may gain professional reflection on their leadership roles.
- The study will contribute to educational research and may help inform future training and support for assistant principals in turnaround schools.

8. Consent Process:

Will participants be asked to sign the consent document? Yes No
Will you use an electronic consent document? Yes No

<input type="checkbox"/>	Waiver of Consent (Including existing de-identified data)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Waiver of Documentation of Consent (Use of Information Letter, rather than consent form requiring signatures)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Waiver of Parental Permission (in Alabama, 18 years-olds may be considered adults for research purposes)

Verbal consent will be obtained from all participants prior to the start of each Zoom interview. The process will begin with the distribution of an information letter to potential participants via email, prior to scheduling an interview. This email will include a read receipt request to confirm that the participant has received the information letter. The letter will detail the purpose of the study, procedures involved, potential risks and benefits, and the voluntary nature of participation.

Participants who reply to the email and indicate their willingness to participate will be considered to have provided documented consent. This email response will be retained as part of the study records. If no response is received, follow-up emails will be sent every three days for a period of up to 10 days. If there is still no response after this period, I will make one phone call to each non-responding potential participant to confirm their interest in participating. If verbal consent is provided during this call, the date, time, and name of the individual will be documented and securely stored in Auburn University’s AU Box system.

At the start of each Zoom interview, I will again review the key elements of the information letter with the participant and provide an opportunity for questions. Once all questions have been

addressed and the participant confirms their willingness to proceed, verbal consent will be documented in the interview transcript. This transcript will be stored securely in the AU Box as part of the study records.

Provide the rationale for the waiver request:

I am inviting participants to meet electronically over Zoom and thus signing the consent forms may serve as an unnecessary and challenging task for some participants.

9. Participant Compensation:

- There is no monetary compensation for participating in this study.

10. Personally Identifiable Information

Identify all personally identifiable information (PII) or protected health information (PHI) you will receive, collect, or record <i>even if you plan to anonymize the data or specimens.</i>	
Check any applicable boxes.	
<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> IP addresses
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Names	<input type="checkbox"/> Date of births
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email addresses	<input type="checkbox"/> Zip Codes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phone numbers	<input type="checkbox"/> Social security numbers
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical record numbers	<input type="checkbox"/> Student or employee numbers
<input type="checkbox"/> PHI	<input type="checkbox"/> Web URL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: A/V Recordings	

11. Provisions to Protect Participant Privacy and Data Confidentiality:

- All data will be securely stored in Auburn University’s AU Box, a password-protected and encrypted cloud storage system.
- Only the researcher and dissertation advisor will have access to the data.
- Audio recordings will not include names or identifying information and will be transcribed and permanently deleted after transcription verification/member checking.
- Data will be stored for a minimum of three years following study completion, in accordance with IRB guidelines.

12. Describe how the results of this study will be used.

- The findings will contribute to educational research literature on the roles and responsibilities of assistant principals in turnaround schools.
- The study results may be published in academic journals, presented at professional conferences, and used as a resource for school districts and university leadership programs.



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board

As a reminder, please upload all additional materials supporting your protocol to 'Local Site Documents' in Endeavor. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Interview Protocols Page 10 of 10
- Site Location Letter
- Email/Phone Recruitment Scripts
- Information Letter



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board
Approved 5/8/2025 to 4/30/2026
Protocol STUDY00000485

Version Date: 09/19/2024

Appendix B

Interview Protocol Instrument for the Assistant Principal

Interview Protocol Instrument for Assistant Principal

Leadership

1. What do you as the assistant principal perceive your role (as in position and/or character) as a leader during the turnaround school process?
2. How do you as the assistant principal perceive yourself performing the responsibilities (as in duties and/or tasks) as a leader during the turnaround school process?

School Climate and Culture

3. What do you as the assistant principal perceive your role (position) in improving the school climate and culture during the turnaround school process?
4. How do you as the assistant principal perceive yourself performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in improving the school climate and culture during the turnaround school process?

Effective Instruction

5. What do you as the assistant principal perceive your role (position) in supporting effective instruction during the turnaround school process?
6. How do you as the assistant principal perceive yourself performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) to support effective instruction during the turnaround school process?

Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System

What do you as the assistant principal perceive your role (as in position) in supporting the curriculum, assessment, and intervention system during the turnaround school process?
How do you as the assistant principal perceive yourself performing the responsibilities (as in duties and/or tasks) in supporting the curriculum, assessment, and intervention system teachers during the turnaround school process?

Effective Staffing Practices

9. What do you as the assistant principal perceive your role (as in position) supporting effective staffing practices?
10. How do you as the assistant principal perceive yourself performing the responsibilities (as in duties and/or tasks) in supporting effective staffing practices?

Enabling the effective Use of Data

11. What do you as the assistant principal perceive your role (position) in enabling the effective use of data (all types) during the turnaround school process?
12. How do you as the assistant principal perceive yourself performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in enabling the effective use of data during the turnaround school process?



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board
Approved 5/8/2025 to 4/30/2026
Protocol STUDY00000485

Effective Use of time

13. What do you as the assistant principal perceive your role (position) in ensuring the effective use of time during the turnaround school process?
14. How do you as the assistant principal perceive yourself performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in ensuring the effective use of time during the turnaround school process?

Stakeholder Engagement

15. What do you as the assistant principal perceive your role (position) in engaging stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, school leaders, and/or community) during the turnaround school process?
16. How do you as the assistant principal perceive yourself performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) of engaging stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, school leaders, and/or community) during the turnaround school process?

Appendix C

Interview Protocol Instrument for the Principal

Interview Protocol Instrument for the Principal

School Leadership

1. What do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal's role (as in position and/or character) as a leader during the turnaround school process?
2. How do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal performing the responsibilities (as in duties and/or tasks) as a leader during the turnaround school process?

School Climate and Culture

3. What do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal's role (position) in improving the school climate and culture during the turnaround school process?
4. How do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in improving the school climate and culture during the turnaround school process?

Effective Instruction

5. What do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal's role (position) in supporting effective instruction during the turnaround school process?
6. How do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in supporting effective instruction during the turnaround school process?

Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System

7. What do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal's role (as in position) in supporting the curriculum, assessment, and intervention system during the turnaround school process?
8. How do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (as in duties and/or tasks) supporting the curriculum, assessment, and intervention system teachers during the turnaround school process?

Effective Staffing Practices

9. What do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal's role (as in position) supporting effective staffing practices?
10. How do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal performing the responsibilities (as in duties and/or tasks) in supporting effective staffing practices?

Enabling the effective Use of Data

11. What do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal's role (position) in enabling the effective use of data (all types) during the turnaround school process?



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board
Approved 5/8/2025 to 4/30/2026
Protocol STUDY00000485

12. How do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in enabling the effective use of data during the turnaround school process?

Effective Use of time

13. What do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal's role (position) in ensuring the effective use of time during the turnaround school process?
14. How do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in ensuring the effective use of time during the turnaround school process?

Stakeholder Engagement

15. What do you as the principal perceive your assistant principal's role (position) in engaging stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, school leaders, and/or community) during the turnaround school process?
16. How do you as the assistant principal perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) of engaging stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, school leaders, and/or community) during the turnaround school process?



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board
Approved 5/8/2025 to 4/30/2026
Protocol STUDY00000485

Appendix D

Interview Protocol Instrument for Teachers

Interview Protocol Instrument for the Teachers

School Leadership

1. What do you as the teacher perceive is your assistant principal's role (as in position and/or character) as a leader during the turnaround school process?
2. How do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (as in duties and/or tasks) as a leader during the turnaround school process?

School Climate and Culture

3. What do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal's role (position) in improving the school climate and culture during the turnaround school process?
4. How do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in improving the school climate and culture during the turnaround school process?

Effective Instruction

5. What do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal's role (position) in supporting effective instruction during the turnaround school process?
6. How do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in supporting effective instruction during the turnaround school process?

Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System

7. What do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal's role (as in position) in supporting the curriculum, assessment, and intervention system during the turnaround school process?
8. How do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (as in duties and/or tasks) supporting the curriculum, assessment, and intervention system teachers during the turnaround school process?

Effective Staffing Practices

9. What do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal's role (as in position) supporting effective staffing practices?
10. How do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (as in duties and/or tasks) in supporting effective staffing practices?

Enabling the effective Use of Data

11. What do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal's role (position) in enabling the effective use of data (all types) during the turnaround school process?



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board
Approved 5/8/2025 to 4/30/2026
Protocol STUDY00000485

12. How do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in enabling the effective use of data during the turnaround school process?

Effective Use of time

13. What do you as the teacher perceive in your assistant principal's role (position) in ensuring the effective use of time during the turnaround school process?
14. How do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) in ensuring the effective use of time during the turnaround school process?

Stakeholder Engagement

15. What do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal's role (position) in engaging stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, school leaders, and/or community) during the turnaround school process?
16. How do you as the teacher perceive your assistant principal in performing the responsibilities (duties and/or tasks) of engaging stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, school leaders, and/or community) during the turnaround school process?



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board
Approved 5/8/2025 to 4/30/2026
Protocol STUDY00000485