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New York City Early College High Schools: Perceptions of College Presidents and High School Principals on Benefits and Institutional Values

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of college presidents and high school principals regarding the Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) in New York City. Examining the ECHSI through the lens of institutional collaboration provided insight into the current process. In-depth interviews were conducted with six college CUNY presidents and six principals of early college high schools to collect data. Findings from this study show that participants shared their perceptions of preparing students for success in higher education through the initiative, but they had mixed opinions on the degree to which the ECHSI offers institutional benefits in New York City. While the process for collaboration has improved over the years, findings show there continues to be room for improvement. Recommendations for future research include: (a) replicating this study throughout the State of New York, (b) examining the extent to which collaboration is working with the ECHSI from the perspective of college and university administrators, (c) examining the perceptions of private college and university administrators regarding the value and benefits of early college high school initiatives, and (d) understanding how the combination of numeracy and literacy skills, with a K-12 perspective, and exposure to STEM are required to prepare early college high school students with diverse skill levels for success in higher education. Recommendations for practitioners include encouraging higher education policy makers to identify how early college high school students can be counted or included as key indicators for colleges and universities. Finally, administrators are encouraged to integrate early college high school students into classes with college students.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to all the people who made it possible and supported me throughout the process. First, I dedicate this work to my wife, Deborah, for her unwavering love and support throughout this journey. I thank her for holding the family together and making sure that I stayed healthy during this long process. I also dedicate this dissertation to our children, Ashley Rose, and Earl, Jr., in the hopes that my example will inspire you to continue to pursue excellence in your education and all that you strive to achieve. I also want to thank my family for their understanding when I missed events, family reunions, and dinners because I was working on my dissertation. I also thank my father, Earl Phillip, and the rest of my family, for their encouragement. In addition, I dedicate this dissertation to the memories of my mother, Jean Marie, and my brother, Curtis Garnett, who were my early advocates and always made sure I was striving to achieve my goals.

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Biographical Sketch

Earl G. Simons is currently the Director of Government and Community Relations at York College of the City University of New York. Mr. Simons attended Shaw University from 1983 to 1987 and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1987. He attended New York University from 1987 to 1989 and graduated with a Master of Public Administration degree in 1989. He began his doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership at St. John Fisher College in the summer of 2011. Mr. Simons pursued his research in the Early College High School Initiative under the direction of Dr. Claudia Edwards and Dr. Frank Auriemma and received the Ed.D. Degree in 2015.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of college presidents and high school principals regarding the Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) in New York City. Examining the ECHSI through the lens of institutional collaboration provided insight into the current process. In-depth interviews were conducted with six college CUNY presidents and six principals of early college high schools to collect data.

Findings from this study show that participants shared their perceptions of preparing students for success in higher education through the initiative, but they had mixed opinions on the degree to which the ECHSI offers institutional benefits in New York City. While the process for collaboration has improved over the years, findings show there continues to be room for improvement.

Recommendations for future research include: (a) replicating this study throughout the State of New York, (b) examining the extent to which collaboration is working with the ECHSI from the perspective of college and university administrators, (c) examining the perceptions of private college and university administrators regarding the value and benefits of early college high school initiatives, and (d) understanding how the combination of numeracy and literacy skills, with a K-12 perspective, and exposure to STEM are required to prepare early college high school students with diverse skill levels for success in higher education.

Recommendations for practitioners include encouraging higher education policy makers to identify how early college high school students can be counted or included as

key indicators for colleges and universities. Finally, administrators are encouraged to integrate early college high school students into classes with college students.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Colleges and universities have recognized that through leveraging their resources they can provide a meaningful impact on their surrounding communities. Today, many colleges have elevated partnering as a key component of their operational strategy (Buettner, Morrison, & Wasicek, 2002). Williams (2002) suggested that to make a comprehensive neighborhood impact, higher education institutions should work collaboratively with community-based organizations with a special emphasis on planning, implementation, and the evaluation of programs and services. Through the use of leveraging their resources, colleges and universities have collaborated with government, community-based organizations, businesses, and public schools to address major public policy issues of the day (Porter, 2011).

The sense of urgency to improve high school education, college access, and college degree attainment received national attention. In his 2013 State of the Union Address, President Barack Obama emphasized the importance of public- and private-sector collaborations as a strategy to improve public schools.

Now, at schools like P-Tech in Brooklyn, a collaboration between New York Public Schools and City University of New York and IBM, students will graduate with a high school diploma and an associate's in computer or engineering. We need to give every American student opportunities like this. (White House, 2013, para. 42)

In New York City, an ambitious renewal of a particular kind of collaboration is emerging as a model for the rest of the state (New NY Education Reform, 2013). This collaboration brings together two institutions that have limited experience as partners, with the potential to change the way students transition from high school to college, and it has the potential to blend the institutions. The program is the Early College High School Initiative where the success will largely depend on the ability of public colleges and high schools to collaborate effectively (Chambers, 2009).

The Early College High School Initiative was established as a national program in 2002 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation along with other partnering organizations. Currently, there are over 240 Early College High Schools (ECHSs) operating in 28 states and the District of Columbia (ECHSI, 2013). Early College High Schools blend high school and college in a rigorous program, compressing the time it takes to complete a high school diploma and the first two years of college. The Early College High Schools are designed so that low-income youth, first-generation college goers, English language learners, students of color, and other young people who are underrepresented in higher education can simultaneously earn a high school diploma and an associate degree or up to two years of credit toward a bachelor's degree, tuition free (ECHSI, 2013).

The State of North Carolina has 76 Early College High Schools, which is the largest number of any state in the country (ECHSI, 2013). New York State currently has 14 Early College High Schools with 12 of the schools located in New York City (ECHSI, 2013). A recent special commission on education reform in New York State recommended to Governor Andrew Cuomo that he increase the number of state-supported Early College High Schools in New York State (New NY Education Reform,

2013). While there is political and public support for the expansion of the Early College

High School model, there is little research on the process of collaboration (Chambers,

2009). Through qualitative research methods, this research examines the partnership

between the City University of New York (CUNY) and the New York City Department

of Education to gain insight into the collaborative process used to implement the Early

College program at CUNY. The collaborative framework in this research is also used to

gain insight into the perceived institutional benefits of the college president and high

school principal who are engaged in the early college high school partnership.

The theory of collaboration is used as a lens for this study, which is an

examination of Early College High Schools in New York City. The Early College High

School Initiative (2013) requires that New York City public high schools and

colleges/universities work together. Through this initiative, both institutions have come

together to improve high school graduation rates, college readiness, and college access

for urban students in New York City.

Problem Statement

According to Orfield, Losen, Wald, and Swanson (2004), we are in an

increasingly competitive global economy where the consequences of dropping out of

high school are devastating to individuals, communities, and our national economy.

Adults are encouraged to earn, at a minimum, a high school diploma to increase their

opportunities to earn a living wage. Furthermore, a community where many parents are

high school dropouts is unlikely to have stable families or social structures. Most

businesses need employees with technical skills that require at least a high school

diploma. Nationally, when comparing the overall high school graduation rates, the numbers are lower for African American and Hispanic students (Orfield et al., 2004).

Carnevale, Jayasundera, and Cheah (2012) found that the recent recession affected workers very differently, depending on their level of educational attainment. Those with more education were doing better than those with less education, while those with a bachelor's degree or higher saw job gains. These patterns have continued during the recovery. Since January 2010, when the economic recovery began, job gains have been limited to those with more education (Carnevale et al., 2012). College graduates have been impacted by the recession but not nearly as severely as those without higher education. Unemployment rates for four-year college graduates never exceeded 6.3%, while the peak for those with just a high school diploma was 13.4%. The report noted that even as of May 2012, four-year college grads faced 4.5% unemployment versus 9.4% for high school graduates (Carnevale et al., 2012).

In 2006, the final report of the Commission on the Future of Higher Education made high school reform a central component in improving access to and success in college (U.S. Department of Education, 2006a). Secretary Margaret Spellings' Action Plan for Higher Education, that same year, committed the U.S. Department of Education to strengthening K-12 preparation and aligning high school standards with college expectations (U.S. Department of Education, 2006b). Both the Commission's report (1991) and the Secretary's action plan (1991) are part of the growing consensus that high schools must begin to view the postsecondary performance of their graduates as a key measure of their own performance. This policy direction recognizes that the new economy demands higher skills and that high school graduates who have no

postsecondary experience face declining economic prospects (Kirsch, Braun, Yamamoto, & Sum, 2007). The "all kids college ready" and other clarion calls are championing a new era of high school reform focused on readiness and access (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2009).

In 2006, former New York State Education Commissioner, Richard P. Mills, stated it was "unacceptable" and "particularly disturbing" that, in that school year, more than a third of the state's high school students failed to graduate (Gootman, 2006, p. 1). The results for boys and girls statewide was a problem. Among the boys, 59.4% graduated on time in 2005 compared to 69.2% of girls graduating on time. In New York City, the gap was even larger, 37.3% of boys and 49.8 % of girls graduated on time (Gootman, 2006).

In a recent update, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) released a report on the graduation rates for high school students. The report focused on students who entered ninth grade in 2007 and graduated in June 2011 (NYSED, 2012). In New York State, 74% of the students who entered ninth grade in 2007 graduated within four years, by June 2011. The graduation rate for students who entered ninth grade in 2006 was 73.4%, and the graduation rate for students entering ninth grade in 2003 was 69.3% (NYSED, 2012).

The graduation rates for some of New York States' five largest city school districts were reported as having increased graduation rates. The graduation rates for the following five cities, where students entered ninth grade in 2007 and graduated in June 2011, are as follows. In the City of Buffalo, 54% graduated in June 2011 compared to 47.4% in June 2010. In New York City, 60.9% graduated in June 2011 compared to 61%

in June 2010. In the City of Rochester, 45.5% graduated in June 2011 compared to 46.1% in June 2010. In the City of Syracuse, 48.4% graduated in June 2011 compared to 45.9%. In the City of Yonkers, 62.2% graduated in June 2011 compared to 63.2% (NYSED, 2012).

In an effort to better prepare students for college and the global workforce, the New York State Board of Regents adopted more rigorous high school graduation requirements in 2005 (NYSED, 2012). "New York's overall graduation rate has improved, but nearly a quarter of our students still don't graduate after four years," said Board of Regents Chancellor Merryl H. Tisch (New York State Board of Regents, 2012, p. 1). "And too many of those students who do graduate aren't ready for college and careers" (New York State Board of Regents, 2012, p. 1.). The Board of Regents passed regulations implementing a phase-out of the local diploma option for most general education students. Students would now be required to pass five Regents Exams (in Mathematics, Science, English, U.S. History, and Global History) with a score of 65 or higher and earn all of their required course credits. Students passing the five exams at 65 or higher and passing all of their required coursework will earn a Regents diploma. The local diploma will continue to be an option for students with disabilities (NYSED, 2012).

When the Regents adopted the change in high school graduate requirements, it was predicted that graduation rates in New York State would decrease. However, according to the New York State Education Department's data, there has been an increase in overall statewide high school graduation rates. Over that time, a greater percentage of students have received a Regents diploma, with a corresponding drop in the percentage of students earning a local diploma (NYSED, 2012).

In a national comparison of state graduation rates, New York is making progress. In a recent report, *Building a Grad Nation: Progress and Challenge in Ending the High School Dropout Epidemic* by Balfanz, Bridgeland, Bruce, & Fox (2012), Tennessee and New York were the only two states in the country to have increased graduation rates by double digits between 2002 and 2009. Each saw an average of two percentage points improvement per year, 18 percentage points in Tennessee, and 13 in New York. There were four states, Colorado, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Louisiana, that had modest gains of about three percentage points over the last decade, equal to the national average. These improvements were counterbalanced by 25 other states that saw limited, stagnant, or declining graduation rates during the last decade (Balfanz et al., 2012). In the final analysis, approximately half the states in the United States moved forward by increasing their graduation rates, and about half did not (Balfanz et al., 2012).

Policy makers have been concerned with the slow progress made by using traditional methods to prepare students for college and careers. As an alternative, policymakers are examining collaborative partnerships as models for helping students in urban communities to successfully transition into two- and four-year colleges and universities (American Institute for Research & SRI, 2009).

Theoretical Rationale

The theoretical framework that emerged in the literature, which is used for this study, is collaboration. According to Gajda (2004), an increasing number of organizations are coming together to address complex societal issues. Most intentional, inter-organizational collaboratives (e.g., strategic alliances) articulate the collaborative effort as the primary method for achieving ideal short- and/or long-term goals that would

not otherwise be attainable as entities working independently. Collaboration is also defined as a relational system of individuals within groups, in which: (a) individuals in a group share mutual aspirations and a common conceptual framework, and (b) the aspirations and conceptualizations are characterized by each individual's consciousness of his or her motives toward the other, by caring or concern to work with the other, over time, provided that the commitment is a matter of choice (Hord, 1986). Professionally, program evaluators use collaboration theory to demystify the meanings of collaboration, to describe and assess levels of collaborative integration, and to engage stakeholders in a dialogical process of evaluation (Gajda, 2004).

There are many challenges and opportunities facing colleges and universities today, and many higher education leaders are identifying collaboration and institutional partnerships as an opportunity to enhance access to their institutions, obtain funding from external sources, and expand community relations (Williams & Pettitt, 2003).

Lev Semenovich Vygotsky was born in 1896 in Russia (Soviet Union). In 1913, after graduating from Moscow University, he began his literary research. In 1924, Vygotsky moved to Moscow and began to work at the Institute of Psychology and later at the Institute of Defectology, which he founded. He also directed a department for the education of physically and mentally challenged children and taught courses in the Moscow State Pedagogical Institute and the Hertzen Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad. Between 1925 and 1934 Vygotsky assembled a large group of young scientists to work in the areas of psychology, defectology, and mental abnormality. The group, known as the Vygotsky Circle, contributed to the foundation of the integrated science of mind, brain, and behavior in their cultural-historical psychology (Vygotsky, 1978).

His systematic work in psychology began in 1924. In collaboration with colleagues and students, he investigated areas such as development psychology, education, and psychopathology (Vygotsky, 1962). Vygotsky's conception of development is, at the same time, a theory of education. Vygotsky (1978) provided the theoretical structure for considering collaboration as a social process in which meaning is constructed from discussion among group members.

Collaboration and collaborative learning is rooted in Vygotsky's views that there exists an inherent social nature of learning, which is shown through his theory of zone of proximal development. The zone of proximal development is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help. The zone of proximal development defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in a beginning state. The actual developmental level characterizes mental development retrospectively, while the zone of proximal development characterizes mental development prospectively (Vygotsky, 1978).

In order to demonstrate the concept of what is in the zone of proximal development today will be the actual development level tomorrow, a study was conducted with preschool children. McCarthy (1930) showed that among children between the ages of three and five, there are two groups of functions. They included those the children already possess and those they can perform under guidance, in groups, and in collaboration with one another, but which they have not mastered independently. McCarthy's study demonstrated that the second group of functions is at the development level of five to seven years olds. According to McCarthy (1930), if you only determine

mental age, you will only have a summary of completed development. Whereas, if you determine the maturing function, you can predict what will happen to these children between 5-7 years old, provided the same developmental conditions are maintained. The Vygotsky zone of proximal development became a powerful theory in developmental research. It had the potential to enhance the effectiveness of the application of diagnostics of mental development to educational problems (Vygotsky, 1978).

According to Austin (2000), organizations, whether non-profits, for-profits, or governments, with complementary capabilities are able to accomplish more together than they can separately. A related type of collaboration centers on inescapable interdependence, the concept that no one entity has all the answers to address a particular public policy problem. He further posited that when you cannot successfully address a problem on your own, collaboration is a requirement for addressing the problem (Austin, 2002).

In research conducted by Austin (2000), business executives perceived cross-sector collaborations to yield important benefits in four areas: strategy enrichment, human resource management, culture building, and business generation. First, corporate strategy can be enriched by incorporating meaningful civic engagement with local not-for-profit organizations (NPO). Second, Austin (2000) posited human resource management is important because community engagement is attractive to potential employees, and it is a potential advantage when trying to recruit new employees in a competitive job market. Third is culture building. According to Austin (2000), community service has become an integral part of the corporate culture. Community service can generate caring, empathy, and attitudes that reinforce a self-help approach. It

can encourage high-involvement and high-impact leadership by encouraging active engagement that is directed at making a difference. Fourth, business generation, can also benefit from external linkages they have developed as a result of their involvement through community service.

Austin (2000) recognized that cross-sector collaborations between not-for-profits and corporations change over time, which it led him to characterize the relationship as part of the collaboration continuum. The collaboration continuum has three stages that an organization may pass through as it evolves. The three stages are philanthropic, transactional, and integrative. First, in the philanthropic stage, the nature of the relationship between the organizations is primarily charitable donor and recipient. Collaboration in the philanthropic stage is highly defined regarding resource allocation and parameters for interactions. Second, in the transactional stage, organizations implement their agreed upon resource sharing through specific activities such as special events, marketing, and paid service related arrangements. The integrative stage includes pre-defined deliverables. There are other important resource exchanges that can occur. The third stage is integrative. According to Austin, the relationship between collaborating organizations has reached the highest level when the collaborating organizations' missions, people, and activities begin to experience more collective action and organizational integration. The organizations' relationship begins to look like a highly integrative short venture that is mutually beneficial and central to both organizations.

Hughes and Weiss (2007) posited that the increasing number of strategic alliances and partnerships established each year are also experiencing increases in failures, which

is due to the lack of initiative to develop the process and structures of collaboration. Woodland and Hutton (2012) presented a collaboration evaluation and improvement framework (CEIF) that can be used by evaluators to systematically measure, assess, and promote the process and outcomes of collaboration. The CEIF framework comprises five points for thinking about when, where, and how to engage in evaluating organizational collaboration. The CEIF five points include: (a) operationalizing the construct of collaboration, (b) identifying and mapping communities of practice, (c) monitoring stages of development, (d) assessing levels of integration, and (e) assessing cycles of inquiry (Woodland & Hutton, 2012).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of college presidents and high school principals of the Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) in New York City, which was established in 2002 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, along with other partnering organizations. The Early College High School Initiative in New York is still considered relatively young, and data related to student success is slowly becoming available (Early College Initiative-CUNY, n.d.). However, in the interim, examining the Early College High School through the lens of institutional collaboration provided insight into the current progress. As identified by Chambers (2009) and Parker (2010), it is important to understand the perceptions of college presidents and high school principals regarding the Early College Initiative in New York State. This study is especially beneficial to state legislators, policy makers, educational leaders, and others who are considering expanding the implementation of Early College High Schools throughout New York.

Research Questions

A review of the literature reveals there are different models of institutional collaboration. While the theory of collaboration continues to evolve and authors may differ on exact models (Gajda, 2004; Hord, 1986; Peterson, 1991; Williams & Pettitt, 2003; Willis, 2011; Wood & Gray, 1991), there are two common elements that continue to emerge. First, there must be a clear sense of the purpose of the collaboration. Second, there must be an opportunity for each organization to individually benefit from the collaboration. The following questions guided this study.

1. To what degree do college presidents and high school principals believe early college high schools prepare students for success in higher education?

2. To what degree do college presidents and high school principals share perceptions regarding the institutional benefits of the early college high schools initiative?

3. To what degree has the process of collaboration been an effective tool for the early college high school initiative in New York City?

Potential Significance

The study will add to the small but growing literature regarding the Early College High School Initiative. It will contribute to the literature on collaboration and the national movement of the Early College High School Initiative as a strategy to improve high school graduation rates. This study will also be a contribution to policy makers in the State of New York who are interested in expanding the Early College High School Initiative in New York City and other parts of the state. In addition, the findings of this study are of value to public school K-12 administrators and higher education

administrators who are grappling with unprepared students graduating from high school and entering colleges and universities in New York City. Finally, the findings from this study may be of value to parents and young adult students who are interested in a nontraditional pathway to academic persistence and degree completion.

Chapter Summary

This study examines high school principals' and college presidents' perceptions of the Early College High School Initiative in New York City. The Early College High School Initiative was established as a national program in 2002 through advocacy and funding by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation along with other partnering organizations. There are over 240 Early College High Schools operating in 28 states and the District of Columbia. Early College High Schools blend high school and college in a rigorous program, compressing the time it takes to complete a high school diploma and the first two years of college. The Early College High Schools are designed so that low-income youth, first-generation college goers, English language learners, students of color, and other young people who are under-represented in higher education can simultaneously earn a high school diploma and an associate degree or up to two years of credit toward a bachelor's degree, tuition free.

There are 12 schools in New York City that are part of the Early College High School Initiative. An education commission convened by the Governor of the State of New York recommended expanding the Early College High School Initiative throughout the state to help increase college access and increase the high school graduation rates. The Early College High School Initiative in New York City is relatively new and is now starting to graduate its first cohorts of students. There is limited research on the Early

College High School Initiative in New York City. This study examines the Early College High School Initiative through a collaboration theoretical framework.

The study will add to the small but growing literature regarding the Early College High School Initiative; contribute to the literature on collaboration and the national movement on the Early College High School Initiative, as a strategy to improve high school graduation rates; contribute to policy makers in the State of New York who are interested in expanding the Early College High School Initiative in New York City and other parts of the state; and assist public school K-12 administrators, and higher education administrators, who are grappling with unprepared students graduating from high school and entering colleges and universities in New York City.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine college presidents' and high school principals' perceptions of the Early College High School Initiative in New York City. This chapter reviews the relevant literature associated with this study and is divided into three sections. The first section reviews dual enrollment, an early collaboration between high schools and universities. The second section describes relevant research regarding collaborative partnerships between high schools and universities. The third section explores common elements associated with different theories and models of institutional collaboration.

Review of the Literature

Dual enrollment. Dual enrollment can be viewed as an early model of university and K-12 collaborative partnerships. Colleges and high schools came together to jointly approve coursework, curriculum alignment, and college readiness standards for high school students (Community College Research Center, 2012). The primary goal of providing college experiences to high school students is to increase the likelihood that students will finish a postsecondary credential. Correlational and quasi experimental research provides suggestive evidence of dual enrollment's effectiveness in meeting goals such as college preparedness and completion. A correlational study conducted in New York City and Florida (Karp, Calcagno, Hughes, Jeong, & Bailey, 2007) found that dual enrollment was associated with positive outcomes on a number of measures. Students

who had taken college classes during high school were more likely to earn high school degrees, enroll in college, enroll in a four-year college, enroll full-time, and persist in college than were students without college experience. In addition, the study found that students who received college credits during high school had higher college grade point averages (GPAs) and earned more college credits within three years of high school graduation. Another correlational study using a large federal database found similar positive outcomes for dual-enrollment students, including enrollment in college, persistence in college, and college graduation (Swanson, 2008). A quasi-experimental study using a large federal database also found that dual enrollment participation increased the probability of attaining any postsecondary degree by 8% and a bachelor's degree by 7% (An, 2012). Struhl and Vargas (2012) conducted a quasi-experimental study of dual enrollment in Texas. The study included 32,908 students who graduated from high school in 2004 after completing all four years in the same school district. Half of the students (16,454) were in the treatment group and half (16,454) in the control group. The research concluded that students who complete college courses in high school had higher rates for college enrollment, college persistence, and college completion in two-year and four-year colleges. Struhl and Vargas (2012) further posited that low-income and traditionally underrepresented college-going populations would benefit from taking college courses in high school and indicated the need for more strategies such as early college high schools.

Dual enrollment has also been associated with positive outcomes for students traditionally underrepresented in college. A quasi-experimental study on the Concurrent Course Initiative in California, which implements career-focused, dual-enrollment and

targets students who are low income families, struggling academically, and traditionally underrepresented in college, found that participants had higher graduation rates, were more likely to enroll in a four-year college, had greater college persistence rates, accumulated more college credits as they progressed through college, and were less likely to enroll in basic skills courses in college than non-participants (Hughes, Rodriguez, Edwards, & Belfield, 2012; Hughes, Karp, Fermin, & Belfield, 2005). Similarly, a study using national longitudinal data found that first-generation students who participated in dual enrollment were more likely to attain a postsecondary degree and earn a bachelor's degree (An, 2012).

Several high school programs integrate college level-content or provide college course access to high school students. A qualitative study of programs in the states of California, Iowa, Minnesota, New York, and Texas that allow high school students to take college-level classes for college credits, such as tech-prep programs, International Baccalaureate programs, and middle college high schools, found three primary benefits for students: (a) an opportunity to earn free college credits, (b) a chance to experience college, and (c) increased student confidence in their own academic abilities (Hughes et al., 2005).

Collaboration between high schools and universities. Bard College at Simon's Rock, founded in 1966 by Elizabeth Blodgett Hall, is the first recognized early college high school in the United States (Bard College at Simon's Rock, n.d.). Simon's Rock opened in Great Barrington, MA, as a private women's school offering students a four-year program that combined the last two years of high school and the first two years of college. Students graduated with a high school diploma and an associate degree. Shortly

after graduating their first class, Simon's Rock became a coeducation institution. In keeping with the original vision, the leadership of Simon's Rock and the president of Bard College established the Bard High School Early College (BHSEC) in 2001. The Bard High School Early College was established as a collaboration between Bard College and the New York City Department of Education.

Higher education institutions play a major role in the design and day-to-day operation of Early College High Schools. Almost 45% of the early college schools partner with two-year public colleges, 24% partner with four-year colleges, and 31% remained on high school campuses (Webb & Mayka, 2011). Webb and Mayka further posited that Early College High School students chose to remain at their partner higher education institution to complete their associate or bachelor's degree.

One of the more rigorous studies of an early college high school was done by the SERVE Center (2010) at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. It was a longitudinal study conducted with 574 ninth grade students from 10 Early College High School sites in North Carolina. Findings show that Early College High Schools in North Carolina are having a positive impact on student achievement. The results concluded with five areas of achievement. First, students attending Early College High Schools were taking the right level of math and English courses required for college readiness. Second, Early College High Schools showed signs of reducing some academic achievement gaps between underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in college (African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans) compared to white students. Third, students in the Early College High Schools were less likely to be suspended and were absent from school fewer days. Fourth, students in the Early College High Schools were

more engaged academically. Finally, students in the Early College High Schools reported a more positive experience in school, which included positive relationships, high expectations, rigorous and relevant instruction, and more academic and social support (SERVE Center, 2010).

Chambers (2009) completed a study of Early College High Schools in North Carolina. Chambers' research examined the perceptions of community college presidents and school superintendents regarding Early College High Schools in North Carolina. It was a quantitative study that included community college presidents and school superintendents from 38 Early College High Schools in North Carolina. The findings revealed that the state-wide implementation of the Early College High School Initiative was successful as it related to clarity of the purpose and the institutional benefits among the partnering organizations. The research indicated that the foundational pieces for a successful collaborative program were in place (Chambers, 2009).

Building upon Chambers' research, Parker (2010) completed a study of Early College High Schools in North Carolina. Parker's research examined the perceptions of North Carolina college instructors and high school teachers regarding Early College Schools in that state. It was a quantitative study which included college instructors and high school teachers from 69 Early College High Schools in North Carolina. The findings showed the college instructors did not share the same perceptions as the high school teachers, and they were less positive about the purpose of the Early College High School. The results of Parker's study revealed there were significant differences in the perception of purpose and of the benefits between the high school teachers and college

instructors. In addition, Parker's findings were significant among three geographic

regions in North Carolina: Mountain, Coastal plains, and Piedmont (Parker, 2010).

In another study, Chambers (2012) examined Trinity College (TC), in Hartford,

CT. TC entered into a partnership with the Hartford public schools to launch an early

college school. The school contained grades 6-12. The new early college high school

expanded from a grades 6-8 magnet school to a grades 6-12 middle and high school.

Although Trinity had many connections with the middle school, the new high school

provides the college the opportunity to help prepare students for college success at

Trinity and other higher education institutions. The partnership also allows the college to

fulfill its commitment to urban engagement at the local level.

Chambers (2012) found it rare to see an ECHS partnership between a private,

highly selective liberal arts college and a public school, Hartford Middle Magnet School.

The research design was a proposal for the best method to measure the successfulness of

the partnership. During the fall of 2011, a Trinity faculty and student team evaluated

nine of the city's ECHSs to better understand the similarities and differences between the

various schools. In addition, because Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy

(HMTCA) is the newest of the early-college model high schools in the area, the

assessment was useful for Trinity College and HMTCA administrators.

The schools examined included: Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy,

Classical, University, Academy of the Arts, Academy of Aerospace and Engineering,

Metropolitan, Pathways, and Sports and Medical Sciences Academy.

The study findings suggest that building on the successes of ECHSs in Hartford

and nationally are important for the future. Creating a model for measuring the successes

of the HMTCA partnership based on student attendance, graduation, and college attendance is important. Also, parental engagement and college/high school partner collaboration are key indicators of success and long-term sustainability of a successful ECHS (Chambers, 2012).

In a study examining a university and public school collaborative partnership, Patterson, Shaver-Wetzel, and Wright (2002) examined the partnership process and the benefits. Their study included a public university in the Southeast and a local public elementary school. The elementary school serves students in Kindergarten through fifth grade. This is a professional development school in partnership with the university and serves 440 students in Kindergarten through fifth grades. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the collaborative process used by the university and public school to integrate technology into the teaching curriculum used by the university and the teachers. The authors utilized a qualitative methodology to interview the public school teachers during the course of one semester (Patterson et al., 2002).

The beginning of the partnership started with a few logistical challenges, which included a delay in the delivery of the technology and material to be used during classroom instruction. After a few weeks and intervention by the university, the material and technology were delivered to the teachers. Another challenge recognized during the collaborative process was timing. The teachers indicated that starting the partnership project at the beginning of the school year was problematic and not recommended in the future. It was difficult for the public school teachers to simultaneously learn new technology to be used as teaching tools while also getting to know their students. The public school recommended that all new technology to be used in the classroom should

be in place before school starts. In the final analysis, the process used in this university

public school partnership to integrate technology into the teaching curriculum had a

positive outcome and provided recommendations to enhance future university/public

school partnerships (Patterson et al., 2002).

The City of Long Beach, California's seamless education partnership is another

example of cross-sector collaboration. In this case, there is a collaboration that includes

the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD), Long Beach City College (LBCC),

and California State University at Long Beach (CSULB), along with the business sector

working together to address the challenges of education in the City of Long Beach. What

is significant about this partnership is the leadership decided it would not need a formal

contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), but instead, the entities would work

together to achieve their goals. The business sector started the collaboration off with a

$300,000 donation to support the partnership (Business-Higher Education Forum, 2009).

The Long Beach Education Partnership (LBEP) started their collaboration

initiative with a focus on improving communication between their K-12 schools,

community college, and four-year colleges. Having achieved their initial goal, the

partnership moved into establishing rigorous grade-level-leaning standards and alignment

of curriculum and standards in higher education institutions (Business-Higher Education

Forum, 2009). The leadership of the LBEP is an example of Austin and Seitanidi's

(2012) cross-sector collaboration framework. The LBEP included collaboration across

institutions, trust by the leadership and stakeholders, frequent communication and

interaction by the leadership and staff, and sharing of resources.

In another partnership, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) engaged in a collaborative partnership with the Westside Cooperative Organization. The goal of IUPUI's partnership with the Westside Cooperative Organization was to reopen George Washington High School, which had been closed due to poor academic achievement, declining student enrollment, and the consolidation of schools by the central office. Despite the fact that George Washington Community High School had served many students and neighborhoods in the past, the overall city population had declined as a result of challenging economic conditions. The neighborhoods immediately surrounding the university were also experiencing challenging economic times including high unemployment and low college-going rates for parents and students (Officer, Bringle, & Grim, 2011).

Recognizing the need to help improve their surrounding neighborhood, the leadership of the IUPUI initiated collaboration with the Westside Cooperative Organization to reopen the neighboring George Washington Community High School to serve the neighborhood children and parents. The collaborative process took four years to reopen the high school. First, IUPUI's administrative leadership reached out and engaged in conversations with the Westside Cooperative Organization regarding establishing a long-term partnership between the university and the community-based organization. Second, and very importantly, the university committed resources from the Office of the Chancellor to establish the Office of Neighborhood Partnerships. Third, a grant was secured from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Outreach Partnership Center that resulted in the establishment of the Westside Education Task Force (WETF). The WETF included university faculty and

staff members, residents, community leaders, and staff members from neighborhood organizations. They were all working to reopen George Washington High School (Officer et al., 2011).

The collaboration between IUPUI and the Westside Cooperative Organization realized the reopening of George Washington Community High School as a grade 7-12 award-winning school. The university continued collaborating with the school by sharing resources and technical and professional skills. This was done in several creative ways. Faculty and staff were given credit and release time for their working services at the school. Students were given opportunities to earn service learning experience, work study, and tutoring assignments at the high school (Officer et al., 2011).

In New York City, the City University of New York collaborated with the New York City Department of Education to address the challenges of increasing high school graduation rates, college access for first-generation college goers, and African American, Hispanic, and other ethnic minority students. In 2003, with the support of a $6.75 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the CUNY announced it would create 10 Early College High Schools in New York City (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2003). A number of the Early College High Schools are now graduating their first or second cohorts.

In January 2010, the New York State Education Department initiated the Smart Scholars Early College High School program (SS ECHS). The SS ECHS' initial funding started with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to fund the first cohort of 11 partnerships (NYSED, 2011). In April 2011, Governor Andrew Cuomo and New York State Education Commissioner, David Steiner, announced the award of $5.5 million

to support 12 new SS ECHS partnerships throughout the State of New York (NYSED, 2011). The goal of the SS ECHS program is for students to be able to earn college credits that can be applied toward a degree at the Partner College or university and be transferrable to that or other campuses within that higher education system. The SS ECHS goal is to serve students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education by allowing them to earn college credits while in high school, reduce their time toward degree completion, and lower the cost to earn a college degree (NYSED, 2011).

In April 2012, New York Governor, Andrew Cuomo, convened a panel of experts to serve on the New York Education Reform Commission. The Commission was charged with taking a hard look at best practices in education locally, nationally, and internationally to propose actionable recommendations to improve educational outcomes for students in New York State. One of the commission's recommendations was to leverage private sector funding to expand Early College High School programs in the state of New York State. The commission further recommended that New York should establish performance-based funding in order to sustain Early College High Schools and hold them accountable (New NY Education Reform, 2013).

Collaboration. A review of the literature on institutional collaboration reveals little disagreement about the value of institutional collaboration, but there is much disagreement about what constitutes, or even defines, a true collaboration. For example, Hord (1986) explored different authors' attempts to clarify the difference between cooperation and collaboration, arguing that distinguishing between the two can provide both a useful framework for exploring the literature, and a clear understanding of the consequences and benefits of the process. Using definitions provided by the New

England Program in Teacher Education regarding the delineation of cooperation and collaboration, Hord (1986) documented the differences: (a) Cooperation: two individuals or organizations reach some mutual agreement, but their work together does not progress beyond this level; and (b) Collaboration: development of the model of joint planning, joint implementation, and joint evaluation between individuals or organizations (p. 22).

Hord (1986) followed with different definitions that further illustrated the lack of consensus in the literature: (a) Cooperation: a term that implies the parties involved share responsibility and authority for basic policy decision making; and (b) Collaboration: a term that assumes two or more parties, each with separate and autonomous programs, working together to make all such programs more successful (p. 22).

Wood and Gray (1991) offered a broader view of collaboration: "Collaboration occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain" (p.146).

Grey's (1989) theory of collaboration maintains that the existence of participants' interest or stake in a collaborative effort is another crucial element in a successful institutional collaboration. Each partnering institution must have a motive, self-interest, or benefit for wanting to participate in the collaboration. In Hord's (1986) list of 10 features that are essential to collaboration, individual institutional benefits tops the list and is referred to again in item number seven. "There must be a sense of gain for each" (p. 26); and "The rewards, or expected outcomes, must be worth the investment to each participant" (p. 26). There is conformity in the literature that, without self-interest or

individual institutional benefits, there would be little motivation for institutions to enter into a collaborative effort.

With the majority of the Early College High Schools in New York operating in New York City, the City University of New York has taken the lead to test and implement the concept. Since 2002, CUNY has created 12 Early College High Schools. The core of the creation of these new schools is the partners in this effort—public high schools and CUNY colleges. There is the potential for uncertainty among these partners regarding the purpose and institutional benefits of the program, which are two areas identified as critical by experts in institutional collaboration theory. There appears to be little information regarding college presidents', and high school principals' perceptions of the Early College High School Initiative. This study examines college presidents' and high school principals' perceptions of the Early College Initiative in New York City.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a review of the literature associated with collaborative partnerships between public schools and universities. The literature included the early collaborative model of dual enrollment between high schools and universities as a way to increase college readiness, college access, and college completion rates. This chapter also described scholarly research regarding the process of collaborative partnerships through examples of actual high school/university partnerships around the country. Finally, the chapter includes a description of the various schools of thought regarding collaboration theory.

Chapter 3 details the methodology, research context, participants, data collection, and data analysis procedures used in this study.

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Introduction

This study examined the perceptions of college presidents and high school principals regarding the value and institutional benefits of the Early College High School Initiative in New York City to gain insight into the collaboration between higher education and public schools. The research questions used in this study included:

1. To what degree do college presidents and high school principals believe early college high schools prepare students for success in higher education?

2. To what degree do college presidents and high school principals share perceptions regarding the institutional benefits of the Early College High School Initiative?

3. To what degree has the process of collaboration been an effective tool for the Early College High School Initiative in New York City?

Although there are several studies focused on the Early College High School Initiative in states, such as North Carolina and Texas, there is little research on the ECHSI in New York State.

Maxwell (2013) posited that qualitative research can help the researcher better understand the participants in the study, their lived experiences, and their actions. A qualitative study typically involves a small number of individuals or locations and allows the researcher to preserve the individuality of each participant during the analysis. A qualitative study can begin with broad questions that are further refined by interviews or

focus groups to determine emerging themes as issues begin to surface. A qualitative methodology allows the flexibility to modify the research design and focus during the research to pursue new discoveries and relationships.

Positionality. It is important to discuss positionality in relation to this study, given the connection and potential influence of the researcher (Stringer, 2007). The researcher is familiar with college presidents in New York City. Professionally, the researcher currently serves as a cabinet member and works directly with a college president in New York City where there is an early college high school collaboration. Prior to joining the college, the researcher served as a consultant to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, serving as a member of the New York State Policy Team. In addition, the researcher has over 15 years of professional experience working in New York City government, which includes serving as a Director of Budget and working with New York City public schools and colleges within the City University of New York.

What may seem like a straightforward research project to the researcher is, to some degree, an intrusion into the lives of the participants in the study (Maxwell, 2013). Thus, it was important to recognize the relationship of the researcher and how he would be perceived by the participants in the study. The researcher made every effort to balance insider and outsider roles. These efforts included providing the participants with clarity of purpose and collecting data through the process of interviews, field notes, journals, and reviewing important documents. In addition, a journal log was kept to chronicle observations that occurred during and outside of interviews.

Research Context

The study focused on an urban university/urban public school partnership between CUNY and the NYCDOE. The NYCDOE serves 1.1 million students with 75,000 teachers in 1,800 schools, making it the largest public school system in the nation. The high school, four-year graduation rate for New York City students was 60.9% in 2011 and 60.4% in 2012, compared to 74%, statewide, for 2011 and 2012 (NYSED, 2013).

CUNY is an urban university system that strives to collaborate with communities, as well as city, state, and federal government agencies, and plays an increasingly active role in increasing the high school graduation rates and improving college readiness for minority students and first-time college attendees. CUNY comprises 11 four-year colleges, seven community colleges, an honors college, and five graduate and professional schools, which includes the CUNY Law School. There are 18 college presidents within the CUNY. The CUNY colleges, combined, enroll over 400,000 students, making it one of the largest public urban university systems in the country (CUNY Value Plus, 2013). The demographics of the ECHS partnering with CUNY are described below.

Brooklyn College Academy (BCA) was founded in 1986 and serves grades 7-12. The total student enrollment is 637 and 48% of the students are eligible for free/reduced-fee lunches. The student ethnic representation is Black (78%), Hispanic (14%), White (2%), Asian or Pacific Islander (5%), and American Indian or Alaska Native (1%). The four-year graduation rate is 95% compared to the New York City-wide rate of 64.7%.

This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with Brooklyn College (ECI Brooklyn College Academy, 2013).

City College Academy of the Arts (CCAA) was founded in 2003 and serves grades 6-12. The total student enrollment is 595, and 72% of the students are eligible for free/reduced-fee lunches. The student ethnic representation is Black (6%), Hispanic (91%), White (2%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (1%). The four-year graduation rate is 95% compared to the New York City-wide rate of 64.7%. This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with the City College of New York (ECI City College Academy, 2013).

City Polytechnic High School (CPHS) was founded in 2009 and serves grades 9-12. The total student enrollment is 414, and 62% of the students are eligible for free/reduced-fee lunches. The student ethnic representation is Black (58%), Hispanic (26%), White (6%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (8%). This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with the New York City College of Technology (ECI City Polytechnic High School, 2013).

Hostos-Lincoln Academy of Science was founded in 2004 and serves grades 6-12. The total student enrollment is 520, and 68% of the students are eligible for free/reduced-fee lunches. The student ethnic representation is Black (25%), Hispanic (72%), White (1%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (2%). The four-year graduation rate is 78% compared to the New York City-wide rate of 64.7%. This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with Hostos Community College (ECI Hostos-Lincoln Academy, 2013).

International High School at LaGuardia Community College (IHLCC) was founded in 1985 and serves grades 9-13. The total student enrollment is 475, and 76% of the students are eligible for free/reduced-fee lunches. The student ethnic representation is

Black (2%), Hispanic (44%), White (10%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (43%). The five-year graduation rate is 74% compared to the New York City-wide rate of 64.7%. This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with LaGuardia Community College (ECI International High School, 2013).

Kingsborough Early College Secondary School (KECSS) was founded in 2006 and serves grades 6-12. The total student enrollment is 540, and 70% of the students are eligible for free/reduced-fee lunches. The student ethnic representation is Black (25%), Hispanic (23%), White (45%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (7%). This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with Kingsborough Community College (ECI Kingsborough Early College, 2013).

Manhattan/Hunter Science High School (MHSHS) was founded in 2003 and serves grades 9-12. The total student enrollment is 449, and 65% of the students are eligible for free/reduced-fee lunches. The student ethnic representation is Black (21%), Hispanic (41%), White (12%), Asian or Pacific Islander (25%), and American Indian or Alaska Native (1%). The four-year graduation rate is 95% compared to the New York City-wide rate of 64.7%. This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with Hunter College (ECI Manhattan/Hunter Science, 2013).

Middle College High School at LaGuardia Community College (MCHSLCC) was founded in 1974 and serves grades 9-13. The total student enrollment is 478, and 59% of the students are eligible for free/reduced-fee lunches. The student ethnic representation is Black (10%), Hispanic (71%), White (11%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (8%). The five-year graduation rate is 75% compared to the New York City-wide rate of 64.7%.

This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with LaGuardia Community College (ECI Middle College High School, 2013).

Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) was founded in 2011 and serves grades 9-12. The student enrollment is 227, and 60% of the students are eligible for free/reduced-fee lunches. The student ethnic representation is Black (76%), Hispanic (17%), White (3%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (5%). This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with New York City College of Technology (ECI Pathways in Technology, 2013).

The Queens School of Inquiry (TQSI) was founded in 2005 and serves grades 6-12. The total student enrollment is 581, and 41.3% of the students are eligible for a free/reduced-fee lunch. The student ethnic representation is Black (17%), Hispanic (24%), White (18%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (40%). The four-year graduation rate is 91% compared to the New York City-wide rate of 64.7%. This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with Queens College (ECI Queens School of Inquiry, 2013).

Striving Tolerance Academic Responsibility Early College High School (STARECHS) was founded in 2003 and serves grades 7-12. The total student enrollment is 637, and 63% of the students are eligible for a free/reduced-fee lunch. The student ethnic representation is Black (84%), Hispanic (9%), White (1%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (3%). The four-year graduation rate is 99% compared to the New York City-wide rate of 64.7%. This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with Brooklyn College (ECI S.T.A.R. Early College, 2013).

York Early College Academy (YECA) was founded in 2006 and serves grades 6-12. The total student enrollment is 571, and 60% of the students are eligible for a

free/reduced-fee lunch. The student ethnic representation is Black (64%), Hispanic (10%), White (1%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (24%). The four-year graduation rate is 94% compared to the New York City-wide rate of 64.7%. This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with York College (ECI York Early College Academy, 2013).

There are two new ECHSs. Energy Tech High School (ETHS) opened its first ninth grade class in September 2013. This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with LaGuardia Community College. In addition, the Health Education and Research Occupations High School (HERO HS) opened with its first ninth grade class in September 2013. This ECHS is engaged in a partnership with Hostos Community College (Early College Initiative at CUNY, n.d.).

Children who attend these early college high schools come from families who live within the five boroughs of New York City—the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island. New York City has a total population of 8,175,133 residents, and it is the largest city in the State of New York and the nation (New York City Department of Planning, n.d.). Of the total population, 1,385,108 (16.0%) reside in the Bronx, 2,504,700 (30.6%) reside in Brooklyn, 1,585,873 (19.4%) reside in Manhattan, 2,230,722 (27.3%) reside in Queens, and 468,730 (5.7%) resident on Staten Island. There are 1,768,111 people in New York City under 18 years old. The City of New York's diversity includes 33% White, 22% Black/African American, 13% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 29% Hispanic (New York City Department of Planning, n.d.).

Research Participants

The study participants included six presidents from the CUNY colleges who are currently collaborating with ECHS. In addition, the study participants included six

principals of early college high schools currently collaborating with CUNY colleges. Creswell (2009) posited qualitative research study enables the researcher to purposefully select participants or sites to help the researcher understand the problem and the research question. There was no reimbursement for participation.

Participants were contacted through the CUNY College Presidents' directory and the CUNY Early College Initiative (CUNY-ECI) Office, which coordinates the early college schools and works with the principals. The researcher also coordinated with CUNY early college campus liaisons to help facilitate any needed contact information for the participants. The researcher served as a senior administrator at a CUNY college and was aware of the various locations available to contact the participants for the study.

A letter of invitation was mailed to all college presidents and public school principals associated with the 14 early college schools partnering with CUNY in New York City. The letter was sent electronically and by U.S. Postal Service (Appendix A). Each participant received an informed consent document outlining the scope of the research, their right to withdraw from the study at any time, and any other rights and privileges they may have drawn upon during the course of the interview. The document included safeguards to protect the privacy of each participant during the study and after the study is completed (Appendix B).

Participants and institutions were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identities. Each participant was given the opportunity to select the location for his or her interview. Finally, each participant was given an option to withdraw from the study at any time, and participants received the contact information for St. Johns Fisher College officials to address any questions or concerns.

Instruments Used in the Data Collection

The researcher's primary source of data collection were in-depth, one-on-one interviews, important documents, memoranda of understanding (MOU), and field notes. The instrument was developed by the researcher and it was inspired by theoretical framework for collaboration. The instrument used for the collection of data included a list of interview questions that were used during the in-depth interviews (Appendices B and C). The researcher recognized that negotiating relationships, as an aspect of positionality, can be a factor throughout the data collection process (Maxwell, 2013). In addition, there was the potential for bias based on the researcher's professional relationship with the participants.

The researcher assembled an expert panel to review the questions to ensure clarity and content validity. The panel included a college president, high school principal, higher education leader, and an education government administrator with 10 years of experience and familiarity related to early college schools and the participants.

In-depth interviews. The use of interviews during research methods is described as a conversation that has structure and a purpose. The interview is generally guided by research questions and allows the person being interviewed to share their world experiences related to the discussion (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Interviews were scheduled at a time and place convenient for the participants. Each interview was expected to run from one hour to one hour and 45 minutes. Participants were scheduled for interviews immediately after they had agreed to participate, and after they signed the informed consent form. The instruments the researcher used to collect data during the individual interviews included a list of interview questions (Appendices B and C).

The interviews were audio recorded and immediately transcribed, verbatim, by a professional company that guarantees confidentiality of voice recordings and guaranteed accuracy of all transcripts produced. The transcripts included all verbal responses. To further ensure the reliability and validity of the data, the researcher listened to all of the digital recordings and read all of the transcripts he received from the transcription company.

Important documents and memoranda of understanding. The researcher reviewed important documents and memoranda of understanding to formally establish the early college schools in the study.

The researcher used pseudonyms to maintain the anonymity of the participants throughout the data collection and transcription process. Only the researcher was able to connect the participant to the research documents. Personal information about the participants in the study, which was obtained from the informed consent forms, is stored separately from the transcripts. All other documents related to this research, including digital recordings and the researcher's field notes, are retained on a password-protected computer. The digital recordings are accessible to authorized and contracted personnel only, such as the researcher, research assistant, and transcription company personnel, each of whom have signed a confidentiality agreement. All digital recordings will be destroyed by May 31, 2016, and the identity of the participants will never be published directly or indirectly in relation to this research.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research includes preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through the process of coding and

condensing the codes, and finally, representing the data into figures, tables, or a discussion (Creswell, 2007). There is no single way to do qualitative analysis (Maxwell, 2013). However, there are important strategies and tools that can be used for qualitative analysis. The analysis process includes listening to recorded interviews; reading the interview transcripts, initial notes, and memos; and reading important documents that are part of the data collected for the study (Maxwell, 2013).

The analysis process was systematically planned, reflective, flexible, and modified, as the data was developed and expanded, to answer research questions and to address any possible validity threats (Maxwell, 2013). Immediately after each interview, the analysis process began to avoid any pile up of field notes or transcripts for review. While listening to the recorded interview and reading the transcript, the researcher wrote notes and memos on what was seen or heard in the data and developed tentative ideas about the categories and relationships. Writing memos during data analysis provided the researcher with opportunities to capture analytic thinking about the data and also to stimulate his analytic insights (Maxwell, 2013).

Triangulation. The researcher intended to triangulate the data by conducting focus groups, but he was not able to convene participants due the timing of the IRB approvals, the participants' school calendar breaks, and the participants' summer schedules. The researcher did conduct in-depth interviews, reviewed important documents, and utilized field notes to capture and review data.

Coding and identifying themes. Stemler (2001) asserted that there are multiple approaches to coding used in data analysis. Emergent coding establishes categories for the data after some form of data analysis is conducted. Emergent coding generally

includes two people who review the data separately, develop criteria for a check list, and

compare notes and resolve any issues before consolidating their criteria into one joint

check list. The next step involves the two researchers separately using the jointly

developed check list to apply coding. Finally, the researchers come together to check for

a 95% agreement on the reliability of the coding. If there is not a high degree of

reliability between the two researchers, they repeat the previous steps until there is a high

level of reliability (Stemler, 2001). Another approach to coding is the use of a priori.

The use of a priori coding employs establishing categories prior to the data analysis based

on a theory. Likewise, the researcher and comparing research assistant agreed on the

categories followed by applying the coding to the data (Stemler, 2001).

The goal of coding in qualitative research is to separate the data and rearrange

them into categories that enable the researcher to compare items in the same category. It

also allows for organizing the data into broader themes or issues (Maxwell, 2013). More

specifically, Maxwell (2013) asserted that categorizing analysis begins with the

identification segments of data that appear important or meaningful in some way. The

identification can be done based on prior ideas of what is important, or it can be an

inductive attempt to capture new insights also referred to as "open coding." Open coding

involves reading the data and developing coding categories based on what data seems

important. Once the themes are identified, the next step involves the process of coding.

The goal was to combine the important themes that captured the most relevant and

interesting aspects from the participant's response (Maxwell, 2013).

During the first phase of the coding process, the researcher read all of the

interview transcripts in order obtain a closer understanding of the lived experiences of

each participant. After the first read of the transcripts, the researcher conducted a second, more detailed read of the transcripts and marked similar words and phrases. During phase two of the coding process, the researcher performed another round of the coding process to group similarities in the data. The data were entered onto an Excel spreadsheet for the ability to sort, group, and decipher themes and patterns. The researcher used a spreadsheet to create a code book for the data analysis. In this round of coding, 132 codes were identified by the researcher.

The researcher looked for the frequency of themes by counting the data. The process is known as numeration, and the researcher examined the emergent themes for positive and negative perceptions to further establish the meaning of the responses. After developing a list of codes and emergent themes, the researcher conducted another examination of themes and analysis of the codes. These steps taken in the coding process provided a more in-depth data analysis of each interview that contributed to the cross analysis.

Table 3.1 illustrates the major and minor categories of the themes. The researcher coded the data according to a key, which was based on the participants' responses. To ensure the reliability of the results, the research assistant verified the codes by using the same coding system as the researcher used to categorize the participants' responses. The researcher resolved all coding discrepancies.

Table 3.1

Themes and Sub-Themes

Number of Themes	Theme	Sub-Theme
Theme # 1	Self-efficacy	1. High expectations for students 2. A nurturing environment that motivates students 3. Student assimilation and maturation
Theme # 2	Academic achievement	4. Literacy enhancement 5. STEM awareness 6. Preparation and college bound
Theme #3	College and high school commitment	7. Dedicated resources and personnel 8. Enthusiasm about early college schools 9. Presidents and principals take on ownership of their early college high schools
Theme # 4	Benefits of the collaborative process	10. Willingness to communicate openly and regularly 11. Working together across institutions 12. Shared value recognized 13. Challenges or obstacles to overcome

Summary of the Methodology

The research was a qualitative study. The context for this study was colleges within the City University of New York. The colleges are part of a large urban public university system located in the Northeast where many of their students are the first members of their families to attend college. In addition, the context included New York City public high schools collaborating with CUNY. The participants included a

purposeful sampling of CUNY college presidents and NYC DOE high school principals with early college high schools and in partnership with CUNY.

The data collection process began with an introductory letter and invitation to participants (Appendix A), and an informed consent form (Appendix B), to explain the study and the right of each participant to withdraw at any time. The data collection process used open-ended questions, which were developed by the researcher and were verified for validity and reliability by a panel of experts in the field. The researcher employed these questions to conduct semi-structured, one-on-one, in-depth interviews, digitally recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed as outlined in this chapter.

The researcher submitted the proposed study for approval to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at St. John Fisher College on December 20, 2013. On January 8, 2014, the researcher submitted the proposed study for approval to the IRB at the New York City Department of Education and to the IRB at the City University of New York on January 15, 2014. After receiving all three IRB approvals, the researcher began to identify potential participants and commenced with conducting the formal interviews. Recordings were sent to a professional transcriber. The researcher reviewed each transcript to ensure accuracy, and he completed the coding and analysis of the data in November and December of 2014 and January of 2015.

Chapter 4: Results

Research Questions

This study used a phenomenological interpretative qualitative design to examine the perceptions of college presidents and high school principals regarding the value and institutional benefits of the Early College High School Initiative in New York City. The participants were college presidents of the City University of New York (CUNY), a large urban public university, and high school principals of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), the largest public school system in the country. This study was inspired by previous research regarding the perceptions of college presidents and public school superintendents (Chambers, 2009) and college instructors and high school teachers (Parker, 2010) regarding the early college initiative in North Carolina.

The study obtained perceptions through 12 individual in-depth interviews and the review of important documents. The chapter includes responses to the specific research questions that guided this study, a descriptive and cross analysis of the data, and a summary of the results.

Question 1: To what degree do college presidents and high school principals believe early college high schools prepare students for success in higher education? The participants recognized that early college high schools provided supportive services that help prepare students for a successful college experience. The supportive services provided at early college high schools included tutors in the areas of math and English Language Arts to provide assistance to students. The tutors were introduced to the

students when they begin sixth grade. In addition, guidance counselors, a college liaison, and the CUNY/DOE Early College Initiative Support Network provides assessments and teacher instructional support to ensure student success. They surprisingly emphasized the importance of self-efficacy for students in their schools. The participants believed that through high expectations of students, a nurturing environment, and students assimilating into the new accelerated program helped prepare students for success in higher education.

Participants also placed a high premium on academic achievement with an emphasis on literacy enhancement and exposure to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) as a way to prepare students for success in higher education. Recognizing that jobs in STEM will grow over the next decade, participants identified algebra, geometry, calculus, biology, chemistry, and physics as examples of courses students should experience in high school and college. Finally, participants felt they were on the right track and their joint efforts were focused on preparing early college students for a successful college experience.

Question 2: To what degree do college presidents and high school principals share perceptions regarding the institutional benefits of the early college high school initiative? While there was general agreement among the participants regarding the benefits to their respective institutions as a result of their participation in the ECHSI, there were some indicators in the data that suggested some college presidents raised concerns regarding the cost benefit of the initiative. Participants believed they were providing a solution to the public schools' challenges in New York City. The early college high schools were among the top-rated schools in their respective districts, and they heavily sought after for entry by students and their parents. The participants

believed their institutions benefited through the ECHSI's emphasis on college readiness and college access. College readiness is one of the assessment performance indicators for New York City public schools. Participants recognized there was a pipeline of college-ready students being groomed from the grade 6 straight into college with a seamless transition. The participants understood that both the college and the high school were making significant commitments by agreeing to participate in the program. At the beginning of their collaborative discussions and establishing their schools, they recognized that dedicated resources and personnel were required of their institutions to make the program successful. Finally, the participants were excited that their schools were producing above 90% four-year graduation rates from their high schools with their students transferring into CUNY, SUNY, and private colleges with college credits.

Question 3: To what degree has the process of collaboration been an effective tool for the early college program in New York City? Participants identified working together across institutions, student preparation for the college bound, and recognizing their shared value as examples where the collaborative process had been effective. For example, participants improved communications across institutions by implementing protocols such as convening monthly meetings between the college and the high school to discuss curriculum-related topics. These meetings generally included the provost or designated dean from the Office of Academic Affairs, the registrar, department chair, principal or assistant principal, and the early college high school liaison. While the participants' overall responses were that the collaboration process was an effective tool, they pointed out areas where the collaboration could be improved. First, the participants identified the need for CUNY and the NYCDOE to review their enrollment-management

systems to ensure compatibility. Second, participants identified the need for financial

support for literacy enhancement for students and student access to science, technology,

engineering, and mathematics classes. Finally, the participants revealed a need to

improve the college campus environment, so ECHS students were motivated at all times.

For the purpose of this study, collaboration is an effective tool defined as the

constant reminder that both institutions should see value and benefit from their

participation in the Early College Initiative in New York City. As described earlier,

participants implemented creative meeting opportunities for teachers, college

administrators, and faculty to work together across institutions and academic disciplines

to learn from each other and share best practices.

Data Analysis and Findings

Prior to the analysis of the findings, it was important to provide a descriptive

analysis of the study participants to understand their experiences with the phenomenon

presented in the study. However, in order to maintain the participants' anonymity, the

researcher divided them into two groups and briefly described both groups to provide a

context for the lived experiences shared by the participants. Following the overviews,

this chapter provides an overview of the analysis of the data, the findings related to

specific research questions, and a summary of the study results.

Descriptive analysis. This section provides a brief overview for the participants

who were engaged in the one-on-one interviews. To create the overviews, the researcher

used audio recordings and notes that were taken during the interviews. The participants

in the study were from the City University of New York school system and the New York

City Department of Education. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the participants. Of

the six college presidents who participated in the study, four were presidents of four-year,

degree-granting institutions that awarded bachelor and master degrees. Two were

presidents of two-year community colleges awarding associate degrees. Of the six public

school principals who participated in the study, five of the public schools served grades

6-12. One of the public schools served grades 9-13. The gender of the research

participants varied by institution.

Table 4.1

Overview of Research Participants

Group	Number of Participants	Type of Institution	Gender
Group A	6 College Presidents	Four-year College	4 males
			2 females
		Two-year Community College	
Group B	6 Public School Principals	Grade 6 to 12 Early College High School	2 males
			4 females
		Grade 9-13 Early College High School	

Group A. These participants were presidents of colleges within the City

University of New York system. Together they have over 35 years of experience in

higher education. They also had experience working with urban K-12 public schools.

Group B. These participants were principals of early college high schools in New

York City. They had experience working with CUNY colleges through the Early College

High School Initiative in New York City.

Table 4.2

Frequencies of Sub-Themes in Participant Interviews

Number of Themes	Theme	Sub-Theme	% of Participants
Theme # 1	Self-Efficacy	1. High expectations for students	92
		2. A nurturing environment that motivates students	75
		3. Student assimilation and maturation	83
Theme # 2	Academic Achievement	4. Literacy enhancement	75
		5. STEM awareness	75
		6. Preparation and college bound	100
Theme # 3	College and high school commitment	7. Dedicated resources and personnel	75
		8. Enthusiasm about early college schools	83
		9. Presidents and principals take ownership of their early college schools	75
Theme # 4	Benefits of collaborative process	10. Willingness to communicate openly and regularly	83
		11. Working together across institutions	100
		12. Shared value recognized	100
		13. Challenges or obstacles to overcome	100

Theme 1: self-efficacy. The participants were asked to provide their perception of how early college high schools prepare students for success in higher education. They agreed that it was important for students to believe that they can do the required work and succeed in their efforts. While all 6 of the principals (100%) agreed that high

expectations for students was important, only 5 of the presidents (83%) mentioned that it was important. With regard to the nurturing environments serving as a motivating factor for students, all 6 of the principals (100%) said nurturing environment was important and only 3 of the presidents (50%) mentioned nurturing environments as a motivating factor. Similarly, all of the principals said student assimilation and maturation was important while 4 of the presidents (67%) mentioned student assimilation and maturity. Here is how a Principal responded.

> Oh my goodness, their awareness, their maturity, very mature, the pride, it's all a matter of self-efficacy, they all believe that they can do it, so those are the great things I've seen, yes. We push the efficacy part through that everybody could succeed, so all kids believe that college is the way, in fact that's the best or the only thing that is holding this school together is the early college mission, that's attractive for our location in New York (pseudonym); we have gone through glorious days and in glorious past, so this is the only catch that attracts the kids here. The other kids, they don't want to come, but once we explain to them the model, then that is what is keeping the school together. (Principal)

Another participant shared an example explaining how a student learned through an experience.

> Like those things are important pieces to the puzzle, and then self-advocacy is number three; that's a big issue because, statistically, students who have high self-advocacy skills do well. They don't have to be brain surgeons, but they have to be able to self-advocate, and a great example of that is one of our girls lost her password to get onto the Blackboard or whatever CUNY online study system is,

and she had to go to the tech office, the tech office didn't have her name because

we're registered under a separate group, so then she had to go over to the bursar's

office to get a piece of paper that said she was actually registered, then she had to

go back to the tech office, the whole thing took about four hours. If she was by

herself, she would never have done it, she would have said forget it, but she was

with the guidance counselor, he was a little upset, but he's an adult and he

hammered through it, and I think because that occurred, she had a new idea of

what self-advocacy was. (Principal)

Table 4.3

Theme 1: Self-Efficacy

Sub-Themes	Presidents N = 6	Principals N = 6	Total N = 12
High expectations for students	83%	100%	92%
Nurturing environment that motivates students	50%	100%	75%
Student assimilation and maturation	67%	100%	83%

Sub-theme: high expectations of students. While 92% of the respondents

expressed the importance of letting students know that high standards were set for them

throughout the early college high school experience, there was a disparity between high

school principals and college presidents. For example, all six the principals felt it was

important, while five of the college presidents felt the same. There was one president

that did not mention high expectation for students. The participants recognized that high

expectation is both a concept valued by and executed in the ECHSI. The participants

believed students in the ECHSI exhibited the capabilities to take actions to transform

these capabilities into reality. There were intentional efforts to remove barriers for students as they navigated the accelerated early college curriculum. One of the college presidents explained how exposure to college professors help set high expectations.

> I think it is, if you can prepare them socially, they get a truer college experience if they're taught in classes with college professors and integrated into the classroom setting rather than being taught by high school teachers teaching college-level courses and having them come as cohorts, because it truly is a very different approach to education, and I really believe to truly prepare them for it, you need to be integrating them with your other college students. (President)

Sub-theme: a nurturing environment that motivates students. This sub-theme implied that students who see the value in what they are learning and, as a result of the nurturing environment, believed they would be successful. The majority of the participants (75%) spoke about how motivated their students were in and out of the classroom as a result of attending an early college high school. While all six high school principals spoke about the importance of a nurturing environment, only half of the president, three, mentioned the nurturing environment as motivating. Study participants were excited that their schools were producing above 90% four-year graduation rates from high school with their students transferring into CUNY, SUNY, and private colleges with college credits. A principal described the process in which students were motivated to advance their education beyond the associate-degree level.

> It's amazing how the kids break down in terms of the ones that have no problem right away to the ones that really struggle. So, I mean, to me, that's what the early college programs are about across the city. I don't think we are building

associate degrees of college credits, I think that's almost immaterial. At the end

of the day, I think what we're building is students that have the staying power to

do four years to get a master's degree to go for the doctorate, to understand how

to persevere when you know things aren't necessarily lined up. That's my take on

it. (Principal)

Sub-theme: student assimilation and maturation. This sub-theme connotes that

students often became fully integrated into the college experience. Participants stated

frequently that they were pleasantly surprised and encouraged by the way students and

the manner in which students became comfortable with their college experience. There

was also commonality regarding observing that student's behavior was at such a quality

level that it was difficult to determine if they were high school students on the college

campus. While the majority of the participants agreed, there were two presidents that did

not mentioned student assimilation and maturation or did not think it was important.

Some of the participants believed high school students in the Early College Program

mature at a faster pace than regular high school students. They described the early

college students as having the maturity of a college student. One college principal said,

Alias (pseudonym) was student name, I wish I still had the e-mail, but anyway,

Alias and a group of students from high school were in a class, and I don't

remember what class it was actually, and they don't have to tell the college

professor that they're high school students, it's up to them, but lots of times when

they're in a class, it is revealed for some reason or another when they're talking

about themselves or, you know, something that has come up in the class where

some kind of discussion is going on and the teacher then becomes aware that

they're high school students. So she became aware that there was a group of kids who were high school students and she started treating them differently. So Alias wrote an e-mail to the college professor and said, when we are here, we are college students, we are not high school students, and everything that is expected of every other student in your class, maybe not exactly those words, we want those expectations for ourselves too. Please don't treat us differently. Okay. And the professor wrote back, I am so sorry, I certainly didn't mean to offend any of you, I was just trying to look out for you, I will now consider you college students. (Principal)

Theme 2: academic achievement. The participants raised similar issues related to their perceptions of how the early college high school initiative in New York City prepares students for success in higher education. They identified literacy enhancement, science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) awareness, and college bound preparation as important outcomes for early college students. While five principals (83%) felt literacy enhancement helped prepare students for success, only four presidents (67%) mentioned literacy enhancement or felt it was important. Similarly, five principals (83%) felt STEM awareness helped prepare students for success, while four presidents (67%) mentioned STEM or felt it was important. All of the participants identified preparation and college bound for students.

Table 4.4

Theme 2: Academic Achievement

Sub-Themes	Presidents N = 6	Principals N = 6	Total N = 12
Literacy enhancement	67%	83%	75%
STEM awareness	67%	83%	75%
Preparation and college bound	100%	100%	100%

Sub-theme: literacy enhancement. Participants acknowledged that they had a major task in having students enter the early college school with varying literacy skills, and given that their early college program is open to all students, they have had to pay special attention to improving literacy skills. While the majority of the principals identified literacy enhancement as important for student success, there were two presidents who did not mention literacy or did not think it was important. One principal talked about the new challenge being faced by early college schools who are partnering with a private industry with the intent for graduates to be hired by the company upon graduation. This is adding to the already accelerated curriculum.

> And that was my fear, my original fear. Because I am a high school person, I
> know, I know what high schoolers are coming in like. I wish them well, I think
> the industry part is wonderful, I really want to see my kids have jobs, I'm actually
> helping them myself, you know, move on and everything. I just, this is my
> experience talking, just because I know how deficient most of these kids are. It's
> going to be really hard, it's going to be really hard for one to sustain the four
> years of high school with bringing the college piece on, because if they don't have

college or high school level reading, which most of them do not, they can't even get through the textbooks. So what are you going to do in ninth grade, you're so busy with regents you can't build their literacy skills. You still have to find a way, you have to find a way. Because we have regents, we have the associate degrees, we have the state exams in middle school, and then I have all this direct instruction for literacy that I'm working on. It's a lot, I never thought it would be this much. (Principal)

Sub-theme: STEM awareness. Five presidents (83%) and four principals (67%) identified exposure to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) as a way to prepare students for success in higher education. One president and two principals did not mention STEM or felt it was not important for student success. Recognizing that jobs in STEM will grow over the next decade, participants identified algebra, geometry, calculus, biology, chemistry, and physics as examples of courses students should experience in high school and college. These were areas they felt would help students achieve academically and better prepared for college success. A participate stated,

I would start much earlier than high school, because I think by high school, I'm a scientist, so from my perspective by the time students are in high school, they've either become math and science phobic or uninterested or disinterested. So I would invest resources at the earliest level, elementary into middle school, and I would invest in programs that would prepare students and excite them for areas of science and mathematics, those STEM fields, by giving experiential learning rather than just doing didactic teaching in the classroom. Yes, elementary, upper

elementary to middle school, but you can't start too soon, you know. I tell you

my first exposure and excitement with science came from my 2nd grade teacher

that gave me a book on rocks and minerals and truly changed my life, and that

was sort of against gender standards at that time. But those are the kinds of things

that the earlier you get them, the better, and in this knowledge economy where

you need quantitative skills, you can't wait until high school to get them and you

certainly cannot wait by the time you're in college, you've already been tracked

out of math and science from a much earlier age. (President)

Sub-theme: preparation and college bound. The participants all agreed that their

curriculums, institutions, and support services for students were essential toward helping

students prepare for college. Some of the participants talked about how they reorganized

and made adjustments in their institutions to enhance college readiness for students. A

participant talked about the need to work with students in earlier grades as was being

done in other early college high schools.

We first started as a 9 through 12, and then we realized that we wanted to catch

them a little earlier, so we drilled on to propose to expand it to a 6 through 12, so

it looks different at each grade level. Each grade level is exposure to workshops,

science workshop, I mean to expose the kids to college-like tours to different

workshops and what is it called, robotics, different levels of interaction for the

younger kids. So we do that through the sixth grade through eighth grade, they go

to different workshops, and then by the ninth grade is where you have active role

starts to get deeper. You have the freshmen seminar, which is six weeks in the

fall, six weeks in the spring, where the kids are bused to the campus, being taught

by college professors, going to different workshops, and then what they do, they go to the workshops in the fall for the six weeks and then they get to choose one that they want to intensely dive into in the spring, so that's every year and then by the 10th grade, we have workshops again for writing workshops for the 10th grade, and then the real teaching collaboration starts really to gel at the 11th grade, where the kids are actively participating in classes at the college, taking just a few classes there and then most of their classes on the New York City College (pseudonym) campus. And by the 12th grade, they're almost full time on the campus, they only take gym maybe another elective here, but they're on the campus with access to all the facilities, libraries the centers, just about everything. (Principal)

Theme 3: college and high school commitment. The participants raised similar issues related to their perceptions of institutional benefits of the early college high school initiative in New York City. They identified dedicated resources and personnel, enthusiasm about early college schools, and working with urban students, and presidents and principals taking ownership of their early college schools. Five principals (83%) and four of the presidents (67%) identified dedicated resources. Six of the principals (100%) and four of the presidents (67%) mentioned enthusiasm about early college high schools. Finally, five principals (83%) and four presidents (67%) mentioned it was important for leaders of colleges and early college high schools to take ownership of their schools. The participants believed that it was in their best interest for both the college and the public school to continue to demonstrate their commitment to the overall success of the ECHSI in New York City.

Table 4.5

Theme 3: College and High School Commitment

Sub-Themes	Presidents	Principals	Totals
	N = 6	N = 6	N = 12
Dedicated resources and personnel	67%	83%	75%
Enthusiasm about early college schools	67%	100%	83%
President and principals take ownership of their early college schools	67%	83%	75%

Sub-theme: dedicated resources and personnel. Five principals (83%) and four

presidents (67%) indicated that they were going above and beyond to provide what was

needed to ensure the success of their respective early college high school. They reflected

on occasions where this meant dedicating additional resources and personnel that were

not originally planned for at the beginning, but it was in the best interest of their

partnership. One principal and two presidents did not mention dedicated resources and

personnel or did not believe it was important. A participated stated,

> So one of the things that I think we have to do in higher education is accept the
>
> notion that the higher education domain as an institution, I think, has a
>
> particularly compelling reason to care about what happens to young people in the
>
> 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade, they are, in fact, entering freshmen at some point, so to the
>
> extent that we understand that is a great importance to our enrollment, then the
>
> question becomes then, what does it mean to you to invest in that, and I think our
>
> investment in it has to be in the form of really helping to improve the education
>
> and the preparation of students who are in that pipeline, who are in that trajectory

which would be large numbers of students who never have gone to college ever in their lives, a large number of students who are in poor performing schools or who have limited proficiencies in math and English and reading, etc. So I think we have, therefore, a real obligation and frankly an opportunity to both invest in those young people and to be very concrete about what that investment takes form, how that takes form. I happen to believe that we ought to really extend our college work, if you will, of faculty, it ought to include a portfolio of community-based investment that is kind of from the capital, the intellectual capital that we have in our faculty. I think that our entering *middle schoolers* [emphasis added] and *high schoolers* [emphasis added] should really get to see college faculty before they ever come to college. I think that they should experience modules of a college course before they ever come to college. I think they ought to come on and visit a campus and see a class being taught before they are ever even college eligible age-wise. So it's really about affiliation, it's really about giving young people an opportunity to affiliate and socialize with the idea of being college bound, it's not just about their placement. That will happen in due course, but to put their lives into some sort of a context requires them having some sort of affiliation and, therefore, having them on campus, giving them T-shirts that say I'm the graduating class of 2025, or whatever the case may be, gives them an opportunity to see that this is a path and they are not in urban America, they are not lost. So that's the way I see that. (President)

Sub-theme: enthusiastic about opportunity to work with early college schools serving urban students. While six principals (100%) expressed their enthusiasm about

working with their early college schools and urban students, only four presidents (67%) expressed enthusiasm about early college high schools. There were two presidents that did not mention enthusiasm about early college schools. There was a sense of passion as participants described their participation with early college high schools. A participant stated,

> That was purposeful for me, I wanted to work in an urban institution. I spent many of my years on the undergraduate campus; I started out on a rural campus, and I love rural campuses, they're beautiful; but what I really did want to do is go back and change from having spent most of my career at an elite institution to an institution that really served what I think are the most pressing needs, the majority of our people and students, young men and women who are in urban areas, in areas where they're not necessarily getting the same advantages they get in the more elite settings. (President)

Another participant voiced, in a more personal way, their perception of the institutional benefits of the ECHSI in New York City,

> So you know, I personally believe in the model of the school and watched from the beginning the impact that it had on our students and when that question was posed to me, I just could not imagine myself being anywhere but here, which was sort of home, and I have such a vested interest in the students and the culture and the community of this school. I'm a New Yorker at heart, even though my family moved to Texas (pseudonym) for a little while when I was growing up. My undergrad was done at University (pseudonym) and so, yes, in a way because I could not have imagined myself anywhere but in New York City. So,

particularly, I fell in love with New York (pseudonym) because of its diversity of everything, you know. So this is just when you talk about first generation, you talk about students, there's not one category that isn't covered in this one building of just 600 students, and so I think that's what makes New York so fascinating, in addition to always being entertained in their job as an educator, it sends it to that next level. (Principal)

Sub-theme: Presidents and principals take ownership of their early college schools. When asked to reflect on the institutional benefits of the ECHSI in New York City, participants expressed the need for them to take on a sense of ownership of their respective early college schools. They voiced that it was important that the message internally and externally reflected the significance of the early college school and the efforts they were willing to undertake to maintain their schools. A participant stated,

What's hard to pull away from it is that whatever money is given, Gates money or anything like that, they always want sustainability; that's their famous line and it's not so simple, because often times what our students lack is that exposure piece. So for instance, when I first came to the school, we had one computer lab and had about 18 computers, most of our kids come in reading at the fourth grade level or third grade, and we're in sixth grade. So you have to do something to ramp it up and that money doesn't necessarily create sustainability. Like when I first came, we didn't have a social worker, so I hired a social worker, and cause the realization was that our kids have all this external energy telling them to fail basically or that indicates that failure is an option, and I mean you see it when you walk in, like it's a tough neighborhood. So they see failure as an option and the

energy that it takes to eliminate that, it's hard to create sustainability with money, cause if you said, alright give me $500,000, what are you going to spend it on and I'd say human beings. Well, then, the money is going to run out. So well, like, cause at the end of the day it's not, I always say I try to make it a private school with public money. Cause at the end of the day, our kids need relationships, they need small classes, and relationships to survive to show that the school is based on academic and social maturation as opposed to, you know, at my daughter's school in Brooklyn. They don't need small classes, there's 32 kids in every class. They could have 50 kids in their class and it wouldn't matter. Every kid would sit there and, alright, give me more. It's different, and my child (pseudonym) doesn't walk home in fear that she's going to get jumped by the three guys she sees standing on the corner. I mean one of my kids got mugged right here on the corner at 2:50, broad daylight, they body slammed him and took his phone right in front of the school. So I look at that and I say these kids have a lot more to worry about and, as a parent, a lot more to worry about than I have with my child (pseudonym) who walks home two blocks. I get it's different, it's a totally different world. So where that money would go if it was at my child's (pseudonym) school is a different ball game than where it would go here. I'm sure you're seeing that, like Brooklyn would spend the money differently than Manhattan or Queens or I would in terms of what we see as impact. It makes, it's a difference because I don't think that it's easy to, it's difficult to spend that money the same in every school, because every school has a different student body and a different environment and if you look at we were the first school and

then if you look at the other early college high schools all those communities are completely different. One is close to ours, and because, as I always try to say, you know, it's one thing to be poor in South Bronx, but you could be poor where I live in parts of New York (pseudonym), and life is going to be a lot easier. So you know, you can be poor in Crown Heights, but if you're poor in a Queens neighborhood, it's a different poverty. So it's not just the fiscal, it's the tension that these kids live with all the time, that plays a big bearing on how they do academically, and how they, as I say in code, switch, like they don't have, sometimes they see problems resolved outside by the shouting and they think that's how you resolve an issue. (Principal)

Participants stated how they maintained their commitment, even after the initial private sector funding had run out. One participated stated,

I can't believe that people open their schools without it, and maybe that's why we are as successful as we are. Because we had $500,000 opening, and I used it all for professional development and technology, and conferences, and retreats and building culture, and every summer, I had my teachers working up until that money ran out. And I still do it now, but now I just pay for it, and kill myself, but you know. It was amazing, it was amazing. (Principal)

Similarly, the participants described the benefits of the private philanthropic support and the benefits of the leveraged public sector support. One participant stated,

I can only speak for our experience in it, it's been absolutely worth every penny, and it works out where we get some money from CUNY to support the program and to offset the course of instruction, but I think, at this point, we would do it

institutionally, but I'm not going to tell them that I don't want their money.

(President)

Theme 4: benefits of collaborative process. The participants reflected on the

process of collaboration as it related to their institutions and the ECHSI in New York

City. They described the willingness to communicate openly and regularly, working

together across institutions, shared value recognized, and challenges and obstacles to

overcome. There was overall agreement by participants in all of the categories except

willingness to communicate openly and regularly. While six of the principals (100%)

identified willingness to communicate openly and regularly as a benefit of collaboration,

only four presidents (67%) agreed. There were two presidents that did not mention

willingness to communicate openly and regularly as a benefit of collaboration or did not

think it was important.

Table 4.6

Theme 4: Benefits of Collaborative Process

Sub-Themes	Presidents N = 6	Principals N = 6	Total N = 12
Willingness to communicate openly and regularly	67%	100%	83%
Working together across institutions	100%	100%	100%
Shared value recognized	100%	100%	!00%
Challenges or obstacles to overcome	100%	100%	100%

Sub-theme: willingness to communicate openly and regularly. Participants

identified their various methods of maintaining regular communication between

institutions. This helped their curriculum reviews and teacher/faculty development. A participant stated,

> We have monthly meetings called curriculum workgroups, which is a
> collaboration, active collaboration with the faculty at New York School
> (pseudonym), the teachers and the faculty at New York School at CUNY College
> (pseudonym), they sit together to plan curriculum, by design, backward design
> ED to make sure that the students are getting seamless instruction. So there's a
> strong collaboration of sciences and of course math, and the arts as well. A strong
> collaboration takes place on a monthly basis and then there are also other
> collaborations with where I would invite the faculty at this college to come to my
> workshop faculty meetings here at New York School and they also do
> collaborations, free flow both ways and then there's also a strong collaboration or
> different type of collaboration where our school, the principals, travel here and
> teach some of the younger kids as well. So this constant back and forth strong
> collaboration. (Principal)

Sub-theme: working together across institutions. Cross-institution collaboration occurs when entities recognize the importance and benefits of working together. Here is what one participant said regarding how they provide a place for discussion where everyone can contribute,

> At least once a year, if not more, and we have these ongoing conversations where
> they'll raise issues, and we'll have to respond to it, and vice versa. One large
> room, everybody gets together. Again, this is what I said earlier about checking
> your ego, we have people at every level from teachers to the principal, all have an

equal voice, and that has to be, that's what at this college, we call collaborative

model in that we have a committee that meets every Monday at 11:00, and it's our

enrollment management committee, and there are vice presidents, deans, and

workers, and all hats are off, and everyone has an equal say. When they come to

a common agreement, even if you're opposed to it that's the agreement. It's come

to collaboratively, you don't have to love it, but that's where we're going and

that's the style that we're trying to do here as well. (President)

Sub-theme: shared value recognized. Many of the participants identified the need

for their institutions to recognize there was shared value and benefits to their

partnerships.

First of all, both sides have to check their egos at the door. There's got to be the

university is not better than you, you're not better than the university, there's got

to be a leveling playing field and that's sometimes hard to do. When we did the

early college high school, there was a culture gap between the Board of Ed culture

and the City University culture, which we bridged eventually. It took two to three

years, but I think that there's a commonality in the interest because we're going to

be measured by the success of our programs at the college. If they send us better

prepared students, we're going to be better assessed as a successful institution. So

there's a mutual interest in there, they will get their students to go to college and

be graded high, but their students will stay in college and will be able to succeed.

(President)

Another participant voiced their integration with the leadership team of the higher education institution and how it has helped them collaborate with the college. The principal stated.

> We are part of the college president's cabinet, so that meets four times a year, I believe, and it give us an opportunity to meet all the department chairs and to network with them, okay, so that last cycle prior to that I met with the math department chairperson and had an idea to run a pilot program here not for college credit but for high school credit but that follows the curriculum of math of 096, because a lot of our students who are tested for math, okay, do not go into the category of math 112, the new Pathways math or the old math 115. So, we test them in the 10th grade, alright, so we thought maybe if we give them this prep course of 096, that if they could take the test at the end of that course, just those who demonstrated that they might be able to pass, this might be worthwhile, so we ran a pilot program, it wasn't as successful as I wanted it to be, but we still did have some kids who went and took the test and did pass and moved into math 112 or math 115, depending on where they are in hierarchy of high school, you know. So that's very unique that we have the opportunity to meet them and know them, so that if we have an idea like this that we'd like to discuss with them, we could meet with them because they know who we are and we know who they are. (Principal)

Another participant continued to support the merits of the ECHSI, but voiced concern that the graduation completion rates and related success were not counted for the higher education institution. The president stated.

You know, I think that having the graduates count towards your data, cause I can, you know, I can live with students, you know, you open the doors of opportunity, and then they're going to go whatever it makes sense for them to go. If it's here, fine, if it's another place, we just want them to succeed. So you know, that doesn't really make me lose too much sleep, what I think it's absolutely unfair is that college resources, faculty, all the things that are going into the students and there is nowhere you can have a recognition of that being part of our persistence and success rate, and when everybody is singling on this very imperfect graduation data, I think the least that could happen was that it would be part of our tally sheet. (President)

Sub-theme: challenges and obstacles to collaboration. This sub-theme refers to the participants who experienced many challenges and obstacles encountered as they formed and continued the early college schools. This participant commented on the misperceptions between the leader of a higher education institution and the principal of the early college school.

I think in general, well, that's an interesting question. I think, in general, everybody is on the same page in terms of we all want the students to succeed. We all want the students to graduate more efficiently through the system to settle into college more readily, have fewer stop outs. Where I think there are sometimes disconnects is between what is a college-level course? And the level at which you teach a course, you know, a student can take ten courses, but they truly may not be college-level courses, and then when they're allowed to get into college and take the college-level courses, they're somewhat surprised by the

toughness of the courses, the rigor of the courses, and the fact that they are not

coddled in college in general. And there are disconnects there that I've seen,

where I've seen where people think they're teaching at a college level and they're

really not teaching at a college level. Even the AP courses didn't have college-

level courses, let's be honest, you know. They're good, they're solid. But they're

not college-level courses because, there's a lot more that goes into a college

experience than just sitting in the classroom. (President)

Another participant voiced concern regarding the challenge of getting the two

institutions to understand their unfamiliar problems impacting their success.

Well okay, so the president of the college, then, made an announcement one day,

we were talking, and she said that if you could imagine two giants dancing

together on a dance floor, that would be CUNY and the Department of Education,

and I think that my low points have only always been never about kids, never

about teachers, never about parents, I think my low points have been about getting

the two institutions to understand what's not happening for us to be successful.

(Principal)

Another participant talked about the importance for principals to be able to

present the case for their early college high schools directly to college department

chairpersons and faculty. Here is what a principal stated.

You see, the thing is, and you know this because you come from a college, I don't

supervise the professors, I certainly don't supervise the chair people, obviously

they supervise me, which I think is a riot, but and I don't understand, and it is

upsetting why some of them and this is not the majority, cause, obviously, I've

had the greatest partnership, they're not interested. Some of them are not and if the buy-in is not there, it makes my life really miserable. I think the one failing piece for any early college school is not for the principal, to not get buy-in herself or himself from the chair people, and I didn't have that opportunity, and I've told them a thousand times, let me present my program, no one's more passionate than me, let me do it, and for whatever reason, I guess, cause it was so new and because it was sixth grade, and because the administrators at the top wanted to handle it, I never really got to lay my ground work. Now not to say all chair people are like that. (Principal)

When asked about the process of collaboration for the early college program in New York City. Participants agreed there was a special effort to work together as institutions for the good of the program and students. The majority of the participants acknowledged that they would like to do more collaboration between departments and disciplines. Here is how a participant talked about the challenges of collaboration between the early college high school and the college.

Not as often as we should. Not as often as I'd like. We do realize the importance of it, there is the desire there but, I mean, you just witnessed about five minutes of what the day can be like, and I'm sure it's, and then some on the college campus. So, you know, if you're asking me to honestly respond how much collaboration goes on, not as much as I'd like, I mean there is a position of a college liaison that a person is said to bridge that gap and, you know, it's a work in progress getting everything that needs to be done. There's also the professors and the teachers being very aware that they need to collaborate, you know, our math and English

teachers need to know, where do these children have to be to be successful in your

class in college, and the research paper thing that I was speaking of earlier, that

came directly from the professors, that was their biggest beef, these students do

not know how to write research papers, so it became a school-wide initiative that

research papers start in the sixth grade; now, of course, sixth grade is a page and

with one source and, you know, as opposed to what we expect a ninth or 10th

grader to write, but knowing that this is something vital to their success in college

from those professors, that was a collaboration that needed to take place. The

math teachers, actually the math teachers, have probably done the most

collaboration, you know, that spiraling foundation because everything is built on

itself as far as math is concerned, so they've probably done a little bit more than

the others. I would like to see the science teachers collaborate more. I would

love to see the social studies teachers collaborate. (Principal)

Summary of Results

The three research questions that guided this study included:

1. To what degree do college presidents and high school principals believe early
   college high schools prepare students for success in higher education?

2. To what degree to college presidents and high school principals share
   perceptions regarding the institutional benefits of the early college high school
   initiative?

3. To what degree has the process of collaboration been an effective tool for the
   early college program in New York City?

The results of the study were discussed according to the four major themes, as well as findings uncovered by the data. The four major themes included self-efficacy, academic achievement, college and high school commitment, and benefits of collaborative process. These results offer to higher education professionals, public school administrators, and policy makers a deeper understanding and level of awareness regarding the current perceptions of collaboration between colleges and early college high schools in New York City.

College presidents and high school principals share in their perception of how the Early College High School Initiative in New York City prepares students for success in higher education. The participants of this study shared their perceptions regarding the ECHSI in New York City. They identified that it was important for students to believe they can do the required work and succeed in higher education. There was a disparity in the response to the importance of providing an early college high school environment for students that would motivate students and assist with their assimilation into their new accelerated academic experience. While six principals (100%) identified nurturing environment to motivate students, only three presidents (50%) mentioned it or felt it was important.

The participants discussed the fact that the ECHSI in New York City is open to all students, based on available seats, and they had students entering with varying degrees of literacy skills. Participants also placed a high premium on academic achievement with an emphasis on literacy enhancement and exposure to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) as a way to prepare students for success in higher education. Recognizing that jobs in STEM will grow over the next decade, participants identified

algebra, geometry, calculus, biology, chemistry, and physics as examples of courses students should experience in high school and college. In addition, 100% of the participants mentioned that their curriculums, institutions, and support services for students were essential toward helping prepare students prepare for college with 90% and above high school four year graduation rates, their students were college bound

College presidents and high school principals have mixed perceptions on the degree to which the Early College High School Initiative offers institutional benefits in New York City. While the majority of the participants indicated that there were institutional benefits from the ECHSI, there was a disparity between presidents and principals. In the specific areas of dedicated resources and personnel, presidents and principals, taking ownership of their early college schools and enthusiasm about their early college schools, principals had higher favorable responses compared to presidents. For example, all the six principals were enthusiastic about the early college high school, whereas only four (67%) of the presidents felt the same way. As it related to institutional benefits, the principals had higher supportive numbers than the presidents.

The participants reflected on the institutional benefits of the ECHSI in New York City and expressed the need for them to embrace a sense of ownership of their early college high schools. They voiced that it was important for the message to reflect the significance of the ECHSI in New York City.

While the process for collaboration has improved over the years, findings show there continues to be room for improvement. The participants expressed their willingness to communicate openly and regularly, working together across institutions, and recognizing their shared value as important aspects of their collaboration in New

York City. Participants expressed their willingness to communicate regularly had helped their curriculum reviews as well as teacher/faculty professional development. This enabled teachers and faculty in specific disciplines to talk and plan on a regular basis. While there was agreement by the participants regarding the process of collaborative process, participants acknowledged there challenges and obstacles to their collaboration.

College presidents expressed concerns in two areas. First, they expressed concern that the initial wave of philanthropic financial support has been exhausted, primarily from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. As the foundation support has been redirected to other worthy priorities nationally and internationally, college president were concerned about funding for the ECHSI. Second, presidents expressed concern with not being able to count ECHSI students in their national and state reporting metrics. This is of particular concern because the presidents expressed the fact that they invested institutional resources and ensured the success of high school students graduating with up to 60 college credits. As a result, the presidents were not as involved as they could have been because they did not see any benefits to their institutions.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The object of this qualitative study was to examine college presidents and high school principals in New York City and their perceptions of the value and institutional benefits of the Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) in New York City. In the study we worked to understand the factors that influenced to what degree did college presidents and high school principals believe early college high schools prepared students for success in higher education and did they share perceptions regarding the institutional benefits of the Early College High School Initiative. In addition, we sought to understand to what degree the process of collaboration has been an effective tool for the Early College High School Initiative in New York City. This study used collaboration as the theoretical framework (Gajda, 2004; William & Pettitt, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978; Austin, 2000) as the lens to analyze the data.

The primary information for this study was gathered by performing twelve in-depth interviews. Six of the interviews were with presidents of colleges within the City University of New York and six were with principals of early college high schools in the New York City Department of Education. All of the participants were involved with the Early College High School Initiative in New York City. The findings provided valuable insight and knowledge regarding the perceptions of the Early College High School Initiative in New York City held by college presidents and public school principals. The objective of the study was achieved.

There was limited research dealing with the Early College High School Initiative in New York City, while the City and State continues to include more schools, clearly underscores the need for this type of study. Findings also expands the dearth of literature on the Early College High School Initiative in New York. This chapter is a discussion of the study's findings and provides insight to state legislators, policy makers, educational leaders, and others considering expanding the early college high schools in the State of New York. The chapter includes details on implications of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, and it is followed by a conclusion.

Implications of Findings

Implication 1: The findings from this study expand the limited research related to the early college high school initiative in New York City. As noted earlier, at the time of this study, there was a surprising dearth of research on the early college high school initiative in New York City. Other studies focused on the perceptions of higher education administrators, faculty, public school administrators, and teachers in other states. This study will begin the process of meeting the need for literature focusing on the perceptions of college presidents and principals of early college high schools and their experiences in New York City. Because of this study, scholars will seek more empirical data that offers greater solutions to the collaboration between colleges and universities and the Early College High School Initiative. Recommendations for future research using quantitative and qualitative methods will be discussed in the section regarding recommendations for future research.

Implication 2: Higher education practitioners should examine the extent to which the campus environment encourages success for early college high school

students. While 92% identified that they had high expectations for early college high school students, 50% of the presidents viewed their institutions as providing a nurturing environment that motivates early college high school students. This 50% represents half of the presidents in the study and is an important part of this implication. A driving incentive for early college high students is reaching the point when they are physically on the college campus and taking classes.

Examining the early college high school structure on the college campus is an important part of this implication. Six of the principals (100%) said it was important to maintain an environment that encouraged and motivated early college high school students. However, this was not on the dashboard for 50% of the college presidents. The presidents were often far removed from knowing what happens to early college high school students while they are on their campuses. These details were often delegated to other administrators and staff who had other college related responsibilities. However, findings from the data suggest that it is not enough to assign a staff member with the responsibility to manage the early college high school initiative on campus. There needs to be a loop back to the president regarding what is happening to the students while they are on campus.

Implication 3: Policy makers and administrators responsible for designing and funding early college high schools should examine the impact of open enrollment on academic success and find ways to support principals and college presidents. The early college high school initiative community in New York City cannot expect to maintain high levels of academic achievement without financial support. In New York City, the Early College High School Initiative are open to all students. As a

result, students are entering early college high schools with a wide disparity of literacy skills. Participants acknowledged a special challenge of bringing students up to where they need to be while moving them into an accelerated curriculum required additional support. While New York is following the spirit of the Early College High School Initiative, this implication indicates that policy makers and administrators need to designate federal and state supported budget streams to provide additional instructional support, tutors, and extended school hours for literacy enhancement and STEM. In addition, it is important to recognize that the City University of New York's collaboration with the ECHSI supports the open enrollment component for the ECHS students.

During the National Early College High School Initiative Conference in North Carolina, it was revealed that their early college high schools were not open to all students and there was a selection process. Seventy-five percent of participants identified literacy enhancement in this study important for academic achievement of students in the early college high school initiative. Administrators responsible for developing Early College High Schools might examine its open enrollment policy and its impact on the potential for student success. Should they decide to maintain the open enrollment, policy makers and administrators should work with educators to provide permanent lines of funding to adequately support and to accommodate students at all literacy levels.

Implication 4: Early college high school practitioners should reassess the required level of commitment for colleges and public schools to participate in the early college high school initiative. Seventy-five percent of the participants identified having to regularly dedicate resources above and beyond what they had planned for throughout the year. The participants were committed to ensuring the academic success

of their students and viewed their investment as a benefit to their institution. In addition,

83% of the participants expressed their enthusiasm about the early college high school

initiative in New York City. When the early college high school initiative was first

started, there was significant philanthropic support for cities, higher education, and public

schools to get early college high schools up and running. In 2003, the Bill & Melinda

Gates Foundation awarded the City University of New York $6.75 million to establish 10

early college high schools in New York City. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has

invested over $1.7 billion to support over 1,800 high schools, nationally, as part of its

small-schools initiative and effort to increase high school graduation rates and college

access. However, the funding for the early college high schools had a limited lifespan

and the Gates Foundation has invested in other worthy causes nationally and

internationally. Now that the private philanthropic support has stopped in New York

City, as well as around the country, college presidents, early college high school

principals, the Department of Education, and public officials will need to include base-

line funding to support the operating budgets of colleges and early college high schools.

Policy makers and administrators might examine ways to provide adequate levels of

support for early college high schools so they can be sustained beyond the life of shorter

philanthropic financial support.

Implication 5: Policy makers, accrediting organizations, and government officials with higher education and K-12 oversight should reassess the reporting metrics colleges and universities use for participating in the Early College High School Initiative. The current national reporting and assessment requirements do not

allow colleges to include high school students graduating from high school with college

credits or an associate degree at the same time. An implication of this study would be for higher education administrators and early college high school initiative administrators to identify how higher education institutions can include ECHS students as part of their state and national reporting of student indicators, such as student persistence and graduation rates. This could have a major impact on the willingness of colleges and universities participating in the early college high initiative.

Implication 6: Early college high school administrators and higher education leaders need to ensure their overall operations systems and enrollment management systems are in sync. It is imperative that colleges, the early college high school, and the local Department of Education implements regular assessments of their student-centered management practices are in sync. For example, the college registrar, the early college high school guidance counselor, early college liaison, and a representative from the Department of Education should meet regularly to make sure goals are being achieved and that they there are looking across their entire institutions to address any operational issues impacting the early college high school students. There should be no reason for a college president to have to step in to remedy operational issues related to early college high school students. An implication is that the monitoring and oversight of the early college high school be elevated to a senior level position of the college administration. The New York City Department of Education administrators, high school guidance team and college administrators must develop seamless transitions for early college high school students.

Limitations

  This study focused on the Early College High School Initiative in New York City. The findings from this study are unique to the City University of New York and the New York City Department of Education. A small sample size is not unusual for qualitative studies, but means the results cannot be generalized to a larger population (Creswell, 2009). The researcher successfully recruited 6 of the 9 eligible presidents and 6 of the 12 eligible principals to participate in the study.

  The researcher knows that his insider positionality may have affected the ability of participants to be completely truthful in sharing their lived experiences with the Early College High School Initiative in New York City. Participants may have felt that they could not fully trust a high level administrator in the CUNY system, and therefore may have been less than forthcoming with criticisms regarding their experiences with CUNY, and the New York City Department of Education collaboration.

  The researcher is a college administrator with more than 10 years of experience working in a president's office at a college with an early college high school. In addition, prior to joining the college, the researcher served as a consultant to the lead philanthropic foundation which provided the major funding for the Early College High School Initiative nationally and in New York City. As a result, there is the possibility of research bias affecting the results.

  An issue that impacted the results of the study was that only two sources of data was collected-perceptions from in depth interviews and the reviewing of important documents. The original research proposal included methods for triangulating data collected from in in-depth interviews, reviewing important documents and conducting

focus groups. Given the timeframe of the study period, the researcher was not able to convene participants within the timeframe of this study. The IRB process took longer than expected and approval was received after the school year when professionals were on summer leave. While the absence of multiple methods for collection of data makes it difficult to verify the trustworthiness of the data, the researcher believed the field notes and journal suggested that participants were forthright in sharing their experiences with the Early College High School Initiative

Recommendations

       Recommendation for future research. Recommendations for future research that would add to the literature surrounding the early college high school initiative and perceptions of college presidents and high school principals include: (a) replicating this qualitative study throughout the State of New York; (b) conducting future research to examine the extent to which collaboration is working with the Early College High School Initiative from the perspective of the college and university administrators, as it would be important to understand the gap in perceptions regarding the value of the early college high school initiative as it relates to institutional benefits; (c) further research to examine the perceptions of private college and university administrators' opinions regarding the value and benefits of early college high school initiative; (d) further research to understand how the combination of literacy skills and exposure to STEM is required to prepare early college high school students with diverse skill levels for success in higher education; (e) conduct a study of the perceptions of college faculty and high school teachers who teach students in the early college high school initiative in New York City;

and (f) examine the perceptions of students' experiences in the early college high school initiative in New York City.

Recommendations for practitioners. A recommendation for practitioners includes the need to encourage regular meetings between the college president and the early college high school principal. In the majority of the cases, there was limited ceremonial interaction between the president and principal. Most of the principals were communicating with a designated college administrator other than the president. The oversight of the early college high school should be designated to a higher education administrator who is a member of the college president's cabinet. Moreover, the college president should visit their early college high school with some level of regularity and along with cabinet members receive updates on student performance and other related matters.

Another recommendation relates to student instruction on the college campus. The appeal to students, parents, and principals regarding early college high schools was the connection to a college or university. They all looked forward to the stage when students would experience the college environment. There was a sense that by just being on the college campus and seeing the students, faculty, and others, the experience would be transformative for students. In many cases, the participants expressed that early college students matured and were motivated by the college campus experience. It was the "power of place" that appeared to appeal and impact students. Therefore, administrators should integrate early college high school students into classes with existing college students. This would address the concerns raised regarding it early college high school students are really doing college-level work. The current funding

structure in New York City supports and encourages the cohort model, where the early college high school students are all in the same classes together and taught by an adjunct member of the faculty.

Recommendations for policy makers. There is a need for higher education policy makers to collaborate with college presidents and public school administrators to identify opportunities where success of the early college high school students can be counted or included in key indicators for colleges and universities. A major point was identified during the interviews which unearthed the disappointment and/or reluctance of higher education leaders to invest their institutional resources into their early college high schools when they cannot count or include the student success in their reporting accountability statistics. This recommendation also relates to the broader question raised during the first National Early College Initiative Conference where the discussion was around how do we get more presidents of four-year colleges interested and involved with the Early College High School Initiative. This is a national issue of concern.

Another recommendation is for policy makers with K-12 and higher education oversight to create a dedicated funding stream for early college high schools and their partnering college or university. As was referenced earlier in the study, the philanthropic support which funded the start-up costs for the Early College High School Initiative across the country has been reduced due their interest in other national and global priorities. In addition, reduced funding is impacting the level of resources that the college and early college high school have available to support the students. As state policy makers contemplate expanding early college high schools across the state, policy makers must include the funding to support the high school and the college or university.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of college presidents and high school principals of the Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) in New York City, which is still considered relatively young, and data related to student success is slowly becoming available. This study is especially beneficial to state legislators, policy makers, educational leaders, and others who are considering expanding the implementation of Early College High Schools throughout New York.

To gain insight into college presidents and public school principals perceptions of the Early College High School Initiative in New York City, this study examines their experiences through the lens of collaboration theory. Vygotsky's (1962; 1978) early conception of development provided a structure for considering collaboration as a social process in which meaning is constructed from discussions among group members, which offers insight into the conceptual framework establishing the Early College High School Initiative. Austin's (2000) work on cross-sector collaboration reports the growing stage where not-for-profit and for-profit organizations, and governments have come together to address problems and policies that they could not impact on their own.

The context of this study are the 12 early college high schools affiliated with the New York City Department of Education and the City University of New York. The research participants are a purposeful sample of six presidents of CUNY colleges who were collaborating with early college high schools and six principals of early college high schools collaborating with CUNY.

The three research questions were:

1. To what degree do college presidents and high school principals believe early college high schools prepare students for success in higher education?

2. To what degree to college presidents and high school principals share perceptions regarding the institutional benefits of the early college high school initiative?

3. To what degree has the process of collaboration been an effective tool for the early college program in New York City?

The findings of the study were consistent with the theoretical framework of collaboration. Collaboration is defined as two or more entities coming together to achieve a goal where they may not be able to accomplish individually. It also includes that both entities in the collaboration should benefit from the partnership. However, the findings from this study revealed a disparity in the perceptions of the early college high school initiative in New York City between the college presidents and early college high school principals. Throughout the findings there was a glaring gap where the early college high school principals were higher ends of the spectrum and in agreement in comparison to college presidents who were consistently at lower to middle ends of the spectrum and not in agreement as much as the principals. This may be explained and or a direct result of the fact that college presidents did not believe they or their college were not benefiting from their collaboration with the New York City Department of Education.

Another related observation revealed in the findings was the 'majestic" appeal of the college as the place of learning and academic success. This created a point of contention between the principals and college presidents. The overall early college high school goal is for students to make their way onto the college campus for college level

classes while in high school. Principals are trying to secure more space on the college campuses for their students, while college presidents are saying that are know little to no additional space to give to the early college high schools. The issue around space is extending to the use of the college gymnasium, performing arts centers, cafeterias, and classrooms, and classrooms.

Another revelation from the findings of this study was the distance of the college presidents from the college-related aspect of the early college high school. There were Presidents who did not know about certain aspects of the college related governance of their earl college high schools. That was primarily because the governance was delegated to staff member. In contrast, there were college presidents who were deeply and knowledgeable in the governance of their early college high schools. In comparison, the early college high school principals appeared to know everything about everything related to their early college high schools and college side of the collaboration. The principals even had recommendations for improvement. Simply stated, the principals were hungry to make the early college high school collaboration work.

The findings of this study also add to the study conducted by Chambers (2009) in North Carolina. Chambers findings concluded their early college schools reduced the need for remedial classes. There was a different finding in this study of early college high schools in New York City. While this study does not refereed to remedial classes, there are findings directly related to the need for support for literacy enhancement and STEM related course work for students entering the early college high schools. As was discussed in this study, the early college high schools in New York City are open to all students, including student with special needs. As a result, students enter sixth grade at

level 1, level 2, level 3, or level 4. This means some student enters above grade level, at grade level, or below grade level. The student who enter below grade level need assistance and the early college high schools are held accountable for showing progress with all students at each level. Simply stated, the early college high schools intensify the need for instructional support.

Chambers (2009) study included a finding that the perception was the college and the early college school benefitted equally. In this study, there was a recognizable disparity between the perceptions of the college presidents and the early college principals regarding the benefits of the early college high school. The principals place high premium on the collaboration whereas the college presidents were frequently at the lower end of the scale.

The early college high school movement is expanding nationally. It is the researcher' intent to identify that there is a genuine need for policy makers and others interested in this model to understand where the needs exist and recognize the fragile commitment and constraints of the college or university. The ultimate beneficiaries are those students in neighborhoods where they have a chance to attend and early college high school.

Finally, another finding from this study speaks to the fragility of the collaboration between the college and the ECHS. Grey's (1989) theory of collaboration implies that for institutional collaborations to be maintained, the participants must have an interest in the collaboration. Moreover, the partnering institutions must be able to benefit from or have an interest in the collaboration. School principals overwhelming saw value, had self-interest on behalf of their schools, and expressed they benefitted from the ECHSI

collaboration with CUNY. However, in contrast, CUNY college presidents did not believe they were benefitting from the collaboration. In addition, they did not see the return on their investment of the college resources being used for the ECHSI. In the context of Grey's theory on collaboration, the benefits and self-interest are being realized by only the principals, thus, rendering the collaborations fragile and vulnerable to sustainability over time. In order for presidents to remain engaged in the collaboration, they must believe there are benefits to their institutions in areas such as being able to include ECHS students in the college national and state reporting metrics including graduation rates, persistence rates, and retention rates.

In conclusion, the ECHSI is not the total solution to the challenges regarding improving the high school graduation rates and access to college. However, the ECHSI is an alternative public school model that provides an opportunity for low-income youth, first-generation college goers, English language learners, students of color, and other youth underrepresented in higher education to earn a high school diploma and college credits tuition free. ECHSI is making high-quality public schools and college accessible to students who otherwise may not have completed high school or college.

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Appendix A

Introductory Letter

Date

Dear_____:
I am a doctoral student at St. John's Fisher College, enrolled in the Doctor of Education
in Executive Leadership program. This letter is an invitation to participate in a research
study I am conducting.
My research study will focus on capturing the perceptions of college presidents and high
school principals. The topic is college presidents' and high school principals'
perceptions of the early college high school in New York. I request your participation in
an individual interview, which is approximately one hour.
If you agree to participate, the interview will be recorded using a digital recording device.
Your confidentiality will be maintained throughout the entire research process, and under
no circumstance will your identity appear in any report associated with this research.
Since this research aims to gain insight on the perceptions of the participants, there is no
need to be concerned about "right or wrong" answers. The goal is to obtain your
opinions and perceptions regarding this topic, which is most important.
If you agree to participate, please contact me at (646) 852-2714 at any time to schedule
the interview based on your availability. I look forward to hearing from you and thank
you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Earl G. Simons
Doctoral Degree Candidate in Executive Leadership

Appendix B

President Interview Questions

General Experience:

1. Describe your journey to becoming a college president.

   a. Did you have a vision for serving underrepresented children?

   b. Was there any single factor that shaped who you have become today?

   c. You know challenges administrators face with low enrollments of Black and Latino and other underrepresented groups and how so many of them enter our institutions ill prepared the academic rigor. If you had the opportunity to leverage college resources to better prepare students for college, describe the elements of an ideal program you would invest to address this complex issues of low student achievement among high school students. For example what types of in-classroom and out of class experiences would you invest college resources to achieve some desirable outcomes you deem essential?

   d. What are your general impressions about models of collaboration as a strategy to address complex issues in education?

Research Questions #1: To what degree do college presidents and high school principals believe early college schools prepare students for success in higher education?
2. How did you come to know about the Early College High School Program?

   a. What did you envision for this program?

   b. Do you think it has been an effective tool for preparing students to be college ready upon graduating from the program?

   c. Can you be specific about the benchmarks you have used to measure student preparedness and have they been rewarding or disappointing?

3. In your opinion, what were the major "highs" the program achieved?

   a. Are there any low points?

4. What shared values around student performance do you believe you share with principals?

   a. Are there any misperceptions around share values?

5. If you had to identify two of the greatest challenges you faced regarding student preparedness, what two challenges would you identify?

      a. What would you do to generate more desirable outcomes for these challenges?

Research Questions #2: To what degree do college presidents and high school principals share perceptions regarding the institutional benefits of the Early College Program?
1. Over the past 11 years, more than $40 million has been invested in the Early College Program in New York. To what degree do you feel the program outcome was worth the institutional resources?
    a. Are there other measurements you would examine in order to justify the Early College program?
    b. To what degree do you believe the resources allocated for the Early College program was worth the time and investment?

Research Questions #3: To what degree has the process of collaboration been an effective tool for the Early College Program in New York City?
1. Please describe the partnership between the college and the Early College High School.
    a. Describe any obstacles or challenges for the two institutions working together.
    b. What is the governing structure for your Early College High School partnership?
    c. Who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Early College program at the college?

What barriers would have to be overcome to create the perfect collaboration with mutual outcomes?

Appendix C

Principal Interview Questions

General Experience:

6. Describe your journey to becoming a principal.

    e. Did you have a vision for serving underrepresented children?

    f. Was there any single factor that shaped who you have become today?

    g. You know challenges administrators face with low enrollments of Black and Latino and other underrepresented groups and how so many of them enter our institutions ill prepared the academic rigor. If you had the opportunity to leverage college resources to better prepare students for college, describe the elements of an ideal program you would invest to address this complex issues of low student achievement among high school students. For example what types of in-classroom and out of class experiences would you invest college resources to achieve some desirable outcomes you deem essential?

    h. What are your general impressions about models of collaboration as a strategy to address complex issues in education?

Research Questions #1: To what degree do college presidents and high school principals believe early college schools prepare students for success in higher education?
7. How did you come to know about the Early College High School Program?

    a. What did you envision for this program?

    b. Do you think it has been an effective tool for preparing students to be college ready upon graduating from the program?

    c. Can you be specific about the benchmarks you have used to measure student preparedness and have they been rewarding or disappointing?

8. In your opinion, what were the major "highs" the program achieved?

    a. Are there any low points?

9. What shared values around student performance do you believe you share with principals?

    a. Are there any misperceptions around share values?

10. If you had to identify two of the greatest challenges you faced regarding student preparedness, what two challenges would you identify?

a. What would you do to generate more desirable outcomes for these challenges?

Research Questions #2: To what degree do college presidents and high school principals share perceptions regarding the institutional benefits of the Early College Program?

2. Over the past 11 years, more than $40 million has been invested in the Early College Program in New York. To what degree do you feel the program outcome was worth the institutional resources?
    a. Are there other measurements you would examine in order to justify the Early College program?
    b. To what degree do you believe the resources allocated for the Early College program was worth the time and investment?

Research Questions #3: To what degree has the process of collaboration been an effective tool for the Early College Program in New York City?

2. Please describe the partnership between the college and the Early College High School.
    a. Describe any obstacles or challenges for the two institutions working together.
    b. What is the governing structure for your Early College High School partnership?
    c. Who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Early College program at the college?

What barriers would have to be overcome to create the perfect collaboration with mutual outcomes?