2013-07-31

Brockton Preparatory School: A Case Study on Educational Leadership in the Establishment and Sustaining of a Private, Nonprofit, University Preparatory School in North Vancouver, British Columbia

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Establishment and Sustaining of a Private, Nonprofit, University Preparatory School in

North Vancouver, British Columbia

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

GRADUATE DIVISION OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

CALGARY, ALBERTA

JULY, 2013

Abstract

The following is a single case study that looked at the establishment and sustainment of Brockton Preparatory School, a private, nonprofit, university preparatory school in North Vancouver, British Columbia.

Within a constructivist paradigm, this study utilized a qualitative approach within case study methodology. The unit of analysis was a single bounded case limited to Brockton Preparatory School. Interviews were conducted with 26 educational leaders who were involved in the establishment and sustainment of this organization from 2004 to 2012. Participants included current and previous educational administrators, Board Directors, parents, faculty, and staff. School documentation was analyzed to assist in examining convergent lines of inquiry. Interviews were conducted to explore how and why educational leaders were successful in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton Preparatory School.

This study used the work of Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) to assist in the development of a conceptual framework that focused on the data analysis process. This conceptual framework helped to determine the themes that emerged in the study by establishing initial categories that directly related to the research questions, with descriptors based both on reviewed literature as well as my own observations and conceptualizations.

The findings suggested that the establishment and sustainment of Brockton Preparatory School was achieved through a dedicated and intense educational entrepreneurial effort primarily attributed to: (a) the high levels of parent leadership demonstrated throughout the foundation and sustainment years; (b) the success of the

school's founders in being able to offer an enhanced learning experience; (c) the

sustained and high level of overall teacher, administrative, volunteer, and parent

leadership; (d) the sustained ability on the part of the school governors and administrators

to successfully maintain a high level of resource and human capital efficiency; and

finally, (e) a high level of commitment demonstrated towards the establishment of the

endeavour.

The study concludes with the presentation of: (a) specific recommendations for

educational entrepreneurs who are particularly interested in establishing a parent-based

organization, and (b) a new parent-based educational entrepreneurship model.

This study contributes to the emerging picture of educational entrepreneurship in

the private, nonprofit K-12 realm.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express gratitude to members of the academic community, in particular to Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann for her clarity, patience, dedication, and encouragement as my doctoral supervisor throughout these years. I would also like to thank Dr. Shelleyann Scott as well as Dr. J. Kent Donlevy for their detailed guidance as members of my supervision committee. Additional thanks must go to Dr. Nancy Arthur and Dr. Keith Walker, who joined the supervisory committee in the examination of this study.

I would like to give special and heartfelt thanks to the current and former parents, governors, administrators, staff, and faculty of Brockton Preparatory School who gave their support, time, and commitment to establish the organization starting in 2004, and who have supported it until the end of this study. I would like to particularly offer my most sincere appreciation and thanks to all Brockton community members who participated in this study. This study would not have been possible without your insight and support.

Dedication

To my wife, Tania, for your love, kindness, patience, wisdom, support, and encouragement every step of the way. To my two amazing boys, Sebastian and Julian, for your love, patience, fabulous questions, and understanding throughout these years.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This study looked at the establishment and sustainment of Brockton Preparatory School, in North Vancouver, British Columbia, from an educational leadership perspective. Brockton School formally started operations as the only independent, nonprofit, university preparatory school offering the International Baccalaureate curriculum in this municipality in September 2004. As of the end of the 2010-2011 school year, Brockton School remained the only school of its kind out of 10 other independent schools in North Vancouver, meaning that no other independent school in North Vancouver was offering the International Baccalaureate curriculum. A simple search of approved independent and or private schools in North Vancouver through the British Columbia Ministry of Education reflected Brockton School's unique position within the North Vancouver School District, making Brockton School a unique and interesting case to study.

It is clear that the start-up of a private, nonprofit, educational endeavour is not an easy feat, particularly in Canada where the public school system enjoys exemplary recognition from around the world. Why would parents, teachers, administrators, and students be interested in starting a school that would be funded on average only between 10% to 20% by government grants and the rest of its budget would need to come from families who already pay taxes to support a public school system that enjoys a very good reputation?

I had come to the point in my educational career where I was most keen to know what happens, or needs to happen, at the leadership level when a private school is started.

Given my previous immersion into private education, the assumption of choice had

always been in the front and centre of any personal endeavour. As I researched doctoral

programs in education while living and working in the Vancouver Lower Mainland, it

was difficult for me to find a choice that provided the particular kind of research interests

I was keen on pursuing. Thankfully, the University of Calgary, through the Graduate

Division of Educational Research, offered the Doctor of Education in Administration and

Leadership program to which I applied with the knowledge that "[school] choice is one of

the important principles Alberta's education system is built on" (Alberta Education, n.d.,

para. 2).

In contrast with some private, non-denominational schools that were started in the

Vancouver Lower Mainland before and during the early 1900s (e.g., Crofton House in

Vancouver, founded in 1898; St Georges School, founded in 1930; and York House

School in Vancouver, founded in 1932), in more recent years, there have been several

examples of successful K-12 private educational organizations flourishing in the area.

These schools are all currently in operation (e.g., Collingwood School in West

Vancouver, founded 1984; Meadowridge School in Maple Ridge, founded in 1985; St.

John's School in Vancouver, founded 1986; Mulgrave School in West Vancouver,

founded in 1993; Stratford Hall School in Vancouver, founded 1999; as well as Brockton

School in North Vancouver, founded 2004.

For the majority of these schools, the history of their inception as well as the

people involved in the process might now be a thing of the past. Out of all these

examples, the most recent school to be founded and sustained would be Brockton

Preparatory School in North Vancouver. Therefore, it would offer a more immediate

perspective of the implications, leadership requirements, and strategies that would successfully enable for the foundation of a private, nonprofit, K-12 educational organization in the Vancouver Lower Mainland.

It is also interesting to note the popularity that the International Baccalaureate program has gained, particularly around the schools that have been founded during the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. Out of the six schools that were founded post-1980 in the Vancouver Lower Mainland area, five have committed to offering the International Baccalaureate curriculum. My intent was to develop a case study about the establishment and sustainment of the most recently established school, and investigate how and why educational leaders were successful in supporting Brockton School.

Biographical Background

I was born in Mexico City in 1970. My paternal heritage can be traced back to the 1600s directly to the town of Pendueles in what was then considered to be the Kingdom of Asturias, which is now part of Spain. I was raised in the West side of Mexico City and attended a private Catholic school from kindergarten to grade 12. I completed a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and Economics at the Universidad Iberoamericana, a Catholic-influenced university administered by the Jesuit Order of Mexico. After I concluded my initial studies, I started to work as a teacher and administrator at Escuela Bancaria y Comericial (EBC), a private secondary and post-secondary educational institution founded in part by my maternal grandfather. EBC is considered to be the first private educational organization to be established in the country. Today, EBC has an enrolment above 10,000 students, with well over 100,000 graduates.

In 2003, I moved to Vancouver with my young family to pursue a Masters of Educational Administration and Leadership at the University of British Columbia and further worked in the education field as Development Coordinator for the Vancouver Waldorf School in North Vancouver, as the founder of Innerland Learning Centre in North Vancouver, as Dean of Students, then President at the Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine in New Westminster, and finally as a Senior Consultant to the Business Families Centre at the Sauder School of Business of the University of British Columbia.

Furthermore, I started my doctoral studies in educational administration and leadership in the summer of 2006 at the University of Calgary. I have served as a volunteer director on the Brockton School Board of Governors and currently serve as a partner of Innerland Learning Centre, a North Vancouver-based consultancy established to promote and enhance inquiry and leadership skills in individuals and organizations. I also currently serve as a business partner of One Smart World solutions based out of Collingwood, Ontario.

Brockton School came to my attention in 2004, particularly because it is based in the municipality in which I live. The International Baccalaureate curriculum was a founding component and a strong commitment of Brockton School from the start. Given my own familiarity and appreciation of the International Baccalaureate curriculum, I have always remained aware of the new strategies and ventures being developed, both locally and internationally, on the part of this organization. Furthermore, in the spring of 2010, my partner and I decided to enroll our two children as students at Brockton School, while at the same time I suggested the possibility of engaging the school in this study. The

Head of School as well as the Board of Directors graciously agreed to allow and support this project. Furthermore, in the same year, I was invited to participate in Brockton School as a Board Member, which I served for less than a year. My emic and etic positionality within the organization allowed for a considerable level of immersion into the organization, while at the same time presented risks because of the potential for some of the participants to perceive my role within the school as an authority figure.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine how and why were educational leaders successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton School (Brockton), focusing on three main areas: (a) the establishment of Brockton; (b) the sustainment of Brockton; and (c) the leadership traits, qualities, or experiences that enabled educational leaders to be successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton. North Vancouver is an area in British Columbia that is divided into two municipalities: the District of North Vancouver and the City of North Vancouver. The District is a surrounding extension of the City. For the purposes of this study, both the District and the City were considered as the municipality of North Vancouver.

Formal provincial regulation for independent education in British Columbia started with the Independent School Act of 1977 after considerable efforts from a large number of non-government funded, non-regulated schools of which the majority were denominational schools in the Catholic, Anglican, and Calvinist traditions (Barman, 1991; Cunningham, 2002). Other non-denominational schools have been established under the same Act in the last 30 years.

When referring to educational leaders, I do not necessarily make reference to individuals in formal leadership roles within Brockton, but also include school parents, Board members, formal managers, staff, and faculty; given the nature of their endeavours, they had contributed to the success of an educational organization.

Objectives of the Study

The first objective was to identify individuals who had undertaken formal and informal leadership roles within Brockton over the last seven years. The second objective was to be able to contact and interview as many as possible of these individuals, in order to document their roles, purposes, strategies, perspectives, challenges, and opportunities as well as to identify the traits, qualities, and experiences that enabled them to be successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton. The third objective was to review as much documented information as possible starting from the period prior to the school's formal foundation in 2004 and up until the end of 2011. The fourth objective was to analyze, synthesize, present, and discuss the findings of this qualitative inquiry effort in order to identify the major reasons for Brockton's establishment and sustainment as a case study that may inform individuals in the field of private school administration and leadership.

Ethics Approval

The Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board at the University of Calgary approved this study on November 4, 2010. Interviews were undertaken from January 2011 to May 2011 and conducted in the Vancouver Lower Mainland area of British Columbia (BC), generally at Brockton's current school premises at 3467 Duval Road in North Vancouver. Some interviews were arranged in participants' offices in the City of

Vancouver to accommodate their scheduling needs and work responsibilities. Other interviews were conducted in my office in my place of residence in North Vancouver.

Brockton's administration or Board of Directors provided the formal, strategic, and board documentation utilized for this study. This documentation was either photocopied by me or received electronically and kept at my home office, where the analysis and writing of this case study took place.

Research Questions

The main research question was: How and why were educational leaders successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton Preparatory School? The main research question was supported by eight additional sub questions:

1. How did the school begin?

2. What was the purpose and perspective for starting Brockton?

3. How were Brockton founders successful in establishing the organization?

4. Why were Brockton founders successful in establishing the organization?

5. How were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization?

6. Why were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization?

7. What do you identify to be the particular leadership traits, qualities or experiences that enabled educational leaders to be successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton?

8. What do you identify as the successful strategies that led to Brockton's existence?

Given that educational entrepreneurship is an emerging field and the concept might have been unfamiliar to the participants of this study, the sub questions of this study were developed with more familiar wording such as establishment and sustainment. The concept of educational entrepreneurship began to emerge with more frequency in literature as this study was on its way. Nevertheless, the concept of educational leadership captured the essence of establishment and sustainment, which were the concepts of study.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study centred on the unique circumstances and conditions in which Brockton was established as well as the emerging picture of educational entrepreneurship in the field. Several scholars in the last five years have researched and written about educational entrepreneurship (Caldwell, 2005; Cordes, Steuerle, & Twombly, 2004; Cuban, 2006; Hentschke & Caldwell, 2005; Hess, 2006, 2008; Sandler, 2010; Scott & Webber, 2013; Webber & Scott, 2008; Woods, 2013). Brockton served as a unique and interesting case exploration into an organizational beginning (e.g., establishment and sustainment) for the purpose of identifying models and recommendations that would be significant in both educational practice and academia.

Additionally, the foundation of private, nonprofit, university preparatory K-12 educational organizations is a limited occurrence in BC, therefore offering a unique perspective of this phenomenon.

This study was significant for several groups of people who were informed by it, such as current and past Brockton Directors as well as formal Brockton educational administrators, particularly in that it has offered analysis and interpretation of interviews

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as well as extensive school documentation that may provide valuable insights into the past, present, and future of the school. In addition, this study could be significant for local, national, and international government officials working in ministries of education or other educational regulatory bodies who may be informed by this study, particularly in areas such as independent school policy development, supervision, evaluation, and research. Individuals interested in independent school start-ups as well as educational entrepreneurship may also find this study significant given its focus on the establishment of an independent school from an educational leadership perspective. Next, independent school researchers or academics in the field of educational administration and leadership may find this study significant, as it serves as another case study looking at the successful establishment of a Canadian independent school. Finally, it is believed that current and previous students, faculty, staff, parents, or guardians at Brockton may find this study significant because it may provide additional information and perspectives in regards to the events and situations lived throughout their participation as members of the school community.

Assumptions

1. Eleven percent of students attend private schools in BC (BC Ministry of Education, Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools, 2011, p. 1). Parents or guardians who send their children to private schools in BC pay tuition directly to their children's schools and expect some form of enhanced educational experience.

2. Parents who send their children to private schools generally perceive their children's educational experience to be more rewarding than at their local public education alternative.

3. Because of the nature of their numbers, private, nonprofit educational organizations in North America in general and BC in particular have not received similar scholarly attention when compared with public education; therefore, the amount of published research available for this study was limited.

Delimitations

This project was limited to the study of the single case of Brockton's establishment in the District of North Vancouver, BC. The data were obtained by an examination of formal school documentation as well as interviews involving Brockton leaders who played a role in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton. The study was originally limited to 30 participants, out of which 26 were secured, totaling 34 hours of interviews.

This study represents a bounded single case limited to Brockton School in North Vancouver, BC, and therefore, the findings may not transfer to other contexts either in BC or the rest of Canada without adaptation and contextualization. An additional delimitation was associated to the socioeconomic level implied by tuition-paying parents/guardians who support the additional expense of approximately $15,000 per year, per student. The International Baccalaureate curriculum may be a limitation as well, in that the program requires certain academic expectations that are not applicable to other independent schools.

The design of this study limited the inclusion of other outside stakeholders who may have informed the study, such as government employees, neighbours, as well as members of external organizations such as the International Baccalaureate, the Federation of Independent School Associations of BC, and the Independent School Association of BC.

Limitations

1. Educational entrepreneurship is an emerging field and, therefore, literature on the subject was limited. Furthermore, educational entrepreneurship literature with a focus on private, nonprofit, university preparatory K-12 education was also limited.

2. My positionality as a parent and Board member may have affected the perception and interpretation of the gathered data.

3. The nature of this study as a single case limited the applicability and transferability of findings to other contexts.

Definition of Terms

Educational leaders refer to all individuals who supported the establishment and sustainment of Brockton through its initial eight years of operations regardless of their formal role in the organization, profession, or background. These individuals included some parents, faculty, staff, formal managers, and Board members.

Establishment refers to the enablement of all necessary elements to operate a private, nonprofit educational organization in the Province of BC.

Sustainment and success refer to the continual viability and operation of an educational organization.

Founders refer to individuals who inspired, managed, and sustained the start-up of Brockton in September 2004.

Senior managers refer to formal senior educational leaders in charge of the operation of Brockton who are under the school's employment.

Parent refers to guardians responsible for the enrolment and payment of tuition for each individual student.

Volunteer refers to individuals who offered their time or resources to Brockton without expectation of personal benefit or remuneration throughout its initial eight years of operations.

Head of School refers the chief school executive under the employment and supervision of a private school society board of governors.

Bounded case refers to the establishment and sustainment of Brockton in particular in contrast to other organizations or groups of organizations.

Outline of the Dissertation

In Chapter 1, I have introduced the context, purpose of the study, ethics approval, research question, significance of the study, biographical background, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations of the study as well as definition of terms. In Chapter 2, the literature review, I introduce leadership theories and then progress to educational leadership theories. The notion of nonprofit organizational theory and leadership in nonprofit organizations are reviewed in this chapter. Furthermore, the notion of business entrepreneurship is explored, followed by nonprofit entrepreneurship as well as educational entrepreneurship and independent K-12 education in BC; objectives and influence of the International Baccalaureate Organization are also presented.

In Chapter 3, I describe the paradigmatic approach and qualitative research and case study methodology. In addition, the role of the researcher is explored; methods and the sources of data are clarified, such as interviews and documentation; trustworthiness as well as the process that was followed in regards to the evaluation and analysis of findings, including Bloomberg and Volpe's (2008) conceptual framework, are discussed. In Chapter 4, I elaborate on the case in detail and describe Brockton's context, situation, facilities, enrolment numbers, and brief history. In Chapter 5, I present the results of the study. In Chapter 6, the discussion of the study will unfold, and Chapter 7 is devoted to conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I introduced the purpose of the study as well as the research question and sub questions. I also introduced my own interest in this particular aspect of educational leadership as well as my current and previous experiences that may be relevant to the study. Additionally, the context and history of independent education in North Vancouver, BC was described.

The next chapter will present an overview of traditional leadership and educational leadership theory; as well, nonprofit, business, and educational entrepreneurship literature will be presented. Additionally, an overview of independent K-12 education in North America, Canada, and BC, as well as contextualization regarding the International Baccalaureate Organization will be provided.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine how and why educational leaders were successful in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton School (Brockton). As the researcher, I was particularly interested in understanding how a private, nonprofit, independent school had been developed, implemented, and sustained in the district of North Vancouver, BC, starting in the fall of 2004. To properly conduct this study, it was important to engage in a critical review of relevant and current literature relating to the purpose of this study.

In this literature review, I have explored general notions of leadership. This review addresses particular theories in educational leadership that include distributed leadership, learning organizations, leadership for change, cultural and moral leadership, politics of leadership, emotional intelligence leadership, sustainable leadership, and instructional leadership.

Brockton was established as a private, nonprofit organization with charitable status validated by the Canada Revenue Agency. Several individuals with business, legal, educational, and nonprofit entrepreneurship and operational experience supported this start-up effort. For these reasons, this chapter will include a review on independent school education in Canada, and in BC in particular, followed by a section on educational entrepreneurship and an exploration of nonprofit organizational theory. I also present an exploration of literature in leadership in nonprofit organizations and an exploration of literature in nonprofit entrepreneurship as well as its relationship with business

entrepreneurship, recognizing that many of the people who begin private schools may come from business and nonprofit sectors, and both sectors value entrepreneurship.

The review of general leadership theory, educational leadership theory, independent school education, educational and nonprofit entrepreneurship as well as business entrepreneurship are presented to provide a context for understanding the purpose and perspective of independent, private, nonprofit school entrepreneurship.

Leadership

This study looked at the establishment and sustainment of Brockton from an educational leadership perspective. It was, therefore, important to review leadership theory in general as a starting point. As stated by Bass (1990), the study of leadership is an ancient art and has been at the centre of the organizational debate for many years. Leadership can be exercised at most levels within organizations and in most activities. Leadership is not based on a particular position, but rather can be found and built within the organization.

Leadership is focused on the type of influence an individual within the organization might have over another, as presented by Yukl (2002) when he stated that most definitions of leadership "reflect the assumption that it involves a process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person over other people to guide, structure, facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organization" (p. 2). Northouse (2001), defined leadership as a "process by which an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve common goals" (p. 4). Another way of approaching a definition of leadership is to contrast it to the concept of management.

Management pertains to the structures and processes by which organizations meet their goals and central purposes (Buhler, 1995; Burns, 1978; Kotter, 1990) and is more likely to be tied to a formal organizational position rather than to persons within an organization. Management is clearly a structural position, which comes with responsibilities and accountabilities (Buhler, 1995), and in contrast to management, leadership is a process of influence rather than a structural or authoritative one.

When it comes to addressing leadership theory, Dym and Hutson (2005) defended that:

> There is no comprehensive, commonly held formal theory of leadership. Instead there are many, various, sometimes conflicting theories. Some focus on the archetypical character traits of leaders. Others emphasize the ways in which leaders interact with followers. Still others concern themselves with the circumstances that bring out leadership or that demand different kinds of leadership. Each theory has its explanatory virtues. (p. 35)

Literature in leadership can be categorized into several general themes, including: trait theories; contingency and situational theories; transformational and transactional theories; instructional theories, and others.

Trait theories. According to Drake and Roe (1999), several studies aimed to identify specific qualities or characteristics that would distinguish leaders from non-leaders, ranging from inborn attributes such as physical characteristics (some may argue even intelligence), to traits acquired through the environment, socialization, or training, such as speaking abilities or social behaviour. Nevertheless, it appears as if leadership traits are perceived differently within various social or cultural contexts and in relationship with the expectations of the leadership role (Casimir & Waldman, 2007). The enactment of leadership traits varies across cultures (Hartog, House, Hanges, & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1999; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). Leaders who are

required to interact with a diverse set of followers, or who work in a foreign environment,

need to recognize that notions of what constitutes ideal leadership may vary culturally

(Shaw, 1990). In this respect, shared ideologies and values (Hunt, Boal, & Sorenson,

1990) influence specific behaviours (Gioia & Poole, 1984; Lord & Maher, 1991).

Contingency and situational theories. These theories shift the focus of

leadership abilities from individual traits clearly towards specific situations and contexts

(Fiedler, 1964; Fiedler & Chemers, 1974; Hersey & Blanchard, 1988; Vroom & Yetton,

1973; Whitaker, 1998). As stated by Fiedler (1967), one of the early scholars in this

movement,

> Any one style of leadership is not in itself better than any other, nor is one type of
> leadership behaviour appropriate for all conditions, hence almost anyone should
> be able to succeed as a leader in some situations and almost everyone is likely to
> fail in others. It also follows from this theory that one can improve group or
> organizational performance either by changing the leader to fit the situation or
> changing the situation to fit the leader. (p. 246)

> Hersey and Blanchard (as cited in Veccio, Bullis, & Brazil, 2006) suggested that

the leader should adjust behaviour to match the maturity level of the group:

> The theory contends that leader effectiveness (measured typically by subordinate
> or group performance) is not merely a function of leader behaviour, but rather is a
> joint function of leader behaviour and situational requirements. More specifically,
> situational leadership theory espouses that subordinate readiness for self-direction
> (typically labelled subordinate readiness or subordinate maturity) is a key
> situational determinant of the appropriate mix of leader behavioural style. (p. 408)

Transformational and transactional leadership. Denhardt and Campbell (2006)

offered the following definition of transformational leadership:

> The values and morals of both the leader and follower are elevated through the
> relationship; both parties become mobilized, inspired, uplifted. It is only this form
> of leadership that has the capacity to move groups, organizations, even societies
> toward the pursuit of higher purposes. (p. 559)

Transformational leadership enables the renewal of individual and collective

organizational missions and visions, facilitating a restructuring of the system by creating

conditions that are arguably ideal for attaining organizational objectives (Roberts, 1985).

Roberts (1985) also presented this approach of leadership as offering a vision of what

could be, providing the organization with a sense of purpose and collective meaning. He

further clarified that this model is aimed at building commitment through enthusiasm,

allowing for a future to be envisioned and assuming organizational objectives to be

manageable and achievable. Transformational leadership empowers people to participate

more fully in the organization, thus providing team members with a sense of hope and

direction, which was also supported by Blanton (2007). Burns (1978) defended that

transformational leadership is concerned with liberty, justice, and equality as general

values.

Transformational leadership has had an important impact on educational

administration (Gronn, 1996; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999). Leithwood et al.

(1999) developed the following eight-dimensional model of transformational leadership

specifically designed for educational organizations:

> (1) Building school vision; (2) establishing school goals; (3) providing intellectual
> stimulation; (4) offering individualized support; (5) modelling best practices and
> important organizational values; (6) demonstrating high performance
> expectations; (7) creating a productive school culture; and (8) developing
> structures that foster participation in school decisions. (p. 9)

The notion of transactional leadership came from the principle that leadership is

seen as involving a series of exchanges between leaders and followers. In this type of

leadership, the leader and follower come together in a relationship that advances the

interests of both, but there is no deep or enduring link between them. They are simply

self-interested participants in an exchange process (Burns, 1978). In which case,

coinciding self-interests amongst team members would increase performance.

Leadership in nonprofit organizations. Dym and Hutson (2005) offered

guidance on nonprofit leadership:

> While growing (see the journal *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*),
> [literature on nonprofit leadership] is still pretty thin. Generally it follows the
> corporate leadership literature in being primarily prescriptive, not descriptive. It
> tells more about how to lead and much less about how leaders actually go about
> their business. (p. 6)

Dym and Hutson additionally defended that "good leadership can be found in both

corporate and nonprofit organizations, though its corporate forms are generally taken as

our culture's ideal- widely researched, broadly revered, and, as we see it, routinely

misapplied to nonprofit organizations" (p. 1). Dym and Hutson shared some descriptions

and pointers on nonprofit leaders:

> What nonprofit leaders sometimes lack in formal education and management
> expertise, they make up in enthusiasm, energy and often enough, inventiveness.
> They learn quickly because they must; they build their ships as they sail; they
> innovate to solve the problems encountered along the way. (p. 47)

Another descriptive element of nonprofit leaders is that "both directors and board

members must spend more time raising money" (p. 47).

Authors who brought together nonprofit leadership with the current business

leadership narrative include: Henton, Melville, and Walesh (1997) who wrote about

grassroots leadership; Grogan (2000) who wrote about urban neighborhood revival;

Schorr (1997) who wrote about strengthening families and neighborhoods; and Letts,

Ryan, and Grossman (1999) who wrote about high performance nonprofit organizations.

Authors who have presented nonprofit leadership as distinct from for-profit would

include: Karoff (2004) who wrote a critique on contemporary American philanthropy;

Light (1998) who wrote about natural innovation in nonprofits; and Dym and Hutson (2005) who wrote generally about nonprofit leadership.

Other leadership theories. Being such a vast subject, in addition to those described, there are many other leadership theories. Some of these include (a) the managerial grid theory (Blake & McCanse, 1991), based on identifying the appropriate correlation between concern for production with concern for people; (b) the path-goal theory (House & Mitchell, 1974), which presented the idea that successful leadership is achieved by the ability to motivate and clarify the roles of subordinates; and (c) the leader-style theory (Vroom & Jago, 1998), which expected leadership decisions to be of the highest quality possible and for there to be high subordinate commitment to these decisions.

Educational Leadership

As is the case of leadership theory in general, there has been much written to reflect leadership within educational organizations. Some of the theories that can be identified within educational leadership literature include distributed leadership, learning organizations, leadership for change, cultural and moral leadership, politics of leadership, emotional intelligence leadership, sustainable leadership, as well as instructional leadership.

Distributed leadership. Spillane (2005) defined distributed leadership as being, first and foremost, about leadership practice rather than leaders or their roles, functions, routines, and structures. Even though these are important considerations, leadership practice is considered the starting point. Leadership practice is viewed as a product of the interactions of particular leaders, followers, and their situations.

In recognizing the abilities of each individual within the educational organization, and validating these, every member of the organization can become a leader in his/her own practice. The idea of teachers as leaders (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, & Hann, 2002) as well as the idea of students as leaders (Levin, 2000) within an educational organization clearly illustrates this approach.

Learning organizations. Senge (1990) considered learning organizations as the ones where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they desire, where particularly new and expansive patterns of thinking are supported, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together. Learning organizations are also considered to be organizations with a capacity for team building and knowledge acquisition. Additional aspects within learning organizations would be systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision as well as team learning. Leaders within learning organizations direct the profound and intense interaction and positive energy of all its members towards a process of learning that is continuous for the purpose of positively influencing practice and organizational growth (Mulford, 1998; Senge, 1996).

Leadership for change. Much has been written about change in educational leadership (Cheng, 2002; Elmore, 2000; Fullan, 1995, 2001; Hobban, 2002; Sarason, 1990; Sleegers, Geijsel, & van den Berg, 2002; Stoll, Bolam, & Collarbone, 2002). Stoll et al. (2002) defended that:

> Leading change in schools concerns decisions about the changes that leaders wish to lead and how best to do so. It involves leadership of those things that they do not want to lead but must lead. Finally, it concerns finding ways to connect these decisions coherently in order to make them meaningful to relevant stakeholders as well as themselves. (p. 41)

Globalization as well as educational policy development and educational reform are themes where leadership for change is a central aspect from the macro level (e.g., government, state, centralization, etc.) to the micro level (e.g., school change, departmental change, and local implementation). Change affects different organizational levels in different ways.

Fullan (2001) presented five components of leaders who were more effective in leading change successfully. These are (a) moral purpose, (b) understanding change, (c) relationships, (d) knowledge building, and (e) coherence making. Fullan's framework implied that these capacities can naturally lead to commitment by the members of the organization, and in turn yield positive results.

Cultural and moral leadership. Peterson and Deal (1998) stated, "It is up to school leaders—principals, teachers, and often parents—to help identify, shape, and maintain strong, positive, student-focused culture" (p. 29). Further, they asserted that the school leaders' morals, words, nonverbal messages, actions, and accomplishments shape school culture. "These school leaders are historians, anthropologists, visionaries, and dreamers. They are potters, poets, actors, and healers" (p. 30). Specifically, school leaders shape culture by communicating core values, honouring and recognizing those who serve the school, and observing rituals and traditions. Further, they recognize heroes and heroines, they articulate the school mission, and they celebrate staff, students, and community accomplishments.

Politics of leadership. Some of the literature in this category is represented by authors such as Blase and Anderson (1995), Blase and Blase (2002), Petersen and Fusarelli (2005) as well as Slater and Boyd (1999). The main idea behind politics of

leadership can be centred in the struggle of the use of bargaining, assertiveness, higher authority, and coalition as strategies to influence the organization. The goal to be reached depends on the context of the organization. Politics of leadership could be used either to emancipate the oppressed or to direct an impulse stagnant or demoralized personnel. Literature on the subject (Foley, 2000; Heymann, 1989; Neustadt, 1960; Skowronek, 2000) has examined primarily formal roles of heads of state, such as presidents and prime ministers in particular, as well as public managers, considering levels of influence as well as their ethical ramifications.

Emotional intelligence leadership. Emotional intelligence focuses on the leader's ability to understand, interpret, and be responsive to the emotions of people; this is the central aspect to leadership success. Goleman (2002) defended that great leaders move us by igniting our passion and inspiring the best in us.

Some other authors who referred to emotions and emotional intelligence in leadership included Ackerman (2001), Blackmore (1996), Boler (1999), Fineman (2000), Hargreaves (2003), James and Connolly (2001), as well as Loader (1997). Prati, Douglas, Ferris, Ammeter, and Buckley (2003) stated that emotional intelligence reflects the ability to understand others emotionally and in social contexts. It serves to detect nuances of emotions and to use such insight to influence others. Prati et al. further defended that it represents a critically important competency for effective leadership and team performance in organizations today.

Sustainable leadership. This model of leadership is centred not only on endurance, but also as Hargreaves and Fink (2003) stated sustainable leadership matters, spreads, and lasts by not unduly depleting human or financial resources and through

caring and avoiding negative damage on the adjacent community. Sustainable leadership has an activist element and promotes a diverse educational environment promoting cross-fertilization of good ideas and successful practices in communities. Other scholars offered their views on sustainability within educational organizations and the leader's ability to enhance direct and consolidate this approach (Datnow, 2000; Stoll, 1999; Tyack, 1990).

Instructional leadership. This leadership model appears to have been particularly tailored to educational organizations. Instructional leaders strive to achieve better instruction to enhance learning. Many leadership models can be applied to several different types of organizations. Nevertheless, instructional leaders would attempt to move an educational institution in the particular direction of academic success and into the domain of instruction (Burns, 1978; Greenfield, 1987; Krug, 1993). According to these same authors, instructional leadership requires: (a) defining a mission, (b) managing curriculum and instruction, (c) supervising teaching, (d) monitoring student progress, and (e) promoting instructional climate. Krug (1993) defended that the educational leader is responsible for creating a sense of educational excitement at all levels of the organization and for enthusiastically driving the interest of students and teachers in productive ways.

Synthesis and Overview

The leadership theories presented in this chapter help to explain aspects of educational theory. Distributed leadership invites and allows all members of an organization to become active leaders. Learning organizations summon the accumulated learning experience of leaders in order to consolidate a stronger position with time.

Leadership for change gives educational leaders the opportunity to be open and flexible to the internal and external needs for transformation as they relate to the organization. Cultural and moral leadership considers axiological positions as influencing or directing the aims of an educational organization. Politics of leadership looks into the personal and institutional bartering processes that have to do with persuasion and influence. Emotional intelligence leadership considers the management, communication, and provocation of emotions as a leadership model within educational organizations. Sustainable leadership serves as a form of maintaining long-term goals and results, and instructional leadership focuses on the constant improvement of instruction and learning.

These theories represent different and important aspects and dimensions of educational leadership and have helped many educational leaders understand and further their goals. For the purposes of this study, these educational leadership theories were considered as important in helping to understand the entrepreneurial efforts that lead to the establishment and sustainment of Brockton as a nonprofit, charitable, and private educational organization.

Isolated leadership theories may have clear limitations. For example, trait leadership as well as charismatic leadership focus primarily on the individual characteristics, whereas learning organization leadership theory focuses on group growth and learning. Another example of the limitations of some leadership theories includes the instructional leadership's focus on educational outcomes and not enough on the financial health of the organization. This last example could be relevant to independent educational organizations. Leadership theory is also constantly evolving and experiencing innovation.

Bass (1990) reminded us about this phenomenon and invited us to consider leadership theory as a consistently evolving creative endeavour.

Nonprofit Organizations

Brockton was structured as a charitable, nonprofit organization. Because of this fact, as the researcher, I considered it important to review literature on nonprofit organizations. The formal incorporation of nonprofit organizations in North America was an alternative explored by policy makers interested in not following the centralization steps seen in many European countries and in seeking a private sector solution that would offer incentives for the formation of voluntary associations dedicated to social outcomes (Hall, 1987). Nonprofit organizations dedicate themselves to mobilize gifts of money, time, and material resources with a legal prohibition of acquiring individual profit from nonprofit work and resources (Hansmann, 1987). The Canada Revenue Agency (2012) has defined a nonprofit organization as "a club, society, or association that's organized and operated solely for social welfare, civic improvement, pleasure recreation or any other purpose except profit" (para. 1).

The nature of the acquirement of resources assures the donor that the gift will be used for charitable purposes. This condition provides donors and volunteers with a wide range of motivations towards gift transaction or an opportunity to participate in social, cultural, or educational activities, as well as an opportunity to experience supporting others or the ability to participate in the promotion of an idea or ideology into a service-providing or advocacy organization (Rose-Ackerman, 1996). Having boards of directors as well as executives to safeguard the principles and activities of the organization according to the nonprofit standards and expectations is an essential aspect of nonprofit

organizations. There are several organizational theories that refer to nonprofits in business literature, such as neo-institutional, institutional philanthropy, nonprofit as business, as well as the change theory in nonprofit organizations.

Institutional philanthropy theory. Institutional philanthropy theory was presented by Frumkin (1996), who hypothesized linear relationships for nonprofits through micro, meso, and macro levels. At the micro level, new knowledge and experience led to new beliefs, which in turn, influenced work place practices; these were manifested by micro-level changes in organizational strategy, policy, and staffing practices. Frumkin stated that at the meso level, a council or national organization overseeing philanthropic activities would tend to support these changes by creating standards and providing operating principles, thus creating normative structures for change for the field as a whole. Finally, technology and best practices would lead to increased interaction and support among organizations, thus fostering homogeneity at the macro level. Furthermore, Frumkin (2002) proposed a model that balances instrumental orientations of demand and supply with rationales of instrumentality and expressiveness as a way to address the study of this particular kind of organization.

Nonprofit as business theory. Nonprofit as business theory stemmed from the principle that there is an important relationship between nonprofit and for-profit organizations. Theorists attempted to clarify if nonprofits are unique and distinct from for-profits or if charitable, nonprofit organizations should be operated in the same way as for-profit organizations, but simply with different resources and outcomes (Carver, 1990; Oster, 1995). Dart (2004) defended that being business-like in nonprofit organizations reflects an effort to increase the supply of resources and instrumental capacity aimed at

better results. Frumkin (2002) also referred to nonprofit organizations as businesses in that these organizations engage in service delivery, social entrepreneurship, statement of values or faith, and civic and political engagement as well as governance. Bryce (2006) described the business of nonprofit organizations as a set of "social capital assets . . . that are endowed with intangible, cognitive, or sociological social capital, serving in a principal-agent relationship with the public as principal, and performing this function in the public policy process" (pp. 312-313).

Proponents who defended an intrinsic difference between businesses and nonprofits included Hirschman (1982), who argued that altruistic gifts generate self-interested return by increasing the donor's capacity to give, differentiating between a charitable gift and a business investment, and noting the contrast between business-like focus on linear and instrumental transactions with unconditional gifts of service that would not take into account generally established business standards. Additionally, Oliner and Oliner (1988) suggested that altruism has four elements to consider: "(1) it is directed towards helping another; (2) it involves high risk or sacrifice for the actor; (3) it is accompanied by no external reward; and (4) it is voluntary" (p. 6). Altruism offers a different approach from the traditional business model because it is not focused on financial gain. It also becomes the only distinguishing characteristic of nonprofit organizations (Gassler, 1998).

Theory of change in nonprofit organizations. The establishment of Brockton was achieved in less than nine months within a considerably unpredictable and constantly changing environment. Additionally, the sustainment years of Brockton have been surrounded by considerable change and unpredictability. The theory of change comes

from the notion that nonprofit organizations are, as all other organizations, immersed in a

rapidly changing world, and therefore, it is important to be responsive and to evolve and

succeed in such an environment, considering the particular elements that are common to

nonprofit organizations. Proponents of change theory for nonprofit organizations

included Young and Salamon (2002), who defended that pressures for change in this

sector include a strong tendency towards marketization, limited growth of charitable

giving, social and demographic changes, increased demand for for-profit services,

increased competition and strategic partnerships, as well as an increase in demands of

accountability. These pressures force nonprofit organizations to experiment with the

creation and operation of social-purpose enterprises through commercial ventures. As

noted by O'Regan (2006), nonprofit governance reflects many of the problems

surrounding nonprofit organizational theory, especially on performance of service,

delivery systems, institutional transparency, value for money, and other administrative

and efficiency concerns.

Business Entrepreneurship

Some founders, parents, and educational leaders involved in the establishment and

sustainment of Brockton approached its foundation and viability through their

background and/or experience in business. The need for resources, revenue, outreach, and

marketing was approached in many instances through the lens of traditional business

entrepreneurship. Given this, I considered it important to include a literary review section

on business entrepreneurship to clarify its theoretical and applied frameworks.

There was considerable literature on business entrepreneurship: for example, the

work of Castrogiovanni (1996) on pre-start-up planning and the survival of new small

businesses, where he concluded that the high mortality rates for business start-ups could be lowered by intense and high-quality pre-planning.

Van de Ven, Hudson, and Schroeder (1984) looked at 14 educational-software start-up companies from the entrepreneurial, organizational, and ecological perspectives, viewing the performance and stages of development of the new organizations through each perspective. The entrepreneurial perspective focused on the characteristics and background of the founding individual, the organizational perspective looked at the planning and initial development processes of the companies, and the ecological perspective was concerned with the success of the industry as a whole.

Hoing and Karlsson (2004) studied 396 business start-ups in relationship to developing formal business plans in the first two years of business. Their findings pointed towards no significant difference in business success where plans were written and executed.

Lyles (2004) developed a study in which he identified industry experience, networking activities, and the strategic orientation of the start-ups to predict establishment and survival. Contrary to his predictions, access to infrastructure and differentiation strategies did not determine the number of business that survived.

In a study by Reid and Smith (2000), it was shown that on strategies business founders may adopt for success, such as survival and growth, only the pursuit of the highest rate of return on investment appeared to have a major impact on end performance, offering again a question on whether nonprofit and for-profit organizations follow the same principles. In a study done by Peña (2002), it was suggested that the human capital of the founders (e.g., education, business experience, and level of

motivation), organizational capital (i.e., the firm's capacity to adapt quickly to changes and the ability to implement successful strategies), and relational capital (i.e., the development of productive business networks and an immediate access to critical stakeholders) are important intangible assets, which related positively to new businesses. Rotefoss and Kolvereid (2005) found that the entrepreneurial experience is the single most important factor for predicting the outcome of the business start-up process

Nonprofit Entrepreneurship

As stated in the previous section, some individuals approached Brockton's establishment and sustainment through the business entrepreneurship paradigm. At the same time, other founders and educational leaders with previous experience in nonprofit entrepreneurship approached the establishment and sustainment of Brockton through the lens of nonprofit entrepreneurship. Therefore, I considered it important to include this section on nonprofit entrepreneurship.

Cordes et al. (2004) posited that:

Because entrepreneurship is typically associated with the creation of new business ventures and innovation in the for-profit sector of the economy, nonprofit entrepreneurship may seem to be a contradiction in terms. Yet many large and successful nonprofit organizations that exist today can trace their lineage back to the enterprise and vision of a founder. (p. 115)

Cordes et al. studied the individual and environmental factors that affect the creation of new nonprofit enterprises. Cordes et al. formulated a set of questions with the aim of clarifying and understanding more about this phenomenon. These questions address and offer a response on why rational economic actors invest their time, talents, and even financial resources to create new nonprofits and/or socially-oriented for-profits. The study resulted in an axiological model that included the entrepreneurial motivation to "do good". The authors also examined the level of impact that external factors, such as

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demand for charitable outputs, access to financing for new ventures, and the blurring of

the boundaries between for-profit and not-for-profit activities, have on the creation of

new nonprofit and socially-oriented for-profit enterprises. They concluded that these

factors would be conducive to nonprofit entrepreneurism when proportionally allowing

growth and establishment opportunities, such as high demand for the product or service,

high access to financing and funding, and more organizational and legal flexibility within

pure nonprofits and socially responsible for profits.

It is important to understand what forces seem to be behind an entrepreneurial

tendency that could often be seen in an individual or a group of individuals. Cordes et al.

(2004) posited,

> These persons become nonprofit entrepreneurs when they identify a need or a
> demand for some type of charitable good or service, and then spend time and
> energy assembling the productive inputs that are needed to satisfy that demand,
> using either the nonprofit or the for-profit form of organization. (p. 125)

As Schiff (1986) and Schiff and Weisbrod (1993) have noted, a clear

characteristic of nonprofit entrepreneurs that differentiates them from for-profit initiators

is that they are "utility maximizers" rather than "profit maximizers". The interest of

nonprofit entrepreneurs would lie not in the actual profit, but more in the utility and

benefit of the endeavour.

Educational Entrepreneurship

The establishment and sustainment of Brockton could be clearly identified as an

example of educational entrepreneurship, given that it was established as a new

organization in a very short period of time. To introduce the notion of educational

entrepreneurship, it would be interesting to consider Sandler's (2010) statement:

> The last hundred years have witnessed important and dramatic economic growth
> that has transformed nearly every sector of the American economy—except

education. Walking into a classroom from the 19th century would be strangely familiar to people today. (p. 133)

Literature on higher education organizational entrepreneurship seems to be limited. Literature on K-12 start-ups seems to be more common and is particularly aimed at the independent or charter school environments. Winger (2000) examined the viability of

> creating a new-schools incubator that identifies appropriate incubator services. A new-schools incubator, an entirely new organization designed to provide expertise and support to school founders during their planning process, may meet the needs of school founders facing the challenges of planning effective new schools. (p. 1)

School start-up literature also presented "school choice" themes, as in the case of Hadderman's (2002) article on charter school trends and issues. Hadderman noted that the establishment of new charter as well as independent schools would support particular needs within society that public education is not able to meet. Millot and Lake's (1996) study on charter school start-ups presented several recommendations that serve as guiding principles for charter school founders. These recommendations are: (a) start with a strong team that holds a common vision and diverse expertise, (b) use outside experts, (c) be willing to adapt to changing needs, (d) view the charter application as a planning tool rather than a "hurdle" on the way to obtaining a charter, (e) institute well-defined roles and processes, (f) be proactive and anticipate potential problems rather than waiting to solve them as they arise, (g) stay focused on the school's mission, and (h) act like a trustee of the state's responsibility for public education.

It has been claimed by many researchers that management literature aimed at business administration is transferable to educational organization and leadership. For example, Gitlin (1999) addressed Fullan's (1999) use of business literature to inform his understanding of schools. Gitlin stated,

Fullan argues that schools are really not that different from businesses except that education is more explicitly and deeply a moral enterprise and schools are mired in bureaucracy. . . . While these caveats may have some validity, what is most telling about his argument is the lack of consideration of the difference between making a product which can turn a profit and working with a student to enhance her/his life chances. Looked at from this point of view, the relation between schools and businesses is not simply that one organization is more deeply moral, or the other bureaucratic, but rather that the morality built into the two organizations *should be* quite different. (p. 214)

Over all, in consideration of this debate, more detail and clear contextualization when and where business literature could actually relate to educational administration is needed. As of late, the concept of educational entrepreneurship has received considerably more attention with Hess (2006, 2008) as well as Sandler (2010). Hess considered this the era of educational entrepreneurship, given that now more than ever unconventional thinkers find themselves exploring more ways to deliver educational products and services than ever before while using new models and methods such as distance learning through electronic means.

As is the case in leadership, entrepreneurship is difficult to define. In an attempt to define the concept, Hess (2006) wrote: "It may be useful to think of educational entrepreneurship as a process of purposeful innovation directed toward improving educational productivity, efficiency, and quality" (p. 2). He believed that in many cases, entrepreneurs seek to teach children who have been ill served, or they seek to improve the quality of teachers and school leaders while giving educators more effective tools to deliver services in more useful and accessible ways. Hess clarified that educational entrepreneurs work to tackle the same problems as other educators, but with different approximations to it.

Hess (2006, 2008) identified differences between traditional educational administrators and educational entrepreneurs, having the latter generally show an

increased tolerance for risk and a high internal locus of control. He also identified

educational entrepreneurs as a product of their environment and who require the

opportunity and the resources to act in an entrepreneurial environment. Hess suggested

that educational entrepreneurs also become engines of progress, given that they generally

possess the flexibility and find the incentives to seek new solutions to old problems while

adapting to the opportunities that the obstacles bring.

On the other hand, Hess (2008) recognized the risks and problems posed by

entrepreneurial activity, particularly in the sense that new endeavours will necessarily

prove ineffective and unsustainable, which at the same time will prove to be disruptive

for some children and some families. Trying to make a case for educational

entrepreneurship and education, Hess (2008) defended that "our schools today confront

challenges that our education system isn't equipped to answer" (p. 4).

Webber and Scott (2008) defined educational entrepreneurship as follows:

> Educational entrepreneurship focuses strategically on creating short and long-term opportunities for learning that will make a significant difference for individuals and their societies. Financial return sufficient to ensure quality programming is an important consideration in educational entrepreneurship but not its raison d'etre. Rather, the primary purpose of educational entrepreneurship is the building of human and social capacity to lead responsible, constructive educational initiatives. Coupled with educational entrepreneurship is the necessary consideration of incorporating and structuring sustainability to ensure that the programs, teaching, and outcomes are of a consistently high standard. Therefore educational entrepreneurship can also include [teachers] as well as students as learners within the learning organization. (p. 3)

Webber and Scott additionally looked at Canadian and Australian university faculties

venturing into entrepreneurial models of growth and innovation. Furthermore, Scott and

Webber (2013) offered various dimensions of Canadian educational entrepreneurship as

well as the social and political influences of Canadian education as essential to the

discussion of educational entrepreneurship. Woods (2013) considered the impediments of

educational leadership in a social context that promotes entrepreneurship. He also

explored the idea of the *enterprising self* in several different facets, from the neoliberal to

the spiritual, and discussed how these may be responded to in ways that sustain and

renew democratic and holistic conceptions of education.

Smith and Petersen (2006) defined an educational entrepreneur as "a rare breed of

innovator whose characteristics and activities may lead to the transformation—not merely

the slight improvement—of the public education system" (p. 22). Smith and Petersen

further made an attempt to identify and clarify qualities that are visible in educational

entrepreneurs. These included (a) be visionary thinkers, (b) start new organizations, and

(c) believe they can change the way things are done. Furthermore, they identified three

crucial roles of educational entrepreneurs: (a) as change agents, (b) as venues for new

skill sets and mindsets, and (c) as developers of learning laboratories where

experimentation and ongoing learning are encouraged.

Larry Cuban (2006) offered a wider interpretation of educational entrepreneurship

that included long-time public servants trying to make a difference. Furthermore, he

defended four assertions that proposed: (a) since the early twentieth century, educational

entrepreneurs have made major changes in US public school goals, governance,

organization, and curriculum; (b) with all of these major changes in schools, educational

entrepreneurs, past or present, have seldom altered substantially or permanently

classroom regularities and low income students' academic achievement; (c) current

educational entrepreneurs' efforts towards making radical changes in the governance and

preparation of school leaders have ended up preserving present organizational structures

and school practices in urban schools; and (d) current educational entrepreneurs'

commitment to a narrow economic purpose for schooling has seriously neglected civic and social purposes that have historically integrated schools into community life.

Educational entrepreneurship strives to establish and sustain educational organizations or educational programs within organizations that would generally demand effective leadership skills. Educational entrepreneurship is not an exclusive element of private or for-profit educational organizations. Any education-oriented organizational effort to launch a new endeavour could be referred to as an effort of educational entrepreneurship.

Educational leaders involved in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton had different backgrounds and experience. The common idea for all involved was the need to establish and sustain a new educational organization, where their children would be able to receive an education in accordance to their expectations. The main driver to this project was, therefore, an entrepreneurial effort; nevertheless, given that the founders' experiences ranged mainly in three specific orientations (i.e., business, nonprofit, and education), I included these last literature review sections for business entrepreneurship, nonprofit entrepreneurship, and educational entrepreneurship.

Woods et al. (2007) presented the importance of connecting the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 2000) to the particular elements identified as relevant in the field of entrepreneurship, which, in the case of this study, would be educational entrepreneurship. Bourdieu (2000) identified a field where "a game is in place" (p. 210), where experiences, remembrances, as well as critical and creative moments are lived. At Brockton, it is important to consider this *habitus* as "a set of inseparable cognitive and evaluative presuppositions whose acceptance is implied in the membership itself"

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(Bourdieu, 1990, p. 9). It is also important to further consider members of the

community, as well as educational leaders involved in the establishment and sustainment

of the organization, as a process of educational entrepreneurship—a process of

purposeful innovation directed toward improving educational productivity, efficiency,

and quality (Hess, 2006) as well as in terms of creating short- and long-term

opportunities for learning that will make a significant difference for individuals and their

societies (Webber & Scott, 2008).

Independent Education

Independent education is a well-established model with different approximations

and differentiations around the globe. For the purposes of this study, I undertook a

literary review of independent education in general, particularly as understood through a

North American framework, as well as a review of independent education in Canada as

well as in BC. The inclusion of this section will serve to contextualize independent

education in general from a North American perspective. I will introduce and

contextualize independent education in Canada and BC in particular.

Ratteray and Shujaa (1987) had noted:

These primarily urban schools are an expression of cultural power and identity
among minority groups who wish to ensure access to opportunities for academic
achievement for their children and also to control the content and context of their
children's education. (p. 2)

In 1987, Ratteray and Shujaa developed a study with a sample of 221 independent

schools in the United States and found the following: (a) most were elementary schools

with enrolments averaging between 100 and 149 students; (b) approximately one half

were religious; (c) schools were characterized by operational autonomy and dependence

on tuition; (d) most families lived within three miles of the school; and (e) educational

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environment and quality of educational program were the most frequently cited reasons for choosing the school, but cultural and religious affiliation and low tuition were also cited. These general characteristics could be identified as being a constant within independent schools in North America, presenting a clear difference with public education, particularly when considering religious and funding matters.

Decoux and Holdaway (1999) suggested that "the mission and goals of independent schools have different and occasionally additional thrusts than do those in the public school systems. These provide a unique context in which leadership, constraints, culture, and symbolism interact to challenge the principal" (p. 69). This vision of independent schools presented a more demanding and challenging organizational structure, with more demands than the ones generally presented to the public school system.

Powell (1996) wrote extensively about independent schools. Powell's research provided an important understanding about the history and background of independent schools, particularly in the United Stated, as well as their common issues and challenges, including an intense and highly debated approach to independent school education. He suggested, "Americans may love or loathe private schools for many reasons but still wonder which of their qualities might make their own schools better" (p. 6). Powell was interested in the quality education that independent schools have provided students for over 100 years and its warranting of further analysis to determine what positive factors were transferable to other independent or public institutions and also what is sustainable for the future of education in general. The particular, relationship that teachers experience

in independent schools is significantly different from the one teachers experience in the public sector:

> Regular classroom teachers in independent schools are more likely to coach sports, advise clubs, and work on student publications and drama productions. They are far more likely to spend time preparing written summary evaluations of student performance, a tradition that rarely turns up in public schools. They are also more likely to discuss with other teachers the progress of students who are not in direct academic or personal trouble. (p. 127)

Powell (1996) noted that there is an understanding within the teacher group that they are not equal partners in governance; nevertheless, they maintain a strong and influential voice within the school. He also noted that teacher participation only becomes valuable if it is clearly supported by the leadership in the school and that, therefore, selection and evaluation of administrators is of paramount importance as those leaders with unsupportive approaches to teacher participation can have a very negative impact in any public or private school. According to Powell, independent schools enable participants to assess the quality of the educational experience and whether or not they remain feasible options for teachers looking for career fulfillment. Teacher participation in the creation, development, and implementation of educational content and delivery is an important part of this process (Danielson, 2006).

Powel (1996) found that teachers felt respected, a sense of dignity, and ultimate job satisfaction when they were encouraged to be innovative and creative. Chubb and Moe (1988) supported this argument by stating, "Relative to public schools, private schools appeared to delegate significant discretion to their teachers, and to involve them sufficiently in school level policy decisions to make them feel efficacious" (p. 37). They further clarified that independent school "leaders are able to staff the school the way they

wish. It is safe, therefore, for them to involve teachers integrally in decision-making processes" (p. 38).

Another clear characteristic of independent schools is the parent body. Generally, the parent body is considerably invested in the organization through emotional and financial means. These means can support or hinder the success of the organization (Powell, 1996). In this way, influential parents can sometimes negatively impact an educational organization by negatively affecting roles and balances between other parents, teachers, board, and the administrative team. Nevertheless, Powel also noted that independent school parents maintained high standards and expectations of excellence of administrators, teachers, and board members (p. 236).

Another core aspect of independent schools is community building, which generally entails the notion that teaching students must go well beyond the accomplishment of basic academic requirements and rigors. According to Powell (1996), the collective mission of independent schools can be understood as a mandate to support students throughout the everyday experiences of life as they develop and forge the skills and relationships necessary to meet life's challenges. Independent schools hold as basic values the building of "decent character and academic literacy" (p. 247). For over 100 years, the conceptualizations of independent schools has included that independent schools foster student engagement through academic commitment by understanding the varying characteristics of individual student profiles.

Another clear characteristic of independent schools is that according to Powel (1996), the great majority of them are based on offering small class sizes, which are becoming considerably more expensive to run. Nevertheless, even with a clear cost

associated with it, many parents consider this to be an ideal setting for their children. This also becomes a very attractive option for teachers looking for a more individualized teaching environment, with the consideration that this model also tends to add more time to the teacher's total sum of hours and sometimes has an impact on teacher performance.

Independent education is a distinct form of education that differentiates itself clearly from public education. Generally speaking, independent education implies the direct payment of tuition and a more active involvement on the part of parents and guardians. In terms of the internal operation of the school, independent schools respond directly to an independent governance body that oversees school operations and makes decisions that can immediately and directly affect individuals and policy within the organization. Independent schools also generally have the flexibility to offer a differentiated or enriched curriculum to its students. Brockton was established as an independent school in accordance to the particular regulations of the Canadian Federal Government (Government of Canada) as well as of the Province of BC.

Independent Education in Canada

The similarities between Canada and the United States as well as independent schools from the United Kingdom are easy to perceive. Furthermore, it could be said that a tradition of independent school education has evolved out of these three countries to influence independent schools and private education all around the world. This tradition is currently highly influential in BC and, therefore, important to understanding the context of the establishment and sustainment of Brockton.

As is the case across Canada, education is regulated provincially, allowing for provincial governments to develop, oversee, execute, and evaluate policy and governance

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strategy through educational ministries that form an important part of the provincial

government structure. Some provinces have established school acts that require

independent schools to conform to certain curriculum and legislative structures and

expectations, which have been explained by the Canadian Association of Independent

Schools (n.d.):

> The Canadian Association of Independent Schools (CAIS) was established in
> 1981 as a national network for member schools supporting collaborative
> initiatives in leadership, education, management and governance. Its key activities
> included organizing, coordinating, and facilitating conferences, benchmarking,
> senior management compensation surveys, and advocacy. (para. 2)

Currently, the Canadian Association of Independent Schools' mission reads: "A

community of independent schools, we explore and pursue exemplary leadership,

training, research and international standards of educational excellence" (Mission section,

para. 1).

Independent Education in BC

As stated before, the governance of independent education in Canada falls mainly

into the realm of each province or territory. Therefore, to further clarify and understand

the context in which Brockton was established and has been sustained, it is important to

review some of the history and normativity that have defined this particular domain in

BC.

History of independent education in BC. Independent education in BC began

under government regulation in 1977 (Barman, 1991). Before that, denominational and

non-denominational schools were "unregulated, subject to no external requirements apart

from the basic health and safety standards applicable generally across the society"

(p. 12). Independent schools in BC had operated without provincial government

intervention and support since the 1870s. Even after steady growth in numbers, especially

in the post-World War II period, they received no legal recognition for the education

services they performed for the benefit of society (Cunningham, 2002). Barman (1991)

further added to this discussion in stating,

> Until 1977, private schooling in BC was limited in its influence to small
> minorities centered in specific social settings and geographical areas. Over 95
> percent of children attended local public non-denominational schools. The
> provincial government concerned itself only with the public sector. Private
> schools were not mentioned in the Ministry of Education's annual reports, much
> less monitored. (p. 13)

There were three different groups of schools operating early on in BC: "The

oldest group were Catholic schools whose beginnings went back as far as did European

settlement itself—to the mid-nineteenth century" (Barman, 1991, p. 13). A second group

of non-public schools had origins going back almost as far in time, to BC's origins as a

British Colony. "In colonial BC the Church of England established its own private, elite

schools which on Confederation also remained outside the provincial system" (p. 14).

The third group were schools established by Dutch immigrants after Holland's

devastation in the Second World War. These schools were established under the firm

belief that "each child would be schooled according to the family's religious beliefs in a

government-supported but denominationally based institution" (p. 14).

Clearly, the independent school movement in BC was originally driven by

educational organizations of religious origin; nevertheless, today many independent

schools in BC have either evolved into becoming non-denominational educational

institutions or have been founded in a similar manner as Brockton School in North

Vancouver, Collingwood and Mulgrave Schools in West Vancouver, and Stratford Hall

School in Vancouver. Barman (1991) noted:

> In 1966, the associations representing the three groups, totaling 121 schools, came
> together to form a joint lobby, the Federation of Independent School Associations.

FISA, as it is usually known, was not an organization of schools but rather of their separate associations, whose continued existence showed the great extent to which the separate strands in private education stood apart from each other. The word 'independent' in the name of the federation denoted these schools' conscious change in orientation from being private, in the sense of private profitmaking, to independent, in the sense of distinct from the public system. (p. 15)

With the BC Independent School Act of 1977 (as discussed in Barman, 1991), "not only do the overwhelming majority of non-public schools receive 50% of the funding allocated to local public schools, but all educational institutions must register with provincial authorities whether or not they desire financial assistance" (p. 13). There have been several modifications and renderings of the Independent School Act since 1977, with their main changes involving funding amounts and rules, as well as health and safety regulations.

Independent education in BC. According to the BC Ministry of Education, Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (2011), 11% of all students enrolled in BC today are educated in schools operating under the current Independent School Act (1977), in conditions where "independent schools receive no grants for the cost of providing land, buildings, and equipment. Independent school supporters pay 100 percent of these costs" (Federation of Independent School Associations of BC, n.d.). Also, "independent schools receive five percent of grants that the provincial budget allocates toward operating costs of schools. The maximum grant to an independent school is .5 the per pupil grant to a public school" (para. 5).

Currently in BC, the BC Ministry of Education (2012) has said,

The government strongly supports a public system of education that provides a publicly funded quality education for all. However, parents have a right to choose from various educational alternatives for the education of their children, such as distributed learning, homeschooling and independent schools. (p. 2)

In 1989, the Sullivan Royal Commission (as cited in BC Ministry of Education, 2012) concluded:

> We therefore deemed it proper that nonpublic schools should continue to receive provincial financial assistance, such aid we believe to be a normal tangible manifestation of the freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression guaranteed by the charter of rights and freedoms. To assume otherwise would be to deny accommodation of social diversity and multiculturalism, the recognition of individual differences and the rights of parents to participate in educational choice—all principles which remain fundamental parts of the democratic system we hold dear. (p. 3)

The 1977 Independent School Act of BC is also based in the declarations co-signed by Canada as part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the European Convention of Human Rights that respectively stated "that parents have the prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children" (BC Ministry of Education, 2012, p. 4).

Furthermore, in an effort of universal accessibility to education, the BC Ministry of Education (2012) has stated,

> No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the state shall respect the right of parents to ensure that such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions. (p. 3)

Currently, the BC Ministry of Education, Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (2011) offers a clear classification of independent schools that consists of the following groups:

> *Group 1 schools*: Receive 50 percent of their local boards of education per student operating grant on a per FTE student basis. They employ B.C. certified teachers, have educational programs consistent with ministerial orders, provide a program that meets the learning outcomes of the BC curriculum, meet various administrative requirements, maintained adequate educational facilities, and comply with municipal and regional district codes. There are currently 56,062 students enrolled in 249 group 1 schools. Of these figures include 6815 FTE's enrolled in 12 distributed learning schools. (p. 1)

Group 2 schools: Meet the same requirements as group 1 schools, and receive per student operating grants at the 35 percent level because the schools' per student operating costs exceed the ministry. There are currently 14,352 students enrolled in 67 group 2 schools. These figures include 9.75 FTEs enrolled into distributed learning schools. (p. 1)

Distributed learning schools: Distributed learning schools may be a group 1 or 2 school and are required to meet the same criteria listed above. Under section 8.1 of the Independent School Act, distributed learning may only be offered with the prior agreement of the Minister. (p. 1)

Group 3 Schools: Group 3 schools receive no funding and are not required to employ B.C. certified teachers or have educational programs consistent with ministerial orders. They must maintain facilities that meet all municipal and regional district codes. There are currently 539 students enrolled in 20 Group 3 schools. (p. 1)

Group 4 Schools: These are non-funded schools that cater mainly to non-provincial students. They meet the same educational program requirements as group 1 and their graduates are eligible to receive the B.C. certificate of graduation if all teachers are B.C. certified. These schools must be bonded. There are currently 1061 students enrolled in 11 Group 4 schools. (p. 2)

The BC Ministry of Education, Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (2011) has also provided data in regards to independent school system enrolments. For the 2010–2011 school year, total enrolment growth over the last five years sat at 8.7% (p. 2). The enrolment growth for 2010–2011 was at 1.85% when compared to the previous school year (p. 2). Additionally, the percentage of BC's total kindergarten to grade 12 population enrolled in independent schools was 11% (p. 2).

The BC Ministry of Education, Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (2011) has clarified that BC Schools are:

Self-identified through the Federation of Independent Schools Association (FISA) membership, and represent diverse communities within the independent school system. Independent schools can be based on faith, . . . educational philosophy, . . . educational offerings, . . . or specific programs or focus; and, lastly, independent schools include some parent led community schools. (p. 2)

Based on September 2010 independent school enrolment in BC, government funding

reached $258 million for the year 2010–2011 (p. 3). The breakdown of this overall

amount is as follows: Two hundred and four million dollars for student operating grants

for 318 group 1 and group 2 schools; $22 million for operating grants to 12 distributed

learning schools; $32 million for special education grants to group 1, to and distributed

learning schools; and $0.3 million home schooling registration grants to groups 1, 2 and

distributed learning schools (p. 3).

Additional data presented by the BC Ministry of Education presents public school

enrolments in the 1977–1978 school year of 527,771 students versus 23,691 students

enrolled in independent schools, with a 4.3% proportion of independent school students

to public school students. These numbers have gradually increased to reflect a total of

558,000 enrolled students in the public system for the year 2009–2010, with 69,272

students enrolled in independent schools for the same school year, which is 11% of the

total student population (BC Ministry of Education, 2012, p. 3).

According to the BC Ministry of Education (2012),

The Independent School Act balances and independent schools authority's
autonomy with provincial standards that the independent school is required to
meet. Provincial requirements established a framework within which independent
schools have freedom to operate. The greater the degree of certification and
funding provided by the Ministry, the greater the requirements that the school
must meet. (p. 3)

There are certain basic limitations that the BC Ministry of Education, Office of the

Inspector of Independent Schools (2011) oversees:

Before issuing or renewing a certificate of group 1, group 2, group 3 or group 4
classification, the inspector must be satisfied that no program is in existence or
proposed at the independent school that would, in theory or in practice, promote
or foster doctrines of (i) racial or ethnic superiority or persecution, (ii) religious
intolerance or persecution, (iii) social change through violent action, or
(iv) sedition. (p. 4)

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In terms of freedom of curriculum, the BC Ministry of Education, Office of the

Inspector of Independent Schools (2011) has stated, "Independent schools have freedom

to approach the curriculum from their own perspectives but the programs of group 1, 2

and 4 certified schools must meet the specified learning outcomes of the BC curriculum

. . . in grades 10–12, subjects that contribute to B.C. certificate of graduation must meet

the learning outcomes of the B.C. curriculum" (p. 4). In regards to teacher employment,

> Independent schools may employ teachers who reflect their schools' various
> perspectives, but all teachers in group 1, 2 and 4 independent schools must be
> B.C. certified, . . . and employment practices must be in compliance with the
> employment standards act. In hiring staff or admitting students, independent
> schools may grant preferences to teachers and students whose religious affiliation
> matches those of the school. (p. 4)

Independent schools may also "purchase property and construct buildings to meet their

specific needs, but the school must be in compliance with all provincial and municipal

codes and regulations" (p. 4).

The levels of regulation and supervision of independent schools in BC have been

established through the 1977 Independent School Act and supervised and enforced by the

BC Ministry of Education. It is clear that independent education in BC is a highly

regulated field that includes different levels of funding for different schools in regards to

the type of programs and employment offered to teachers. Brockton's founders and

educational leaders had to intensely familiarize themselves and navigate these

requirements successfully. It is particularly important to consider that the decision to

start-up Brockton was formally established in early 2004 and that the school opened its

doors in September of that same year.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed available scholarly sources that reflected the current understanding of leadership theory in general and educational leadership in particular, including trait theories, contingency of situational theories, transformational and transactional leadership theories, as well as others. Additionally, I reviewed educational leadership, which included distributed leadership theories, leadership for learning, learning organizations, leadership for change, cultural and moral leadership, politics of leadership, emotional intelligence leadership, sustainable leadership, and instructional leadership. These particular theories were chosen considering their suitability to study and analyze private and entrepreneurial education and nonprofit organizational theory in general, as well as the establishment and sustainment of Brockton in particular.

Furthermore, I have presented a clear review of independent education in general, in Canada, and in BC in particular. Additionally, a review of nonprofit organization theory as well as leadership in nonprofit organizations was undertaken. Finally, several notions of entrepreneurship were reviewed that included educational, nonprofit, and business theories. In the following chapter, I present the methodology utilized for this study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

A case study approach was selected to study how and why educational leaders were successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton School (Brockton). In seeking to understand the establishment and sustainment of Brockton, the study addressed one main research question: How and why were educational leaders successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton Preparatory School? This primary research question was additionally supported by eight sub questions:

1. How did the school begin?

2. What was the purpose and perspective for starting Brockton?

3. How were Brockton founders successful in establishing the organization?

4. Why were Brockton founders successful in establishing the organization?

5. How were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization?

6. Why were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization?

7. What do you identify to be the particular leadership traits, qualities or experiences that enabled educational leaders to be successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton?

8. What do you identify as the successful strategies that led to Brockton's existence?

In this chapter, I will elaborate on social constructivism as the research paradigm used in this study. Furthermore, I will provide the literature support necessary to justify

the use of a qualitative approach, the case study methodology, as well as particular methods that were considered adequate in this study. A description of the overall research process and how data were analyzed, including my approach to coding and interpretation, will be shared.

A unique conceptual framework proposed by Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) has been used in the data analysis process. For these authors, in particular, a conceptual framework had the aim of shaping and categorizing the results of the study through the process of establishing initial themes that directly relate to the research questions, with descriptors based both on reviewed literature as well as on my observations and conceptualizations. Bloomberg and Volpe supported this particular understanding of a conceptual framework as differentiated from the more traditional theoretical framework in order to fine-tune the data gathering process. This process served as the initial repository for the data collected for further analysis, interpretation, and synthesis. It is important to emphasize and clarify once more that this definition of conceptual framework differed from the traditional understanding of conceptual framework as a theoretical framework more commonly used in academic studies to guide a literature review.

Finally, I address trustworthiness issues as related to this study. Additionally, UI will also include the perceived limitations of the study as well as ethical considerations.

Research Paradigm

Patton (2002) described a paradigm as a worldview, a general perspective and a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world. Guba (as cited in Guba & Lincoln, 1994) described paradigm as an interpretative framework guided by a clear set

of feelings and beliefs about how the world should be situated and understood. Dill and Romiszowski (1997) defended that philosophical paradigms attempt to clarify how the world works, how we can obtain knowledge, and how one is to interact and communicate with this knowledge. Paradigms also define the types of questions, methods, and methodologies to be used in order to acquire knowledge.

In this study, the philosophical paradigm used was social constructivism, given that it recognizes knowledge as socially constructed, situated, and distributed (Resnick, 1991; Wertch, 1991). Since educational leaders often have different approaches to engaging with others and achieving results, it is important to clarify that this study's assumption was one in which knowledge regarding leadership, in general, as well as educational leadership, in particular, are gradually built through understanding, experience, analysis, and maturation. In the case of the establishment and sustainment of Brockton, multiple realities arising from multiples individuals were joined by several expectations, resulting in the construction of a learning process that enabled the organization to be established and sustained through its initial eight years of operations.

Qualitative Rationale for this Study

Participant numbers were expected to be between 20 to 30 volunteers, with no possibility to establish large samples and control groups. Having a small sample as well as an experiential narrative derived through interviews and supported through documentation, the research design needed to allow for flexibility, which according to Bailey (1997), is an important characteristic of qualitative research. One aim of this study was to collect complex information through documentation and through the interview

process—in essence, obtaining longer, detailed, and variable data, therefore validating a qualitative approach.

Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) noted:

Qualitative research is grounded in an essentially constructivist philosophical position, in the sense that it is concerned with how the complexities of the sociocultural world are experienced, interpreted, and understood in a particular context and at a particular point in time. (p. 80)

They further clarified that "the intent of qualitative research is to examine a social situation or interaction by allowing the researcher to enter the world of others and attempt to achieve a holistic rather than a reductionist understanding" (p. 80). Documenting the reasons and ways in which a private independent school was established and sustained in the district of North Vancouver required a holistic approach to understand the context and its complexities.

Overall, the key features that support qualitative methodology were deemed by me, as the researcher, to be clearly adequate for this study, specifically when focusing on the key features that Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) distinguished as a qualitative stance. These included: (a) understanding the processes by which the events and actions take place, (b) developing contextual understanding, (c) facilitating interactivity between researcher and participants, (d) adopting and interpretive stance, and (e) maintaining design flexibility (p. 80).

Case Study Methodology

Within the framework of qualitative inquiry, I identified case study methodology as the best suited approach for this study given the limited number of individuals who participated in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton. Single-case study research was identified to address the main question and sub questions of this study. Also, as

identified by Merriam (1998), a case study is best employed to gain an in-depth

understanding and meaning for those involved. The interest is not in outcomes in

particular, but in the process, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery and

exploration rather than confirmation. Furthermore, Hancock and Algozzine (2006)

posited that:

> Case studies represent another type of qualitative research. They are different
> from other types in that they are intensive analysis and descriptions of a single
> unit or system bounded by space and time. Topics often examined in case studies
> include individuals, events, or groups. Through case studies, researchers hope to
> gain an in-depth understanding of situations and meaning for those involved.
> (p. 10)

Brockton's educational leaders had undergone and witnessed an intense

transformational experience while establishing and sustaining the school; therefore, much

richness would be derived from understanding the process and the context in a spirit of

discovery. In the case of this study, Brockton leaders who were successful in establishing

and sustaining the organization were interviewed.

Schramm (1971) suggested that case study methodology attempts to investigate a

decision or set of decisions as well as determine why they were made, how they were

implemented, and what the outcomes were. Yin (2003) stated, "Case studies are the

preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator

has little control over events and when the focus is on contemporary phenomenon within

some real-life context" (p 1). As previously indicated, this study investigated the how and

the why of how Brockton emerged and succeeded in surviving.

Patton (2002) confirmed the adequacy of using case studies as part of a qualitative

research project: "Case studies are 'holistic' and 'context sensitive', two of the primary

strategic themes of qualitative inquiry" (p 447). Patton also argued that "cases can be

individuals, groups, neighborhoods, programs, organizations, cultures, regions or nation states" (p. 447). They can also be defined as anything "specific, unique or bounded system" (Stake, 2000, p. 436). In this study, the unit of study or bounded system was Brockton. Patton additionally assured us that cases are units of analysis and that "what constitutes a case or unit of analysis is usually determined during the design stage and becomes the basis of purposeful sampling in qualitative inquiry" (p. 447). Therefore, during the design stage, it became clear that case study design would meet the needs of this study.

Case study research is also presented in groups of theme-based studies or as single-case studies. Patton (2002) stated, "A scholarly or evaluation project may consist of several and include cross-case comparisons" (p. 447). Nevertheless, a single-case approach was appropriate for this project because single-case studies facilitate the deep examination of one subject (Kazdin, 1981), which in this study would be Brockton School. Yin (2003) also offered guidance in regards to the adequacy of having a school like Brockton considered as a central case unit and this study as a single-case analysis. Yin considered particular criteria to assess the adequacy of a single-case analysis when it is considered to be a *unique case* as well as a *revelatory* case among other principles. The argument supporting the consideration of this study as unique came from the fact that the establishment and sustainment of Brockton pointed to several characteristics apparently not regularly seen in the educational and organizational world. These characteristics included organizational survival after the seven-year mark as well as the uniqueness of the circumstances surrounding its foundation. It also became revelatory, in that it offers the opportunity to understand and analyze the leadership traits, which were reflected by

the abilities and events undertaken by Brockton's founders that successfully led to the establishment and sustainment of the organization.

Yin, Stake and Merriam

Robert K. Yin (2003), Robert Stake (1995, 2000), and Sharan B. Merriam (1998) are recognized authors when it comes to literature in case study research. All three authors maintained certain similarities and differences that are important to consider. Brown (2008) commented, "Merriam presented a balanced, pragmatic approach, while Yin was highly methodical and logical, and Stake was like an artist or poet, creating and crafting meaning" (p. 7). For the purposes of this study, my intention was to acknowledge these three differentiated approaches while finding and utilizing a common ground between these authors, rather than to aligning with one of them in particular interpretations of case study research.

Yin (2003) would not necessarily be considered a positivist, but he appreciated the scientific approach when used in the social sciences. As described by Belk (2010), Yin's special emphasis in rigorously utilizing mixed methods has been considered by some as a good approach to improve the standing of social research in the world. Merriam (1998) has been generally considered more in the centre of both Yin (2003) and Stake (2000); nevertheless, these last two authors are considered more influential.

Thomas (2011) identified different kinds of qualities regarding these authors. Thomas identified Merriam as descriptive, interpretive, and evaluative; Stake as intrinsic, instrumental, and collective; and Yin as critical, unique, longitudinal, representative and revelatory. Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, and Morales (2007) noted that both Merriam and Yin referred to case study as a methodology, while Stake (2000) remained to the side

arguing that the term methodology has been overly used. According to Pederson (2011),Yin was especially critical of the single case study in particular, while Merriam and Stake welcomed this approach. As one can see, there are different perceptions of case study methodology.

Methods

In this section, I describe the methods used as part of the case study methodology. Gillham (2000) suggested that methods used within case study methodology may include interviews, observations, document and record analysis, and work samples, to name a few. In the case of this study, methods included data sources, interviews, and documentation.

Data sources. In this study, the two main data sources were interviews and documentation. Stake (1995) defended that the most important planning of a study has to do with what needs to be known or possible relationships that may be discovered. He additionally stated that researchers find their best work by concentrating on a few things, yet are ready for unanticipated happenings that reveal the nature of the case. Certainly, what needs to be known and what are some possible relationships that could be further discovered are of paramount importance to any study. In this case, I considered that the best way to access the details required to study the phenomenon of the establishment and sustainment of Brockton would be through the use of in-depth interviews and documentation analysis.

Referring to data collection strategies, Merriam (1998) clarified that "rarely however, are all strategies used equally. One or two methods of data collection predominate" (p. 137). She continued:

No one can attend to all things and observe or think of all possible questions that could be asked in an interview. At best, the researcher is guided by the focus of the study and by being open and sensitive to new ideas and insights as they emerge in the process. (p. 139)

Yin (2003) wrote, "The approach to individual sources of evidence… is not recommended for conducting case studies. On the contrary, a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use different sources of evidence" (p. 97). Therefore, the use of different sources of data and triangulation was very important in working to successfully obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. This strategy added depth, breadth, and rigor to the study and provided corroboration through the analysis of the data obtained (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) clarified that "based on the research questions, specific data-collection methods are chosen to gather the required information in the most appropriate and meaningful way" (p. 73). Given the previous considerations and limitations, I decided to use two different data collection methods that included in-depth interviews as well as formal organizational documentation analysis.

To support the theme and coding process, I used electronic support through the use of Dedoose (http://www.dedoose.com/). Dedoose is a web 2.0 application designed by UCLA's Drs. Thomas Weisner and Eli Lieber. The user of Dedoose can upload complete interview transcripts to the site. Once at the site, Dedoose allows the researcher to selected excerpts from within the interview transcript. After the excerpt is selected, a code name can be applied. Codes are then easily accessible on the side of the screen; both the interview transcript as well as the codes menu are easily available on the screen. This coding process helped in the identification of the study's themes. Dedoose also kept track

of excerpt authorship and the original location within the interview transcript. An export tool within the program allows for the preparation of an Excel file that includes the excerpt, participant name, original transcript, and all levels of coding. After the coding process was completed and the themes were identified, excerpts in written form were sent to the participants for their approval of use in this study.

Interviews. For this study, interviews were held with 26 educational leaders, totaling 34 hours about Brockton. I was kindly requested by the Brockton Board of Governors not to directly contact potential participants, in order to eliminate the risk of them perceiving any kind of pressure to participate. Therefore, possible participants were invited to volunteer in the study through personalized invitations presented by Brockton's Head of School at the time (see Appendix A). There were also school-wide invitations made through the Brockton's weekly newsletter as well as email, instructing participants to directly contact me if they were interested in participating in the study. Twenty-six individuals from all categories agreed to participate.

In this particular study, each participant was asked eight open-ended questions that allowed participants to immerse themselves in their previous experience to describe how and why were educational leaders successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton (see Appendix B). I was careful not to modify the questions as the interviews progressed. Interestingly, the founders' and the current leaders' interview answers were consistent and similar in terms of the establishment and sustainment process, which I attributed to the fact that Brockton is still very much a young organization. This consistency may be as a result of the ongoing interaction of the original founders and current leaders through the Board of Governors and several other school initiatives.

Pollio, Henley, and Thompson (1997) mentioned that the method that attains an adequate description of human experience is that of a dialogue, where the investigator assumes a respectful position vis-à-vis the real expert, the subject, or the co-researcher. A path toward understanding then emerges from the interaction of two people committed to exploring the experience of one of them.

One of the two main forms of data collection for this study was in-depth interviews of formal and informal Brockton educational leaders. Gillham (2000) validated the use of interviews by stating that the "overwhelming strength of the face-to-face interview is the richness of the communication that is possible" (p. 62). He then offered the following criteria to help researchers determine when interviews could be used:

1. Small numbers of people are involved.
2. [The participants] are accessible.
3. [The participants] are key and you can't afford to lose any.
4. Your questions (or the most significant ones) are mainly open and require an extended response with prompts and probes from you to clarify the answers.
5. If the material is sensitive in character so that trust is involved: people will disclose things in a face to face interview that they will not disclose in an anonymous questionnaire. (p. 62)

Butin (2010) suggested that interviews are a popular research method in the social sciences. Interviews are seemingly concrete and a simple means for collecting data from individuals, both one-on-one or in focus group settings. He also suggested that effective interviewing presents open-ended questions that invoke meaningful and deep responses that take the shape of narratives with no expectation of participants answering yes or no. Rather, participants should talk about their experiences, feelings, and intuitions regarding the issue or situation being examined.

Hancock and Algozzine (2006) wrote: "Having identified the disciplinary orientation and design for the investigation, the researcher gathers information that will address the fundamental research question. Interviews are a very common form of data collection in case study research" (p. 39). These authors also indicated that the researcher should identify key participants whose knowledge or opinions may provide important insights in regards to the research questions.

Participants may also be interviewed individually or in groups. Individual interviews yield significant amounts of information from that person's perspective and may be quite time-consuming. Hancock and Algozzine (2006) also suggested that interviews may be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. Semi-structured interviews are suggested to be well suited for case study research. In this approach, researchers ask pre-established but flexibly worded questions. In addition to posting predetermined questions, researchers using semi-structured interviews may follow up by asking additional questions designed to probe more deeply into the issues of interest. Semi-structured interviews give an opportunity to interviewees to express themselves freely and define the case from their own perspectives.

Patton (2002) also defended that "interviews yield direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge" (p. 4); therefore, I believed this approach to be one of the best possible for this study along with documentation analysis. Marshall and Rossmann (1999) stated that interviews "rest on the assumption that there is a structure and essence to shared experiences that can be narrated. The purpose of this type of interviewing is to describe the meaning of a concept or phenomenon that several individuals share" (p. 112).

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As to the particular interview details, Pollio et al. (1997) shared that since the goal

is to attain a first-person account of a specified case in point, with the themes set by the

interviewee, the interview begins with a set of questions concerning the topic, and all

additional questions flow from the conversation as it moves along, rather than having

been controlled in advance. It is common for topics discussed at an earlier part of an

interview to reappear later on.

Yin (2003) stated that the interviews should "appear to be guided conversations

rather than structured queries" (p. 89), noting that the researcher would have to follow its

own line of inquiry, while at the same time he or she would need to ask actual

conversational questions in an unbiased manner that also serves the needs of the line of

inquiry. Yin continued:

> Most commonly, case study interviews are of an open-ended nature in which you
> can ask key respondents about the facts of a matter as well as their opinions about
> events. In some situations, you may even ask the respondent to propose his or her
> own insights into certain occurrences and may use such propositions as the basis
> for further inquiry. The respondent also can suggest other persons for you to
> interview, as well as other sources of evidence. (p. 90)

It is important to note Yin's comment that "interviews should always be considered

verbal reports only. As such, they are subject to the common problems of bias, poor

recall, or poor or inaccurate articulation" (p. 92), which also suggested that "a reasonable

approach is to corroborate interview data with information from other sources" (p. 92).

Documentation. Documentation analysis was an important component of the

study. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, I requested all available unpublished

documentation that could be relevant in regards to the establishment and sustainment of

Brockton . The documentation received and reviewed for analysis purposes included 84

Board meeting minutes of the Brockton Preparatory School Society dated from April 6,

2004, to November 16, 2011. Additionally, I reviewed 14 minutes from the Annual

General Meetings, Fall General Meetings, and Extraordinary General Meetings dated

starting on April 26, 2004, to December 1, 2011. Other documents analyzed included

minutes of school parent meetings prior to the establishment of Brockton as well as

Certificates of Incorporation, Constitution Articles, Society Certificates of Change of

Name, and Society Bylaws. Also, I analyzed letters from the Board of Governors and the

Head of School to the community, as well as content and curriculum delivery,

application, and authorization plants. All current and approved board and school policies

were also reviewed as well as the school's business plan for the years 2007–2012

(Brockton, 2007). Overall, the documents totaled an approximate 470 pages.

All the documents were carefully read several times in order to identify themes.

Documents were also compared and re-read before and after analyzing the interview data.

I then developed electronic document summary sheets, in which excerpts were divided by

document type, date, category, subcategory, and relevance. These documents sheets were

utilized to have easy access to this information.

Butin (2010) clarified that document analysis is an important and sometimes

underused research strategy, especially in exploratory research and case studies.

Document analysis is the analysis of a text being broadly understood as a physical

document. With several documents and a defined protocol, it is possible to develop a

comprehensive picture of important issues based on apparently random documents. Yin

(2003) recommended the use of:

> Letters, memoranda and other communiqués, agendas, announcements and
> minutes of meetings, and other written reports of events, administrative
> documents—proposals, progress reports, and other internal records, formal
> studies or evaluations of the same 'site' under study, newspaper clippings and

other articles appearing in the mass media or in community newsletters. (pp. 85-86)

Yin further clarified that "documents must be carefully used and should not be accepted as literal recordings of events that have taken place" (p. 87), as well as warned that "the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (p. 87). Yin also noted that in cases where "documentary evidence is contradictory rather than corroboratory, one needs to pursue the problem by inquiring further into the topic" (p. 87). One of the problems of documentation, according to Yin, is that some researchers become over-reliant on documentation as if it were representative of the unmitigated truth. Yin warned us that "every document was written for some specific purpose and some specific audience other than those of the case study being done" (p. 87).

Hancock and Algozzine (2006) defended that case study researchers often review existing documents from which they gather information related to the research questions. Documents may be different and often vary in usefulness. It is important to gather information from as many relevant documents as are available. When using documents, the researcher may look for who has the information and how it will be collected. Documents may include online, private, and public records, as well as documents created by the researcher.

Gillham (2000) referred to documentation as written evidence of two basic kinds: (a) published evidence of what others have done or found; or (b) other official publications, which may reflect part of the external context that a case inhabits, as well as unpublished documents and records that may be found in institutions. Individuals may also have their own documentation, which may be relevant. In additional to focusing on

published written evidence, I also concentrated on accessing and analyzing unpublished

school literature. In this regard, Gillham (2000) suggested which kind of unpublished

literature would be ideal for case study research. He defended that institutions may have

their own literature, which is usually unpublished and unavailable to the public. For

example, some of it may be available as school handbooks for parents or students. Large

organizations may also have a range of public documents as part of their public relations

function. Stake (1995) defended that almost every study should find a way to examine

documentation, such as newspapers, annual reports, correspondence, minutes of

meetings, and so forth. Gathering data by studying documents is inspired in the same line

of thinking as observing or interviewing, with the researcher being both organized as well

as open for the unexpected.

Research Sample

The case to be studied was the establishment and sustainment of Brockton, in

which 26 participants were interviewed in total. Eight participants of the 26 were

interviewed for two hours, and the remaining participants were interviewed for one hour,

totalling 34 hours of interviews. Eighteen participants gave me permission to use their

given names, six of them chose pseudonyms, and two preferred to remain anonymous

(see Figure 1). Merriam (1998) supported this approach in stating,

> Two levels of sampling are usually necessary in qualitative case studies. First, you
> must select "the case" to be studied. Then, unless you plan to interview, observe
> or analyze all the people, activities, or documents within the case, you will need
> to do some sampling within the case. (pp. 64-65)

This single case study was based on one particular private, nonprofit, university

preparatory school that implemented the International Baccalaureate curriculum, located

in the District of North Vancouver, in the province of BC, Canada. As suggested by

Merriam (1998) in the previous excerpt, Brockton was selected as the bounded case to be studied. Furthermore, considerable work and dedication was invested in developing the sampling selection strategy that helped to identify key individuals to interview.

No.	Roles	Hours
1	Head of School	2
2	Parent	1
3	Board Member	1
4	Parent	2
5	Head of School	2
6	Board Member	1
7	Faculty	1
8	Faculty	1
9	Staff	1
10	Board Member	1
11	Board Member	2
12	Staff	1
13	Parent	1
14	Parent	1
15	Parent	1
16	Board Member	2
17	Parent	1
18	Faculty	2
19	Board Member	1
20	Parent	2
21	Parent	1
22	Parent	1
23	Head of School	1
24	Faculty	1
25	Board Member	2
	Total	**33**

Figure 1. Participants of the study.

I chose a purposeful sampling approach based on Patton's (2002) suggestion that purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study: those from which one can substantially learn about issues of importance to the purpose of the

study. For Chein (1981), an analogy to understand purposeful sampling would be similar to a situation in which a number of expert consultants are called in to address a difficult medical case. These consultants, who are at the same time a purposive sample, are called because of their special experience and competence. Both Patton (1990) and Silverman (2000) additionally supported the idea that to yield the most information about the phenomenon under study, purposeful sampling is a method that is typical of case study methodology.

I sought to locate individuals involved with the establishment and sustainment of Brockton. The purposeful sampling strategies used in this study included typical case sampling, where individuals were "selected because they represent the norm and are in no way atypical, extreme, or very unusual" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 191). Additionally, criteria sampling was also part of the strategy used for the sampling approach for this study, in that the study would focus particularly around individuals who may have participated in making decisions, whether in formal or informal leadership roles throughout the foundation and sustainment of Brockton. Therefore, participants had to "meet one or more criteria as predetermined by the researcher" (p. 191).

I also utilized the snowball sampling approach, otherwise referred to as network or chain sampling, to successfully reach particular individuals who were key in the establishment and sustainment of the school. This particular approach to sampling is one in which a few participants who possess certain characteristics are selected, and they are asked to identify and refer others who are known to have the same or similar characteristics. This was done to identify individuals who had key or formal leadership responsibilities throughout the period of 2004 to 2012.

It is important to note that the Brockton Board of Directors formally requested that I not directly contact potential participants for the study. The clearly adequate rationale behind this request was that the Board would not appreciate anyone to feel forced to participate. Therefore, the Board suggested that the invitation to participate in the study should come from the Head of School. Initially, an invitation was presented to all current and previous school founders, parents, and teachers as well as board members; the principles of typical case sampling were assumed (see Appendix A). The invitation from the Head of School came both through electronic mail as well as the school newsletter. In this way, both criteria sampling and typical case sampling were the initial approach utilized for the study.

Several individuals initially responded to the invitation to participate in this study. Furthermore, as interviews started, a few suggested the interviewing of other participants given their perceived participation in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton. These potential participants were further contacted by the Head of School and invited to participate in the study, implementing a snowball, network, or chain sampling strategy. Several participants replied favourably to the second invitation (see Appendix A).

The criteria for participant selection were that they should be: (a) a member or a former member of the Brockton community who had participated or witnessed administrative or leadership aspects of the establishment and/or sustainment of Brockton through 2004 to 2012; and (b) individuals who had fulfilled formal leadership roles during the same period of time, including teachers, administrators, parents, staff, and Board members.

I had hoped to enlist 30 participants for one-hour along interviews. Nevertheless, after considerable efforts that included several reminders of the invitation through e-mail and the school newsletter, as well as several personal invitations led by the Head of School, I was able to interview 26 individuals who adequately reflected the criteria established for the study. Eighteen of these individuals were interviewed for two hours, and the remaining eight for one hour, accumulating a total of 34 hours of actual interview time. The final participants included current, former, and founding Heads of School, Board members, faculty, parents, parent volunteers, staff, Board Chairs, and school administrators.

The intent of the study was to accumulate at least 30 one-hour interviews; nevertheless, when confronted with a reduced number of potential participants, it was decided to invite participants who had already been interviewed for one hour to engage in one additional one-hour interview, initiating an in-depth interview process. All participants were invited to participate in a second in-depth interview, and out of 26 participants, eight agreed. In-depth interviewing is an important element within qualitative research.

I took proactive care to offer participants protection of their identities if they chose. All of the 26 participants were offered the possibility to (a) use their own name and be quoted as part of the study, (b) choose a pseudonym and be quoted using this pseudonym, or (c) to remain completely anonymous.

Bloomberg and Volpe's Conceptual Framework

My approach to utilizing a conceptual framework was different from the more commonly used approach generally utilized in qualitative research (Becker, 1998;

Maxwell, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Robson, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Schram, 2003). Rather, the conceptual framework in this study was understood as defined by Bloomberg and Volpe (2008). For these authors, a conceptual framework is used to shape and categorize the results of the study by establishing initial themes that directly relate to the research questions, with descriptors based both on reviewed literature as well as on the researcher's observations and conceptualizations. Bloomberg and Volpe developed this particular understanding of a conceptual framework in order to fine-tune the data gathering process, for it to serve as the initial repository for the data collected for further analysis, interpretation, and synthesis. I decided to include and use this differentiated model of conceptual framework because of the analysis support it presented. It became the framework for the thematic process, which was the basis for reporting the results as well as guiding data analysis and discussion of the study.

The current study focused on the establishment and sustainment of a BC Ministry-approved independent school in BC that opened its doors in the fall of 2004 (Brockton, 2012, para. 1). In addition to looking at the establishment and sustainment of the school, the study also looked at leadership traits, qualities, and experiences of individuals who participated in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton. I was also interested in clarifying the purpose and perspective of Brockton's foundation, as well as identifying the successful strategies that supported the school throughout its years in existence.

For these purposes, a detailed and pertinent literature review was conducted to provide the reader with the adequate background information to support their understanding and foundation of this study. This literature review has looked at general leadership theories as well as educational leadership theories, which included trait

theories, contingency and situational theories, transformational and transactional leadership theories, learning organizations series, leadership for change, politics of leadership as well as emotions of leadership amongst others.

As stated before, this study did not only look at formal leadership roles in the process of establishing and sustaining Brockton. Given the definition of educational leadership in this study, participants with non-formal leadership roles in the establishment and sustainment of the school were interviewed. In the context of this study, leaders were individuals who took action or engaged in strategy in support of the establishment and sustainment of Brockton.

In this case, a conceptual framework included classifications that supported: (a) the purpose and perspective of an educational start up; (b) the notion of how and why the school began; (c) the notion of how and why was the school successfully established; (d) the notion of how and why was the school successfully sustained; (e) the identification and classification of traits, qualities, and experiences that demonstrated successful leadership; and finally, (f) the identification of successful strategies during the establishment and sustainment of Brockton. These six points may further be identified as a starting point for the development of a conceptual framework that may inform other studies in this emerging field of educational entrepreneurship. For these purposes, it would be important to consider the findings of the current study, as they informed the initial classifications of this potential theoretical framework.

These categories are a clear reflection of the main research question: How and why were educational leaders successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton Preparatory School? As well, an additional eight sub questions presented in the

introduction of the study supported the analysis of this study and allowed for the

emergence of themes and codes. There was also a strong reflection of Yin's (2003)

suggested approach to the approximation of case study methodology, particularly in

regards to looking for the how and why of the particular phenomenon under study.

According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), "the review and critique of the literature,

combined with the researcher's own experience and insights" (p. 61) contributes to the

development of a conceptual framework for the study. A conceptual framework "helps to

focus and shape the research process, informing the methodological design and

influencing the data collection instruments to be used" (p. 61). Furthermore, the

conceptual framework

> also becomes the repository for the data that were collected, providing the basis
> for and informing various iterations of a coding scheme. As such, this framework
> provides an organizing structure both for reporting this study's findings as well as
> the analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of these findings. (p. 61)

The conceptual framework for this study was:

1. Purpose and perspective of start-up

2. School beginning: How and why?

3. Establishment: How and why?

4. Successful sustainment: How and why?

5. Successful leadership: Traits, qualities, and experiences

6. Successful strategies: Establishment and sustainment

Analysis and Results

The formal process of identifying the study's results began by reading all

interview transcripts and documents several times, while assigning themes and codes

according to the descriptors in Bloomberg and Volpe's (2008) conceptual framework.

After codes were thoroughly assigned to particular excerpts, I exported the coded

excerpts into Excel spreadsheets, where further clarification and code simplification was

attained.

Documentation data were received electronically and in hard copy from the

school. All documentation was read several times to identify themes and sub themes.

Initially, documentation data were coded utilizing colour pens and post-its in hard copies

as well as coloured text highlight on electronic files. All relevant excerpts identified in

hard copies as well as in soft copies were later transcribed into Excel spreadsheets and

kept separate from interview excerpts for further coding and analysis. To support this

process, particularly with interview transcripts, I utilized a web-based qualitative

software tool called Dedoose ((http://www.dedoose.com/), designed by UCLA's Drs.

Thomas Weisner and Eli Lieber. This software allowed for all interview transcripts to be

uploaded into their server. Additionally, this software had the capability of supporting the

researcher in assigning codes and then grouping excerpts according to the codes that have

been associated with them. The results identified and presented related to themes that

reflected categories in more detail as associated to the actual findings. Findings were

validated and further supported by direct quotations from participants as well as from

documentation.

Research Process

One main research question guided by eight sub questions was explored to gather

the information needed for this study. In essence, this study was intended to identify how

and why were educational leaders successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton,

while at the same time clearly identifying the purpose and perspective of its

establishment, as well as the strategies utilized and the leadership traits, qualities, and experiences that guided this process.

The information needed in this study included formal and informal founders' perceptions in seeking to understand how and why were educational leaders successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton throughout the period of 2004 to 2012. Additionally, the information needed for this study also included the roles and responsibilities that participants had throughout the establishment and sustainment of Brockton particularly pertaining to formal or informal leadership roles. I was careful of noting each participant's background as it related to the institution. Finally, information was analyzed and compared with current and past theory through an ongoing review of the literature that would be relevant to this study.

Following the clarification of the information needed for this study, I engaged in the following steps that summarize the phases undertaken to carry out this research:

1. A review of the literature was conducted to study the proposals and contributions of other researchers and writers in the field of leadership in general and educational leadership in particular. This included independent education, educational entrepreneurship, nonprofit entrepreneurship, business entrepreneurship, as well as nonprofit organizational theory and nonprofit leadership theory. This literature review was initiated shortly after my acceptance into the Doctor of Education program in the summer of 2006 at the University of Calgary and was maintained until the last stages of this study in the spring of 2012.

2. A research proposal was successfully defended and approved by my appointed research committee for the purposes of carrying out this study as a result of my participation and enrolment in the Doctor of Education program offered at the University of Calgary.

3. Formal authorization was then requested from the Brockton Board of Governors to conduct the study entitled: *Brockton Preparatory School: A Case Study on Educational Leadership in the Establishment and Sustaining of a Private, Nonprofit, University Preparatory School in North Vancouver, BC,* to which the graciously agreed.

4. Following the approval of the research proposal by my research committee as well as the Brockton Board of Governors, ethics approval was requested and accomplished through the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board at the University of Calgary. I received the formal Certification of Institutional Ethics Review on November 4, 2010. The Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board approval involved clarifying and outlining all processes and procedures to establish and ensure adherence to standards expected in the study of human subjects, including participants' references within the study and informed consent.

5. Formal school documentation was requested and approved for use by the Brockton Board and administration of the school. Documentation provided to me included a total of 84 formal Board minutes from April 6, 2004, to November 16, 2011. Additionally, I had access to 14 annual, fall, and general meeting minutes of the Brockton Preparatory School Society. Other

documentation provided included minutes of parent meetings prior to the

establishment of Brockton; incorporation and constitution documentation; a

complete set of Board policies; letters from the Board of Governors as well as

the Head of School; curriculum authorization, application, and delivery

documents; as well as the Brockton (2007) business plan for the years 2007–

2012. The total number of documentation pages was estimated to be around

470.

6. Potential research participants were invited to participate through electronic

   and personal invitations from the Head of School adhering first to typical case

   and criteria sampling strategies. After this initial round of invitations had been

   accomplished, active participants suggested other participants who may have

   played a significant role in the foundation years of Brockton. Therefore, a

   snowball, network, or chain sampling strategy was additionally conducted to

   invite these participants.

7. In-depth interviews were conducted with 26 participants who had previously

   accepted the terms presented in the formal letter of consent prepared for this

   study, which had been approved by the University of Calgary's Conjoint

   Faculties Research Ethics Board. Eight participants were interviewed for two

   hours, and the remaining participants were interviewed for one hour each,

   totaling 34 hours of interviews. Interviews were conducted at one of three

   possible places: (a) the Brockton school premises, (b) my home office, and in

   limited cases (c) in the current places of work of some participants.

8. Interview recordings were transcribed totaling approximately 780 pages and initially analyzed by me to clearly identify excerpts from these transcripts that were in relationship with Bloomberg and Volpe's (2008) initial conceptual framework themes presented in this chapter. The data reduction, exclusion, and inclusion process was implemented using the interviews that provided the thick description, which resulted in the identification of the study's themes.

9. Excerpts initially considered by me for further analysis and the possibility of being quoted were then forwarded to each participant requesting formal approval of the excerpts for potential use in this study. Of the 26 participants interviewed, 26 responded with their approval. All participants who were interviewed for two hours replied and approved their excerpts.

10. Further analysis, clarification, and coding modifications followed in order to successfully present the results of this study as reflected in Chapter 5. The discussion of the findings has been reported in Chapter 6 and several concluding ideas presented as part of the final section of this study.

Trustworthiness

Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) noted that trustworthiness consists of any efforts by the researcher to address the more traditional qualitative concepts of validity and reliability. These authors further noted that qualitative researchers have to do their best to control the potential biases that may be present throughout the design, implementation, and analysis of this study. Therefore, in this study, I considered the following issues of trustworthiness: researcher bias, triangulation, member checks, audit trail, and transferability.

Researcher bias. Eppley (2006) stated,

> When we, as researchers, position ourselves as "insider" or "outsider", we attempt to stabilize and make coherent that which is tenuous and discursively constituted. We attempt to say, "I am *not* one of them" or "I *am* one of them." (p. 2)

Nevertheless, positionality has its complications, as some authors argued that one can never completely isolate one of these states, as was the case when Eppley defended that insider/outsider positions are socially constructed and require a high level of fluidity that may further affect a research situation. A researcher needs to have some level of "outside-ness" in order to satisfactorily conduct research. This does not mean that his or her personal perspective is surrendered, but rather exists at the same time. There is a separation Eppley called "othering", in the very act of observing and studying that is a necessary distancing in different levels and degrees. There can be no interpretation without some degree of separation; therefore, researchers cannot be insiders nor outsiders; rather, they are temporarily positioned within a continuum.

With these complications being relatively evident, it was important nevertheless to clarify my positional role within this study. in stating preponderance towards an insider researcher position without completely eliminating the objective traits that a researcher should generally possess when conducting any form of research as noted by Eppley (2006).

Kauffman (1994) defended that the insider is an individual who possesses intimate knowledge of the community and its members due to previous and ongoing association with that community and its members. I was in a position of insider as a school parent starting September 2010 as well as board member from June 2011 until April 2012. Some of the positive attributes to being an insider were stated by Labaree (2002) when he referred to methodological researchers, citing "a variety of interrelated

advantages to insiderness" (p. 102) that can be summarized in "four broad values: the value of shared experiences; the value of greater access; the value of cultural interpretation; and the value of deeper understanding and clarity of thought for the researcher" (p. 102). I was also very cognizant and aware that there were, of course, certain risks and limitations to being an insider researcher, which were appropriately addressed following Yin's (2003) recommendations for researchers in these circumstances to become participant observers. In this particular study, there was a clear risk for me, as the researcher, to be perceived as an authority figure within the organization on two levels: first, as a Board Member. Board members have a direct responsibility for the hiring and assessment of the head of school and, hence, are generally perceived to be the last authority (at the top of the hierarchy) within educational organizations of this type. Additionally, as a parent, there was also the risk of being perceived as an authority, given that parental influence in tuition-based schools is generally very high (Powell, 1990). Some of the participants may have had direct responsibilities with one of my two children within the organization.

Yin (2003) defended that a participant-observer is not "merely a passive observer" (p. 93) because of the possibility of the researcher actually participating in the events by being an insider to the organization. Yin continued by stating that in the case of specific neighborhood studies, the "[participant-observation] role may range from having casual social interactions with various residents to undertaking specific functional activities within the neighborhood" (p. 94). Yin also defended that serving as a staff member or a key decision maker within an organization provided good opportunities for participant observation. To Yin, another distinctive opportunity in participant-observation

is "the ability to perceive reality from the viewpoint of someone 'inside' the case study rather than external to it; many have argued that such a perspective is invaluable in producing an 'accurate' portrayal of a case study phenomenon" (p. 94).

Some problems were identified by Yin (2003) in relation to the insider participant-observation model, which I always considered as important while conducting the study. These had to do with the fact that (a) the investigator has less ability to work as an external observer; (b) the participant-observer is likely to become a supporter of the group or organization; (c) the participant role may require too much time and attention; and (d) if the organization is physically dispersed, it would be difficult to be at the right place at the right time (pp. 95-96). All of these concerns, except the last, which is not applicable to Brockton's situation, were important to consider during the process of the investigation.

Following the suggestions of Yin (2003), I also endeavoured to cultivate the majority of the following skills: (a) able to ask good questions, (b) be a good listener, (c) be adaptive and flexible, (d) have a firm grasp of the issues being studied, and (e) be unbiased by preconceived notions. A continuous, conscious questioning effort remained in the back of my mind in regards to the last point referred to by Yin. Yin also stated that the insider issue is something particularly important to consider when confronted with contrary findings than what were expected by the researcher. The role of bias of the insider participant-observer model was of most importance when addressing its potential complications. This awareness required that I constantly monitor, address, question, and clarify.

Inter-rater reliability (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was conducted by having a colleague read several interviews with the purpose of identifying emergent codes and themes. Generally, the codes and themes were found to be consistent between the researcher and the colleague. Consequently, there was no need to engage in any dispute resolution process in this regard.

Triangulation. In regards to using multiple sources of evidence, I also followed Yin's (2003) suggestion that individual sources of evidence are not ideal for case studies, but rather triangulation of data is needed, which in this case study originated from different sources, which included interviews and documentation. In this regard, Yin stated,

> The most important advantage presented by using multiple sources of evidence is the development of "converging lines of inquiry". . . . Thus, any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be much more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information. (p. 98)

Also, following Patton (2002), I considered triangulation strategies in "checking for consistency of what people say about the same thing over time; comparing the perspectives of people from different points of view" (p. 559) as well as "checking interviews against program documents and other written evidence" (p. 559).

In regards to creating a case study database, I had clear differentiation and archiving of case study observation notes, documents, as well as interview transcripts (Yin, 2003). It was important to maintain a chain of evidence that would allow any external observer, in principle, "to follow the derivation of any evidence, ranging from initial research questions to ultimate case study conclusions" (p. 105).

Member checks. I conducted member checks as part of this study. "Member checks are argued to be a key to establishing the accuracy and credibility of many types

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of qualitative research, and they can indeed act in this way" (Bradshaw & Stratford, 2010, p. 203). Lincoln and Guba (1985) clarified that member checks are "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (p. 314). Hancock and Algozzine (2006) mentioned that perhaps the most powerful strategy to confirm a report's findings is to share the results with the participants of the study. This activity supported my ethical obligation to debrief participants in the study. Member checking included seeking insight and feedback from participants; the viability of the findings was determined by the information and suggestions that the participants provided. Merriam (1998) defined member checks as "taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are possible" (p. 204). I engaged in member checks "to ensure that the researcher's own biases do not influence how participants' perspectives are perpetrated, and to determine the accuracy of the findings" (p. 77).

After transcribing all interviews, I underwent an initial analysis of the data using Bloomberg and Volpe's (2008) conceptual framework as the starting point to complete an initial round of coding and classification. After this initial coding round was finished, I had identified potential excerpts on the part of each individual participant that may be used in the study.

Sequentially, I contacted all interview participants via electronic mail requesting the approval of excerpts obtained from the original transcript of their interview. All 26 interviewed participants were contacted, out of which 26 replied with their approval. Some participants made minor modifications to the data, and consequently, changes were made given that the substance of the excerpt remained the same. There were no

participants who substantially modified the data. I conducted the case study, and all member checks were requested prior to the data analysis.

Audit trail. Yin (2003) clarified that the general way of approaching reliability is to make steps as operational as possible and to conduct research as if someone were always looking over your shoulder, as in the accounting profession where any calculations must be capable of being audited. Auditors also make reliability checks and must be able to get the same results when calculations are repeated. Therefore, a guideline was to conduct the research in a way that procedures could be repeated obtaining the same outcome.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) concluded that just as an auditor authenticates the accounts of a business, independent judges can authenticate the findings of a study by following the trail of the researcher. Therefore, I developed "a method for labeling, storing, and gaining access to information acquired during the research effort" (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 57). Methods used included mainly electronic records. The research proposal approved at my candidacy examination was carefully studied and used as a constant guide for the purposes of moving forward. All information and documentation access on my part were initially labeled in accordance to the type of data they may relate to.

All data were stored either physically in my home office filing system or electronically in my computer system, with five copies of electronic backups constantly updated. Given that the organization of the data, information, notes and other research indicators was clear and simple throughout the study, I was always able to access the information without any loss having occurred at any time during the research process.

Transferability. In addition to the previous suggestions, transferability in this study was also maintained through the accomplishment of rich, thick description. Merriam (1998) explained rich, thick description means "providing enough description so that readers will be able to determine how closely their situations match the research situation, and hence, whether findings can be transferred" (p. 221). As described throughout this dissertation, I made all possible efforts to provide as much of a rich, thick description as possible in all aspects of the study. The relevance of the data was considered, and attempts were made to present information in a way so that it is not reiterative or redundant.

Walker (1980) defended that transferability refers to the case of "the reader who has to ask, what is there in this study that I can apply to my own situation, and what clearly does not apply?" (p. 34). Transferability also refers to "the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other settings or groups" (Polit & Hungler, 1999, p. 717). In this regard, Merriam (1998) said, "The researcher has an obligation to provide enough detailed description of the study's context to enable readers to compare it with their situations" (p. 221).

Graneheim and Lundman (2004) stated that to facilitate transferability, it is important to offer a distinct description of culture, context, selection, characteristics of participants, data collection, and process of analysis. Transferability will also be supported in this author's perspective by providing a vigorous presentation of the findings with relevant quotations from participants.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have provided a detailed description of this study's methodology and paradigmatic approach. Within the social constructivist paradigm, the qualitative approach was considered as best suited to address this study. Furthermore, it was identified that case study research methodology, particularly single-case research, was the best possible approach to study how and why educational leaders were successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton.

Additionally, I identified the best methods to approach this study. The methods that were determined to address the research question were chosen. Personal interviews as well as school documentation were identified as these sources of data collection. Bloomberg and Volpe's (2008) conceptual framework as well as the study's research process and results were also discussed in this chapter. Additionally, issues around trustworthiness were examined, including researcher bias, triangulation, member checks, audit trail, and transferability.

A detailed and rich description of Brockton as the single case study will be presented in the next chapter. This description will include historical accounts, excerpts from school documentation, detailed explanations in regards to funding, educational program delivery, facilities, formal school leadership, and enrolment as well as the participants' backgrounds.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE CASE

Introduction

In this chapter, the case will be described in as much detail as relevant for the purpose of this study, which was to examine how and why educational leaders were successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton School. The sections in this chapter will include establishment, funding, facilities, locations, and enrolment. Sections describing the International Baccalaureate program, in general, and at Brockton School, in particular, have also been included.

Overview

Brockton School (Brockton) is currently the only private, nonprofit, K-10, university preparatory school in the District of North Vancouver that follows BC Ministry of Education curriculum as well as the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The IB program has been offered at Brockton since its inception as an IB candidate school and later as an official IB World School, and has always been an integral part of the school since its foundation. Additionally, Brockton is centrally located within the district of North Vancouver and currently operates out of what used to be Westover Elementary School in Lynn Valley.

Throughout its years of operation, Brockton has experienced many challenges, including a considerably difficult foundation in 2004, which was the unexpected product of a failed operation on the part of a previous private school where the great majority of Brockton's founding families and guardians had students enrolled. Several other challenges could be identified as being related to facilities, enrolment, financing, and leadership, which will be explored in the findings and analysis sections of this study.

Brockton currently employs approximately 25 staff, with 22 of them having direct teaching responsibilities. Teachers have a diverse mix of backgrounds, and all are IB certified or in the process of becoming IB certified.

Several sources of documentation were analyzed to obtain an understanding of Brockton's timeline from before its formal inception until today. These documents included 84 board minutes as well as 14 annual general meeting, fall general meeting, and extraordinary general meeting minutes. Additionally, general meeting minutes from pre-Brockton parent meetings were considered as well as formal incorporation, change of name, constitution, bylaws, and Board policies documentation. Internal documentation such as letters from the Board of Governors and Head of School as well as educational action and delivery plans were considered. The 2007 *Brockton Preparatory School Business Plan 2007–2012* was also considered for these purposes.

Brockton Establishment

Sometime by the end of 2003 and the beginning of 2004, several parents and guardians from a pre-existing private school in North Vancouver found out that the school had accumulated significant debt and that parents were expected to become involved in the effort to cover the financial need. On January 28, 2004, a group comprised of these parents met to select a fact-finding task force to better understand the situation that the school was going through. The expectation was to have a "good cross section of parents –for example parents of younger grades as well as older grades, parents with diverse expertise and skills" (Pre-Brockton Parent Meeting, personal communication, January 28, 2004).

Some of the areas of concern were that consulting expenses were too high as well as the existence of a considerable debt load that had been accumulated in the amount of approximately $1.7 million dollars. Parents had been formally requested by the administration of this institution to cover the debt accumulated, and therefore, they were interested in knowing more about the original business plan for the school and how reality had changed in such a way that parents were now expected to support the school with funds.

Parents were interested in knowing more about the governing and financial structure of the school as well as the school's future and growth expectations and planning projections. The school administration had consistently communicated to parents as well as prospective parents that they would not expect financial support from them other than the payment of tuition. This was certainly a different model used by the majority of schools of its kind in the area. Other schools would usually request a bond to be placed per family of approximately $20,000. Parents felt disconnected from the governance and financial aspects of the school. They had poor clarity and knowledge of the society's constitution and bylaws and knowledge of whether the school was a for-profit or a nonprofit private educational organization and its sources of funding.

On February 6, 2004, the parent meeting minutes reported that:

> Eleven parents are now working on the task force, which has been split into two groups in order to streamline tasks and speed up the process of inquiry. The findings group efforts are focused on obtaining disclosure of financial and other information and documentation, while the future options group efforts are focused on identifying options for the future operation of the school. (personal communication)

Given that the parent task force was unable to reach an agreement in regards to moving forward in consideration of the complications that existed at the time, parents

decided to establish a new and completely independent educational organization hoping

to keep the current students and faculty together. Hence, on April 6, 2004, the parent task

force established a completely new and independent nonprofit society by the name of

True North Independent School. The Constitution of True North Independent School

(2004) reads:

> The name of the Society is True North Independent School Society. The purposes of the society are: 1. To establish, govern, administer, operate and promote a non-denominational, coeducational independent school that provides students with challenging academic, extracurricular and athletic programs in a nurturing learning environment that embraces diversity, prepare students for continuing study at a university or college, and enable students to become responsible citizens by fostering high standards of morality, integrity, respect, and character. 2. To provide continuing education programs; and 3. To perform other functions as are incidental, ancillary or conductive to the attainment of the purposes and powers of the society. (p. 1)

> On September 9, 2004, the True North Independent School Society changed its

name to Brockton Preparatory School Society. The formal document stated:

> I hereby certify that True North Independent School Society has this date changed its name to Brockton Preparatory School Society. Issued under my hand in Victoria, BC on September 9, 2004. [signature] John S. Powell, Registrar of Companies. Province of BC Canada. Number S-47436. (p. 1)

> Brockton started operations in September 2004 with 44 students: eight in

Kindergarten, 12 in a grade 1-2 split, nine in a grade 3-4 split, four in a grade 5-6 split,

and 11 in a grade 7-8 split. Operations started with five full-time and three part-time

teachers as well as three staff members, consisting of after school care, admin support,

and janitor. Mr. Robin Hinnell served as Head of School.

Funding

As is the case with all private educational endeavours, funding issues were a

recurrent theme. Brockton is currently funded through a combination of public funds

from the BC Ministry of Education and private tuition revenue as well as other sources of funding that have included grants, gifts, and charitable donations.

Brockton was established and is currently catalogued as a Group 2 school for the purposes of provincial funding for independent schools in BC (BC Ministry of Education, Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools, 2011). As a reminder:

> *Group 2 schools*: Meet the same requirements as group 1 schools, and received per student operating grants at the 35 percent level, because the schools per student operating costs exceed the ministry grants page to the local boards of education. There are currently 14,352 students enrolled in 67 group 2 schools. These figures include 9.75 FTEs enrolled into distributed learning schools. (p. 2)

In other words, Group 2 schools receive 35% of what the BC Ministry of Education (n.d., "Background," para. 5) estimates are the costs that the government incurs to educate one student in the public system per year.

> The district operating grant refers to the per-student operating grant amount issued to the school district in which the independent school is located, as determined by the Minister of Education. It excludes the funding that districts receive for capital costs. ("Background," para. 1)

Furthermore:

> The district operating grant consists of the per-pupil base allocation plus supplementary amounts added to produce the per-student district operating grant amount. Supplementary amounts are included for unique student needs (including learning disabilities, learning assistance, speech and language services, mild intellectual disabilities, English language learner, aboriginal education, and adult education programs), enrolment decline (greater than one percent per year), salary differentials, transportation and housing, and unique geographic factors. The supplementary factors account for the difference in school district operating grant amounts. ("Background," para. 2)

Each independent school's grant is calculated by multiplying the local district's grant amount by the number of eligible students enrolled, then multiplied again by the designated group percentage. This grant can only be used for operational expenses. Also, it is important to consider the following:

A school may refuse to accept grant payments at any time, or, if a school ceases to comply with the requirements of the Act, the grant payments may be withheld, reduced or discontinued by the Inspector. In such a case, the Inspector's decision may be appealed to the Minister of Education, whose decision is final. (BC Ministry of Education, n.d., "Withholding," para. 1)

Brockton's tuition fees for the year 2012-2013 have been established as follows:

For kindergarten to grade 5: $13,446 and for grades 6 to 11: $14.910. Grade 11 will be starting in September 2012. The school requires initial deposits of $3000 per student in the spring of the previous school year and the payment of the balance is due by June 1st before starting in September. There are monthly payment plans as well as grants for families in financial need, which are assessed by an independent third party not associated to the school, its directors or administrators. There is also a sibling discount of 5 percent for the first sibling and 10 percent for the third and subsequent siblings. (Brockton Website, June, 2012)

Additional funding is provided through advancement activities organized by the Brockton Parent Committee, which is an independent volunteer organization in charge of the advancement and parent-related social activities at Brockton. They have raised from $20,000 and up to $60,000 annually over the years through diverse activities. These funds become accessible to the organization for their use.

As is the case with many private, nonprofit, educational organizations, capital funding is generally achieved by the placement of financial bonds in favour of the organization, with certain conditions of financial gain and payment. Brockton has had several versions of a bond throughout the years.

Initial funding for the establishment of Brockton was secured through private founders' loans that some of the founding families offered the school as seed money, with the clear understanding of re-payment in the majority of cases. These were unsecured personal loans, with a very high degree of risk at the time. Per Brockton Board Minutes from January 23, 2008, a motion was passed to set up a plan to renew both promissory notes and repayment plans for founders' loans. Brockton Board Minutes

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dated September 17, 2008, read: "The committee is organizing the paperwork for paying out the founding families that have left the school."

Small advancement loans were also requested from time to time. For example, on January 23, 2008, there was a reference in this regard that read: "Advancement fund. 41 families have paid . . . 12 families have not paid; to follow-up with the families. One third came as loans and two thirds came as donations." On November 19, 2008, a motion was approved at a Brockton Board Meeting to "roll the existing founders' loans into the Brockton Bond Program" effective that date.

A Board report dated December 18, 2008 read: "Report on bond subscription level. We currently have had 10 families enrolled in the Brockton Bond Program." Given the situation, on January 14, 2009, a decision was made by the Board that a "compulsory bond program would be effective June 30, 2010, for the 2010-2011 academic year." At the time, the school held $330,000 in bond funds. The Fall General Meeting Minutes dated November 25, 2009, stated that "parents were reminded that the $20,000 bond will become mandatory as of June 30, 2010."

A new series of bonds was created recently to better reflect the financial reality of the school. The Brockton Fall General Meeting Minutes dated December 1, 2011, read: "A new bond series was introduced with three option; option one is a $20,000 bond with no interest; option 2 a $25,000 bond with interest; and option 3 is a $15,000 donation." Currently, all new families at Brockton need to choose one of the three options to enroll. Previous bonds have been honoured as originally signed.

Facilities and Locations

Immediately after its foundation in 2004, Brockton was situated at Cloverly

Elementary School in the southern part of the North Vancouver District. It was an old

elementary school building that was not used by the North Vancouver School District and

one that was approved for lease at the time. The Cloverly location soon proved to be

limited in terms of the expectations Brockton had for growth; therefore, after negotiations

with the North Vancouver School Board, Brockton successfully negotiated a larger

school site referred to as Westover Elementary School.

The first lease between the Board of School Trustees of School District Number

44, North Vancouver, and Brockton Preparatory School Society was signed starting from

the 1st day of January 2006 to and including the 31st day of July 2010. Brockton had

early occupancy starting from November 17, 2005, for the purposes of facilitating the

completion of the tenant's leasehold improvements. The use of the building is clearly

established and defined as follows:

> The tenant will not use or permit the building to be used for any purpose other
> than the operation of the school and other educational or instructional services or
> ancillary services thereto. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the
> tenant will not carry on business which would in the reasonable opinion of the
> landlord, tend to lower the character of the building. (School District #44, 2005,
> p. 3)

On June 23, 2009, the Board of Education of School District Number 44, North

Vancouver, published a request for proposals on the Westover Elementary School

Property that had been leased by Brockton for the previous five years. This meant that

Brockton would need to compete with other possible tenants to keep the premises they

had been using for the last five years. The summary of the request for proposals read:

> North Vancouver School District is inviting proposals from parties interested in
> leasing space surplus to school district requirements. The property available for

lease is located at the former Westover Elementary, 3467 Duvall Rd., North Vancouver, BC. This property consists of the existing school buildings and also includes shared use of the outdoor facilities. Proposals to lease the space must be compatible with the vision and values of the North Vancouver School District. (School District #44 RFP # 90828-11, p. 4)

The rentable area includes 22,717 ft² with a site size of 7.167 acres. Land use for this area is public assembly, which allows for educational organizations. The facilities are located in the Lynn Valley neighborhood of North Vancouver and are primarily surrounded by single-family homes. Sports fields are offered for shared use between the tenant and the North Vancouver School District.

Brockton was able to secure a second lease at this same property commencing August 1, 2010, with a 10-year term. The permitted use of the premises in this case established use of:

Private school for not more than 210 students, community uses other noncommercial uses that are ancillary to the operation of the school, and such other commercial and noncommercial uses as may be approved by the landlord. (School District #44, 2009, p. 5)

It is important to note that rent obligations and the payment were in accordance to general commercial lease practices. Brockton did not receive special funding or special considerations for rent payment given the nature of its educational activities. Brockton finalized its first capital building expansion in the fall of 2011, which included four new classrooms and new washroom areas to accommodate students mainly from the middle years' program and some specialized language classes.

Enrolment

Enrolment has fluctuated in interesting patterns. Enrolment has been influenced by the different stages that Brockton has undergone. The first formal reference to enrolment numbers in Board minutes was from December 9, 2004, with 45 students

enrolled. Subsequently, there are reports from December 11, 2006, with 97 students. On Board minutes from April 19, 2007, there was a report of increasing enrolment, particularly in the junior school, but without a number given. On September 20, 2007, enrolment was reported at 93. At this time, some students were assigned to split grade classrooms. On January 1, 2008, it was reported that single classes were expected for all grades starting September 2009. On the same date, it was reported that enrolment stood at 99 students. On March 12, 2008, it was noted that the majority of families registered in the school had handed in their continuing enrolment packages and that the kindergarten enrolment was significantly higher than at the same time on the previous year.

In Board minutes from April 16, 2008, the following information was documented: "Enrolment continues to grow, we are still expecting to make our target enrolment of 108 by September 2008. There will likely not be grade 10 in 2008–2009 as the grade 9 students have elected to go to a larger school." On May 14, 2008, the confirmed number of students was 95, with a goal of 112 to start the 2008 academic year. On June 11, 2008, formal enrolment numbers stood at 99, with an expectation to start 2008 with at least 108 students. On July 15, 2008, enrolment was confirmed at 101 students. On August 20, 2008, enrolment was confirmed at 105. On January 14, 2009, enrolment was confirmed at 107. On May 12, 2009, enrolment numbers descended to 91 students. Furthermore, on January 20, 2010, student population of Brockton was reduced to 90 students. On April 1, 2010, enrolment population was confirmed at 84 students. On April 21, 2010, there were 86 confirmed students at Brockton. On May 19, 2010, enrolment was confirmed at 96. On August 16, 2010, enrolment was confirmed at 106, and on November 16, 2010, enrolment was reported at 115 students. On April 19, 2011,

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enrolment was reduced to 103 students. On June 7, 2011, enrolment was confirmed at 125. On August 18, 2011, enrolment was reported at 127. On September 20, 2011, enrolment was reported at 131 students. On October 18, 2011, enrolment was reported at 135. On November 16, 2011, enrolment was reported at 137 students.

Brockton currently serves approximately 140 students from kindergarten to grade 10. The school has committed to offering grade 11 starting in September 2012. The school's goal is to open grade 11 with approximately 10 students. A hundred and forty students currently bring together approximately 90 families to the school.

Available enrolment data from December 2004 to November 2011 is illustrated in Figure 2. How enrolment numbers have increased significantly overall and more than tripled considering Brockton's inaugurating year is illustrated in Figure 2. In the period between late 2004 and 2006, Brockton experienced rapid growth. From 2006 to 2008, growth was moderate, with a further slight decline after the 2008 financial crisis. Significant growth started again after April 2010 and continued until late 2011.

One of the key elements that reportedly attracted parents to join the school was its affiliation with the International Baccalaureate Organization and its approval to offer its curriculum in the area. It was clear for all the continuing parents who eventually founded Brockton that the new school would need to venture into establishing the International Baccalaureate program.

Fox (1985) traced the origin and history of the International Baccalaureate program:

> It's had a rapid expansion in North America, where many school systems are attracted by its challenging academic curriculum. Worldwide university recognition of the program is steadily increasing. Considering the prospects for

future development, with particular emphasis on attempts to move the Baccalaureate beyond its Euro-centric origins. (p. 53)
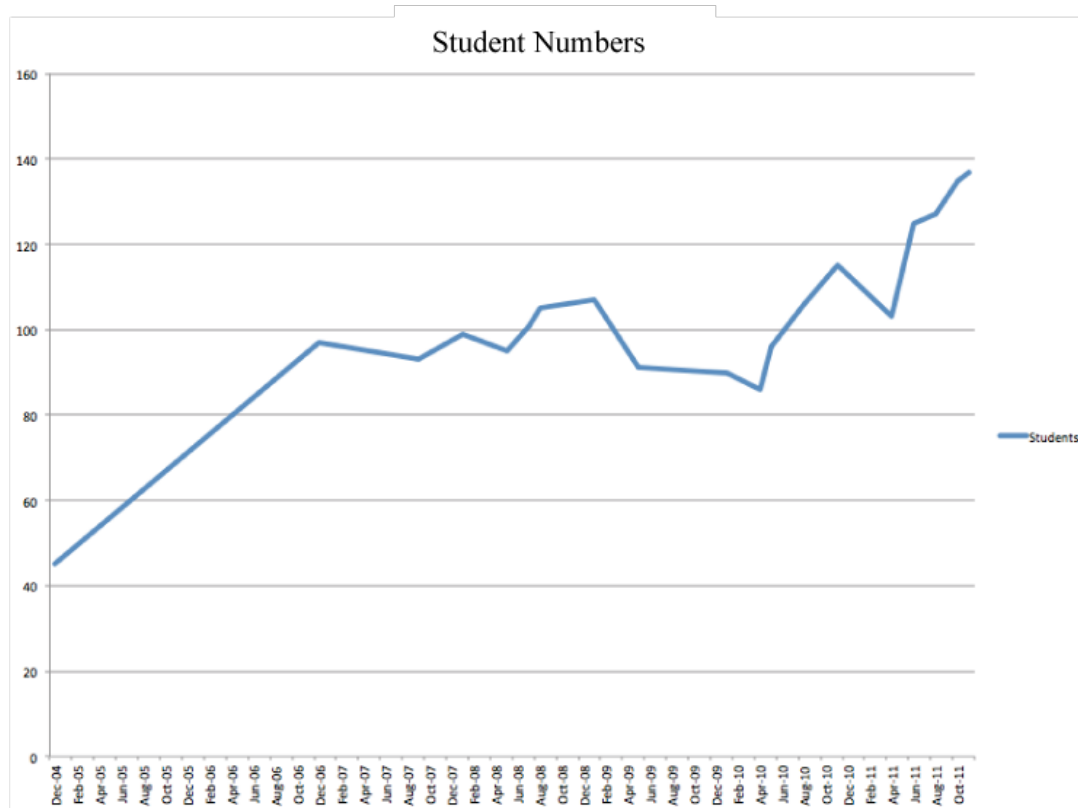
Figure 2. Brockton School enrolment numbers between 2004 and 2011.

The International Baccalaureate Organization

Hayden and Wong (1997) defended:

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is an internationally accepted pre-university qualification which, since its origins in the 1960s, has increased in popularity to the point where it is now offered in more than 70 countries worldwide. As a university entrance qualification accepted internationally, it aims not only to provide an appropriate academic curriculum, but also to support geographic and cultural mobility and to promote international understanding. It claims to do so by both inculcating international attitudes in its students and by encouraging the maintenance and development of their cultural identities. This study examines the extent to which the IB actually appears to achieve these aims, by exploring the views of an opportunity sample of ex-IB students, IB teachers and staff at the University of Bath who have direct experience of the IB programme. The findings indicate that the IB can clearly facilitate mobility and can contribute to the development of international understanding, whilst at the same time supporting

the preservation of individual cultures and national identities, provided contextual factors are appropriately arranged. (p. 349)

Frost (2011), Hill (2002), Kyburg, Hertberg-Davis, and Callahan (2007), Petersen (2003), Phillips and Pound (2004, Poelzer and Feldhusen (1996), and Savage (1982) offered detailed accounts of the history and description of the International Baccalaureate Organization as well as a recount of its successes, challenges, and recognition by universities and other educational organizations.

The International Baccalaureate Organization (n.d.b) was "founded in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1968 as a nonprofit educational foundation" (para. 1). Additionally,

> A group of talented, forward-thinking teachers at the International School of Geneva, with assistance from several other international schools, created the IB Diploma Programme. What started as a single programme for internationally mobile students preparing for university, has today grown into three programmes for students aged 3 to 19. (para. 2)

The International Baccalaureate Organization has substantially grown since its inception in 1968. Of note is the fact that public education boards all around the world have also become interested in the program, considering that its foundation was based only on private educational organizations. Currently, the International Baccalaureate Organization's (n.d.a) mission statement reads:

> The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right. (Mission and Strategy section, para. 5)

The current International Baccalaureate (IB) Organization's strategy is defined in the following terms:

The IB has seen tremendous planned growth in the past five years, delivering successful performance through a strong focus on quality, access and infrastructure.

The new strategy builds upon our successes and ensures that the IB has a clear direction for the next five years. At its heart lies our ambition to establish the IB as a global leader in international education. To achieve this, the IB Board of Governors has endorsed the vision together with a set of strategic goals and strategic objectives. (Strategy section, para. 1-2)

The IB has earned considerable recognition in university circles. According to information provided on the IB website, the IB "works with universities in nearly 140 countries to promote broader recognition of the Diploma Programme for the 120,000 Diploma Programme graduates entering university each year" (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2012, n.p.).

The IB offers three distinct programs designed for different educational stages for students aged 3 to 19:

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) for pupils aged 3 to 12 focuses on the development of the whole child in the classroom and in the world outside. The Middle Years Programme (MYP) for students aged 11 to 16 provides a framework of academic challenge and life skills through embracing and transcending traditional school subjects. The Diploma Programme for students aged 16 to 19 is a demanding two-year curriculum that meets the needs of highly motivated students, and leads to a qualification that is recognized by leading universities around the world. (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2012, n.p.)

IB Curriculum at Brockton

The IB program has been considered at Brockton since its inception. When parents decided to continue on by establishing a new school, there was always a clear expectation that it should continue to offer this program. The earliest reference to the IB program at Brockton was from Brockton Board minutes from January 9, 2006, that stated,

Ministry of Education's inspection report is overall very favorable to Brockton, a reflection of the effort of Robin and teachers. The school continues to be on track

with its plans for IB program implementation and to move closer to being in a position to apply for full IB certification. Teaching faculty professional development will continue to focus on development of IB skill set.

On October 11, 2006, it was noted that both staff IB coordinators were "moving along very well with all aspects of the programs" (Brockton Board minutes); furthermore, on February 5, 2007, it was noted that an IB Diploma Program coordinator would need to be hired to start in September 2007, at which point the school would formally apply to offer the IB diploma program.

On April 5, 2007, a Board communication to parents stated:

> According to the Brockton parent surveys conducted earlier last Fall, the three IB programs were identified as a key strength that parents would like to see fully implemented at Brockton in five year's time. Although costly, the Board of Directors considered this a necessary next step for Brockton, one that would be feasible to undertake now because Brockton would be offering a unique academic program not available elsewhere in North Vancouver, and as such could continue to expect to draw new enrolment into the senior grades as it has done thus far. As many of you are aware, the primary years' program is already fully integrated within Brockton's academic framework; integration of the middle years' program is well underway and Brockton continues to be unique in this regard in North Vancouver.

Brockton strongly considered the IB program to be a competitive advantage of its own in North Vancouver. Given the difficulty of increasing enrolment numbers, there was considerable preoccupation when, in January 2008, the North Vancouver School District initiated a strong advertising campaign of the public school that had applied to become an IB candidate school (Brockton Board Minutes, January 23, 2008). The preoccupation was based on the possible negative effect that an additional authorized IB school in the area could have on Brockton's enrolment numbers.

After several years of IB candidacy status, Brockton Board minutes dated April 16, 2008, stated, "IB world school primary years' program authorization was approved earlier this month which is a tremendous milestone for Brockton." In terms of the middle

years program, it was noted in Brockton Board Minutes dated October 15, 2008, that the "IB organization has communicated that the school must address some outstanding concerns before the middle years program can be fully accredited." At the time, the Head of School stated that this was not unusual for small schools and that the requirements would be taken care of.

More validation of the importance of the IB program for Brockton can be found in the minutes from the Fall General Meeting dated November 6, 2008, particularly regarding a later strategic plan update that read:

> 1. Establishing the academic reputation of the school; a) achieve IB world status; b) hire and retain talented faculty and provide professional development. 2. Coordinating the expansion of the school; a) Expand student body; b) Implement IB diploma program. 3. Ensure sustainability of the school; a) Increase student enrolment; b) Maintain a positive cash flow; c) Develop a land and facility plan. (Fall General Meeting Minutes, November, 19, 2008)

In the minutes from the Brockton Annual General Meeting dated May 27, 2009, a report stated:

> The primary years' program was given the official stamp in the Spring of 2008. She was also happy to report that early this month Brockton was verbally told by the IB organization in New York that Brockton has been authorized as an IB world school at the middle years' program level as well.

The first IB evaluation for Brockton was made on May 27, 2011. The implementation and delivery of the primary years' program as well as the middle years' program was reviewed. Currently, plans to deliver the IB diploma program are being considered as stated below:

> Graduation program update: Grade 11 will be offered in 2012–2013. The hiring of a new specialist teacher in the previous year was done with the intention that these individuals would be able to support grades 11 and 12. Some investment in additional resources will also be needed for the school to deliver grade 11 and then grade 12. Mrs. Wall is in the process of investigating when the school will be able to officially apply for full authorization to efficiently deliver the IB Diploma. However, she reassured the membership that the teaching of grades 11 and 12 will

follow the IB format from the outset. (Brockton Fall General Meeting Minutes, December 1, 2011)

Chapter Summary

The intent of this chapter was to provide a thick and rich description of Brockton and the context that participants in this study came from. Sections in this chapter included establishment, funding, facilities and locations, and enrolment. Sections describing the IB in general and in Brockton in particular were also included. A brief summary of the chronology of events at Brockton is presented in Figure 3.

Date	Event
January 28, 2004	Pre-Brockton Parent Meeting
April 6, 2004	Establishment of True North Independent School Society
September 9, 2004	Change of Name to Brockton Preparatory School Society
September 13, 2004	Brockton School Starts with 44 students leasing Cloverly Elementary School facilities
January 1, 2006	Brockton moves to larger facilities at Westover Elementary School
January 9, 2006	Favourable Ministry of Education evaluation
December 11, 2006	Enrolment increases to 97 students
April 16, 2008	Formal approval from the International Baccalaureate for the Primary Years Program
August 1, 2010	Brockton signs a 10 year lease on Westover Elementary School facilities
November 16, 2011	Enrolment increases to 137 students

Figure 3. Brockton chronology of events.

Challenges in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton were directly witnessed and experienced by the participants. Participants constituted a broad range of individuals who have directly experienced the challenges and achievements of this

unique organization and who have diverse educational, nonprofit, and business

backgrounds. In the following chapter, I describe the perspectives that emerged from

these participants in regards to analyzing the establishment and sustainment of Brockton

as well as the leadership traits, abilities, and functions embodied by several participants.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS

Introduction

The results of the study based on the study's main research question and eight sub questions are the focus of this chapter. Thirty-six themes were identified and described in detail, which were grouped into eight sections relating to each of the eight sub questions of this study. These sections are:

1. How did the school begin?

2. What was the purpose and perspective for starting Brockton?

3. How and why were Brockton founders successful in establishing the organization?

5. How were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization?

6. Why were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization?

7. What are the particular leadership traits, qualities or experiences that enabled educational leaders to be successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton?

8. What are the successful strategies that led to Brockton's existence?

This research project utilized case study methodology to identify the reasons of how and why were educational leaders successful in establishing and sustaining this particular private school in North Vancouver, BC. For this, 34 hours of interviews were held with 26 participants. Data were initially analyzed using Bloomberg and Volpe's (2008) conceptual framework. During the second phase, this conceptual framework

evolved into the identification of 15 main codes, and from these main codes, 19 sub-codes were identified as presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Main Codes and Sub-Codes of this Conceptual Framework

Main Code	Sub-Codes
1. Establishment Purpose/Perspective	
2. Establishment Strategies	
3. Establishment Challenges	• Founding Board • Founding Parents • Pre-Brockton
4. Establishment Successes	
5. Sustainment Strategies	
6. Sustainment Challenges	• Administration • Board • External • Faculty • Parents • Students • Transition
7. Sustainment Successes	
8. Challenges	
9. Opportunities	
10. Strategies	• Advancement • Community • Education • Faculty • Growth • Strategic Planning
11. Leadership Founders	
12. Leadership Board	
13. Leadership Parents	
14. Leaderships Administration	• Head of School 1 • Head of School 2 • Head of School 3
15. Leadership Faculty	

A document analysis was undertaken as well, which included 84 board meeting minutes of the Brockton Preparatory School Society dated from April 6, 2004, to November 16, 2011. Additionally, I reviewed minutes from 14 of the annual general

meetings, fall general meanings, and extraordinary general meetings spanning from April 26, 2004, to December 1, 2011. Other documents analyzed included general meeting minutes of school parent meetings prior to the establishment of Brockton as well as certificates of incorporation, constitution articles, society certificates of change of name, and society bylaws. I also analyzed letters from the Board as well as the Head of School to the community, as well as content and curriculum delivery, application, and authorization plans. All current and approved Board and school policies were reviewed in addition to the school's business plan for the years 2007–2012 (Brockton, 2007). The total number of documentation pages was estimated to be around 470.

All documents were carefully analyzed and compared before and after analyzing the interview data. I then developed electronic document summary sheets, in which data were divided by excerpt, document type, date, category, subcategory, and relevance. These document sheets were utilized to have easy access to the data and to further explore interview findings or conflicting data. Relevant documentation excerpts were then selected and included in the presentation of findings.

Themes to be included in this study were identified as relevant in reference to the frequency that participants mentioned or referenced certain concepts or ideas or descriptions. These concepts/ideas/descriptions were later coded, then themed, and converted to percentages. After reviewing the participants' data, data that was identify by 8% or less were identified as the minimum and, therefore, considered of very little relevance. It was important to provide as much detail as possible in regards to the findings that were identified, while at the same time making an effort to discard data that were irrelevant and answers that were not connected to the emerging themes. Therefore,

results with percentages between 8% and 20% were considered of little relevance; results between 20% and 40% were considered of medium relevance, and finally results above 40% were considered as significant and were used to identify the five key findings of the study. To ensure anonymity of participants, pseudonyms have been used to identify participant quotes.

How did School Begin?

Five themes emerged in the analysis of the first question of the study: debt transfer (15%), loss of trust (15%), lack of options (12%), parent leadership (42%), and adequate skills (15%; see also Figure 4). Each will be detailed in this section.

Debt transfer. Fifteen percent of participants identified the attempt to transfer debt to parents at their previous school as one of the reasons for beginning Brockton. In 2004, the great majority of Brockton founders were peer parents or guardians at a previous private school in North Vancouver. This educational organization accumulated significant debt, and there was an attempt to have parents cover the debt in order to support its growth:

> And at a point in the School year, I believe it was around February, the Board approached the parents of the school and suggested that they wanted to move the school to the next level which entailed parents coming up with a bunch of money, and I believe it's a million-two or million-five springs to mind, out of a student population of a hundred students. So it's a significant amount of money. That particular situation was a problem. It was a presentation of the future of the school. The first 45 minutes were about how wonderful the school is doing because all these grandiose plans, and at that point, we were in leased premises, and you know we had to get into our own school etcetera, etcetera. Then eventually, it was the last 15 minutes where they said, "And by the way, you know, there is this little matter of a debt that's been accumulated to get the school going. So that's going to be have to be—have to be dealt with at some point." (Brian)

Diedre presented a situation where parents were confronted with the unexpected financial

needs of the organization:

> So this school had been in existence for three years. It was an independent school
> and without going into too many of the details they basically had told the families
> that it would not be run off the backs of the parents, that they had a consortium
> that would fund the school that we really were responsible for our tuition as they
> said it and the fees and so on and then we were all stable. . . . Just before
> Christmas of the third year, they announced that they were, I believe it was two
> million dollars in debt and that they would be asking for bonds, which they had
> promised they would not do.

Parents also felt they were doing their part, as mentioned by John:

> The school was in debt for what was it? It was over $2,000,000 and this just
> flawed the parents thinking. What do you mean? We have been paying our
> tuition. Of course, nobody has been shown a budget to show what will it cost to
> run the school.

The following excerpt describes a meeting held by parents to address their concerns:

> Some of the areas of concern, but not all are: 1. What services does [a particular
> company] provide the school, and what value has been put on those services, both
> in the past and ongoing? What are we getting for the fees that are being charged?
> 2. Why does the school have a debt of $1.7 million, and what are all the charges
> that make up this dead? 3. What was the original business plan and how was
> reality been different than the plan? (Parent Meeting Minutes, January 28, 2004)

Several parents felt that there was considerable trouble with the operation of the

school and resisted the idea of covering standing debt at the school without having open

access to governance and financial operations. Parents had the impression that if they did

their part, mainly by paying tuition and participating or volunteering in school life, that

the school would do its part in terms of finance and governance as well as strategic

planning of the school. There was limited understanding by parents about the governance

structure as well as the detailed financial model for the school.

Loss of trust. Fifteen percent of participants identified the loss of trust that

resulted from the attempt to transfer debt to parents at their previous school as one of the

reasons to start Brockton. In this respect, there is a clear sense of doubt in the following

quote:

> I think it was like when you are driving to work and driving home you are
> thinking about your events, what's important in your life today, and you are
> driving along and thinking, "I just don't trust those guys." Yeah that's the main
> point because I just don't really trust them and its—that's really what it boiled
> down to. If it had been a situation where there was probably some human
> connection from parent to Board so that you can say, "I can see the Board—I can
> see the President of the Board walking through the hallways, he actually cares. He
> cares about what's happening in his organization," as opposed to this distant
> shadowy figure who I have to pay tribute to. (Brian)

School management concerns became evident on the part of parents as described

in the following excerpt:

> We had huge concerns on how the school was being managed. . . . Some people
> started to get more and more involved and tried to actually work with the powers
> that be to find out really what was happening—you know, show us your books, let
> us help you, let's figure it out. Because we were given all sorts of ultimatums like
> pay the bonds or the school goes under, we're going to turn it into an ESL school,
> we're going to turn it into a sports academy, we're going to, and all sorts of
> aspects that none of us wanted for our children. (Deidre)

Another example of parents loosing trust in the school was shared by Judy:

> They had announced about February-ish that they were going to put in a capital
> loan program and that the school was in a lot of debt, and it seemed like this
> money was just to pay them and their debts off as opposed to be put towards the
> future of the school and expansion and that kind of thing. And you might as well
> have yelled fire and pointed at the doors because everybody ran and nobody
> stayed. There was a complete loss of trust on the part of the parent body.

In the perspective of some of the parents at school, trust was lost because of the lack of

information and clarity they were given, particularly around finances and governance.

Trust had eroded to the point where many parents felt that the organization would no

longer be viable.

Lack of options. Twelve percent of participants identified that there were no

other viable schooling options for them in the in North Vancouver area; therefore, some

parents felt compelled to start a new private school in the area. One participant stated,

> There were no other options. At that point we had talked among ourselves and
> found this is a dead end. You know going away to another school is a dead end,
> what's another place to go? Perhaps we can start our own school right? (Brian)

Carolyn shared the view of some parents at the time regarding the alternatives available

to them:

> They had a group of people that were insistent that there was nowhere else for
> their children. And I think that when you, as a parent, when it comes to your
> child, some of us are, just don't take no for an answer. I think that probably is
> what drove them to accomplish it for September because there was nowhere else
> for them to go in their minds.

For parents committed to private education, the options were clearly limited in

North Vancouver as described in this excerpt:

> So what happened when this debt problem arose is parents went into groups.
> There was the group who said, "Oh so this is what independent schools are all
> about. I'm out of here. I'm back to public school. This was a nice experience but
> thank you very much; I'm not dealing with this." There was a group of parents
> who were committed to independent schools, and they had thought that that was
> going to be the next successful school in the North Shore. They had no other
> options. (John)

Many families had been apparently attracted to this school because of the

combined traditional private education and IB program approach. At the time, this was

the only educational organization in the municipality offering such a combination.

Commuting to West Vancouver or Vancouver East would have been the only alternative

for parents wanting to keep this model available for their children. Therefore, some

parents perceived this school to be their only option in the area. In this regard, parents felt

that their choices were limited given their particular educational preferences.

Parent leadership. Forty-two percent of participants identified parent leadership as the main reason that contributed to Brockton's beginning. Parents got organized and exercised considerable leadership to achieve the foundation and sustainment of this new private school. One participant described the circumstances:

> So out of that, we arranged a meeting for parents at Presentation House in North Vancouver. We booked the little theatre and arranged a "What do you want to do about this?" meeting. The parents who showed up created what we called a task force—that's what it became known as. It was created to examine and find answers; to look at what we are being told and whether there is any reason to invest in the school or not. (Katherine)

At a subsequent interview, the participant referred to this same meeting at Presentation House:

> I said the power is not with the people who own the school. The power is within this group, it's right here. We are the people—we have what they want, we should think about it in that way. Let's change our mindset a bit and say if we want to continue the school, the power is here. It's going to happen within this group—the people in this room or the people within the school, not from the administration. (Brian)

One of the participants who had attended that meeting recalled:

> This is March, and then in April the same parent group had decided: Well you know this is stupid. If we are willing to pay them a million dollars, why don't we just take the million dollars, hire these teachers, keep all the parents, try to hire the Headmaster, and we will start our own school. I mean that's sort of the simplistic mindset at that time. I mean, I was like what the hell? Believe it or not, that was how the school got started: as a reaction, and I doubt very much you would have seen Brockton on the North Shore if it hadn't been the ability for that group of parents to get organized and form the school. (John)

In terms of documentation, the following excerpts were identified as relevant to this theme:

> Report on meeting held January 31, 2004: a group of parents met on Saturday, January 31 to strike a parent task force to obtain answers to questions arising from the presentation and to identify options to secure the school's future success.

> Eleven parents are now working on a task force, which has been split into two groups in order to streamline tasks and speed up the process of inquiry. The

finance group efforts are focused on obtaining disclosure of financial and other information and documentation from the school and from the North Vancouver Independent School Society, while the future options group efforts are focused on identifying options for the future operation of the school. The work of the finance group informs that the future options group and upon completion of the finance group mandate, the two groups will merge and focus exclusively on the issue of future options. (Parent Meeting Minutes, February 6, 2004)

Parent leadership was, therefore, a very important aspect of the establishment of Brockton. Many parents felt empowered to be able to provide their children with what was perceived as needed in their particular circumstances. Parents took responsibility and gave the energy, effort, and commitment needed to start an organization of this nature and decided to lead the way forward.

Adequate skills. Fifteen percent of participants identified the adequate mix of skills within the founding parent body as one of the main reasons for the creation of Brockton. Some of the relevant commentaries to support this finding included the following:

> Saying we can probably just do our own school. You know, the way these guys are running it, it's obvious that they are no brighter than we are—this parent group. We've got—you know we've got a lot of skills in the parent group. We have CEOs, and we have doctors and engineers and lawyers and accountants and whatever. There is enough good will and expertise in the parent group that we can make this happen. (Brian)

In regards to parent leadership qualities, one participant mentioned:

> Parents that started the school were all intelligent and sophisticated people who put together a really strong plan. They were looking long-term; they did a great job in so many ways securing the lease and picking the name and the uniform, and all these things are really important to building your brand and long-term school. So they were very impressive, and all had a considerably high skills set. Things weren't completely planned out. It was a scramble, and there was time pressures too because you got to get your school up and running so fast, yes incredible time pressures. So I was amazed what they were able to do. (Judy)

In terms of parent qualifications and experience, Steve shared:

There was also a group of parents who I think represented the strategic energy behind the school, and so you had a couple of academics, a couple of pretty senior business savvy people. These were the sort of people I think had the experience, the knowhow, the skills, and the dexterity you need to get something as complex as this started. A couple of people had a university background, and a couple of people had been involved in start-ups. So I think that blend of academic and entrepreneurial skill is pretty important in getting anything like this started.

The combination of adequate skills within the parent community was perceived by some participants to be important for the establishment of Brockton. Business, legal, and educational expertise seemed to have joined forces in a way that supported the foundation of the school. Parents leading the establishment of Brockton had no significant educational leadership experience; nevertheless, many of them had considerable business, legal, and marketing experience.

What was the Purpose and Perspective for Starting Brockton?

Three themes emerged when addressing the question, "What was the purpose and perspective of starting Brockton?" They included (a) continue positive experience, (b) enhanced learning experience, and (c) small school community.

Continue positive experience. Thirty-eight percent of participants suggested that one of the purposes for starting Brockton was to be able to continue with the positive educational experience that students and parents enjoyed in the previous school. The main idea behind this finding was that founders assumed that they could keep the positive aspects of that school and get rid of the negative by starting their own school. An example of this would be:

They were really committed to the whole process that the school was unique in what it was doing, and they thought that the teachers were fantastic, and the kids were getting a lot of out of the experience. So, it was enough that they said, "Hey let's try and keep this going rather than just popping our kids in another school." (Bob)

There appeared to be a clear differentiation regarding the value proposition offered by the school to its students; everything appeared to be fine from the Head of School down, but it was not necessarily the same case from the Head of School up. As stated by Brian,

> From the Headmaster on down, the situation was great for my daughter. From above the Headmaster on up, it was not a positive experience, and we did not want to lose the positive experience regardless of the problems the school had.

One of the participants spoke to the potential perceived by some parents:

> There was this very small group of dedicated parents at that school who said, "Hey look, you know what, for all its misgivings, this school had some really good things. Can we build on this?" A dedicated handful of parents really took the ideas and the positive aspects of that school and essentially established this one. (Harry)

Much of the student experience was positive; hence, parents were interested in finding a way to continue what was good at school, which they felt was an aspect they could carry forward into the school's new reincarnation.

Enhanced learning experience. Forty-two percent of participants identified that one of the reasons for starting Brockton was to provide students with an enhanced learning experience. Some of the relevant commentaries in this respect were:

> Brockton is kind of the Phoenix that came out of a previous school, and Brockton was started by a parent group who were looking to set up an enhanced educational program as an alternative to public schools and also an alternative to the large established private schools in the area. (Nichola)

The Head of School at the time stated,

> So you have a group of parents with passion and determination and desire to have a special school for their children, and they have an understanding or inclination leading to understanding of the school philosophy they want, the program they want. In other words, they want to exercise their choice for their children and what they want is not available unless they do it themselves. (Robin)

Some parents believed that public education was not an ideal option for their

children. Here is an example:

> The school began as an effort by a group of parents who were all local. That is,
> they lived in North Vancouver, and I understand they had a common concern and
> a common vision around an alternative education for their children. They were all
> parents, they were all parents of children of early school age, and they recognized
> that they wanted an environment for their children, which offered a quality
> academic environment. I think, particularly at that time, there were some concerns
> with this group about public education. They didn't necessarily want to send their
> children out of North Vancouver. They wanted them to be in a local kind of
> community school. So they had a vision and a need for an alternative. (Steve)

As a reflection of these ideas, founders established the following clear purposes as part of

the society constitution. The participants reflected the desire to provide an enhanced

educational experience to students at Brockton:

> The purposes of the society are: 1. To establish, govern, administer, operate and
> promote a non-denominational, coeducational independent school that provides
> students with challenging academic, extracurricular and athletic programs in a
> nurturing learning environment that embraces diversity, prepare students for
> continuing study at a university or college, and enable students to become
> responsible citizens by fostering high standards of morality, integrity, respect, and
> character. 2. To provide continuing education programs; and 3. To perform other
> functions as are incidental, ancillary or conductive to the attainment of the
> purposes and powers of the society. (True North Independent School, 2004, p. 3)

There appeared to be a clear appreciation for the overall quality of the experience

of students, both formally and informally, in the process of establishing the school. The

participant perception of offering an enriched learning experience to their children if

enrolled in a private school seemed to have been a significant driver for the establishment

of Brockton.

Small school community. Thirty-one percent of participants indicated that one of

the main purposes of starting Brockton was to establish a small, safe school community

that would allow students to receive a more personalized educational experience. Some

of the relevant comments in this regard included:

The parents were looking for a safer community; they were looking for an environment that was open to different kinds of learning. They understood that each child is different and each child needs personal, individual attention, and they thought that in the smaller environment of a small school, that they can actually have their children learn more better faster, have a bigger picture. (Anonymous D)

Claire recalled the original vision of the founders of the school in regards to its size:

The original founding parents set up the vision for the school. The vision for the school was to keep the school small. They did not want to create another big IB school. I remember hearing that they wanted to cap the student numbers at 500 because they wanted to keep that small school feeling . . . to create a very individual small school feeling environment.

For one of the participants, a small school community would imply:

We all talked about how we wanted Brockton to be an alternative to what was out there, and one of the ways that we can offer that is to stay small. Not like the other schools in the area. We wanted to be able to walk down the hallway and know every child by name. We didn't want a school; we didn't want to be a part of a large school. This was what was going to keep us tight and strong—if we stayed a community that knew each other. (Deirdre)

Participants perceived school size to be an important aspect to its success. The notion that a small school would provide a higher quality of student experience was an important aspect of its purpose.

How Were Brockton Founders Successful in Establishing the Organization?

Three themes emerged when addressing how founders were successful in establishing Brockton. These included (a) limited grade offer, (b) parent funding, and (c) securing facilities.

Limited grade offer. Twelve percent of parents identified the school's limited offering of grade levels in its early stages as a key element of success for educational leaders in establishing Brockton. The school started with eight students in Kindergarten, 12 in grade 1-2 split, nine in grade 3-4 split, four in grade 5-6 split, and 11 in grade 7-8 split. The founders' original hope was to be able to accommodate all grades offered in the

previous school; nevertheless, the reality of the situation showed that viability would only

be sustained with limited grade levels. There were certain challenges with enrolment that

also influenced the limited grade offer, as suggested by this participant:

> We had 100 to start with, but now everybody is dropping off and saying that they
> are not going to make it. We figured that we couldn't handle offering grade eight.
> We had to just stay with grade sevens. That's as much as we could handle now
> because there was a cut off when we had to say, "Sorry, just can't—we just can't
> provide grade eights and grade nines and grade tens." (Brian)

In Robin's opinion, even though limited, the offer was larger than what would be

generally seen in traditional start-up schools:

> If you look at other models, most schools have 35 students when they started and
> lease out a church basement, much more modest probably kindergarten to grade
> three only. . . . We started at kindergarten to grade eight, but had several split
> levels.

Brockton had a limited grade offer at start-up, consisting of K-8 with four split-

levels. This appeared to the founders to make more sense financially than starting with

individual teachers for each grade.

Parent funding. Thirty-one percent of participants indicated that parent funding

was a key element in establishing the successful beginning for Brockton: from initial

unsecured founders' loans to formal all-parent bonds as well as the payment of tuition.

All monies handed to the starting school were being invested with considerable risk.

Katherine recalled the financial needs identified prior to starting operations:

> Yeah, we needed to raise $360,000. 360, that sticks in my mind, and it did for a
> good reason. I was constantly looking for this amount of capital. So that had to be
> raised, and then the parents had to understand we don't have facilities, but we
> have to commit to the teachers. So, whether we are successful in getting one of
> these properties or not, that money is now gone. We didn't have quite as much up
> front as we needed for a full year of salaries.

In regards to financial risk, Deirdre mentioned:

It was big money though they put. You know, it was a big risk to put it all together at the start of the school, both financially, but also the fact that they are going to put their kids into this environment.

In regards to the strategy to secure initial funds, one of the participants mentioned:

What would normally happen in starting schools is that parents would meet to generate start-up funds. Sometimes, it's a private commitment; sometimes, it is a formal bond, which is an instrument where parents of the school have to loan the school some amount of money. If you are interested in this place, if you want come to this place, put $25,000 on the line as soon as you apply. Brockton was able to secure a significant sum of money as start-up funds, which lasted through the first two or three years to help offset the initial non-profitability. (Robin)

As stated in documentation, founders were also asked to submit early payment of tuition on some years to be able to sustain the school throughout the last months of the previous year. The Board minutes from April 1, 2006, read: "Board communications: letter to the founders regarding early payment of 2006 and 2007 tuition fees." Later on, in minutes from the Fall General Meeting dated November 25, 2009, it was noted: "Parents were reminded that the $20,000 bond will become mandatory as of June 30, 2010." In the Fall General Meeting Minutes dated December 1, 2011, it was stated that: "A new Bond series was introduced with 3 options; option 1 $20,000 with no interest; option 2 $25,000 with interest; option 3 $15,000 donation." During Brockton's early years, it is important to note that there were a few attempts to implement formal bonds and that the founders explored many other options to secure funding.

Funding in these cases would generally come from individuals who were willing to make a significant charitable donation to an educational organization. In Brockton's case, this approach certainly included a limited number of parents when it came to seed money, and to most parents when it came to the payment of tuition.

Securing facilities. Twenty-seven percent of participants indicated that securing

facilities was a key element in establishing success for Brockton . In terms of availability

of facilities, Katherine mentioned:

> We had embarked on the school; the key factor that made this come off the
> ground was the availability of facilities. It was that it coincided with the decline in
> public school enrolment reaching a point at which the school district had to, for
> the first time, rent out some facilities. That was a key thing. Otherwise, this would
> never have gotten off the ground, and it was only because we knew that was on
> the horizon that we even went forward.

There appeared to be a clear decline in student population in the public system, which

allowed for the availability of educational facilities, as mentioned by one of the

participants:

> Well, the student population in North Vancouver was as a pool dropping, so they
> were closing down public schools. So there was kind of a natural progression,
> where they were closing schools, we were available as a group to rent a school,
> and because the school property is owned by the District there can't be anything
> else other than a school. There can't it has to be a school okay, it has to be
> educational. The initial lease kind of came to the eleventh hour. So we are in a
> kind of a late night meeting . . . we ended up with Cloverly, right? Now it wasn't
> without a lot of, how do I say? trepidation, a lot of trust on the School Board side
> too. They stepped up when they didn't have many other renters that were coming
> to them. (Brian)

Negotiations with the North Vancouver School District were an important aspect to

securing facilities at the time, as stated below:

> Through the negotiation process, we worked hard to have the School District
> understand that they were dealing with a professional group of savvy people who
> were going to be great business partners, with a vision for a school that was never
> ever going to be a significant threat to the North Vancouver School District and
> its enrolment. So you know, our target enrolment and our 10-year plan always
> meant that we wouldn't grow more than 0.5% of the students' population in North
> Vancouver. (Steve)

> Brockton was introduced to the North Vancouver District as a private educational

initiative that would have a very low impact in terms of student enrolment, while

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allowing the District to receive constant revenue from a school that closed due to the

District's low enrolment numbers at the time.

Why Were Brockton Founders Successful in Establishing the Organization?

Three themes emerged when addressing why founders were successful in

establishing Brockton. These included (a) element synergy, (b) effective leadership, and

(c) effective teachers.

Element synergy. Twenty-three percent of participants indicated that Brockton's

successful establishment was due to the coming together of different elements. An

example of this was seen in the following comment from Brian:

> There are all these factors that came together: that the funding came through, that
> the IB is coming and the Head of School was able to come together, that we had a
> nucleus of students and parents who were prepared to make this sacrifice. We
> knew that trying to start from scratch and recruit into the population of North
> Vancouver was not going to work. We had to have that nucleus to start to move
> towards this.

In regards to this synergistic phenomenon, Christie mentioned: "It wouldn't work without

the great kids. It wouldn't work without great parents. It wouldn't work without the

teachers and the admin and the Board, and it's a community small school." Also, John

shared: "So, I think there is a fair bit of serendipity or just another brick that fell into

place if you like." While Katherine noted: "We just happened to have a good

combination of talent, situation and resources I guess within the group." In addition,

Nichola indicated: "So very much in those first couple of years there is a huge bonding

process, and it's very, very much an entrepreneurial and pioneering kind of experience.

All came into place."

In school documentation, I could see references to the same phenomenon:

> For younger children, parents are making the choice of school for their child, and
> our experience has been that they choose Brockton for several reasons, of which

the IB educational program is just one. Other factors, such as smaller classes, full-day kindergarten, integrated after school care and a safe, nurturing and structured school environment are often equally important. With older students, particularly those in their last couple of years of high school, the students themselves are increasingly responsible for determining which school they will attend. (Letter from the Board of Governors to Parents, April 5, 2007)

Additionally, the following closing remarks to an Annual General Meeting were made:

Believe: Brockton believed that it would achieve a balanced budget and it has! Brockton believed it could create a stimulating learning environment for students and it has! Strive: Brockton strives to hire highly qualified teachers and staff and it has and it is committed to maintaining the standard. Brockton strived to achieve IB world school status with both the primary years program and the middle years program and it has. Excel: Brockton's parent community has excelled in their support. The students of Brockton have excelled in embracing the IB philosophy. (Annual General Meeting, May 27, 2009)

Finally, in minutes from a recent formal meeting, it was stated:

Brockton is a thriving growing school community with strong students, passionate faculty, engaged parents and guardians. These stakeholders together have created a school with a strong reputation for delivering a program of high academic rigor that is now known in the broader community. (Fall General Meeting, December 2, 2010)

In Brockton's case, the elements that came together were the interest of parents to enroll their children, the work and dedication of committed administrators and faculty, the governance structure that allowed for the school to be registered on time, the availability of facilities to set up the school, and the availability of financial resources.

Effective leadership. Fifty percent of participants indicated that effective leadership was a key element for the successful establishment of Brockton. Effective leadership was shown on the part of individual founders, administrators, and parents. Some of the parents on the initial Board of Directors were identified as "rainmakers" by one of the participants:

I think, in the early days of the Board, there were two or three real rainmakers that are really the principal drivers, and I think the Board was fortunate to have a couple of very dynamic people focused on the same goal. Not only did they have

a very relevant skill set, but they had the passion, the energy, and the commitment. (Steve)

In regards to the leadership abilities of the founding Head of School, one of the participants mentioned:

> He knew how to go about to start a school, not just from the administrative point of view, but also with the school needs, as I would say so, to be successful and provide the environment that the parents are looking for and most likely most teachers are looking for as well. So he was the glue to all of the information, the necessities that the school needed to have. (Anonymous D)

> Many teachers had a great respect for the leadership, and I think a lot of that was very key in starting up the school and in their motivation to try and really want to make it a place where people would want to come. (Karen)

A relevant documented reference includes the one stated in the November 22, 2006, Board Meeting Minutes: "Congratulated [school leadership] on the successful visit from the Ministry of Education. There were no recommendations cited in the ministry stated that they do not need to come back next year but will visit again in 2009." Several participants in this study considered effective educational leadership as a significant element in the establishment of Brockton , making the establishment of Brockton a good example of entrepreneurial educational leadership.

Effective teachers. Twenty-three percent of participants identified that having effective teachers at Brockton was an important aspect as to why leaders were successful in the establishment of Brockton. Robin recalled the school's strategy to recruit high-quality teachers:

> We talked about the importance of getting great teachers, but the great bit has to include the ability of the teacher to relate to the students. One is the element of teaching. So let's pretend that this is grade two, so the language is repetitive: "I love my teacher," "we did this today" because they don't have long-term perspective. We did this today, and it was interesting, and the parent says are you having a good time? I'm having a wonderful time. So I love the teacher, I'm having a wonderful time, and we did this or that. That's a substantial piece because the children have got to have a sense of what they are doing.

Founders were focused on teachers' needs as an important part of attracting effective

teachers. A participant explained:

> We paid teachers more money than they would make at most other private
> schools. Private schools cannot match the kind of benefit levels that the public
> system gets for obvious reasons, but at least when I was there, we did match the
> salary levels, which is unheard of. Salaries are the biggest expense, but they are
> also not where you should nickel and dime. I don't think you should nickel and
> dime teachers, particularly when you're not delivering job security or adequate
> benefits. (Katherine)

In regards to teachers' approaches and attitudes to working at Brockton, it was

commented:

> You spend time in the classroom, and you realize they're not trying to teach
> because there's a parent in the classroom. They're not talking to that kid that way
> because there's a parent in the classroom. They just seem to have direction. Our
> teacher is not trying to impress me; she's not trying to say things that I'm going to
> say, "Oh, I love this school. I'm going to come back next year." No, she's
> concerned about the kids and what they're learning. (Frances)

Several participants seemed to be highly aware of the importance of including

high-quality teachers at Brockton. Given other natural limitations that the school had at

the time (i.e., facilities and enrolment numbers), participants appeared to be determined

to attract the best possible teachers. Considering the difficulty of achieving the

foundation and sustainment of a new school, several participants believed that founders

were successful in hiring a group of teachers who understood the demands of a start-up

educational organization.

How were Brockton Founders and Senior Managers Successful in Sustaining the

Organization?

Three themes emerged when addressing how founders and managers were

successful in sustaining Brockton. These included (a) increasing enrolment, (b) effective

marketing, and (c) operational efficiency.

Increasing enrolment. Twenty-three percent of participants indicated that

increasing enrolment contributed to the successful sustainment of Brockton by

educational leaders. Some of the comments that supported this finding included:

> We have obviously successfully managed to build the enrolment in the school because we have kept good teachers, [and] we have built good academic and co-curricular structures, music program, a P.E. program. These are all really positive things that both the school is doing on a day-to-day basis with the direction of the Head of School but that the Board is supporting. (Alice)

> On the success side, I think the fact that we are recruiting new students quite rapidly, that we have increased the size of the school something like 25% over the past year and hoping to do that again, I think that's all a sign of success. (Maria)

In regards to the strengthening of the primary years' program at Brockton, one of the

participants stated:

> Then finally, I would say that she brought an attention to really strengthening the PYP [primary years' program] proposition, and she was critical in refining elements of that part of the school, which then attracted parents. So in her tenure, we grew enrolment, and the PYP became a lot more credible and that was what she was recruited to do. (Steve)

> In the documentation, the earliest reference to enrolment numbers was included in

Board Meeting Minutes from December 9, 2004, which indicated: "Enrolment currently

stands at 45." On the other hand, the latest documented reference to enrolment numbers

found on the December 1, 2011, Fall General Meeting Minutes stated, "Enrolment has

grown from 115 in 2010–2011 to 137 in 2011–2012." There was an overall gain of 92

students in seven years, almost tripling the school's initial student population.

Enrolment numbers are of considerable importance to self-funding schools. In

additional to the 30% per student funding provided by the Ministry of Education in the

Province of BC, tuition-funded schools rely heavily on tuition payment and others forms

of financial support. Overall, private education numbers have significantly increased in

BC since data records started in 1977. In 1977, the proportion of private school enrolment

numbers was at 4.3% when compared to public education. The latest numbers indicate

this figure has almost tripled and is currently at 11.6% for the year 2012-2013.

(Federation of Independent School Associations of BC, September, 2012, n.p.). Brockton

has seen a significant increase in student enrolment in the last seven years, allowing the

organization to have a healthy financial outlook.

Effective marketing. Twenty-three percent of participants indicated that effective

marketing was one of the key elements in identifying how educational leaders were

successful in sustaining the organization. In regards to the school's effective marketing

initiative, Nichola stated,

> The awareness of Brockton as an alternative in the North Shore has exploded.
> When I first arrived and again this is a common experience, there was a lot of, oh
> we didn't know you were here. So it's still like tipping something, and the
> awareness-taking point really started to build momentum last Spring. So now, you
> know this is kind of the beginning of the enrolment season. . . . The phone is
> ringing, yeah, and people are saying, "We have heard about you, and we want to
> come in and check this out." So there is more of the community contacting us
> than us having to go out. I find that we are still doing lots of marketing of course .
> . . but there are more people making that initial contact without being surprised.
> (Nichola)

One of the participants identified the need to attract parents outside of the initial circle of

founders:

> I think he had a very good eye for the marketing of the school, and my
> understanding is [that] when he came in, he got some perspective on how best to
> get the name out and rebranding the school. We need to look at establishing
> something which is designed to attract more parents beyond the initial founder
> group. (Steve)

In regards to the efficient marketing of Brockton, Carolyne shared the following:

"Maybe a combination of a few things, but I mean, we show our face at consistent events,

we market consistently even. Even before we had a marketing company in place, we were

marketing consistently." Chris mentioned: "There was also an extraordinarily large amount of time and money being spent on marketing."

In school documentation, there was reference to actions and results directly related to effective marketing of the school:

> We have had 11 new students enroll as a consequence of the open houses that have taken place since February; the house mail drop in the V7K postal code area was successful in that it increased the awareness of Brockton in the Ross road area; the decision was made to widen the house maildrop to include East of Blueridge and Fromme. (Board Meeting Minutes, April 1, 2010)

For Brockton, outreach and marketing efforts have played a very important role. The immediate relationship between student numbers and the financial health of the organization was a very significant relationship. By communicating the school's history and what it offered, Brockton's establishment and sustainment might have been considerably more difficult.

Operational efficiency. Fifty percent of participants indicated that operational efficiency was a key aspect to understanding how educational leaders were successful in sustaining Brockton. Bob commented,

> They were all very capable sort of business people who steered the ship in the right direction and made it work financially and acting as an advisory board towards the school. So it's like a checkpoint, it's like a valve for looking at "should we do this" or "shouldn't we do that?" So kind of bouncing ideas off and making sure they're sound from a business point of view.

In regards to the business plan, one of the participants stated,

> The question was ensuring that the business plan that was being developed for the school made sense and that we weren't growing trying to do too much too quickly or acting in a way other than the fact that we were a school that didn't have a lot of money and needed to really set some foundations before we could become successful. . . . The entrepreneurial spirit got them to where they were now. We needed to pull the rings in a little bit on that and start looking at what do we really need to do in order to get through the next difficult years as we grow the student base and at the same time ensure that we don't go too much into debt. (Chris)

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Sustainable growth as a matter of operational efficiency was addressed by one of the

participants in the following way:

> Clarifying what Brockton is, who we are. When I arrived, it was very much we
> were going to be a K to 12 school, and I understood my job was to come in and
> take the school to Grade 12. Nevertheless, we needed to be a lot more efficient in
> our operations to be able to do this. . . . I brought in the idea that we have got to
> start treating this like a business model, and with that comes accountability and
> structure, and you know making sure that whatever we are doing, you know the
> finances for example, can be looked at by anybody. (Nichola)

In documentation, this particular excerpt explained how the Brockton Board of

Governors made decisions about the well-being of the organization:

> After discussion of the North Vancouver school district's decisions, the board
> decided that the risks involved in adhering to the current expansion plans are too
> great now that the North Vancouver school district has altered its course on
> Balmoral and decided to implement IB, and in light of the lack of re-enrolment
> commitments from founders in the senior school. As a result, Brockton will not
> expand into grades 11 and 12 on till it is financially feasible to do so, will
> eliminate the planned education deposit, and will alter its fee schedule for 2007–
> 2008. (Board Meeting Minutes, March 31, 2007)

Resources were scarce throughout the initial years at Brockton. No individual or

group of high net-worth supported the foundation of Brockton. Therefore, it was of

paramount importance to do what was best with the resources available. A significant

number of participants in this study suggested that the school administration was

effective in designing and managing efficient operational processes to support the

establishment of the organization.

Why were Brockton Founders and Senior Managers Successful in Sustaining the

Organization?

Three themes emerged when addressing why founders and managers were

successful in sustaining Brockton. They included (a) inclusive community, (b) efficient

communication, and (c) good governance.

Inclusive community. Thirty-five percent of participants indicated that forming

and promoting an inclusive community was one of the reasons that educational leaders

were successful in sustaining Brockton. In regards to generating a trusting environment,

Robin stated,

> Kids have to be able to walk down the hallway without worrying about who is
> behind them. You've got to trust the environment. It's not just trusting people;
> you have to trust that we create an environment where everybody trusts that it's
> going to work for them; they can be themselves. Very often, children will tell you
> this one is the key thing they like here because they feel safe and they are
> included. So things like psychological safety, which is critical in a school setting,
> comes from that value space.

A participant suggested that one of the traits of private education is an inclusive

environment.

> They are doing that because they want the best place for their kids, and that's why
> people bring their kids here you know. I want to go to a private school, but I want
> to go to a private school where my kids are going to be included, cared for, and I
> am going to be valued, and we are going to be able to build it together.
> (Hermoine)

Bob clarified that the expectation was not to create an exclusive and excluding

community:

> That they say hey this has been a great experience for our family, but they're not
> being sort of exclusive and saying that we're the only ones that could have it
> because we are the founders. But they seem to be more along the lines of, this has
> been a great experience for our kids, we've benefitted so much, and we want
> others to benefit as well.

> School documentation also showed how new parents were integrated into the

community. The following expectation formalized the process: "Buddy system for new

families–[Board Member] will contact [Board Member] to facilitate the setting up of the

new parent buddy system" (Board Minutes, August 22, 2006).

Participants in this study identified the interest of Brockton founders in creating

and fostering a community that welcomed all interested in the educational philosophy and

organizational goals of the school as one of the important reasons for its sustainment.

Efficient communication. Nineteen percent of participants believed that efficient

communication was a key element in successfully sustaining Brockton. Some of the

commentaries that supported this finding included:

> It also meant, and this was something that all schools struggle with, all companies
> the way you've got very high share holder engagement, was making sure that we
> were communicating effectively to the parents about what was going on. So that
> meant having regular meetings with the parent group, being very open about
> where the issues were. So it was finding that balance between scaring off parents
> from staying with the school, but also being open with them as to what the status
> or the health of the school looked like at any one time. (Chris)

Deirdre referred to the importance of communication over time and as the school grew:

> He [position] was also very aware that the dynamics and the communication with
> the parents would change with each year because with each year, their
> expectations of the school would be higher. You know a parent is just not going to
> come in and bring his children and see it the same way as I do. Because I look at
> that corner, and I realize that I was on my hands and knees scrubbing it six
> months ago. Just now, three years later, and parents are saying, "Well this is an
> established school." So efficient communications were crucial to the success of
> the school.

One of the participants also commented about the sensitivity of communication with

parents:

> Yeah successful strategies, you realize just how sensitive people are, and you
> have to manage the communication to parents very carefully so as not to sow
> panic. Then you have to work like hell in the background to make sure that you
> can deliver on that confidence that you're expressing; you don't want to oversell
> it. (Katherine)

In this study, efficient school communication was perceived to be an important

aspect in the establishment of Brockton. Parents and staff were involved in an operation

with significant risk on a financial as well as a job security level. Effective

communication management seemed to have been of importance in unifying the school

community; this allowed efforts to successfully come together during the initial years of

the school.

Good governance. Twelve percent of participants indicated that good governance

on the part of the Brockton Board of Governors was an important reason that educational

leaders were successful in sustaining the organization. Healthy governance was

referenced by one of the participants in this way:

> To balance the ownership of creating the school with a successful model of arms-length governance and that is a huge challenge. It took us three years to get there, which is just normal, but if you don't have a strong accomplished school leader, that is not just a simple challenge. You know lots of anecdotes to this story. As soon as the Board members start talking about the art teacher at the Board meeting, you have got a problem. (Robin)

In regards to the separation of roles, Hermoine commented:

> They have made decisions which ultimately go to a path that isn't necessarily the best for their kids, but it actually is best for the school. The other good thing is that it's an arm's length governance, so they are making decisions on financials and putting the things in place so that we can run the school like a business and make all the day-to-day decisions.

As time went by, the school governance structure matured and allowed the administration

to have more independence. As mentioned by Chris,

> When we brought in the new Head of School, it was easier for her because she was coming into a school that had gone past the initial stages, and therefore, it was easier to differentiate the role of the Head of School from the role of the Board and to move the Board more towards a true governance model.

The following examples were found in school documentation:

> [Board Member] emphasized the board's commitment to achieve these goals by keeping a relentless focus on the essentials, including continuing emphases on strong governance and financial stewardship, and consulting with the parent body who are our investors and stakeholders. This way, and working as a team, we will exceed all of the expectations we have for Brockton. (Board Meeting Minutes, December 1, 2011)

In a Board communication to parents there was a clarification of the separate roles

between the Board and the Head of School:

> The administration of Brockton is delegated to the Head of School, who is the school's educational leader and bears primary responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of all academic and co-curricular school programs. The Head of School reports to the board, providing it with professional guidance in setting general educational policies. He is responsible for the administration of Brockton in accordance with those policies. (Board Communication to Parents, April 5, 2007)

Participants identified good governance as an important aspect in the

establishment and sustainment of Brockton. An arms-length governance-operational

structure is difficult to achieve in entrepreneurial organizations. Several participants

seemed to have been aware of this challenge. They identified a healthy balance between

entrepreneurial governance and social governance principles that were present throughout

the foundation years at the Brockton Board of Governors.

What are the Particular Leadership Traits, Qualities, or Experiences that Enabled

Educational Leaders to be Successful in Establishing and Sustaining Brockton?

Thirteen themes emerged when addressing leadership traits of educational leaders

in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton. These included care, charisma,

commitment, experience, active listening, hard work, trust-building, optimism, passion,

visibility, relationship builder, respectful, and risk-takers.

Care. Twenty-three percent of participants indicated that care was an important

leadership trait for educational leaders at Brockton. One of the participants stated,

> We have lots of individuals that really, really truly care about the school and care about us as people, and it just truly feels like a big family. My role is kind of keep them happy, what is it that they need. (Anonymous D)

One of the administrators explained:

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So as far as a leadership trait, certainly she really cares about all the students. She came into my classroom one day, and I was having a problem, so she said, "Let me just come and sit in your class and observe the student in detail and kind of give you some feedback on what I see, take some notes." So she's good at that. (Hermoine)

An example of care as perceived by one of the participants could also be seen in this

comment:

She [Head of School] did something amazing; she listened to my concern, and said she was going to speak to my son about it. She was very caring and subtle and not wanting to cause him embarrassment, waited until recess and just saddled up next to him, asked how things were going and managed to get it out of him. She then arranged to meet with him and the group involved. She brought in the whole class as it was an issue with the whole class and so we realized that there was a problem with boys hitting boys in the class. And she said okay, well how do you think we should address this? What can we do to work together as a better community? So basically the end result was they set up a caring club; the Respect Club it was called, and she met with the Respect Club every Monday at lunch time and they just sat and talked about what they would do to create more respect in the community amongst individuals. (Maurette)

Brockton leaders were perceived by some participants to have been caring

throughout the establishment and sustainment of Brockton. Some participants mentioned

that attention to detail and meeting the particular needs of parents and students as

important.

Charisma. Nineteen percent of participants indicated that charisma was an

important leadership trait for educational leaders at Brockton. John stated,

You put him with a group of parents or in front of a group of parents, you put him in a parade, and he is the attention magnet, and he was okay with this. He could just rap people's attention, and that was really what I think was the part of what he brought to the enrolment effort.

Karen described the perceived charismatic traits of one of the administrators:

So you know the kids really liked him and he could get up at assembly and tell a funny joke or a funny story about something or do a little skit about how to get the paper towels in the basket in the boy's bathroom and that kind of thing. He'd get his points across to the student body and to everybody in a way that kids could respond as well as the teachers and adults. In terms of personality you know I

think he had a certain persona for people that can take the helm of a leader you know getting up on in front of an assembly of people and speaking from the heart and just having that sense of presence. (February 18, 2011)

Maria considered the personality of one of the administrator's to be ideal at the time:

> He had this personality, this way of engaging parents and kids that was really his key strength. He was absolutely the right person to bring together a group of people to make something work. He was the right person for that because you just bought into him and his vision and his ideas.

Participants in this study identified charisma as one of the leadership traits that was evident in some individuals during the start-up and sustainment of Brockton. Some of the individuals with leadership responsibilities had the ability to generate trust and provide direction, and they clearly understood the situation and needs of the school.

Commitment. Forty-two percent of participants indicated that commitment was an important leadership trait seen in educational leaders at Brockton. One of the participants mentioned:

> I was really committed and very involved in the start-up because the people around had no background in education. One had run a business; you know what I mean, so he knew what he was doing from the risk management perspective. I knew what I was doing for the organizing, and I was learning the rest of it, but I needed to review school law. I was reviewing other schools' prospectuses and all sorts of things. (Katherine)

Regarding parent commitment, Bob mentioned:

> [Founding parents are] completely committed to the process and very enthusiastic and passionate about Brockton. They are also open to bring other ideas. What's nice is that when you speak to them, it's like they're really open. They want other people to be able to experience what their kids have experienced.

When addressing the level of commitment perceived by the Board of Directors at the time, one participant mentioned:

> Because that founding group when I walked in here, that founding group was running four, five events a month, trying to raise funds to just pay for extras and paint the school, and they were in here every month cleaning and running fix days. Highly committed individuals. They were definitely committed to their

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vision and to not backing down. . . . I feel the Board of Directors is also committed. They are very committed, they are an amazing group of people. I have sat on two boards in my life, and I have never sat with such committed, such dedicated people. (Carolyn)

In school documentation, I found the following reference:

Be it moved that the Brockton community would like to formally acknowledge the hard work, determination, commitment, and compose that our founding Headmaster has most ably demonstrated over the last 4 years. (Annual General Meeting, May 21, 2008)

Leadership commitment appeared to be of importance given the circumstances surrounding the founding school. Without the clarity and direction provided by leadership, which included parents, teachers, and administrators, the chances of success for the school would have been limited.

Experience. Eight percent of participants indicated that experience was an important leadership trait seen in educational leaders at Brockton. John referred to one of the administrators in this statement:

The teachers for the most part viewed him as the voice of authority. They were in no position to question him, and they just did whatever he asked them to do. For the most part, they were young, they were energetic, they were keen, they got opportunities at Brockton that they might have not had in other schools.

Maurette mentioned: "He knew the system, he was passionate about IB and about Brockton."

Founding an educational organization is by all means not an easy task. Experience in educational entrepreneurship was apparently present in some of the key leaders at the time.

Active listening. Fifteen percent of participants indicated that active listening skills were an important leadership trait apparent in educational leaders at Brockton. John described a founding administrator in this way:

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He was one of those people who you could go and talk to. You always felt like you were valued and listened, you felt like he was caring about what you had to say. He always took the time, and he was very patient and would listen to what you were trying to talk to him about, and he was good at not necessarily offering solutions for you if you're having a problem, but was good at helping you find your own way, you know, as facilitator or guide or whatever, using your own thinking, helping you come to your own conclusions about things.

In regards to the same individual, one of the participants mentioned:

He was a good listener; he helped the students to see where things had gone wrong and get them to think about fixing the problem for themselves. Everybody respected him for that. He was very open and was very willing for people to go and talk to him. (Katherine)

The integrity of a founding educational organization could be constantly at risk given the entrepreneurial conditions that surround it; therefore, having clarity regarding what is happening is of paramount importance. This clarity could be gained by engaging in active listening, intentionally listening to the community, and allowing for potential issues to be identified and dealt with before they grow.

Hard work. Twelve percent of participants indicated that hard work was an important leadership trait seen in educational leaders at Brockton. John identified the crucial role and hard work of one particular individual in the following comment:

The school, getting it started, and getting it enlarged fell very heavily on the shoulders of one individual. Now she didn't do it alone; there is no question that a lot of other people did a lot of things. There was a lot of hard work. Getting all the school society papers organized, getting all the legal standing, organizing everything. I mean she was just an unbelievable dynamo at what she could produce, and it seemed like she would never sleep—really sharp.

In regards to unexpected challenges, one of the participants mentioned:

The school survived, and it has thrived, and I have to attribute some of this to [its formal leadership]. With the number of kids who left last year because of the bond or other reasons, we lost them, but we gained those numbers back plus more. I think there were 40 new kids that started this year, I mean that's just an enormous amount of work and staggering for our school, and I do attribute that to being relentless with the advertising and the open houses and that kind of thing. (Anonymous J)

Any entrepreneurial effort demands considerable energy and dedication. Some participants identified hard work as one of the important traits evident in the individuals that began and sustained Brockton.

Trust-building. Twelve percent of participants indicated that the educational leader's ability to generate trust was a leadership trait seen in educational leaders at Brockton. Brian commented:

> At that point, I think that we had talked enough in front of the group that the parent group kind of knew that we had the correct motivation to be doing this and that we could be trusted—right? It wasn't for self-satisfaction and it wasn't for self-promotion. It wasn't for money or whatever. It was for the correct motivations for the school and our children, okay. (Brian)

Katherine referred to this particular event:

> I met with the teachers, and I said, "Look, things are going well. People are re-enrolling, but here's the deal: we didn't plan the timing of this quite the way we should have because of the way the school opened up in a rush; please don't lose confidence." I had to convey the message that they weren't going to have their contracts for another six weeks, but that they needed to all stay on board, and they could trust us, and I did that, and they all stayed.

Without the ability to secure trust, Brockton might have lacked the commitment and direction necessary to succeed.

Optimism. Eight percent of participants indicated that optimism was an important leadership trait seen in educational leaders at Brockton. One of the participants recalled:

> So I remember, we had a meeting where she said that about 20 [students] is all we are going to get [to start], and that's how it's going to happen, with 23 and again I guess that should—well I had to control my urges. I said, "Listen, you know I think we shouldn't be so pessimistic. I think we should set our goal on recruiting 100 students. Now, we may not reach 100 students, but we should set our goal on recruiting 100 students. 23 may be what we've got now; let's not just—let's not settle. Let's keep moving forward." (Brian)

Judy explained:

> He definitely had a way with people having confidence in this school. He just was able to portray optimism in the future that you felt comfortable and confident as

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well. He had the ability to give you confidence when there are only 30 kids, and he just had that presence and vision.

A few participants noted this trait as present in some of the educational leaders involved in the start-up and sustainment of Brockton.

Passion. Twelve percent of participants indicated that passion was an important leadership trait seen in educational leaders at Brockton. In regards to the founding parents, Claire stated,

So the founding parents were people with passion and people who were willing to take that challenge and who were open to looking for a different way, a different school environment to what might be found in a traditional public school.

Robin noted: "The parent focus at the very beginning is always passion, passion, passion, not expertise, which is a big challenge. The parent's role is to be passionate." Some participants in this study identified passion as an important trait in leaders that helped establish and sustain Brockton.

Presence or visibility. Twenty-seven percent of participants indicated that presence, or visibility, was an important leadership trait apparent in educational leaders at Brockton. Some of the commentaries that supported this finding included:

He is present, he is there every morning, he is saying good morning, he knows your children's name, he asks you how your night was, how was that tournament you had this weekend? Whatever it is, he is there, he is connected to that community, and he knows exactly what is going on. He was a gentleman at it, and he had a presence. You know, he is at the front of that door sort of hollering at the parents and calling everybody by name, and you know just old speak, old school Head of School. (Carolyn)

In regards to the Head of School, Deirdre stated,

He was at the front door, I know this has sort of been a comment that some people have made, especially those who have experienced it, but we all seem to understand. We all seem to understand that that made a difference when you are coming into this building with your kids every morning, and you've got a Head of School standing there and saying good morning Pedro. Good morning Johnny. So

he had the presence, he was out there, he was visible, and he was sharing that with everyone that was around him.

Maurette described the physical presence of one of the administrators in the following terms:

> He was always present. First thing in the morning, he was out at the front, physically outside, no matter what the weather, welcoming everybody and wishing them a good morning, how is your morning, have a great day, goodbye whatever. . . . I remember one day seeing him in the front foyer riding a bicycle, a mountain bike up and down the corridor, and of course everybody was turning around, and they were laughing and joking, but it was great fun. He was fun loving and had a big personality, bringing presence to the school.

Relationship builder. Twenty-seven percent of participants indicated that relationship building was an important leadership trait seen in educational leaders at Brockton. According to Alice,

> So, she is leading a staff, both the teaching and both the academic and administrative staff, and she is providing them the support they need for the resources they need. In other words, I need this kid to be here, and the whole openness that only works if there are teachers that are talking to each other. The teachers are only talking to each other if they are working as a team, and the teachers are only working as a team if there is a leader, and the leader is building relationships.

Regarding one of the early administrators of Brockton, Claire mentioned:

> He knows lots of the other principals in other independent schools in the area. He knows a lot of people, and he has a lot of experience. He has seen a lot of things come and go. He's worked in other schools that have built up, that had started small, and he's moved them along. He is one of those people you could go to if you had a problem. He would always listen to you and make you feel supported. He builds relationships.

In this current study, several participants identified relationship building as an important leadership quality or trait demonstrated by leaders in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton.

Respect. Eight percent of participants indicated that being respectful was an important leadership trait seen in educational leaders at Brockton. Christie shared:

Rather than trying to push me in the door, sign me on her school to get one or more bodies in to pay tuition, she was always very respectful and conscientious and extremely professional on the issues.

In regards to the Head of School's approach to marketing and promotion of the school, Frances commented:

She was quite objective about it, and it wasn't like she was saying, "You've got to come; you've got to bring him here." She wasn't really pushing it, which was exactly what we needed. We just needed to feel like, "Okay, there is something out there if we need it," and that was exactly what she did.

In this study a few participants also addressed the importance of respect demonstrated by leadership.

Risk-takers. Nineteen percent of participants indicated that risk-taking was a leadership trait seen in educational leaders at Brockton. In this regard, Claire mentioned:

It was new and exciting, but probably very nerve-wrecking because they didn't know if it was going to work out. They were taking a huge risk. I know the parents took a huge financial risk on it because they had to provide the funds to do this. The teachers also too a huge risk because the success of a new school is not going to be guaranteed. The new school could have floundered just as the old school had floundered.

Parental risk-taking was also addressed by an anonymous participant:

The parents in MYP [middle years' program] now are the real risk-takers because they're the ones saying, "Ok, we'll stay for grade nine with just seven students. We have great hope for that, we really do. We'll just keep our fingers crossed and hope it's right for us when our kids are at that age." (Anonymous J)

In Brockton's case, it was quite evident that taking significant risks was necessary for its emergence.

What are the Successful Strategies that led to Brockton's Existence?

Three themes emerged when addressing what were successful strategies that let to Brockton's existence. These included the International Baccalaureate, commitment to original philosophy, and volunteerism.

The International Baccalaureate program. Twenty-three percent of participants

indicated that starting and maintaining the IB at Brockton was an important strategy that

supported the school's existence. Some of the commentaries that support this finding

included:

> I would say the IB was instrumental [for the success of Brockton], and I will say
> we had never even heard of it before we started here, and I'm still learning about
> it as the years go by. We liked the whole philosophy, and not to sound naïve, but I
> had no idea there were other styles of teaching other than what's available at
> public school. (Anonymous J)

> The IB program was also considered to provide a competitive advantage. The

offering of the IB program had to be addressed when public schools in the North

Vancouver School District started to be interested in offering the IB program as well.

Chris commented,

> The IB program was a key component of what the school was trying to achieve.
> You had the public schools systems starting to get into the IB program and trying
> to compete. So we needed to look at a lot of external competitive issues that
> needed to be resolved in order for this school to maintain a brand and also
> maintain a competitive edge.

The IB program was perceived at the time as a value-added approach to what Brockton

could offer its students:

> There is a real pedagogical commitment to the IB program. A number of the
> original families were really focused on the benefits of the IB diploma, and we are
> currently learning more about the IB middle years' and primary years' programs
> at the time. The whole concept of enquiry-based learning was something that was
> really appealing. I think that was also an inspirational factor because there were
> no IB programs in public schools or anywhere else in the area. (John)

In terms of school documentation, an early reference to the IB program was mentioned:

> The school continues to be on track with its plans for IB program implementation
> and to move closer to being in a position to apply for full IB certification.
> Teaching faculty professional development will continue to focus on development
> of IB skill set. (Board Meeting Minutes, January 9, 2006)

A documented reference on the status of the IB program implementation read:

According to the Brockton parent surveys conducted earlier last fall, the 3 IB programs were identified as a key strength that parents would like to see fully implemented at Brockton in 5 years' time. Although costly, the Board of Directors considered this a necessary next step for Brockton, one that would be feasible to undertake now because Brockton would be offering a unique academic programs not available elsewhere in North Vancouver, and as such could continue to expect to draw new enrolment into the senior grades as it has done thus far. As many of you are aware, the primary years' program is already fully integrated within Brockton's academic framework; integration of the middle years' program is well underway and Brockton continues to be unique in this regard in North Vancouver. (Board of Governors Communication to Parents, April 5, 2007)

Commitment to original philosophy. Twenty-three percent of participants

indicated that a commitment to Brockton's original philosophy was an important strategy

that supported the school's development. Brockton's original philosophy is reflected in

this statement from its 2007-2012 business plan (Brockton, 2007):

Brockton School was established in 2004 by a group of North Vancouver parents who shared a common vision for the school. The vision for Brockton is a non-denominational school where a rigorous academic education is balanced by arts and athletics in an environment where merit rather than materialism is the core value. The brand of Brockton is represented in its Motto: "Believe, Strive, Excel". Brockton School's mission is reflected in the mandate of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IB), which aims to develop inquiring knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. (p. 2)

As a private, nonprofit, non-denominational school, Brockton's original

philosophy focused on rigorous education balanced by the arts and athletics. Up to this

point, this philosophy may be relatively common to schools of its kind. Additionally,

Brockton's founders were interested in achieving high educational standards in an

environment where merit rather than materialism was the core value. In this respect, it is

important to note a clear effort to move away from a conception behind some tuition-

based private education environments as being driven by exclusivity and materialism.

Other tuition-based private educational organizations on the North Shore of the

Vancouver Lower Mainland were financially unaffordable for parents; however, these

parents were still interested in having their children attend a private school. The motto: "Believe, Strive, and Excel" clearly stressed an individual's ability to successfully undertake challenges based on merit and effort, further supporting the school's philosophy.

As stated before, the IB program was a significant integral part of the establishment of Brockton. Initially, the mission of the school itself was not separate from the educational mandate of the IB Organization. Both were one and the same thing. One of the most important aspects to Brockton's original school philosophy was to embody the IB program in North Vancouver.

Some participants believed that one of the reasons for the successful establishment and sustainment of Brockton was the ability of leaders and founders to commit to the original philosophy. Some of the commentaries that supported this finding included:

> I think one of the biggest successful strategies here is that the school is very inclusive and open-minded. They have got an underlying key philosophy that they work for and that is the mission. They are open-minded to everything as long as it doesn't break their key philosophy. So as long as you have a great key philosophy, you can be open minded to doing everything as long as it doesn't break your key philosophy. . . . They are not going to turn around and change the educational structure of the school because that breaks its key philosophy, but they are open minded to everything else that comes and knocks on the door and that's at the classroom and Principal level. (Alice)

In regards to commitment and steady stewardship of this philosophy, Steve mentioned:

> We do have a very specific goal for the school. An IB small community school, which you know creates the right type of academic and social learning environment. So that's something that we are and something that we will continue to offer, and it was something that the Board and the Head of School remained focused on, and I think it was something that got us through.

Carolyn mentioned an unwavering commitment of Brockton's founders:

We haven't waivered on anything to our direct community in terms of how we do things. So like our annual fund raising events, they haven't waivered, they haven't changed, and that's so we are consistent within our community as well. Brockton has been parent-driven, and private schools tend to be parent-driven because it is a parent board usually. . . . I think we can always stay with that core of being parent-driven, and we will be in really good hands.

The school's original philosophy was supported consistently and without much divergence in opinion. As stated by Karen,

It's very interesting when you get together as a Board and staff, and you basically see the leadership, your administrator, and the Board that governs the school all committed to the same things. There wasn't a lot of dissent about anything.

In terms of school documentation, I found the following relevant references:

Looking ahead, the board is committed to managing Brockton's growth. It is the aim of the school to maintain our uniqueness and our values. This will be achieved by understanding and communicating what defines Brockton's appeal, and by exceeding the expectations of parents, guardians and students. (Fall General Meeting, December 2, 2010)

In terms of Brockton's future, there seems to be a further commitment to the values and philosophy that has prevailed so far:

Once we establish clear goals and as the school continues to grow, we must not forget Brockton secret sauce, maintaining our uniqueness, and our values, and never forgetting that the kids are our purpose, as well as our guides. This feedback has been expressed clearly in the strategic plan consultation sessions to date. (Fall General Meeting, December 1, 2011)

Brockton founders were clearly concerned with the aims, forms, and methods that they wanted to see manifested at the new school in the short and long term.

Volunteerism. Thirty-eight percent of participants indicated that encouraging and supporting volunteerism in the school was an important strategy to support the school's existence. It was, therefore, conducive for Brockton founders to expect as well as invest copious amounts of volunteer hours in order for the school to succeed. Some of the

comments regarding the level of commitment to volunteerism that manifested in

Brockton included a comment from Maurette:

> They invest in it, and they invest everything they've got in their children because their children are their world. That's the case for me and the parents who volunteer with their whole heart. They bring something incredibly special, and you can see that they're doing it for the love of it, not because they've been coerced into it. They're helping because they know it's for the benefit of the people they love most in our lives. It's quite inspiring, and they give of themselves until they are exhausted and burned out; it's incredible.

Nevertheless, at times, there may not have been large numbers of volunteers, as explained

by a participant:

> There's a number of people who take on a huge amount of volunteer work to really make sure, in the underground scene, . . . So the social gatherings with the kids and the family and concerts and that kind of stuff, they're doing the gala and making it all happen so that they can make the school work, so they can make it successful. . . . They are a very small number of people who are highly committed to doing it, and that's usually the way it works in volunteer sort of situations that people either have the time or they need to have the time, but also have the passion behind the whole idea of volunteering their services and more than that, making that more than just an experience for the kids. (Bob)

The importance of volunteerism directed by personal interest was also reflected by

Carolyn:

> Parents want to be doing stuff, they want to be in here rolling up their sleeves, they want to volunteer and give back to the teachers that are being here for those nine-, ten-hour days and putting together their programs and trying to come up with some great ideas and how they are going to get through the next challenge of education. . . . I think that the parents that have their kids in the school that make the choice to choose Brockton are very committed to the school and helping in what they are comfortable in helping. We have got a pretty amazing volunteer community.

> I found several references to volunteer opportunities at Brockton in school

documentation. Some relevant excerpts included:

> Parent volunteer handbook will be handed out at the pancake breakfast. Included in this will be the great specific events for example kindergarten to organize the fund a support team, grade 1/2 to fund a barbecue, grade 3/4 the Winter feast,

grade 5/6 the back-to-school BBQ, senior school the book fair. (Board Meeting Minutes, September 18, 2006)

On September 17, 2008, it was noted on Board Meeting Minutes that: "[Ex-Oficio Board Member] provided a report on the Brockton parent community. There has been a tremendous enthusiasm from the parent volunteers and each class has a parent volunteer." Also, on May 27, 2009, the Annual General Meeting Minutes showed the following reference: "Brockton parent community report. Fundraising by the parent volunteer committee was a tremendous success this past year. The total funds raised were double of that in the previous year."

As is the case of nonprofit organizations in general, volunteerism forms an integral part of nonprofit entrepreneurship. At Brockton, it was indeed an important aspect of its foundation. Monetizing the number of volunteer hours invested in Brockton would allow for a more detailed analysis in educational entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, in many nonprofit organizations such as Brockton, tracking volunteer hours and value is considerably time consuming and complicated. The reasons behind it may be several, starting from an ethic of volunteer anonymity to the lack of a system that can track and value this effort. In the end, many participants in this study identified and valued volunteerism at Brockton as one of the key strategies to establishing the school.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the 36 themes found in this study. Themes were organized sequentially to match the order of the research questions. Data from participants was presented on their own or along with relevant excerpts from school documentation within each of the finding sections. As expected in case study research, several relevant quotations have been included to substantiate each theme. By using direct quotations of

participant voices, I aimed to accurately represent the case and situations studied in a reliable way.

The themes that emerged from question one of this study are shown in Figure 4. Themes included: (a) debt transfer, at 15%; (b) loss of trust, at 15%; (c) lack of options, at 12%; (d) parent leadership, at 42% being the highest reported theme for this question, and (e) adequate skills, at 15%.
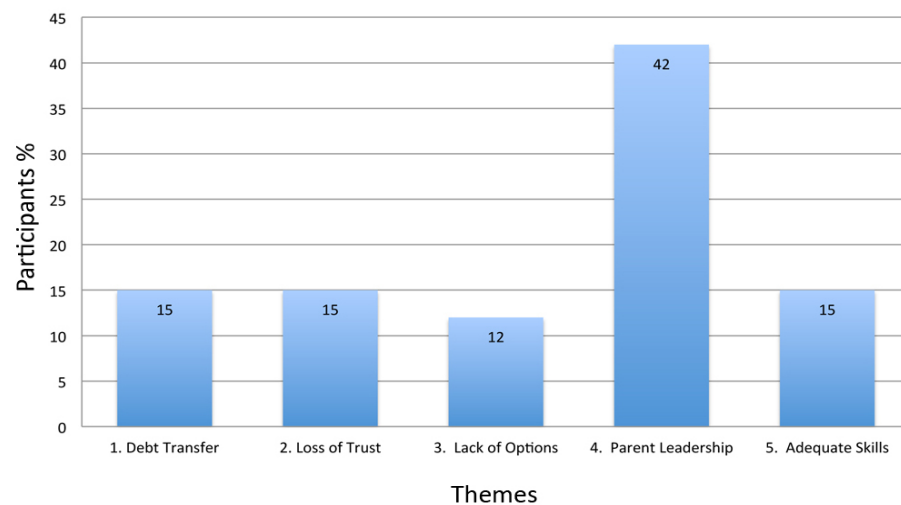
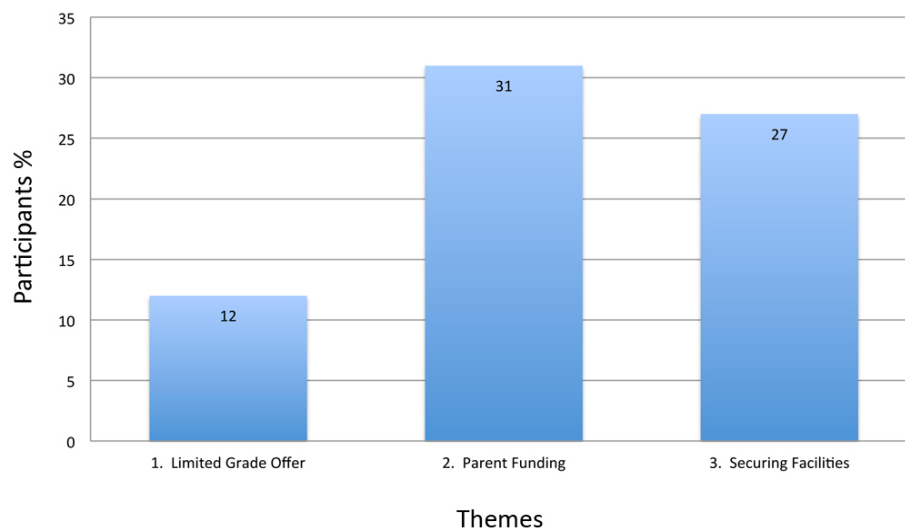*Figure 4.* Emerging themes from question one: How did the school begin?

For question two of this study, the themes that emerged were: (a) continue positive experience, with 38%; (b) enhanced learning experience, with 42% as well, and (c) small school community with 31%. Please see Figure 5.
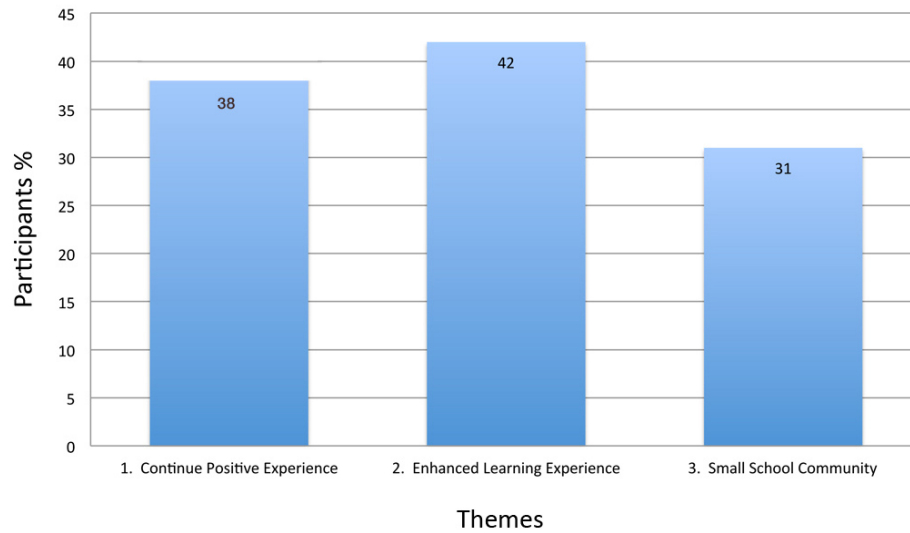
Figure 5. Emerging themes from question two: What was the purpose and perspective for starting Brockton?

Themes that emerged in response to question number three of this study included: (a) limited grade offer, with 12%; (b) parent funding, with 31%, and (c) securing facilities, with 27% (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Emerging themes from question three: How were Brockton founders successful in establishing the organization?

Themes that emerged from question number four of this study are reflected in

Figure 7: (a) element synergy, with 23%; (b) effective leadership, with 50%, one of the

highest results of this study; and (c) effective teachers, with 23%.

For question number five of this study, the themes that emerged were: (a)

increasing enrolment, with 23%; (b) effective marketing, with 23%, and (c) operational

efficiency, with 50%. Please see Figure 8.
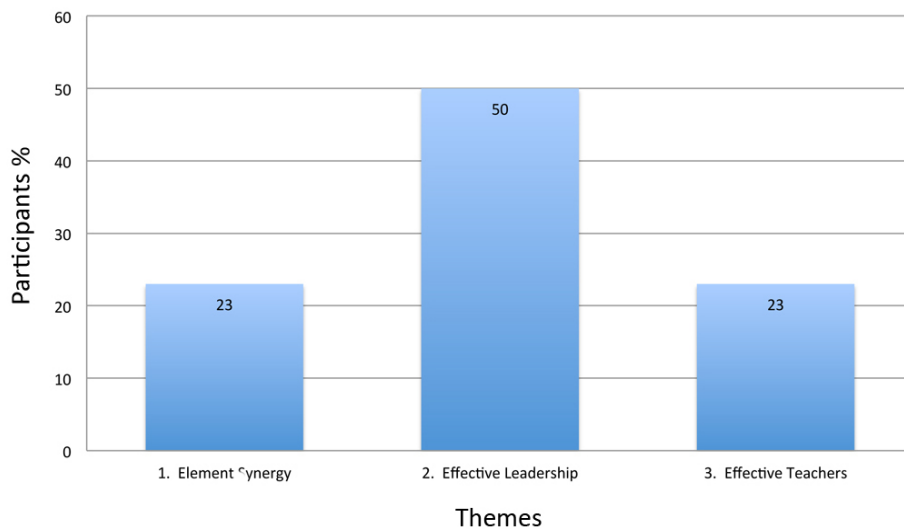
Figure 7. Emerging themes from question four: Why were Brockton founders successful
in establishing the organization.
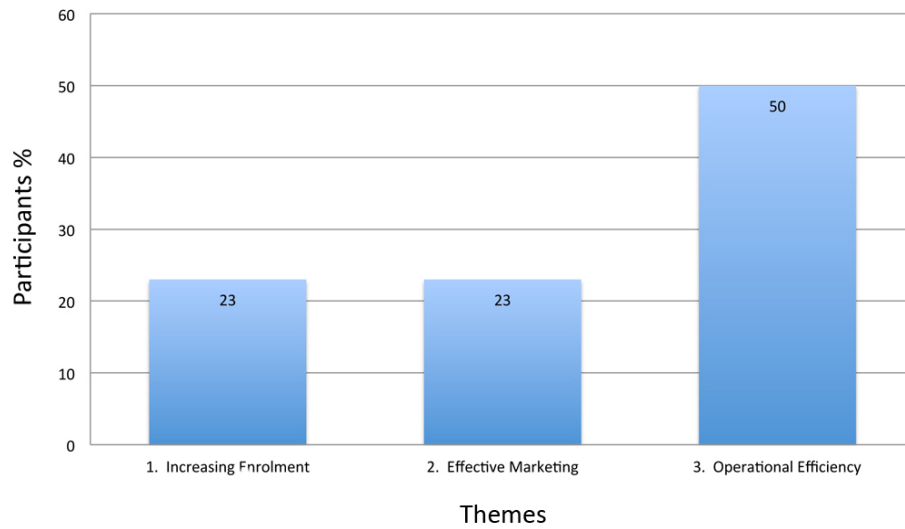
Figure 8. Emerging themes from question five: How were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization?

Themes that emerged for question number six are shown in Figure 9 and included: (a) inclusive community, with 35%; efficient communication, with 19%, and good governance, with 12%.
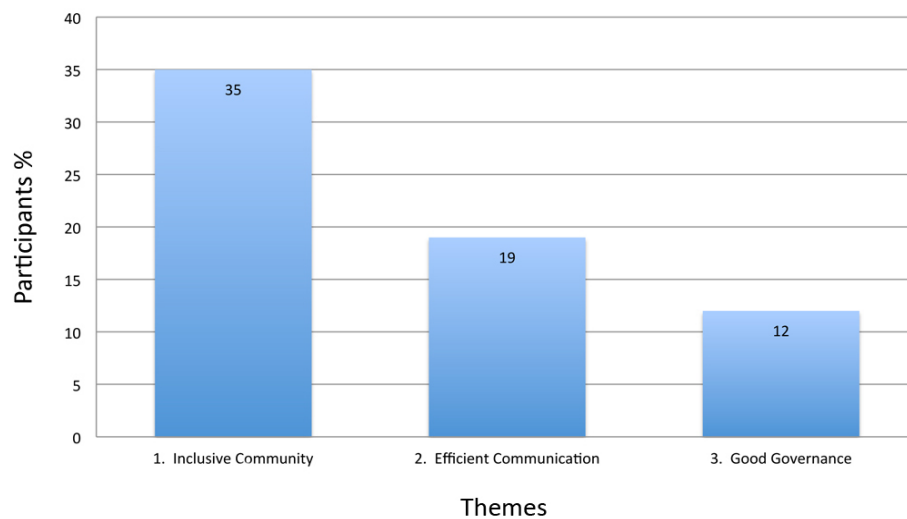
Figure 9. Emerging themes from question six: Why were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization?

Themes that emerged from question seven are shown in Figure 10. Themes included: (a) care, with 23%; (b) charisma, with 19%; (c) commitment, with 42%, the

highest for this question; (d) experience, with eight%; (e) active listener, with 15%; (f) hard worker, with 12%; (g) trust-building, with 12%; (h) optimism, with eight%; (i) passion, with 12%; (j) present or visibility, with 27%; (k) relationship-builder, with 27%; (l) respectful, with 8%, and (m) risk-taker, with 12%.

For question eight of this study, the themes that emerged included: (a) The IB program, with 23%; (b) commitment to original philosophy, with 23% and volunteerism, with 38%. Please see Figure 11.

In the next chapter, the themes that emerged from this study will be discussed.
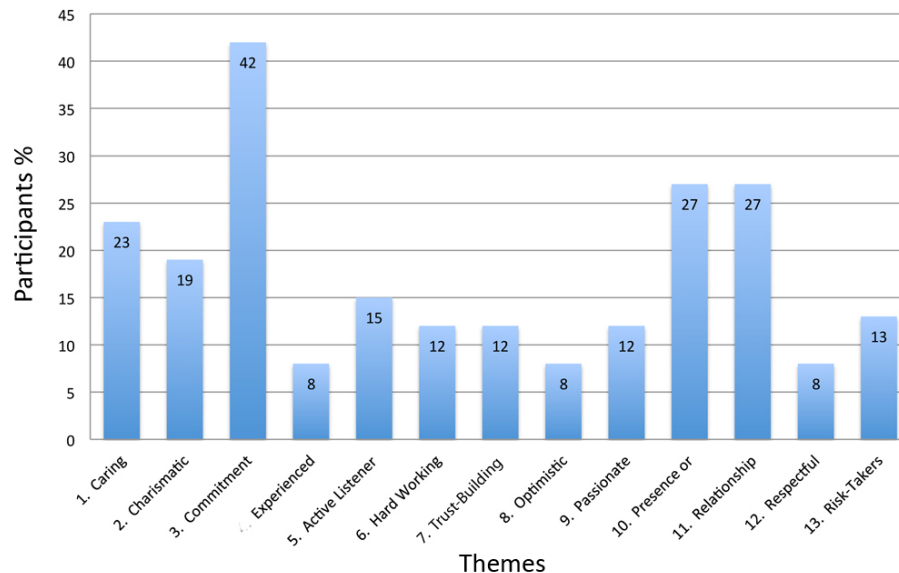
Figure 10. Emerging themes from question seven: What do you identify to be the particular leadership traits, qualities, or experiences that enabled educational leaders to be successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton?
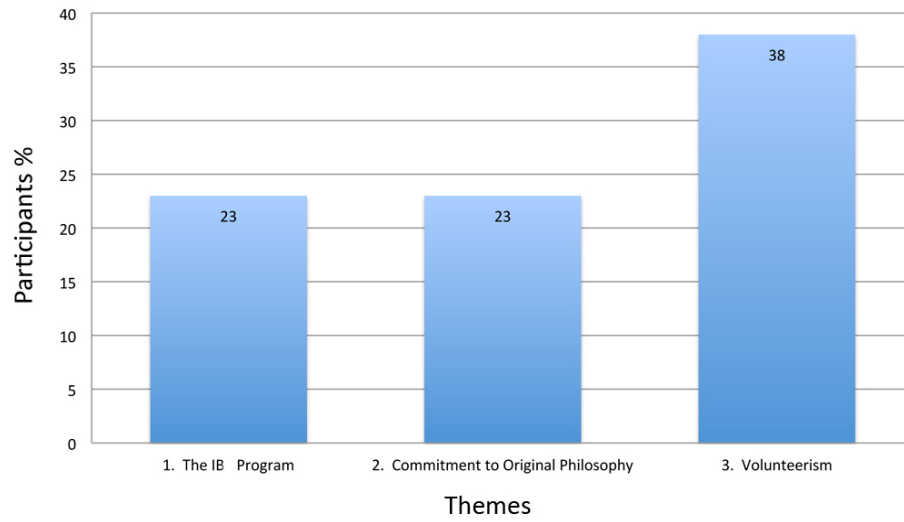
Figure 11. Emerging themes from question eight: What do you identify as the successful strategies that led to Brockton's existence?

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of this study and their possible meaning in the educational leadership context as well as their relationship to the literature will be discussed. This chapter was grouped into 10 sections that represent the identified themes: (a) context of start-up, (b) action and engagement, (c) vision for a new school, (d) establishment foundations and successes, (e) sustainment mechanics and achievements, (f) leadership traits and qualities, (g) strategies for existence, (h) key findings, (i) overview of key findings, and finally, (j) next steps.

In the tradition of interpretive research, and following the suggestions of Butin (2010), I have devoted this chapter to taking "the concluding analysis from the previous chapter and discuss[ing] how the findings inform the original research questions" (p. 115). Additionally, I will "explore the larger academic context of how the research fits into and informs the ongoing discussion in the literature and, in turn impacts our understanding of the bigger picture of that specific issue" (p. 115). Finally, "this chapter will conclude with suggestions and implications of future analyses, given what has now been learned; that is, now knowing the outcomes of this study, what would be the logical next steps in examining that particular issue?" (p. 115).

Context of Brockton's Start-Up

To clearly contextualize the establishment and sustainment of Brockton School, it is necessary to address the circumstances that were identified as conducive to the phenomenon. Three particular findings relate to question number one of the interview

questionnaire: How did the school began? These findings shed light on the circumstances that surrounded the establishment of the school.

In this study, it was found that 15% of participants identified the attempt to transfer debt to parents at their previous school as one of the reasons for how Brockton began. Fifteen percent of participants identified the loss of trust that resulted from the attempt to transfer debt to parents at their previous school as one of the reasons that Brockton began. Twelve percent of participants stated that there were no other viable school options in North Vancouver for them to move their children to, and therefore, the lack of school choice in the area became an important motivator for a group of parents to begin a new private school in the same area.

Context and circumstances seem to be highly relevant in cases of educational entrepreneurship. The undertaking to establish a nonprofit organization is generally supported by a high-value social need. Ogden (2010) stated that entrepreneurial "innovations were born out of scarcity and the and up close and personal understanding of both the needs and the available resources" (p. ?). Board Source (1999), a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the public good by building exceptional nonprofit boards and inspiring board service, cautioned nonprofit entrepreneurs and suggested a grounded analysis before moving forward. Board Source explained:

> Most nonprofit organizations begin with an idea and a desire to make the world a better place. Before launching into this process, ask yourselves why you want to start your own nonprofit. Is somebody else already providing this service? You may not want to duplicate what already exists. Don't underestimate the time, energy, and effort required to start a new organization. . . . Good intentions alone are not always enough to make a nonprofit venture successful. (p. 2)

As seen in the findings and supported by documentation, parents were approached by the administration of their previous school requesting their financial support. A

significant amount of debt had been identified between the one and two million-dollar

mark, which needed to be addressed. John explained the situation as follows:

> I recall a meeting where it was discussed how we would negotiate a different solution to this problem. That proposal was crafted [with] the support of the rest of the parent group. Not all of the parents were involved in that primarily. Basically, the school has got a $2,000,000 debt, and the parents were initially willing to support $1,000,000 of that debt.

The particular reasons and circumstances surrounding the need for debt-recovery

funding or the reasons for accumulating debt are beyond the scope of this study and,

therefore, not relevant for exploration or speculation. This situation could easily be

identified as the triggering circumstance for the loss of trust reported by participants. The

combination of accumulated debt in addition to the perception of an internal

organizational crisis was clearly identified by Brian:

> In investing, you don't necessarily have a problem with that if you see a better future for yourself. If you say you are going to invest a million dollars, when I am making two millions over here, I can maybe make that investment. But they wanted two million dollars and, oh by the way, there is more of a crisis over here.

Trust is of paramount importance in educational organizations at different levels,

including leadership, governance, parenting, and teaching. Dirks and Ferrin (2002)

examined the findings and implications of the research on trust in leadership that has

been conducted during the past four decades. Their study provided estimates of the

primary relationships between trust in leadership and key outcomes. Satterthwaite, Piper,

Sikes, and Webster (2011) offered a detailed examination of the nature and role of trust,

particularly in education. Kurnianingsih, Yuniarti, and Kim (2012) stated the importance

of teachers' earned trust in their ability to guide students in their learning activities.

Holzman (2012) additionally defended that schools cannot improve without collective

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trust. Other authors have explored the *trust in education* concept, such as Louis (2007)

and Troman (2000).

It was implied that when parents were approached with the expectation to

financially support the organization where their children were enrolled, many questions

and concerns started to arise. The concern, for parents, evolved to a point where the

situation was untenable and possibly perceived as a form of victimization. Brian

explained:

> I guess it would be along the sense of if you see your community being victimized
> and taken advantage of and that you obviously develop relationships with people
> who are in your school and with other parents as well as the kids.

When several of the parents felt that trust was broken and the need for financial

resources appeared not to be supported by the parent body, these families started looking

for other schooling options for their children, all efforts were not successful. At the time,

their current school was the only one offering the IB program in North Vancouver. It was

only until 2007 that the North Vancouver School District announced that they would be

offering the IB program at their Balmoral School, that Brockton became concerned about

their uniqueness in offering the IB program (Board Meeting Minutes, March 31, 2007).

As of March 2012, the only two other schools listed on the International Baccalaureate

Organization's website (www.ibo.org) in North Vancouver were Capilano Elementary as

well as Carson Graham Secondary schools, both public educational institutions.

Therefore, Brockton still remained as the only private preparatory school offering the IB

curriculum in the municipality.

Therefore, it is understandable that parents who were committed to private

education and/or the IB curriculum would have seen no other option but to consider

starting their own school. At the time, the IB program was only offered in West

Vancouver or the city of Vancouver itself which, for families living in North Vancouver, would result in considerable commuting time; nevertheless, given the circumstances, many families in that original seed school did move out of the municipality to other private schools. Deirdre commented,

> Well, the other thing is that it also had to happen so quickly, and it also happened very late. So right at the time that we were still trying to solidify the fact that we could do this, other IB schools had re-enrolment and enrolment deadlines. I know that we lost people to those schools because they just weren't happy in holding out a couple or months or a couple of weeks later to figure out what we were doing. So they were, you know, looking after themselves first and not willing to take the risk.

> John added: "So many parents also sent their kids to Mulgrave or Collingwood, to

St. Georges, or you know, some other independent schools." According to the participants, other private school options apparently had other undesirable characteristics such as being much bigger in terms of student population, and this was not ideal for many parents. Claire shared the following ideas:

> If you want IB in a big school, don't come to us, go to [other schools]. I know that's why people come to us because we are smaller. I know we need to grow and to have 20 students in a class. I just hope that we don't have to go too much past that.

Action and Engagement

In answer to the question: How did the school begin, participant comments and organizational documents provided a depth of history. Pre-Brockton parents in early 2004 were left with the challenge to either invest in a school that was not perceived to be financially and organizationally stable or move to a different school. Given that some parents perceived that they had nowhere else to go and, at the same time, that their children were experiencing a very positive educational experience at their current school, conversations amongst the parents started to lean towards finding a way to achieve

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continuation in a different form. During this time, several individuals appeared to have been profoundly moved by the situation and by the needed to provide the education that they were hoping for their children.

Consequently, several parents started taking on important leadership roles for the purposes of clarifying the situation and to later consolidate a parent task force with the mandate of establishing the new school. Later on, these same parents and other volunteers became committed to starting a private school in a very short period of time (i.e., from January 2004 to September 2004). The new Board started with the first parent-only meetings in the beginning of 2004, and, amazingly, they actually opened the doors to a new school in September of that same year. The leadership demonstrated that they were able to empower and engage others during this important time.

Two additional findings related to this first interview question. These included the finding that 42% of participants identified parent leadership as the main reason for Brockton's beginning, and the finding that 15% of participants identified an adequate mix of skills within the founding parent body as significantly contributing to Brockton's beginning. Some of these skills included legal, business, and educational as well as social and political.

There are several recent studies regarding parent leadership in education. Jasis and Ordoñez-Jasis (2012) explored the process of parent engagement, particularly examining commitment and empowerment in schools. McDonald, Fitz Roy, Fuchs, Fooken, and Klasen (2012) noted that student retention rates were statistically significantly higher with parent leadership. Bolivar and Chrispeels (2011) explored how building social and intellectual capital in education enhanced parent leadership and

empowerment. Slaton, Cecil, Lambert, King, and Pearson (2012) offered a look into the authority, influence, and credibility earned by family leaders as well as their impact in educational communities. Freer (2009) wrote about parental influence on curricular decisions in private schools. He stated, "Parental input and participation on curricular decisions influence the educational process in private schools" (p. 5).

In the case of Brockton, the notion of parent leadership was influenced by social and/or educational entrepreneurship principles. Educational leaders who were successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton approached its foundation as they would any other entrepreneurial organization: that is, considering costs, services, personnel, expenses, income, government grants, fiduciary issues, governance issues, and so forth. In addition to the general references of educational entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship presented in Chapter 2, there have been other interesting studies. Toson (2011) looked at educational entrepreneurship from the point of view of for-profit charter schools. Hristov (2011) researched about entrepreneurship and business performance indicators as determinants for school quality. In his study, Hristov arrived at two conclusions that were very supportive to this study:

> First, charter schools are business organizations, despite the fact that they receive public funds. Operationally, they differ substantially from district schools and government agencies and depend on market forces. Second, charter schools cannot survive inefficient management practices, as market forces tend to drive them out of business, regardless of academic success and student achievement levels. (p. ii)

Finally, Smedts, Smeyers, and Depaepe (2008) addressed parents as educational entrepreneurs who learn from experts and apply the new learning within their schools.

Parent leadership and empowerment was a theme that emerged from many of the participant interviews. There was also the desire and willingness to do something that had a concrete positive effect in the experience of their children. As Brian suggested:

> You know you see so his kid is playing with your child, and you want to see the best for that child, and at some point, you stand up and say that you know I am not going to take it anymore, or I think that we should go on a different way.

Parent leadership at that time reflected a high degree of sensitivity towards the difficult financial situation that the previous school was experiencing, while at the same time showed a high level of efficiency in terms of getting things done. One of the participants noted this difficult balance, as well as a willingness to produce something good from the situation:

> So you know, it got really quite dicey towards the end. Yeah, it was really quite hard. So when the parents felt really quite bad about that and the group of parents grouped up together, got organized, and decided we can do a better thing, and in the space of a few months, they put a school together. (Hermoine)

There appeared to be a particular tipping point, a moment of critical mass, a threshold, a boiling point (Gladwell, 2000) when parents started talking about taking action. John noted, "We were preparing to give these guys a million dollars. Why don't we just give ourselves a million dollars and then just go for it?" So they did. This was not an easy task by any means. For such an endeavour (i.e., the starting of a school) to see the light in such a short amount of time, serious hard work and specific skills were needed on the part of the parents who decided to go forward with this venture.

Entrepreneurial skills have been the focus of considerable research. Some of the most recent include Baptista, Lima, and Preto (2012), who studied entrepreneurial skills in small firms and found that "entrepreneurs are more skilled than workers and more skilled entrepreneurs manage larger firms; more skilled entrepreneurs hire more skilled

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workers" (p. i). The Skoll Foundation (2011) for social entrepreneurship identified some

of the skills and characteristics of social entrepreneurs:

> Entrepreneurs are essential drivers of innovation and progress. In the business world they act as engines of growth, harnessing opportunity and innovation to fuel economic advancement. Social entrepreneurs act similarly, tapping inspiration and creativity, courage and fortitude, to seize opportunities that challenge and forever change established, but fundamentally inequitable systems. (para. 3)

Brockton showed some remarkable tenacity. Founders appeared to be a highly

functioning group of educational leaders with the necessary skills to establish and sustain

a private K-8 educational organization. Chris explained:

> Hopefully, you find that balance of utilizing the strengths of all involved, and I think one of the things I think was good about Brockton was because you were drawing a lot from the parents, there was a lot of well qualified people with considerable skills willing to sit on the Board.

Steve also shared that: "You want to have a bunch of pretty savvy parents who are a little

bit above and beyond just the passion, they have got to have some know-how and some

business intelligence."

Starting a private, nonprofit school in BC demands an enormous amount of

knowledge, resources, strategy, and action; the founding leaders were able to apply all

these. On the first week of September 2004, the True North Independent School opened

its doors at the Cloverly site and, very shortly after, adopted the name of Brockton

Preparatory School Society, a nonprofit society, registered under the Societies Act of BC.

Vision for a New School

Participants were asked: What was the purpose and perspective for starting

Brockton? Educational leaders who started Brockton appeared to have been thrown into a

reactive situation, where in only a few months, the decision to start a new school was

made: How to do it? How will it look like? What is important? What is the purpose?

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These and many other questions were surely in the minds of Brockton founders. These questions are precisely the train of thought that allowed me, as the researcher, to address the second question presented to participants: What was the purpose and perspective for starting Brockton?

There were indications that student experience at the seed school for Brockton was positive for many families. In this regard, 38% of participants suggested that one of the reasons for starting Brockton was to be able to continue with the positive educational experience that they had enjoyed in the previous school. At the same time, 42% of participants identified that one of the reasons for starting Brockton was to provide students with an enhanced learning experience. Finally, 31% of participants indicated that one of the main reasons of starting Brockton was to establish a small school community that would allow for students to be safe and to receive a more personalized educational experience.

Deirdre mentioned, "The families loved the education and everything that was happening within the walls of that school. Parents wanted to keep that and get rid of the rest." This showed that parents were surprised by the difficult financial situation that the school was in and also appreciated the good that was actually happening in terms of their children's education. In other circumstances, if the situation on the educational side of things had not been working for families, there might have not been the cohesion and interest to keep the experience going, and parents probably would have just looked for other educational possibilities.

At the time in North Vancouver, the educational offer included public education as well as several denominational schools. There were also French immersion and

French-only schools. The Vancouver Waldorf School had also located in the municipality for more than 30 years.

Some parents clearly understood that the public education option was not of their interest and, in some cases, referred to it as the kind of education they were looking to move away from. In reference to this, Claire mentioned that "the founding parents were looking for those people with passion and people who were willing for that challenge and who were open to a different school environment to what might be found in a traditional public school." In this regard, the following suggestion was also made:

> For parents that are making a choice outside of the public school system where they are dropping their kids off at the corner street and letting the kid walk into school, we are making a choice for something different than that, to belong to something, to be able to participate, to engage in our children's educational system, and that's pretty significant. That's a pretty big privilege in today's world of education. (Carolyn)

As noted, the notion of participation and having the ability to influence their child's education was also present in some comments from participants in the study:

> I believe a lot of parents choose to support Brockton because they can have influence on what happens. Also, the larger a school gets, the more dilute that influence is, and I think one of the things that Brockton, at least at the start ,was really focused on was the fact that it was so small and had a very good sensitivity to the inputs of each and every one of the parents. (John)

A study by Van Pelt, Allison, and Allison (2007) looked at private school growth in Ontario from 1960 to 2006. They surveyed parents from 919 households whose children attended private schools. They found that all schools considered in this study "saw their mission as being the provision of a superior education . . . [and also that] while a little over a 3rd of the comparable adult population had attended university, three–quarters of private school parents had" (p. 3). Another of their findings suggested that "disappointment with public or separate schools was a factor in choosing their private

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school for 94% of surveyed parents. 75% said this disappointment was a very important factor in their choice" (p. 3). The authors also identified several features of private schools that were positive reasons for choosing these schools, which I may suggest resonated with Brockton's founders' intent of providing an enhanced educational experience for their children. These reasons were: (a) dedication of the teachers, with emphasis on academic quality and safety; (b) concern with morals and values, with family and character development as being very important; (c) high expectations for teachers and their classroom instruction, including individualized attention as well as a motivating, supportive, nurturing educational environment that instills confidence and independence in students; and (d) considerable interest in class sizes remaining small (p. 4).

Van Pelt et al. (2007) also found that the majority of parents strongly agreed that their schools were safe; had dedicated teachers who emphasized academic quality; they educated the whole child; they developed student character; they offered unique opportunities; and they were generally motivating, supportive, and nurturing. Other characteristics found were strong leadership, clear goals, parent–teacher collaboration, flexibility, responsiveness, high expectations and discipline.

A study by Patras and Randall (2009) looked at the factors that influenced parental decisions to exit a public school and enroll their children in a private school in Utah. A study in Australia conducted by Beavis (2004) also found:

> The most common reasons given for changing from a Government school included the view that there is better discipline in private schools, the view that there is better education or better teachers (paid more or properly screened) in private schools, the view that there are smaller classes or there is more individual attention given to students in private schools. (p. 4)

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Findings in these studies identified the reasons that parents pursue private education. It could be argued that seeking an enhanced educational experience would be one of the main reasons why parents who participated in these studies have chosen independent schools. Furthermore, as stated in the findings of this study, it is easy to understand why educational leaders reflected this same sentiment as they engaged in the process of establishing Brockton. A better educational experience may come at a higher price.

Establishment Foundations and Successes

In this section, I present an analysis of question three of the interview questionnaire: How and why were Brockton founders successful in establishing the organization? This study found that 12% of parents identified that the school started with a limited grade offer as a key element of the successful establishment of Brockton by educational leaders. This study also found that 31% of participants indicated that parent funding was a key factor in the successful establishment of Brockton. Twenty-seven percent of participants indicated that securing the facility was a key element in terms of how educational leaders were successful in establishing Brockton.

> The first difficulty in a school is recruiting right, recruiting students. So we had that mass—so we get the critical mass to move forward at that point it was 100 students. So you know we could do this. (Brian)

Brian's words reflected the conditions that contributed to parents making the decision to open the new school. The expectation was that the majority of students, estimated at around 100, would follow through to the new organization. Nevertheless, Brockton started with 41 students, and therefore, more than half of the expected initial enrolment was lost. As time progressed and the winter of 2004 became spring then later

summer, many uncertainties about the situation forced many families to seek other school options.

Lower enrolment numbers forced Brockton founders to assess the number and manner of grades that could be offered so that the school could be viable from an economic point of view. Therefore, the school started offering Kindergarten to grade 8 with one class for Kindergarten as well as split classes for grades 1 to 8, which included grades 1 and 2, grades 3 and 4, grades 5 and 6, as well as grades 7 and 8.

In the end, conducting an assessment of the number of students that the school would be able to attract, as well as an efficient manner in which to serve them, appeared to have been key in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton. The link between grade, class offerings, and funding has a direct relationship. Given that the majority of funds that would be redirected to start Brockton was going to be coming from unsecured loans produced by the parent body, a grounded assessment of the educational offering seemed to have been established.

As stated in the previous section, the relationship between grade offerings and funding was a very sensitive one. Founding parents of Brockton were successful in achieving approval for Group 2 independent school funding offered by the BC Ministry of Education (n.d.). This kind of funding allows schools to receive per student operating grants at the 35% level of ministry-calculated student operating costs, which may translate to a direct cost reduction of between 10% to 20% of the actual per-student operating cost in private schools.

This experience can be complicated as reflected in the following comment by Brian:

The funding of schools is based upon this formula you know, and if you don't meet these criteria, you don't get it, but there were all these long involved and unclear answers. Weeks after we finally figured out exactly how everything—all the pieces of the puzzle fit together on the financial side to say okay well then given these inputs, what's our break even? What's our student ratio need to be etcetera, etcetera right?

This situation demanded that approximately 80 to 90% of the actual cost of the operation of the school needed to be taken care of directly through parent funding, establishing an enormous responsibility on the parent body as well as the Board of Governors. In this respect, Deirdre shared that: "The rest of us were just like pulling money out of our pockets left right and centre and just handing it to the school, you need a bookcase or something, it was like our own baby really."

Initially, a group of only a few families committed to the endeavour of paying the needed tuition amounts. Families who came into the school later on were not initially asked for a bond or for any other kind of financial commitment, which generated a difficult situation:

So, we had really two tiers of people at the school. We had the founders who had put in money, we had the parents who had come in later, and the founders were members of the society and the other parents were not, and this is an untenable situation. . . . There were two rounds of bonds founders' loans of something like $20,000 for a single child at the school; $30,000 if you had two children. (John)

Coulson (2009) found that "direct parent funding of private schools generally comprises either a very high or a very low share of the total" (p. 31), which was consistent with the model in which Brockton was founded. Private schools that receive high levels of public funding have a tendency to be openly criticized, as seen in this statement by Paquette (2005):

The past two decades have generated numerous and varied experiments with the use of public resources to support "private" schools, which, in any case, become and behave more like public schools in proportion to their dependence on the

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public purse. From an equity point of view, however, no compelling moral necessity exists to use public funds to support private schools. (p. 568)

As is the case with nonprofit private schools, Brockton was registered as a charitable organization with the Canada Revenue Agency (2012), which allowed the school to offer tax-deductible receipts for donations. Nevertheless, independent, nondenominational schools appear to have enormous difficulty in attracting donations from outside of their parent body, thus pushing back the financial responsibility and wellbeing of the school to the parent body.

By the first week of September of that same year, an educational organization hoping to be capable of offering students the same quality education they were receiving at another North Vancouver school became a feasible idea. The founders appeared to have clarity in regards to one of the most important aspects of independent school education: enrolment. As stated before, they initially hoping for enrolment numbers similar to the ones they had at the previous school (i.e., around 100), but they had significantly less (i.e., 41) students in September. Securing facilities was much more of a challenge than maybe anything else at the time, as reflected in this comment:

> We started casting around everywhere we could to find information, and in the course of me going, looking for information on school structure, what laws govern, how do you set up, what is the law that you have to know, procedures to go forward, and what are the essentials, we realized we had to have facilities and they are very hard to come by. (Katherine)

Some participants of this study would argue that not having a facility was one of the reasons some students ended up securing spots in other schools in the area. Deirdre mentioned: "We were in negotiations with the [North Vancouver] School Board to secure our facilities. We couldn't let the cat out of the bag. We couldn't tell the parent group that

we felt 99% sure that it was going to go through." There was indeed a particular window

of opportunity, as reflected in the following comment:

> Leasing premises from the District today would take 9 to 12 months to be completed because there is a very defined process, and at that point, there was no process. We started in April. We had signed a lease to July, and then we spent the summer renovating that school inside because it was horrendous. So all the parents did all the renovating. (John)

Securing the facility was certainly one of the crucial factors that led to the

successful establishment of the organization. In this regard, Katherine said, "It is the

number one thing. It's not the parents to tell you the truth; it is the fact that there was a

facility available and that we were able to cut a deal at the last minute."

Findings for question four showed that 23% of participants indicated that a

combination of different elements came together to create Brockton . Fifty percent of

participants indicated that effective leadership was a key element in the establishment of

Brockton. Twenty-three percent of participants identified that having effective teachers at

Brockton contributed to its success.

Beneke, Schurink, and Roodt (2007) defined synergy "as a concept describing the

systemic processes whereby business units of diversified organizations may generate

greater value to working as one system rather than working as separate entities" (p. 9).

According to Harwood (2000), the word synergy comes from the Greek *synergos*, which

means working together. Juga (1996) identified synergy as "the co-operative action of

discrete agencies in such a way that the total effect is greater than the sum of the effects

taken independently" (p. 51). Finally, Krumm, Dewulf, and De Jonge (1998) defined

synergy as "the combination of two or more different businesses, activities, or processes

will create an overall value that is greater than the sum of the individual parts" (p. 374).

It was by utilizing Bloomberg and Volpe's (2008) conceptual framework that this particular study and its findings were understood. Participants referred to a "coming together" of different elements that produced enough traction and momentum to be able to finally open the doors of a new school in September 2004. Aspects such as incorporation, funding, enrolment, facilities, hiring of teachers, and securing the services of a competent Head of School came together in such a way that the result became more than the linear sum of its parts. For example, in regards to the financial aspect, Steve mentioned: "So we worked hard at building those relationships and underlining our reliability, our fiscal responsibility, our financial strength and I think it paid off."

Effective leadership is crucial for entrepreneurial endeavour of any kind (Hentschke & Caldwell, 2005; Kaufmann, 2009). The concept of educational entrepreneurship implies effective leadership at many levels. In education, effective leadership can also be seen as a crucial part of educational entrepreneurship (Boyett & Finlay, 1993; Chand & Amin-Choudhury, 2006; Guzzetta, 1982; Hess, 2006, 2008; Jones & Spicer, 2005; Shalom, 2006; Webber & Scott, 2008). The following participant illustrated his perception of effective leadership:

> So having the right Head of the School to exercise the leadership and to provide the guidance to the Board of Directors, to flow that way is very important. But if you didn't get that right, then you are a long way back down the road. (Robin)

For one of the participants, effective leadership could be considered even more important than strategic planning or the conceptual business model:

> The power of the growth comes from just that incredible excitement, dedication, leadership, and selflessness, and you know, we are doing something so amazing here. That's how the school managed to grow. If the business model was maybe not quite as precise as it should have been, you know in that first year or two, that doesn't really matter so much. (Nichola)

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Effective leadership appeared to have paramount importance in regards to the foundation and sustainment of Brockton, primarily because of the circumstances that surrounded the school's start up. In the first months of 2004, there was no expectation for this school to be started. There had not been any initiative directed at starting Brockton, and parents were certainly not counting on having to start a school by September of that same year. It appeared that the founders encountered a lack of time and resources to start a school; nevertheless, eight years after that moment, it is now safe to say that a new independent, nonprofit, university preparatory school was successfully established in the district of North Vancouver.

Effective teachers were identified to be an important part of the successful establishment of Brockton. Some of the characteristics associated with effective teachers could be seen in the following comment:

> I don't think anyone is teaching here because that was the only job they could get, and I applied for everything. I just don't see that here. It's a very positive staff. Everybody is nice to each other and collegial with each other and that's kind of unique too. But it means that we are all here by choice, and we don't have any golden handcuffs that keep us in a job that we're miserable at. We would just choose to leave, and if you're not happy here, I think it would be obvious to everyone. So I really like that because it means you've got a staff that want to be here. (Christie)

Effective teaching in K-12 has been widely studied in educational research (Darling-Hammond, 2011; Routman, 2012). Effective teaching has also been studied in relation to educational leadership (Popp, Grant, & Stronge, 2011; Thoonen, Sleegers, Oort, Peetsma, & Geijsel, 2011). The link between effective teaching and successful educational entrepreneurship is important information for educational leaders who are in the process of establishing a school and for researcher and policy makers.

When addressing effective teaching, questions around professional education in independent schools could be easily identified, particularly for in-service teachers. How could high levels of commitment that is expected in independent schools be developed, enhanced, sustained, or communicated? A recommendation may include giving teachers an influencing voice within the organization. This influence should be directed both towards the educational as well as organizational aspects of the organization. In this case, professional development programs around entrepreneurship, outreach, or marketing could easily compliment the more traditional professional development topics experienced in schools (e.g., learning outcomes, assessment, literacy, etc.). It is important to also address the issue of teacher support and wellness, in consideration of the additional expectations that private school education as well as educational entrepreneurship pose on faculty. Teachers need to be supported as much as possible because of the extra demands posed by the private school context. Burnout and stress can have serious implications to the personal lives of teachers, negatively affecting an emerging and existing organization.

Sustainment Mechanics and Achievements

Findings relating to question number five of the interview questionnaire: How and why were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization, showed that 23% of participants indicated that increasing enrolment was a key element of educational leaders' success in sustaining Brockton. Twenty-three percent of participants indicated that effective marketing was another key sustaining the school. Fifty percent of participants also indicated that operational efficiency was also important to sustaining Brockton.

The majority of the literature relating to tuition-based sustainment models of education has generally focused on higher education. In this case, tuition-based funding as well as enrolment numbers played a significant role in private, non-chartered schools that received limited funding from the government. Simply, enrolment numbers equals sustainment.

There appears to be an association between tuition-based education and student enrichment. Lofthouse (1994) investigated an optional full-day, tuition-based kindergarten in Colorado and found that its primary objective was to "provide a safe, educationally enriching environment for kindergarten-age children" (p. 24). He also found that the program was both successful and profitable, and he suggested the development of similar programs. Smyth (2009) stated, "Previous international studies have indicated that such tuition can enhance academic performance and facilitate access to tertiary education" (p. 1). The extra effort that comes from families paying tuition is validated by this quote. Smyth also noted that there is no correlation between tuition payment and educational or professional success.

In some cases, private education may be perceived as a risky endeavour in comparison to public education. Nonprofit societies are easy to set up. As a matter of fact, a small number of independent individuals can come together and decide to start up a school. In many cases, this effort alone is not enough to provide a quality education.

Marketing for start-up organizations is also crucial for their survival. The concept of entrepreneurial marketing has been addressed by several authors (Collinson & Shaw, 2001; Gilmore & Carson, 1999; Mort, Weerawardena, & Liesch, 2012; Stokes, 2000). As in most business-related spheres within education, literature on educational marketing

was more prevalent and available when referring to higher education (Cook & Ley, 2011). Educational marketing at the K-12 level has not been studied with the same consistency. Kotler and Fox (1995) offered a solid understanding of marketing in the context of educational organizations.

Rizvi and Khan (2010) offered deeper understanding in this matter:

> Educational marketing is about managing relationships through effective communication. In commerce and industry it is often considered to be about managing the exchange between producers and consumers. In the educational world, marketing is about managing the relationship between schools and their clients. (p. 39)

Rizvi and Khan further clarified educational marketing. In educational marketing: (a) purchases are intangible, (b) the service may be based on the reputation of a single person, (c) it is more difficult to compare the quality of similar services, and finally (d) the buyer cannot return the service (p. 40).

At Brockton, through considerable investment and effort, these educational marketing techniques have been gradually incorporated into the outreach efforts of the school, which has generated a high-quality, recognizable brand throughout the district of North Vancouver. The amount of talent and resources that has been dedicated to promoting the school within its region as well as communicating what the school believes to be its strengths has generated a clear public awareness of its existence and general location. Overall, Brockton's marketing focus appeared to be based on being a good fit for every student:

> The vision has always been that Brockton is marketed on the basis of being a fit for your child, and if a fit for your child means that your child excels in a small school environment, in a small class, and with an IB process, then it's a great fit. (Steve)

Operational efficiency in education refers to the maximization of results in

relation to the resources a school has available for the purposes of operating successfully.

This concept has been studied considerably at all levels of private, public, K-12, and in

higher education by scholars such as McCorkle and Archibald (1982), Massy (1996), and

more recently by Comm and Mathaisel (2005). In the case of Brockton, an important

number of participants considered this to be a very important element in securing the

successful sustainment of the organization. Participants offered some examples on how

this was achieved:

> I think this was something that again is a hallmark in schools like Brockton,
> [which] was going out to the parent base and finding the skills there that we could
> utilize as opposed to going out and buying those skills, and that was a very
> important part of the process. It helped us to engage the parents more in the
> school and save some money. (Chris)

Systems and controls were also mentioned:

> We began putting systems in place to more efficiently manage administrative
> things, controls, and you know more Board control in terms of systems and
> finances and structures, checks and balances, and all that kind of stuff. (Harry)

Operational efficiency is especially important in entrepreneurial situations

(Alarape, 2007; Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991). This was very important at Brockton

because they had limited government funding, and they had to develop and operate in an

environment where high-quality education is generally considered free and accessible.

Findings relating to question number six of the interview showed that 35% of

participants indicated that forming and promoting an inclusive community was one of the

reasons for the sustainment of Brockton. Nineteen percent of participants believed that

efficient communication was a key element in why educational leaders were successful in

sustaining Brockton. Twelve percent of participants indicated that good governance on

the part of the Brockton Board of Governors was important for the success of the organization.

Brockton has offered and currently offers support for families with financial needs by providing bursaries for up to 50% of tuition. Financial need has been independently assessed by a third-party organization. Additionally, Brockton's admission process has not been structured in a way to favour and promote only academic ability. The school's admissions process has involved a holistic approach, and there has been a strong preference towards differentiated-needs learning methods within faculty and administration. Brockton currently successfully works with students diagnosed with ADHD, dyslexia, or Asperger's as well as with families with various levels of financial needs.

Socially, university preparatory private schools have often been considered or perceived as "elitist" (Wardman, Hutchesson, Gottschall, Drew, & Saltmarsh, 2010). Some may say that that same perception can be shared with several private schools in the Vancouver Lower Mainland. One of the main goals of the Brockton founders was not allowing Brockton to become an exclusive or excluding school. Some of the comments from participants in this regard included:

> It was this thinking and approach that inspired us, that drew us in, and the feeling of an inclusive community and the education as a whole. Brockton is not about just drilling information into somebody, which they have to learn by rote. It's the love of learning and community that's encouraged here. The love for learning that they would carry throughout life. (Maurette)

Bob also noted:

> It just seems to me that its culture is really not barred of exclusivity [in] anyway, that it hasn't sort of based itself on that kind of philosophy, which was one of my big major concerns in going to a private school.

Leadership Traits and Qualities

Findings relating to question number seven: What are the particular leadership traits, qualities or experiences that enabled educational leaders to be successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton, can be seen again in Figure 12. The three most important leadership traits and qualities identified by participants include: commitment (50%), presence or visibility (27%), and relationship building (27%).
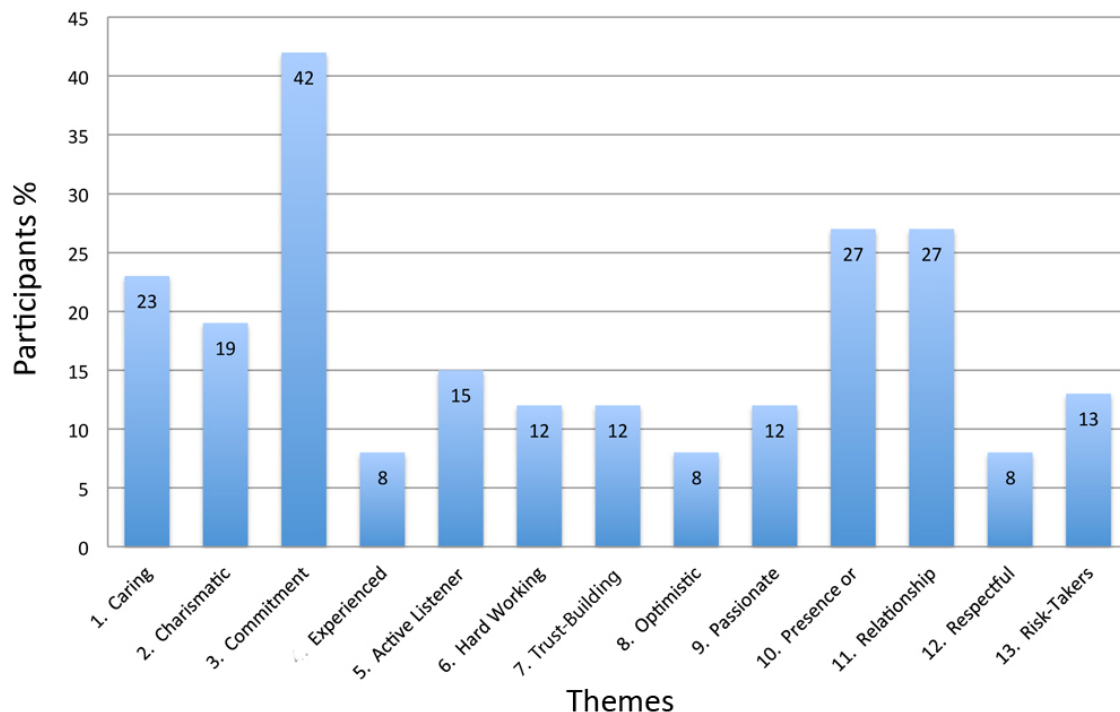
Figure 12. Emerging themes from question seven: What do you identify to be the particular leadership trait, qualities, or experiences that enabled educational leaders to be successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton?

Leadership theory is a vast subject. Undeniably present and often complex, it is consistently considered one of the most important aspects of any organizational endeavour. Even more so, leadership is very important for entrepreneurial activities as previously seen in this analysis.

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Both formal and informal educational leaders established Brockton School, including parents, administrators, faculty, and volunteers. Therefore, the notion of educational leadership in this study did not refer only to formal leadership roles within the organization, but rather I approached the issue in the direction suggested by Walker and Dimmock (2005):

> For a more complete understanding of leadership, it is necessary to consider its connections to other key processes and activities that take place within schools and outside in their environments. Within school, these other activities include teaching and learning, while outside school, they involve parenting, socialization and home–school relationships. (p. 396)

Far from considering these traits as innate or part of the nature of individuals (i.e., great man theories), traits in this study were identified as relevant to the situation and context. Failing to take situation and context into account has been one of the major criticisms in traditional trait leadership theory. Northouse explained (2012):

> People who possess certain traits that make them leaders in one situation may not be leaders in another situation. Some people may have the traits that help them emerge as leaders but not traits that allow them to maintain their leadership over time. In other words, the situation influences leadership. It is therefore difficult to identify a universal set of leadership traits in isolation from the context in which the leadership occurs. (p. 31)

Trait theory is certainly not to be entirely dismissed, particularly when context and circumstances are taken into consideration. Northouse further elaborated:

> The trait approach has earned new interest through the current emphasis given by many researchers to visionary and charismatic leadership. Charismatic leadership catapulted to the forefront of public attention with the 2008 election of the United States' first African American president, Barack Obama, who is charismatic among many other attributes. (p. 20)

Brockton School clearly had a very particular set of circumstances and conditions throughout its inception. By analyzing the interviews, it was clear that several individuals were successful in supporting its foundation and sustainment. Northouse (2012)

discovered that the most prevalent leadership traits identified in leadership studies include intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability.

Strategies for Existence

Findings relating to question number eight of the interview questionnaire: What are the successful strategies that led to Brockton's existence, showed that 23% of participants indicated that starting and maintaining the IB at Brockton School was an important strategy that supported the school's existence. Twenty-three percent of participants indicated that a commitment to Brockton School's original philosophy was an important strategy for the school's existence. Thirty-eight percent of participants indicated that volunteering and parental support were important strategies that supported Brockton School's existence.

The IB Organization (n.d.a) was founded in 1968 and currently works with 3,635 schools in 145 countries by developing and offering three challenging programs to over 1,122,000 students aged 3 to 19 years (para. 2 & 3). In its 44 years of existence, the IB has achieved high standards in professionalism and excellence that positively reflected its reputation in the IB World.

Cambridge (2002) explored international education in general and the International Baccalaureate in particular through the frame of franchising. He examined the "extent to which it may be claimed that international schools constitute a network of independent franchised distributors of globally branded international education products and services" (p. 227). It is not difficult to understand how some researchers may identify the IB as an international education franchise with all the traditional franchisee perceived benefits. As stated by Woodrow (1993), "For the franchisee, benefits come from, the

association with a good brand name, good training, good systems, and the opportunity for an immediate start-up. In addition both can gain from shared marketing strategies" (p. 211).

In terms of educational operations, content, and teacher interaction, the IB program also has much to offer a start-up school. In the words of the founding Head of Brockton School:

> Taking on the IB was not just because it is an academic program that is well recognized, but the fact that it does require collaborative activity and creates ownership. So teacher applicants had to agree to be on that page because I am not interested in teachers who simply say, "This is my program and my classroom and my door is closed." Those days have gone thankfully. (Robin)

As a new school, it is easy to understand why Brockton School might have been interested in being associated to the IB. The benefits associated with the IB brand would provide the school with immediate recognition, IB educational content, and the promise to provide a high-quality educational experience. Additionally, it would differentiate Brockton School from all other schools in the area, given that there were no other K-12 schools in the municipality offering the IB program at the time of the school's inception. Families moving into the municipality with previous experience with the IB in other regions could easily identify with Brockton School as a strong option for their children's education. It is very common for independent schools to identify themselves with a particular educational philosophy or religious approach in order to clearly differentiate their school.

The IB offers a set of proven educational guidelines as well as strong international brand recognition; there are other substantial differences between IB world schools, particularly regarding school and class size as well as community values. Private and public schools have other major differences stemming from their interaction with unions,

boards of governors, as well as school districts, which may affect flexibility and maneuverability of expectations and needs within the organization.

In addition to the IB philosophy, Brockton School was founded with the intention of offering small class sizes within a small school environment. Other aspects mentioned by participants who were part of creating Brockton School's original philosophy include: (a) inclusive community, (b) open mindedness, (c) community involvement, (d) parent-driven school, (e) high value of education, (f) as well as fundamental human values. A participant shared:

> I have a grounded belief that the job of the school is to enable children to develop a value system of their own. That's not an exclusion of the school's responsibilities or the family responsibility, but I have always made no apology for the fact that I believe that core values make schools work and help children for life. If the parents decide not to believe in those values, I would say please take your children somewhere else. If one does research right across non-denominational and faith-based schools of all faiths and cultures, you will find fundamental values like truth and trust and honesty are not really debatable; they are kind of structural. So in terms of values I would always start with those values. (Robin)

Another commitment established by the founders of Brockton School could be found on the school's website:

> Brockton School was established in 2004 by a group of North Vancouver parents whose shared vision for Brockton is that of a non-denominational school where a rigorous academic education is balanced by arts and athletics in an environment where merit rather than materialism is the core value. (Brockton School, 2012, para. 1)

The Brockton School website reflected some of the values and commitments established as part of the foundation of the school.

> At Brockton, we focus on the quality of the daily school experience, positive academic outcomes for students en route to post-secondary studies, the development of students' personal integrity and character, and creating an inclusive community that welcomes students from a variety of backgrounds. (para. 3)

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This commitment to the original philosophy suggests that a need was identified by the parent community to move forward with the initiative to establish the school. Furthermore, being consistent in delivering and "living out" the philosophy may have generated important levels of trust within the community and with families who had initial interest in the school.

It is important to note that the participants did not identify any major issues or describe any conflict or tension within the school community in relation to the school building process other than the initial dissatisfaction with the pre-Brockton School from which the majority of families originated. This group of individuals were forcibly moved into a situation where their qualities as leaders in an educational context had to manifest. In this instance, it would have been understandable if this challenging and unexpected process would have generated differences of opinions and even conflict between the school founders; nevertheless, according to the participants interviewed for this study, if there were issues and conflict, they were minor in relevance, as they were not mentioned.

Key Findings

The main research question of this study was: How and why were educational leaders successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton Preparatory School? This question was answered by identifying the major findings of this study. This information may also have certain implications in its potential use by current and future educational leaders who are in the process of establishing and sustaining a new educational organization.

The top five findings of this study include the following themes: (a) parent leadership, (b) enhanced learning experience, (c) effective leadership, (d) operational

efficiency, and (e) commitment (see Figure 13). In other words, educational leaders were

successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton School because of: (a) the high levels

of parent leadership demonstrated throughout the foundation and sustainment years;

(b) the success of the school's founders in being able to offer an enhanced learning

experience; (c) the sustained and high level of overall teacher, administrative, volunteer,

and parent leadership; (d) the sustained ability on the part of the school governors and

administrators to successfully maintain a high level of resource and human capital

efficiency; and finally (e) a high level of commitment demonstrated towards the

establishment of the endeavour.
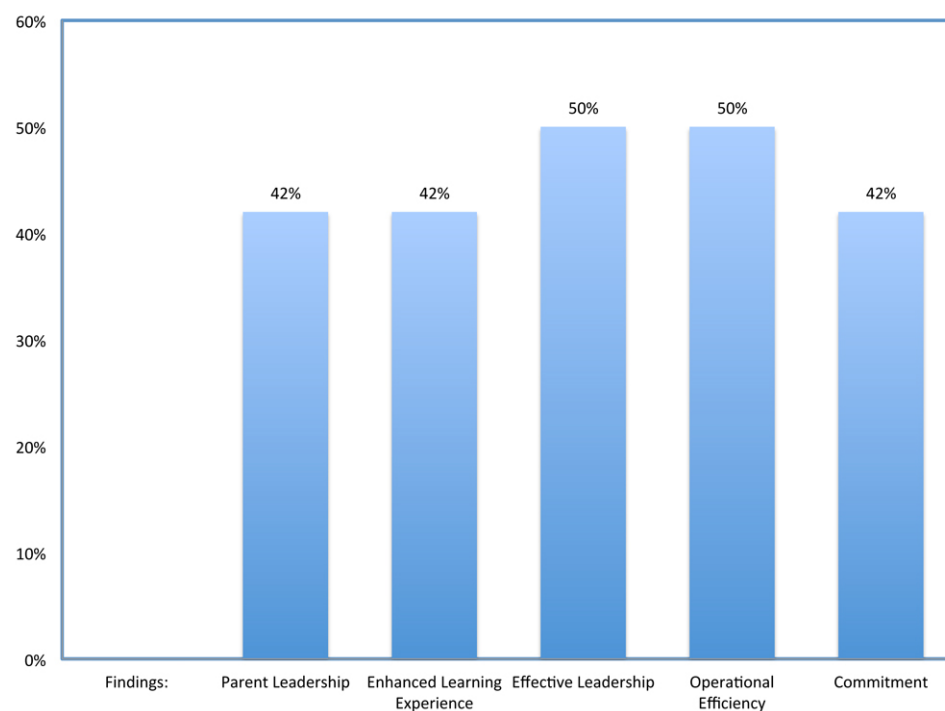
Figure 13. Key findings.

Parent leadership. Parent leadership was identified by 42% of participants as one

of the five highest ranked themes in the study. In the case of a private, nonprofit

educational entrepreneurial activity, this may indeed be one of the most important

elements of success for Brockton. Brockton had a strong parent body throughout the process of starting a school. These parents invested a high level of personal involvement, interest and ownership for the new endeavour. Potentially, parents could attract other parents and present themselves as entrepreneurs, detached from political or self-serving interests with one exception—the education and wellbeing of their children. Social interaction amongst parents played a very important role in the promotion and support of the organization.

Berger (1996) as well as Epstein and Connors (1992) showed the importance of parental leadership in supporting the formal leadership of the school. At Brockton, there was more of a parent entrepreneurial strategy that demanded leadership skills, as described by the literature about the independent school entrepreneurship model presented by Hess (2008).

Educational entrepreneurship literature also addressed leadership skills and their importance during the development of a new organization. Authors such as Cuban (2006), Gergen and Vanourek (2008), Hassel (2008), Teske and Williamson (2006), Williams (2007), have looked exclusively at educational entrepreneur qualities and skills. Of particular interest may be the work of Gergen and Vanourek, who looked for educational entrepreneurs outside the education sector; they argued that other skills such as business and entrepreneurial skills, which would be more grounded on the business side, would best serve the entrepreneurial approach to education. Some participants identified entrepreneurial synergy as a by-product of entrepreneurial leadership. The concept of entrepreneurial synergy as a leadership capacity-building effect has been

addressed before by authors such as Anderson, Chernock, and Mailloux (2006) and

Beneke et al. (2007) as well as by some participants in the study.

Enhanced learning experience. Forty-two percent of participants identified the

founders' interest for an enhanced learning experience as a reason for the success of

Brockton. It would be important to note that Brockton parents were willing to pay for

tuition instead of sending their children to public school, as they expected their children

to receive a better educational experience. Added value would, therefore, be a very

important aspect of a new school offering. In Brockton's case, most of this value resided

in the fact that founders had decided to offer the IB program. Other schools may choose

other approaches, but based on the results of this research, it would be highly recommend

that educational leaders identify the value offering so that the new school can stand out or

differentiate itself from the established options.

Betts (2005) and Brown (2004) have written extensively in regards to school

choice and the BC government promoting school choice within the public school system

in 2002 by eliminating catchment boundaries for schools. Policy and growth for

independent schools has not changed much in decades. Parental involvement in schools

often allows for a better appreciation of student experience as well as a parental

perception of higher student achievement (Sampson, 1999).

Independent schools have often been associated with providing an enhanced

learning experience (Rouse, 1998). Formal findings in studies have tended to report all

kinds of tendencies in terms of student achievement in both the public and private school

sectors (Gamoran, 1996; Witte, 1992). Parents who tend to choose independent schools

for their children tend to want an enriched learning experience for their children. In

reference to a study of school choice in Alberta, Bosetti (2004) stated, "Parents choosing

private schools are actively seeking options for their children's schooling from the

outset" (p. 400). Supporting this finding, in the same study, it was noted that parents in

pubic and alternative schools who are given the choice to change schools if finances were

not an issue would choose a private school:

> For those parents who said they would send their child to a different school, they
> were asked to indicate what kinds of different schools they would select. Of the
> nearly half of public and alternative school parents who would send their child to
> a different school, almost 60 percent said they would send their child to a private
> school. (p. 399)

The idea of small educational settings being more conducive to supporting an

enhanced learning experience in education and community building has been supported

widely in the past by authors such as Clinchy (2000), Levine (2002), and Meier (2002). A

significant number of participants in this study identified that one of the main purposes of

leaders working to establish Brockton was to create a small school community.

An enhanced learning experience may also be supported by the notion of

inclusiveness and inclusive educational communities. Much has been written in regards

to inclusive educational communities that support this finding. Authors such as Blimling

and Whitt (1999), Stainback and Stainback (1992), Walther-Thomas, Korinek,

McLaughlin, and Williams (2000), and more recently, Graham and Harwood (2011) have

offered several approximations to its fostering and growth.

Effective leadership. Half of the participants in the study identified effective

leadership as one of the five most important aspects resulting in the success of Brockton .

This finding echoed what most entrepreneurs already know about starting a new business.

Effective leadership is of paramount importance in business entrepreneurship. Given that

educational entrepreneurship in the K-12 sector rarely manifests as such, it is important to

stress that in this aspect in particular, effective leadership should be understood to be much more similar to the traditional business approach than to the traditional educational administration approach. School entrepreneurs need to have a product, they need to have a business plan, they need to market the product, they need income, they need start-up funding, and they need to pay salaries, among other things.

Leadership in private start-up educational organizations has not been studied to the same extent as educational leadership in general. Gergen and Vanourek (2008) identified a great need in this regard and made the case of establishing a leadership apprenticeship track specializing in educational entrepreneurial leadership. Candler (2008) also suggested the creation of a similar training track for charter school entrepreneurial leaders. Hassel (2008) stated,

> It is important to point out that within the broad range of programs designed to recruit and prepare people for roles in the educational system, only a handful appear designed specifically with the potential to cultivate a significant number of entrepreneurial leaders. Generally speaking, existing programs (which tend to be university-based principal and teacher preparation programs) are not set up to attract entrepreneurially minded people or equip them with entrepreneurial skill sets. (p. 57)

Good governance is of significant importance to nonprofit organizations and could be used to support the notion of effective leadership in general. Traditionally, governance approaches between for-profit and nonprofit organizations have been considered to be of a different nature. Some of the literature that has looked at nonprofit models includes authors such as Hyndman and McDonnell (2009), Spear, Cornforth, and Aiken (2009), Speckbacher (2008), and Szporluk (2009). who have attempted to blend both nonprofit and for-profit models in an effort to give nonprofits a more efficient, results-driven governance model.

Participants identified faculty leadership as an important component of educational leadership. There are traditionally several challenges to hiring teachers that are conducive to educational entrepreneurship. Hess (2008) documented some of the challenges surrounding teachers in entrepreneurial educational organizations. He wrote:

> Industrial-era compensation, benefit and retirement systems that discourage mobility and reward educators who stay in one state or district for decades are a hindrance when it comes to competing for talent in today's workforce. In addition, they make it even more difficult to entice veteran teachers of principals to take a chance on a new venture, limiting their prospects and impeding the ability of new entrants to recruit the optimal mix of talent. (p. 232)

Hess also looked at younger teachers in terms of their suitability to engage in educational entrepreneurship projects, arguing that little machinery exists today to cultivate would-be educational entrepreneurs or to allow them to grow. Hess defended that young teachers work alone in their classrooms, have little non-classroom responsibility, develop networks restricted to fellow teachers, and gain limited insight into team management and how to build a new enterprise. Hess posited that this contrasts to other entrepreneurial fields, where young adults move easily among projects, gaining experience and developing support networks.

Operational efficiency. Effective leadership and operational efficiency were the two highest-ranking themes in the study. Half of participants identified these themes as the two most important aspects that supported the success of Brockton. Operational efficiency for Brockton meant having considerable business sense when it came to spending money and using resources in the best way possible. For leaders interested in educational entrepreneurship, it was important to treat the educational operation in much the same way a business would be treated, with a constant aim to achieve the best results possible through the most efficient means available.

The concept of operational efficiency is well known in business and nonprofit literature. Authors such as Alavi, Yoo, and Vogel (1997), Frumkin and Kim (2001), and McCorkle and Archibald (1982) as well as Eller, Hartley, and Medlock (2011) have offered several approaches to the understanding, delivery, and measuring of operational efficiency within organizations that are consistently focusing on the best use of resources given the objectives of an organization. Cost reduction in entrepreneurial theory has been considered an important element in the successful establishment of an organization as presented by Baumol (1993), Lipparini and Sobrero (1994), Stevenson and Gumpert (1985), and more recently by Parker (2009). Parents followed this entrepreneurial tendency by trying to keep costs and debt on check for as long as possible at Brockton.

It is important to note that educational entrepreneurial funding is considerably different from business entrepreneurial funding. Smith and Petersen (2008) explored the possibilities of funding for educational organizations in entrepreneurial phases and noted that the options included several strategies for those based in social return on investment as compared to financial return on investment. Parent funding of a nonprofit educational organization would certainly fall under the social return on investment category, next to funding from foundations, other nonprofit organizations as well as governmental bodies. There is often a strong relationship between the funding body and the nature of the social return on investment expected. Foundations and nonprofit organizations tend to be less interested in funding primary school endeavours, which leaves parents and government as natural supporters of private school start-up funding.

Berger and Stevenson (2008) noted that start-up capital is one of the main barriers to educational entrepreneurship, given that in most sectors, professional venture

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capitalists generally provide funding for private initiatives. When it comes to education, the authors stated that "venture capital is K-12 education phobic" (p. 133).

The concept of efficiency in communication is also considered important and has been well studied in business and nonprofit organization literature (Guffey & Loewy, 2010; Huck, Al, & Rathi, 2009; Schoop, Köhne, & Ostertag, 2010; Valackiene, 2010). Generally speaking, these authors wrote about its importance within the organization, as well as the repercussions of its absence, and its impact to the overall efficiency of the organization.

Commitment. Commitment was the highest-ranked leadership trait by far in this study. Forty-two percent of participants identified this leadership trait as one of the reasons why leaders were successful in the establishment and sustainment of Brockton. Commitment certainly resonated with the ownership referred to earlier when addressing parent leadership. Educational entrepreneurs would benefit from understanding that the road ahead would probably not be easy, that consistent effort would need to be applied, and that the expectation should be to be persistent for the long run.

In educational literature, commitment on the part of the Principal or Head of School is of significant importance (Sergiovanni, 2001) as well as teacher commitment (Anderman, 1991). Student commitment was also considered important by Huber (1999). Other leadership traits could be associated as conducive or enhancing of commitment, such as care, hard work, trust, optimism, passion, presence, respect, and listening.

Noddings (1984, 1992) clearly and extensively identified the importance of care in education. In regards to business literature, Lawrence and Maitlis (2012) also

presented the importance of care in organizations. Hard-working leaders have also been studied and identified by academic literature authors such as Southworth (1993).

Trust in organizations has been consistently considered to be of paramount importance. Bruhn (2002) linked trust to the level of health of an organization. Kramer and Tyler (1996) as well as Kramer and Cook (2004) also clearly showed the importance of trust within organizations and the complications that arise with the lack of it. Elangovan and Shapiro (1998) also presented a clear example on the implications of betraying trust in organizations. Leaders who secure trust in organizations are generally able to sustain organizational commitment and direction in successful ways. In the case of entrepreneurial educational organizations, the need to secure trust may be even greater given the transformational nature of education. Some of the literature reviewed that supported this finding included the work of Dirks (2006) and Dirks and Ferrin (2002) on trust in leadership as well as the work of Madjar and Ortiz-Walters (2009).

Optimism could be understood as the ability to trust that the future will bring positive results. The ability to clearly envision a future for a starting organization requires an enormous level of creativity and assertiveness. Some of the authors who have written about optimism in leadership include Chemers, Watson, and May (1996) as well as Wunderley, Reddy, and Dember (1998). Stuart and Paquet (2007) further explored emotional intelligence leadership and optimism. Passion is a very important aspect to leadership in the eyes of many scholars who study the subject. Davies and Brighouse (2008) wrote on passionate leadership in education. Piper (2005) also investigated passion in leadership in the healthcare industry. Finally, Sugrue (2005) researched passionate school principalship in particular.

Batsis (1987) as well as Smith and Andrews (1989) clearly identified the importance of presence and visibility for school principals. Hallinger (2003) also addressed the importance of visibility in leading educational change. Starratt (1991) addressed respectful leadership in education in his explorations towards building an ethical school. Fullan (1998) also addressed the respect a leader should demonstrate towards others that resist or disagree with her or him. Literature on active listening in leadership includes authors such as Greenleaf (1991), whose servant leadership concept included active listening as one of its main characteristics. Other authors who have addressed active listening within the frame of servant leadership include Reinke (2004), Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2002), as well as Wong and Page (2003). Authors who have written on just active listening include Küpers and Weibler (2006) as well as Perra (2001).

Summary of key findings. Educational leaders in the process of planning, establishing or sustaining a private, nonprofit, K-12 organization may benefit from this study in general and from these last five findings in particular. These findings could be further simplified into three important themes: (a) ownership and commitment, (b) effectiveness and efficiency, and (c) product strategy as viewed through the lens of entrepreneurial and educational leadership. A sense of ownership and commitment is clearly evident throughout this study's narrative. Parents, school leaders, teachers, and students assumed that the school was a major part of their lives and that their individual participation is important to the overall school experience. Effectiveness and efficiency could be seen as important throughout the study, both in terms of leadership and human capital as well as in terms of financial resources. Finally, participants consistently

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presented the importance of establishing a clear approach to differentiating the school's offering as special and worth wile.

Next Steps

Ideally, this study could be replicated when looking at the entrepreneurial effort of other similar schools in the region, the province, or in Canada. In this case, this single-case study could become the first of several others with the same purpose and methodology, therefore producing a multi-case study that would provide additional validity to the findings.

Additionally, this study may support and encourage other researchers to engage in further research regarding educational entrepreneurship. Given that literature on this particular topic is considerably limited, it may be interesting to see more written about this topic. Furthermore, if literature in educational entrepreneurship appears to be difficult to find, it is considerably more difficult to find educational entrepreneurship literature specializing in the private, K-12 sector. It is my aspiration to have somewhat contributed to this highly specific aspect of educational leadership.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter an analysis of the findings divided into ten overall themes or sections was presented: (a) context of start-up, (b) action and engagement, (c) vision for a new school, (d) establishment foundations and successes; (e) sustainment mechanics and achievements; (f) leadership traits and qualities, (g) strategies for existence, (h) key findings, (i) overview of key findings, as well as (j) next steps.

Within each section, I have offered a grounded analysis utilizing this study's themes, current and relevant literature, as well as particular comments from the

participants of this study. In the final section, I presented the five most important findings in this study as well as offered suggestions for current and future educational leaders of private, nonprofit entrepreneurial educational organizations in the K-12 realm. Furthermore, I presented the three overall themes that could be further identified from these five major findings: (a) ownership and commitment, (b) effectiveness and efficiency, and (c) product strategy.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The purpose of this single case study was to examine how and why educational leaders were successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton School. The conclusions follow this study's analysis and findings and address the following areas: (a) overview of major findings, (b) context of start-up, (c) action and engagement, (d) vision for a new school, (e) establishment foundations, (f) establishment successes, (g) sustainment mechanics, (h) sustainment achievements, (i) leadership traits and qualities, and (j) strategies for existence. In addition to the presentation of conclusions derived from the findings, I will also offer (a) implications for this study, which will include recommendations as well as the presentation of a new model of parent-based educational entrepreneurship; (b) an emerging definition of parent educational entrepreneurship, and finally (c) a study reflection.

Overview of Key Findings

The key findings of this study reflect that educational leaders were successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton because of (a) the high levels of parent leadership demonstrated throughout the foundation and sustainment years; (b) the success of the school's founders in being able to offer an enhanced learning experience at Brockton; (c) the sustained and high level of overall teacher, administrative, volunteer, and parent leadership at Brockton; (d) the sustained ability on the part of the school governors and administrators to successfully maintain a high level of resource and human capital efficiency; and finally (e) a high level of commitment demonstrated towards the establishment of the endeavour.

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Context of Start-Up

The findings that illustrate the conditions in which Brockton was established are included in this section. Participants identified important contextual situations that led to Brockton's start-up, which included: (a) the attempt to transfer debt to parents at their previous school, (b) the loss of trust that resulted from the attempt to transfer debt to parents, as well as (c) the perception that there were no other viable school options in North Vancouver to which they could move their children .

The school from which Brockton originated was the only school in North Vancouver that offered the International Baccalaureate curriculum and was, therefore, the only IB option for many families in the area. The initial school came to a point where it accumulated considerable debt throughout the years and had sought parental support to address this issue. In the winter of 2004, parents were presented with the opportunity to contribute funds to support the school. The attempt to transfer debt to parents was received by parents in unexpected ways.

Some parents were initially willing to support the school in exchange for acquiring board representation and some degree of governance influence. Nevertheless, this invitation to financially support the school was difficult to manage by some parents, and the situation resulted in uncertainty as well as loss of trust within the parent groups that experienced this unexpected news. Some parents chose to leave the school immediately, while several others believed that there was no other educational institution in North Vancouver that could offer their children a similar educational experience that they were accustomed to. These parents concluded that the best possible outcome would be one in which the current school could be preserved or one in which a new school

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could be founded that would be in line with the educational tradition of the original school, but would include substantial modifications to its governance and administrative structure.

Action and Engagement

Nonprofit, private, educational organizations demand a considerable and sustained entrepreneurial effort in order to achieve sustainability. Brockton was established in a very short period of time because parents unexpectedly came into an untenable situation in regards to the education of the children. I found no evidence that any interest existed in regards to starting a school within this group of parents before the issues at their school started manifesting. Hence, it could be concluded that the establishment of Brockton emerged from dire circumstances.

Brockton school parents had a very limited amount of time to achieve what most would have considered practically impossible. The founders demonstrated strong leadership that eventually resulted in an extraordinary accomplishment in the midst of considerably difficult circumstances. Already busy individuals with jobs and other responsibilities took the time and effort to start Brockton. There were no volunteer or paid full-time leadership positions allocated, and a facility was not readily available. In my point of view, Brockton founders managed an extraordinary educational and organizational leadership feat.

The findings revealed that the parent body had the skills necessary for a school start-up. Legal and business expertise was clearly evident from the start of the process. The parents knew that the educational aspect of the future school was established, so they ventured into a purely entrepreneurial process more in line with organizational business

theory. Without this particular mix of skills and a great sense of entrepreneurial urgency, the foundation of this school could have been greatly challenged.

Vision for a New School

In the previous section, I referred to the idea that the educational dimension of Brockton was perceived not to be a major issue at the time of the initial entrepreneurial effort. Thirty-eight percent of this study's participants concurred in saying that one of the purposes of starting Brockton was to be able to continue with the positive educational experience they enjoyed at their previous school. Parents seemed to have the certainty that they knew what good education looked and felt like and that they would be able to replicate it or get enough guidance to be able to do so.

After the initial entrepreneurial process, the services of Mr. Robin Hinnell were secured as Head of School. Mr. Hinnell served as Head of School at Brockton's seed school and so was originally unable to support dissenting parents in their quest to start a new school. Nevertheless, when his contractual obligations with Brockton's seed school concluded, he was free to support the efforts of the new school. He was then able to give parents the support and continue providing the high-quality educational experience that their children were experiencing.

Participants in this study generally regarded Mr. Hinnell as the formal founding educational leader of the school and someone in whom trust could be given to deliver an enhanced educational experience for Brockton students. Almost half of participants concurred that this aspect was also one of the main purposes of establishing Brockton.

Safety and personalization of the educational experience seemed to be two words that often emerged in conversations with participants. The duty of trust and care that is

deposited by parents and guardians in schools and with teachers seemed to be a very important aspect for families who seek private education. Differentiated learning is conducive to an inclusive atmosphere where one-track academics are not the main driving factor.

Establishment Foundations

Size, funding, and facilities seem to have been important elements to consider in the establishment of Brockton (and rightly so); any entrepreneurial feat should consider these aspects very closely. A misstep in any of these may cause an undesirable outcome in the establishment of a school. Size is crucial because it is linked to funding as well as educational resources. Too few or too many students can easily jeopardize the integrity of a starting school. The initial situation may have pushed parent leaders to hope for and expect more students at the outset than the enrolment number they ended up getting. A strong sense of emancipation may have provided an initially over-optimistic expectation regarding student numbers. However, projections started to adjust very quickly, and Brockton founders were able to manage the unexpected.

It is important to note that parents were not part of the Board in the original seed school; therefore I cannot say that they were generally familiar with the details around independent school funding. It was clear that a considerable amount of research had to be undertaken to be able to figure out a strategy in a matter of only a few months. Very early in the process of separation, parents were very efficient in undertaking research responsibilities and initiated task force groups to be able to clearly identify their needs.

The school facility seemed to be an important topic in this study. The ability to situate a school with adequate space for educational and recreational purposes was seen

as quite a challenge in one of Canada's most expensive real estate markets. The issue of a facility was not going to be satisfactorily resolved by looking for a regular commercial space to establish the school. Use of land for public educational purposes is closely governed by the Ministry of Education and Educational District property, and at that time in North Vancouver, the Public School Board had not leased or in any way provided independent schools with facilities. Through the dedication and commitment of school founders as well as the clear financial need of the North Vancouver School District, facilities were provided for Brockton to lease at a cost that reflected the appropriate use of land for educational purposes.

Private education often utilizes a governance model that is established and controlled by a limited number of individuals. In relation to these individuals, who are also parents, it could be argued that the reason they established an organization like Brockton was for personal reasons (e.g., my children, my resources) rather than doing something for the common good. As stated by Powell (1990), parental influence in private preparatory schools is a clear and constant influence. In these kinds of organizations, parents tend to become clients in the traditional business sense; hence, their influence may sometimes become a hindrance to the administration and to the attainment of strategic goals of the organization.

Establishment Successes

Synergy, effective leadership, and effective teaching were clearly identified to be the main elements that contributed to the successful establishment of Brockton. When addressing synergy, there often is a mysterious quality to it that seems to defy reason. It could be luck, some form of special connection, some form of special interaction, or

some form of particular qualities or traits that come together. I identify synergy with the production of something that is bigger than the single elements in isolation. Synergy manifested in Brockton's initial establishment years in several ways. I could say that founders' skills and attitudes combined in ways to achieve the results expected, not of course without considerable effort and many challenges.

Effective leadership manifests itself in many ways; it is very difficult to predict, but very easy to see after the fact. Parents, heads of school, teachers, and staff have all played a very important role in the manifestation of leadership within Brockton. To define effective leadership by its most basic qualities, the definition would need to imply achievement and success of some sort. In Brockton's case, the fact that the school is currently alive, stable, and growing is basic evidence of success and an example of effective leadership. Effective teaching in this case may be more suggestive of the ability for a school to provide an enriching educational experience, which was also identified as one of the important aspects as to why leaders were successful in establishing the school.

Sustainment Mechanics

Increased enrolment, effective marketing, as well as operational efficiency were identified as key elements in the sustainment of Brockton. Brockton was only able to offer split classes as a cost-saving measure for a limited amount of time. Brockton had to become a healthy school and acquire a constant flow of interest from families. For Brockton, attrition levels were low and enrolment levels tended to increase gradually, but consistently, over time. The clear mark of a healthy enrolment situation would be to achieve waiting lists for admission. Interestingly enough, as of the spring of 2012, Brockton was at a point in which several classrooms are but one or two students away

from establishing waitlists. This moment might have only been a dream for many of the highly committed individuals who started the school, many of whom have since lost daily interaction with the organization mainly because their children have moved on to other schools or post-secondary education.

Effective marketing is an interesting topic in the world of educational administration. It is certainly very present in higher education and generally follows standard business-like principles. In the case of K-12 education, educational marketing is generally confined to non-denominational independent schools. Investment and development of a brand, communication materials, and communication and marketing strategies are perceived to be very important. Brockton had the opportunity to receive the pro bono services of a creative agency that developed a name, logo, and communication strategy. As stated previously in the study, the original name for the society was True North Independent School, which was never used in the market and which was rapidly changed to Brockton Preparatory School following the recommendations of this particular creative agency consultancy. The brand recognition levels to this day are regarded as solid, and the school presence is now more prominently noted within the community. Local newspaper reports highlighting the school are often seen throughout the year.

In my point of view, operational efficiency is one of the most significant findings in the study. There were high expectations to find important effective leadership examples to support the establishment and foundation of Brockton; yet, it was noted that healthy business principles coupled with the efficient use of resources were of paramount importance to the success of the school. In other words, it is now clear that having the

vision, intent, and passion to undertake such efforts would not have been enough without a sound and efficient business model and minds to support it.

Sustainment Achievements

"Establishment leadership" focuses the more immediate needs of an organization such as securing funding for the first few years, initiating the process of IB validation, and securing the best possible teachers for the initial school year. "Sustainment leadership" focuses on the long-term objectives of an organization. At Brockton, it relates to the efforts that contribute to long-term sustainability, such as securing long-term facilities, solid finances, and long-term growth and educational outcomes strategies.

Inclusion, communication, and good governance seemed to have been key elements to the sustainment of Brockton. An inclusive community is one that would generally have a holistic approach to education, reflected by the ability to welcome different styles of learning as well as student personality and educational needs. Inclusive educational communities consider the diversity that our world represents and the fact that different individuals need different things to be able to thrive and be the best they can be. Brockton seemed to have high marks in regards to inclusion and consideration of student needs. Several students who attend Brockton have been diagnosed with some level of autism, dyslexia, or ADHD. Brockton made all possible efforts to provide these students with a high-quality and enriching experience. It is important to note that Brockton is not a school that specializes in special needs and does not have specialized resources directed for these needs. In cases where the student's needs could not be met by Brockton, parents have generally been encouraged to find suitable support for their children or, in some cases, other school alternatives.

Good governance is paramount to any organization; good governance assumes the responsibility and leads the overall strategy of an organization. Responsible finances and healthy and up-to-date policies are structural backbones of educational organizations. The Board of Governors at Brockton has endured several challenges since 2004, and as of early 2012, it is immersed in the development of a 10-year strategic plan for the organization.

It is important to mention that this study was done at the seven-year mark for Brockton. The question of whether it was still too early to assess sustainability certainly needs to be addressed. Many organizations take many years, sometimes decades, to reach sustainability; nevertheless, in many of these cases, there is a need to secure continual/yearly funding from outside sources. In the case of Brockton, financial sustainability was achieved in 2011. By financial sustainability, I am making reference to the achievement of a balanced budget. It is important to note that initial financial sustainability does not necessarily prove long-term sustainability, but then again, in this world of constantly changing influences, sustainability as a solid construct may simply be a thing of the past.

Leadership Traits and Qualities

Several leadership traits and qualities were identified in this study. From more significant to less significant, these included: commitment, presence, relationship building, care, respect, charisma, active listening, hard work, passion, trust, optimism, and experience.

Currently, there is some debate in terms of whether leadership traits and qualities can manifest naturally or innately, or whether they can be developed through the

conscious effort of the individual as well as supported and promoted by the organization. Therefore, educational organizations should focus on identifying this potential and either attract innate leadership talent or identify ways in which the internal development and support of leadership traits and qualities could be supported.

Strategies for Existence

In the last few decades, the International Baccalaureate Organization has earned a reputation of supporting and guiding high-quality education in schools all around the world. Having decided to establish the IB program at Brockton was without a doubt one of the successful strategies that led to the current existence of the school. Originally, the IB only offered a program that focused on the last two years of secondary education. In 1997, the IB started the primary years program for students aged 3 to 12 years old, which allowed for starting K-12 schools concentrating in the early years to adhere themselves to the IB educational philosophy.

Brockton's original philosophy seemed to be centred on providing a high-quality educational program in a small, personalized setting that considered each child's individual needs and potential. Throughout its organizational life, this approach has been espoused and practiced by teachers throughout the school and supported by the whole community.

Volunteerism has played a key role in the development of the school. Countless hours and resources have poured into Brockton since its inception. It may be impossible to quantify this effort monetarily, but it would be difficult not to consider it as one of the most important strategies for the school's existence.

The first objective of this study was to identify individuals who had undertaken formal and informal leadership roles within Brockton over the last seven years. With the support of the Brockton Board of Governors, as well as the guidance and direction of the Head of School, I was able to identify enough individuals to be able to proceed with the study. The second objective was to be able to contact and interview these individuals, or as many as possible, in order to document their roles, purposes, strategies, perspectives, challenges, and opportunities as well as to identify the traits, qualities, and experiences that enabled them to be successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton. This objective was achieved mainly with the support of Brockton's Head of School, who issued personal invitations and general invitations in the school newsletter. The third objective was to review as much documented information as possible, starting from the period prior to the school's formal foundation in 2004 and up until the end of 2011. In this case, the documentation analysis extended until the spring of 2012. The fourth objective was to analyze, synthesize, present, and discuss the findings of this qualitative inquiry effort in order to identify the major reasons for Brockton's establishment and current sustainment as a case study that may inform individuals in the field of private school administration and leadership. This objective was successfully achieved as presented in Chapters 5 and 6 of this study.

Implications of this Study

The implications of this study are interesting. Educational entrepreneurship is an emerging field within educational leadership. Faculties of education in Harvard and the University of Calgary are beginning to publish seminal articles in the field. This study may serve to provide further support to these efforts. In terms of practice, the

implications of this study may be of considerable interest for parent leaders looking to establish or sustain a private educational organization. Formal educational leaders may also be informed about the development processes surrounding parental entrepreneurship, especially if they are serving in parent-based private educational settings. In terms of policy makers, this study may help civil servants understand the particular complexities underlying the establishment or sustainment of a parent-based private educational organization in order to further support individuals involved in efforts of this nature.

The conceptual framework contribution of this study was developed using the five themes that emerged from the data analysis: (a) parent leadership; (b) enhanced learning experience; (c) effective distributive leadership; (d) operational efficiency; and (e) commitment as conducive to the establishment and sustainment of private, nonprofit, K-12, educational organizations.

This section includes recommendations as well as a new parent-based educational entrepreneurship model, which was developed utilizing the conceptual framework that has been described. My recommendations are directed towards individuals in positions of leadership, particularly in situations of educational entrepreneurship involving the establishment and sustainment of a private, nonprofit educational organization. A final note around the possible delimitation of the study has also been included.

Recommendations. The first recommendation would be to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the levels of parental leadership capacity within the group of educational entrepreneurs interested in establishing a new private nonprofit educational organization. This evaluation may include current abilities, experience in business entrepreneurship and business in general, experience in nonprofit leadership and

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management, as well as previous examples of successful entrepreneurial endeavours. This evaluation should ideally reflect high levels of leadership capacity within the entrepreneurial team.

The second recommendation would be to make a detailed assessment of value derived from the establishment and existence of the new educational organization. It is important for a new educational organization to offer an enhanced learning experience of some sort that can be uniquely identifiable as well as clearly and efficiently communicated. Public as well as private programs in the area should be clearly assessed to identify whether the new offering is relevant to the area and the individuals it may serve.

My third recommendation would be to make sure that all involved in the establishment and sustainment of a new private, nonprofit educational organization maintain a high level of leadership performance throughout the process. Educational leaders should identify and summon highly committed individuals who are able to embody the endeavorendeavour as an important part of their lives and the lives of whom they serve or aspire to serve.

A fourth recommendation would include achieving a high level of governance efficiency as well as a high level of resource efficiency, especially considering the natural funding limitations commonly associated with these types of efforts. Governors in private, nonprofit educational boards should aspire to have a broad set of abilities and experience, including legal, business, accounting, facilities, educational, and operational.

The fifth recommendation is to promote and ensure a strong commitment to the endeavour from all involved, with the understanding that the effort, dedication, and

resources that are necessary to establish a new private, nonprofit educational organization are generally significant. Commitment should be aligned and based in a strong set of transcendental values that should be easily recognizable for the individuals involved in the entrepreneurial effort, such as educational outcomes, added value, uniqueness of the organization, effect on future generations and/or in education in general, and effects on broader educational policy or individual child benefits.

A new parent-based educational entrepreneurship model. Utilizing this study's major findings, this model was developed as a blueprint to guide future educational leaders in the establishment and sustainment of a new parent-based, private, nonprofit educational organization. Please see Figure 14.
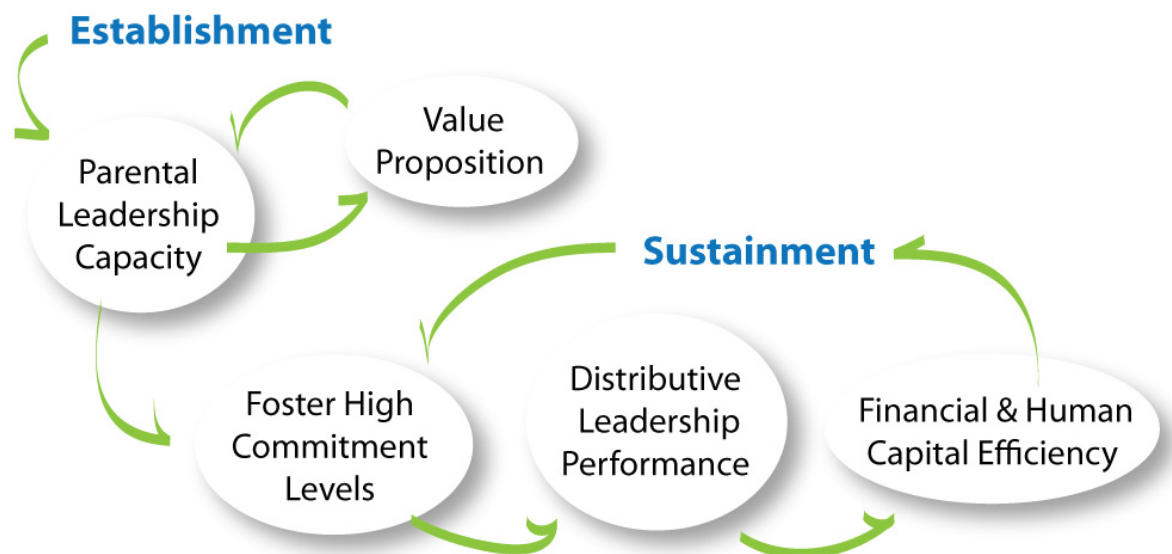

Figure 14. Parent-based educational entrepreneurship model.

Step 1. Identify parents within a particular community who would be interested in starting a new educational organization to serve their children. The link between parental commitment and their child's educational outcomes should be very strong. The reasons for wanting to start a new school could be diverse, from particular individual needs of

their child to personal or family educational philosophy as well as life outcomes and success for their children.

Step 2. Identify a strong value proposition that is clearly distinguished from other options being offered in the community. These may include elements such as university preparatory, internationalization, technology, arts, language immersion, philosophical paradigms, religious beliefs, and so forth.

The link between steps one and two is an important one, given that parental leadership capacity seems to be nurtured by the value proposition at the time; the more interesting the value proposition, the more parental leadership capacity is developed. In terms of sustainment, the three main steps that need to be continually engaged are presented in the proceeding paragraphs. Teaching and learning are an integral part of the model, given that education is at the heart of the endeavour. In this model, the educational component initially relates to the value proposition, which is promoted and nurtured by the parent community.

Step 3. Identify teachers, staff, and volunteers who have a high level of leadership capacity to support the extraordinary effort and dedication required to successfully establish and sustain a new educational organization. It is important to consider that a high level of tolerance for change and uncertainty is needed as well.

Step 4. Make a formal and strong commitment to achieve high levels of efficiency in the utilization and engagement of all human, physical, and financial resources, including decision-making and planning processes.

Step 5. Promote and support a high level of commitment from all involved by clearly identifying the transcendental and differential factors of the new endeavour. In

other words, clearly identify: Why is it a unique endeavour and Why is it important for the school to be established?

Emergent Definition of Parent Educational Entrepreneurship

I considered it appropriate to venture into offering an emergent definition of parent educational entrepreneurship based on the work of Webber and Scott (2008). Through this perspective, this concept is understood as strategically (a) focusing on creating short- and long-term opportunities for learning, opportunities that will make a significant difference for students and their families; and (b) securing financial resources to ensure quality programming. Additionally, parent educational entrepreneurship involves the development of efficient models of sustainability to ensure the viability of the organization.

Final Reflections on this Study

Literature and research pertaining to independent school education in general and international preparatory education in particular is limited in the overall field of education. The US Department of Education (2011) published independent versus public current enrolment numbers and future projections. The projected total enrolment for independent schools in the US for the year 2019 stands at approximately 1,300,000 students, while the total number for public school enrolments is estimated at 37 million; independent schools measure only 3.5% of the public school population excluding homeschooling (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012, para. 3). Additionally, the Federation of Independent School Association of BC (2012) estimated that approximately 72,000 students were enrolled in independent schools in the 2010-2011 year cycle, representing 11% of all elementary and secondary school enrolment in BC (Enrolment,

para. 5). In Alberta, the Association of Independent Schools and Colleges (2012) estimated a total enrolment in the year 2008-2009 at approximately 550,000 with total independent school enrolment numbers estimated at 14,000, measuring 2.5% of the total enrolment population (para. 4).

As reflected by enrolment numbers, independent school influence and presence in the overall educational context is not as strong as public education. Therefore, it would be understandable to see less interest in the academic community to direct institutional research into this area. Nevertheless, independent schools are at the same time a source of considerable innovation and provide possible insight into general education and public education in particular. Powell (1996) argued that independent schools can be viewed as "lab schools" that provide new insights into school organization and teaching and learning for the benefit of our public school colleagues. Research focusing on independent school systems can provide examples of innovation in education overall.

Literature on educational entrepreneurship looking at independent K-12 schools is limited. Entrepreneurship in the business sense is not well received by educational leaders, given its intensive use in venture capital activities and business-related research. I believe further research in educational entrepreneurship as a source of change and transformation may be of benefit to the general field of education.

The constant tension between educational leadership and business theory could also be addressed in an effort to identify best practices regardless of the context and sector. Generally, in education, best practices end up benefitting students, teachers, parents, and organizations. The widest sense of educational entrepreneurship invokes practices that address resistance to change, efficiency, results-driven initiatives,

evaluation, assessment, re-design, and more. These activities tend to constitute an important part of the world of business operations, but for one reason or another appear to be contrary to the ethics of education, given that they generally come attached to an expectation of private benefit or financial gain.

When establishing an independent school to be managed by a nonprofit society, the world of educational leadership, nonprofit administration, and business entrepreneurship combine in challenging as well as interesting ways. Once again, nonprofit, independent schools are not commonly or frequently established.

Chapter Summary

The conclusions included the following sections: (a) overview of major findings, (b) context of start-up, (c) action and engagement, (d) vision for a new school, (e) establishment foundations, (f) establishment successes, (g) sustainment mechanics, (h) sustainment achievements, (i) leadership traits and qualities, and (j) strategies for existence. In addition to the presentation of conclusions derived from the findings, I also offered (a) implications for this study, which included recommendations as well as the presentation of a new model of parent-based educational entrepreneurship; (b) an emerging definition of parent educational entrepreneurship; and finally, (c) a study reflection.

I drew conclusions from the findings as well as my own educational, nonprofit, entrepreneurship, and business leadership experience. As a final reflection on this study, I considered the relevance and significance of independent, non-denominational education in North America in general and in Canada in particular.

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Appendix A: Invitation Letter

January, 2011

Re: Invitation to participate in a research study.

I would like to kindly invite you to participate in a research study titled: *Brockton Preparatory School: A case study on educational leadership in the establishment and sustaining of a private, non-profit university preparatory school in North Vancouver, British Columbia.*

This study will take a qualitative look at the educational leadership experience of individuals involved in the establishing and sustaining of Brockton Preparatory School in North Vancouver, British Columbia. This single-case study will use documentation and in-depth interviews to access, understand, categorize and synthesize how and why leaders were successful in establishing and sustaining this educational organization. The main research question is: *How and why were educational leaders successful in establishing and sustaining the Brockton Preparatory School?*

For these purposes, I would like to invite you to participate in a one hour interview where you will be presented with a small number of qualitative open ended questions for your consideration. Please see consent form attached for details.

Brockton Preparatory School is a unique organization that manifested in unique circumstances. This study will document and attempt to understand the substance of this case for the benefit of university preparatory education in particular as well as educational research in general.

Sincerely,

Alexander P. Cortina, M.Ed.

Appendix B. Interview Questionnaire

Oral Interview Questionnaire

1. How did the school begin?

2. What was the purpose and perspective for starting Brockton?

3. How were Brockton founders successful in establishing the organization?

4. Why were Brockton founders successful in establishing the organization?

5. How were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization?

6. Why were Brockton founders and senior managers successful in sustaining the organization?

7. What do you identify to be the particular leadership traits, qualities or experiences that enabled educational leaders to be successful in establishing and sustaining Brockton?

8. What do you identify as the successful strategies that led to Brockton's existence?

Appendix C: Letter of Informed Consent

Research Consent Form

Name of Researcher, Faculty, Department, Telephone & Email:

Alexander P. Cortina, M.Ed.
Faculty of Education, Graduate Division of Educational Research
604 961 8619 / acortina@corfie.com

Supervisor:

Jacqueline Ottman, Ph.D.
Faculty of Education, Graduate Division of Educational Research
403 220 5697 / jottmann@ucalgary.ca

Title of Project:

Brockton Preparatory School: A case study on educational leadership in the establishment and sustaining of a private, non-profit university preparatory school in North Vancouver, British Columbia.

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask.   Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of the study is to document, from an educational leadership perspective, the establishment and sustaining of Brockton Preparatory School. You have been chosen to be invited to participate because you have been identified as one of the individuals involved in the process of establishing and/or sustaining the institute since its inception and until 2010. Please allow this document to serve as an invitation to participate in this study.

What Will I Be Asked To Do?

You would be participating in a one hour interview in which a series of open-ended questions will be presented to you in regards to how and why was Brockton successful in being established and sustained during its first years of existence. Your responses would be recorded and later transcribed for analysis. After the written analysis is finished you will be provided a copy for your comments for factual corrections. You will have two weeks to review and return the materials, a lack of response after

the mentioned time allowance will indicate approval as is. Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate in any part of the study or all together. You may also withdraw from the study at any time without the need to provide written confirmation of withdrawal from the study.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to provide your name for the purposes of the study and no other personal information will be collected in this study. You can also request to remain anonymous. Participants in the study will be quoted by using either name, a pseudonym of their choice or as an anonymous participant. Given the nature and title of the study, participant confidentiality will be limited by the fact that Brockton Preparatory School will me identified and made reference to in the final report therefore making it possible that even anonymous participants will be recognisable to those who know them.

I grant permission to be audio taped:	Yes: ___ No: ___
I wish to remain anonymous:	Yes: ___ No: ___
I wish to remain anonymous, but you may refer to me by a pseudonym:	Yes: ___ No: ___
The pseudonym I choose for myself is: _____	
You may quote me and use my name:	Yes: ___ No: ___

Are there Risks or Benefits if I Participate?

There are no indications of any particular risks in participating in this study. In terms of benefits, there may be the ones associated with having the opportunity to share and document your experience as a founder educational leader in this process so that the organization, the research community and society at large can benefit by having access to an educational leadership case study that analyzes the establishment and sustainment of a private, non-profit university preparatory educational institution in North Vancouver, BC. The collected data will also inform a doctor of education degree dissertation.

What Happens to the Information I Provide?

The information you provide will only be seen by both the researcher and his supervisor. You will be quoted in reference to either your name or the pseudonym of your choice if this were the case. If you choose to withdraw from the study the information provided will remain as part of the study unless otherwise instructed. You may request all information to be permanently erased at any time. Data will be archived indefinitely by the sole researcher. Data will be stored in the researcher's password-protected computer with a hard drive backup copy locked in a filing cabinet.

Signatures

Your signature on this form indicates that you (1) understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation in this research project, and (2) agree to participate as a research subject.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Participant's Name: (please print) _____

Participant's Signature _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Name: (please print) _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Questions/Concerns

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Alexander P. Cortina, MEd, Principal Researcher
604 961 8619 / acortina@corfie.com or

Dr. Jaqueline Ottmann, Research Supervisor
403 220 5697 / jottmann@ucalgary.ca

If you have any concerns about the way you've been treated as a participant, please contact the Senior Ethics Resource Officer, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at (403) 220-3782; email rburrows@ucalgary.ca.

A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. The investigator has kept a copy of the consent form.