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THE IMPACT OF NEW JERSEY'S HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND
BULLYING (HIB) LEGISLATION ON THE PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES
OF BUILDING LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS

BY

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

The impact of New Jersey's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Legislation on the Professional Responsibilities of Building Level Administrators

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PROBLEM: On January 5, 2011, Governor Chris Christie signed anti-bullying legislation into law meant to address harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) within our schools. This legislation, known as the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights, stated all schools must adopt comprehensive anti-bullying policies, increase staff training, and adhere to strict deadlines for reporting episodes of harassment, intimidation, and bullying (Hu, 2011). This legislation has impacted the daily professional responsibilities of building level principals throughout the state by mandating strict investigative timelines and specific paperwork requirements for each HIB incident. The purpose of this study was to gain the perspective of building level principals who implemented HIB legislation in their buildings over the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years and how HIB legislation impacted their professional responsibilities. The research questions guiding this study include: What training and resources were provided by the district when implementing this legislation? How is HIB legislation implemented across buildings within the school district? What perceived impact does New Jersey's HIB legislation have on the professional responsibilities of building level principals?

METHOD: This mixed methods study was conducted in a large suburban school district with ten building level principals. These ten principals were selected using their school

building characteristics including size, academic level (high school, middle school, or elementary), and the number of confirmed HIB cases reported during the 2011-2012 school year. The research questions were assessed through semi-structured interviews with the ten participants and analyzing weekly surveys submitted by the participating principals over a four month period. The semi-structured interviews and weekly surveys were then compared to determine the impact HIB legislation had on principals' responsibilities within their buildings.

FINDINGS: HIB legislation has had a direct impact on the professional responsibilities of building level principals. It is apparent that this legislation has syphoned the building principal's time away from other necessary activities such as improving instruction, building management, district initiatives, and community relations. More specifically, HIB legislation has saddled building principals with excessive paperwork and forced them to reallocate time away from other necessary tasks including teacher observations, informal building walk-throughs, student supervision, and completing other district paperwork. This study also shows that implementing New Jersey's HIB legislation has evolved from year 1 (2011-12) to year 2 (2012-13); however, the professional impact on the building level principals implementing this legislation has had a significant impact on their other professional responsibilities.

SIGNIFICANCE: The professional impact of HIB legislation on building level principals mirrors other state and federal legislative mandates that have been imposed by our governing bodies, such as the Guns Free School Act (GSFA). More specifically, this study provides New Jersey school districts with a model to examine the impact of HIB legislation on the professional responsibilities of their building level administrators.

I dedicate this to Jen and Ava who continue to make me want to be a better person.

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The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand.

-Vince Lombardi

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The Impact of HIB Legislation on the Professional Responsibilities of Building Level Administrators

CHAPTER I

Introduction

The position of a building level principal is constantly evolving. In the 1960s, Harry Wolcott (1973) followed elementary principal “Ed Bell” for two years, 1966 to 1968, to chronicle the professional activities of a building level principal and their daily responsibilities. During that two year span, Wolcott examined the daily routine undertaken by Ed Bell, the relationships he maintained with the staff and community, and distribution of time and resources allocated by an elementary principal in the 1960s (Wolcott, 1973). While much has changed in the educational world since Wolcott’s observations, building level principals are still impacted by the core elements defined by Wolcott within his book: receiving student, teacher, and parent requests and handling school-based problems, addressing the needs of stakeholders and community members, and taking care of the building (Wolcott, 1973). These core elements continue to impact building level principals to this day.

As highlighted in Wolcott (1973), building level principals impact their school community and culture through their decisions and managerial expertise. Their positive impact on their school environment affects school operations through motivating teachers and students, identifying and articulating vision and goals, developing high expectations for students and staff, promoting communication, distributing resources, and developing a support structure for teaching and learning (Hornig, Klasik & Loeb, 2010; Spillane & Hunt, 2010; Supovitz, Sirinides & May, 2009). Effective school administration can be defined when successful and appropriate teaching and learning are occurring for all

stakeholders, including students and staff, as well as, when the principal acts as the leader and manager for administrative and curriculum based decisions (Greenfield, 1995; Spillane, Camburn, & Pareja, 2007). Also, when the morale of students, teachers, and other school members is positive, and parents, other community members, and the school district's administration judge the school to be fulfilling both the letter and the spirit of local, state, and federal laws and policies, the principal usually gains credit for their positive influence (Greenfield, 1995). While the above characteristics define some of the responsibilities of a building level administrator, the principal's role continues to evolve. The rise of state and federal mandates, including No Child Left Behind Legislation, continue to impact the building principals' responsibilities and adjust expectations of district administration, parents, students, and staff.

Evolution of New Jersey's Anti-bullying Legislation

In 2001, the United States Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, otherwise known as No Child Left Behind. One element of this act, Title IV, was specifically directed at addressing violence within our schools. In Title IV, Part A, Section 4001, the components of the Safe and Drug Free School and Community Act stated, "The purpose of this part is to support programs that prevent violence in and around schools and to provide Federal assistance to states from grants to local educational agencies and consortia of such agencies to establish, operate, and improve local programs of school drug and violence prevention and early intervention" (United States Department of Education, 2002). Title IV tied school funding to creating a safe environment for students, and went so far as to include the Unsafe School Choice Option which allowed students to transfer schools if the institution they attended was labeled as

“persistently dangerous” (Edmondson & Dreuth-Zeman, 2011, p. 34). One example of Title IV’s impact on school governance is the adoption of harassment, intimidation, and bullying legislation within each state. To date, all 50 states have developed and/or mandated some form of harassment, intimidation, and bullying legislation, each with the purpose of making schools safe for our students (United States Department of Health and Human Resources, 2012).

In January 2002, New Jersey passed N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 et seq., which required districts to establish policies and procedures to prevent harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) of students on and off school grounds, at school-sponsored functions and on school buses. This legislation defined acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying, required every district adopt a policy aimed at prohibiting HIB acts, mandated districts to have policies on school websites, and "encouraged" districts to establish bullying prevention training programs for school employees (Schwartz, 2010). On January 5, 2011, Governor Chris Christie signed P.L.2010, Chapter 122, an act concerning harassment, intimidation, and bullying which amended various parts of 18A:37-13 et seq., and was propelled by the public outcry surrounding the 2010 suicide of Rutgers University freshman, Tyler Clementi. The new legislation, known as the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights, states all schools must adopt comprehensive anti-bullying policies, increase staff training, and adhere to strict deadlines for reporting episodes of harassment, intimidation, and bullying (Hu, 2011). Under the amended law, districts continue to maintain local control of their bullying policies, but at a minimum, must have the components of the amended statute within their district policy (New Jersey Department of Education, 2011).

The New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights also included a more detailed definition of HIB which highlighted a student's right to safely attend school. The reforms increased the responsibility of school officials to deal with HIB incidents that occur off school grounds and/or interfere with the school day, and required annual training for school staff. The new law outlined specific language necessary in all districts' HIB policies, a hierarchy of staff trained in HIB investigation tactics, specific reporting requirements, and consequences for non-action on the part of school personnel (Schwartz, 2010). This statute has been championed as one of the strongest anti-bullying laws across the United States and went into effect on September 1, 2011 throughout New Jersey (Hu, 2011).

As previously mentioned, in accordance with the regulations, each school district must create tiered levels of administrative oversight when implementing the HIB legislation. A district anti-bullying coordinator examines and strengthens the district's policies on HIB requirements and implementation. A school anti-bullying specialist (ABS) must lead HIB investigations at the building level and act as the primary contact for HIB related incidents. School safety teams, consisting of school personnel, a school anti-bullying specialist, a parent, and any other stakeholder as selected by the building level principal must be formed within each school to enact professional development, receive HIB complaints that have been referred to the principal, and identify patterns of HIB within the school (New Jersey Department of Education, 2011). However, the assignment of the above roles is determined by district and school administrators, which has left numerous questions concerning the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Bill of

Rights, its realistic impact on New Jersey's school districts, and its effect on the roles and responsibilities of building level principals.

In Wolcott's examination of Ed Bell, he stated, "The time that Ed Bell spent in formal, prearranged meetings restricted the time in his total day at school for handling other routines. The net effect was that the busier a day with scheduled meetings and appointments, the busier were the unscheduled moments available for handling daily routines" (Wolcott, 1973, p. 123). This statement on the time constraints placed on building principals rings true today as well, as seen through the example of implementing HIB legislation. HIB legislation is governed by very strict timelines and procedures, and its implementation would be considered an unscheduled moment, since an incident of harassment, intimidation, and bullying can occur at any time or place throughout the day. Similar to the 1960s, unscheduled moments dictate many principals' daily plans, decisions, and actions. It is the ability of the principal to schedule for and manage these unscheduled moments, such as HIB legislation implementation, which will help guide this study.

Statement of Problem

Many countries, states, and academic institutions have attempted to address bullying throughout their schools. Many have been met with limited success, in part because of the scale and scope of the bullying problem. One example of failed HIB legislation implementation was seen in 2006 when South Carolina legislators adopted the Safe School Climate Act, a law designed to curb harassment, intimidation, and bullying within the state's public schools (Terry, 2010). Over the next four years, school districts

implemented anti-bullying programs and promoted professional development to comply with the state law and stop harassment, intimidation, and bullying throughout their schools (Terry, 2010). However, lack of communication among stakeholders, inconsistencies within district implementation, and insufficient school official involvement limited the success of the program throughout the state. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying continue to plague South Carolina schools, with only serious cases of bullying being consistently reported (Terry, 2010). This case in South Carolina can be repeated many times over when describing the shortfalls of anti-bullying legislation throughout the country. The correct implementation of anti-bullying legislation needs a universal message, consistent program development, and sufficient school official involvement (Terry, 2010). Without these three characteristics, no legislation can be wholly successful as seen within the implementation of bullying legislation over the past decade. It is the last of these three characteristics, sufficient school official involvement, which will be examined thoroughly throughout this study.

Students have limited choice or control over where they go to school and with whom they have to spend their time in a class (Hall & Hayden, 2007). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the school and staff to provide a safe and secure environment in which the students can learn. This environment can only be created if staff and school employees report and act on instances of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. One goal of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights was to make reporting instances of HIB easier for students and staff. This has led to the development of standardized reporting forms and stringent timelines which staff and administration must follow when initially informed of a possible bullying incident. For example, once a staff member reports a potential HIB

incident to the building administrator, an administrative investigation must be done and general report must be submitted to the superintendent within ten (10) days of the initial report (Nash, 2011). This additional responsibility of HIB legislation implementation on school personnel has increased the liability of building level principals and anti-bullying specialists (ABS) who oversee these investigations. This added liability is just one way the HIB law impacts building level principals.

While teacher disciplinary action in the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights is vague, disciplinary action of school administrators is not. The law states, “A school administrator who receives a report of HIB from a school district employee and fails to initiate or have an investigation conducted, or who should have known of an HIB incident and fails to take sufficient action to minimize or eliminate the HIB may be subjected to disciplinary action” (Cerf, Hespe, Gantwerk, Martz, & Vermeire, 2011). The disciplinary action can include a memo, increment holding, or tenure charges, similar to the teachers (Cerf et al., 2011). However, while classroom teachers might deal with one or two HIB incidents within their classrooms a month, building principals may deal with multiple HIB incidents a week, increasing the opportunity for disciplinary action if the HIB cases are not handled properly.

The Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights has increased the responsibilities of building level principals throughout the state. Principals must plan professional development and train staff members in best practices for positive behavioral interventions. Principals must ensure that the HIB law is in the code of conduct and work in conjunction with parents and staff to annually re-evaluate the district policy pursuant to the state law (New Jersey Department of Education, 2011). These administrative responsibilities imposed by the

New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights were added to the numerous other responsibilities already handled by our building level principals who work to improve classroom instruction, develop curriculum, maintain student decorum, and communicate with parents, staff, and stakeholders (Horng et al., 2010; Spillane & Hunt, 2010; Portin, 2004). Besides the additional responsibilities, if building level principals do not properly implement HIB legislation within the buildings, there can be severe professional consequences.

To date, no one has examined the impact of New Jersey's HIB legislation on the professional responsibilities of building level principals. This mixed methods study will look specifically at the perceptions of building level principals on the impact of HIB legislation on their professional responsibilities. This study will be conducted in a large, K-12, suburban school district in central New Jersey.

Purpose of the study

Bullying legislation is one way to address harassment, intimidation, and bullying within our schools. However, the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights has the potential to impact districts legally, financially, and professionally. In one recent New Jersey court case, Toms River School District was ordered to pay \$ 68,000 for a bullying case that dated back to 1999, as well as, a \$10,000 fine and the state's legal fees (Asbury Park Press Staff Writer, 2013). In another case, the Emerson Board of Education settled with a student who was subject to bullying for his perceived sexual orientation for \$ 130,000 (Calefati, 2011). Building level administrators are the defensive front line for districts implementing this new legislation, as well as, the first targets when HIB cases go awry.

Some responsibilities that the building level administrators have within the implementation of the HIB law include receiving and reviewing all HIB complaints, disseminating the reports to the Anti-Bullying Specialists for their investigation purposes, contacting the parents when an incident is reported, administering discipline when necessary, and testifying before the Board of Education when HIB appeals are submitted (New Jersey Department of Education, 2011). School administrators must also oversee school safety teams within their respective buildings (New Jersey Department of Education, 2011).

The purpose of this study is to examine the professional impact of the HIB law on building level administrators. This is an important area of study because it can determine the long-term impact of anti-bullying legislation on the academic environment of our schools, as well as, continue to define the distribution of professional resources within our academic institutions. This study will add to the growing body of research surrounding the impact of bullying legislation on our academic institutions. It may identify additional effects of New Jersey's Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights on the school community, its staff, and the students that would facilitate additional research on this topic.

Research Questions

To glean an understanding of the impact of HIB legislation on school administration, the research questions examined will include: What training and resources were provided by the district when implementing this legislation? How is HIB legislation implemented across buildings within the school district? Finally, what

perceived impact does New Jersey's HIB legislation have on the professional responsibilities of building level administrators? The goal of these questions is to analyze the effects of the HIB law on building level administrators who implement and interpret the legislation on a day-to-day basis.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

Greenfield (1995) provides one of the best descriptions of a building level principal's daily routine as described below:

The work of the school administrator involves extensive face-to-face communication, is action oriented, is reactive, the presented problems are unpredictable, decisions frequently are made without accurate or complete information, the work occurs in a setting of immediacy, the pace is rapid, there are frequent interruptions, resolution of problems often involves multiple actors, and the work is characterized by a pervasive pressure to maintain a peaceful and smoothly running school (p. 63).

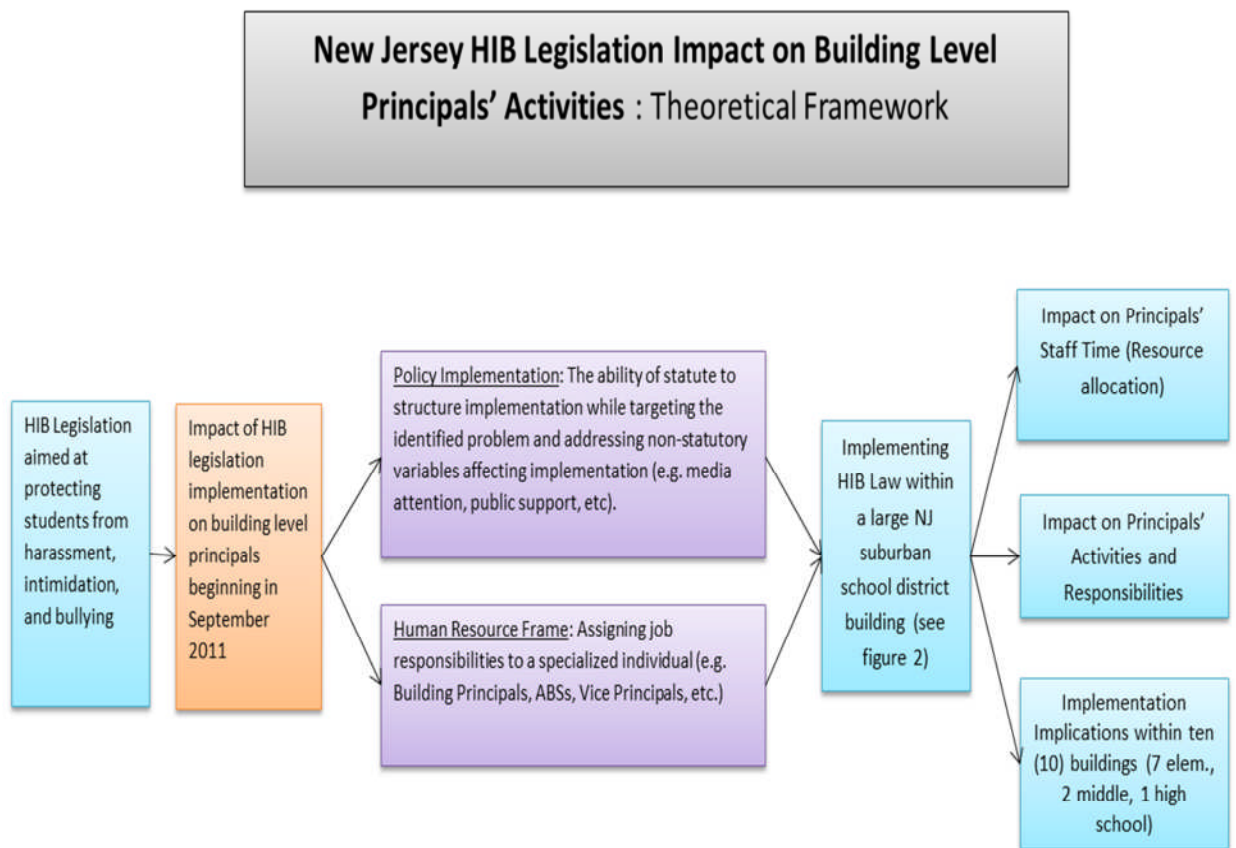
HIB legislation implementation has contributed to this frenetic pace while placing very strict timelines and procedures on the principal. However, to fully examine the impact of HIB legislation on building level principals, it is important to analyze how the legislation was organized by the school district and how it was implemented by the stakeholders.

In their work, *Reframing Organizations*, Bolman and Deal (2008) highlight important characteristics of management and leadership within their four frames: structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. In particular, they highlight how to develop better systems to collect and process information, assign job responsibilities to specialized individuals, and allocate resources with the possibility of continuous conflict emerging through implementation of legislation among various schools and school personnel (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Building principals must address each of these three responsibilities when implementing HIB legislation effectively within their building.

Also, principals must consistently implement the law from building to building throughout school districts. To analyze how the implementation of this legislation has impacted principal responsibilities, Sabatier & Mazmanian (1980) examines legislation

implementation of public policy within organizations. Their theory will be transferred into an examination of HIB implementation in schools and the impact this legislation has on our school resources, particularly the building level principal. The impact of HIB legislation will be examined through both the lens of Sabatier and Mazmanian's (1980) policy implementation and Bolman and Deal's (2008) human resource frame as seen in Figure 1:

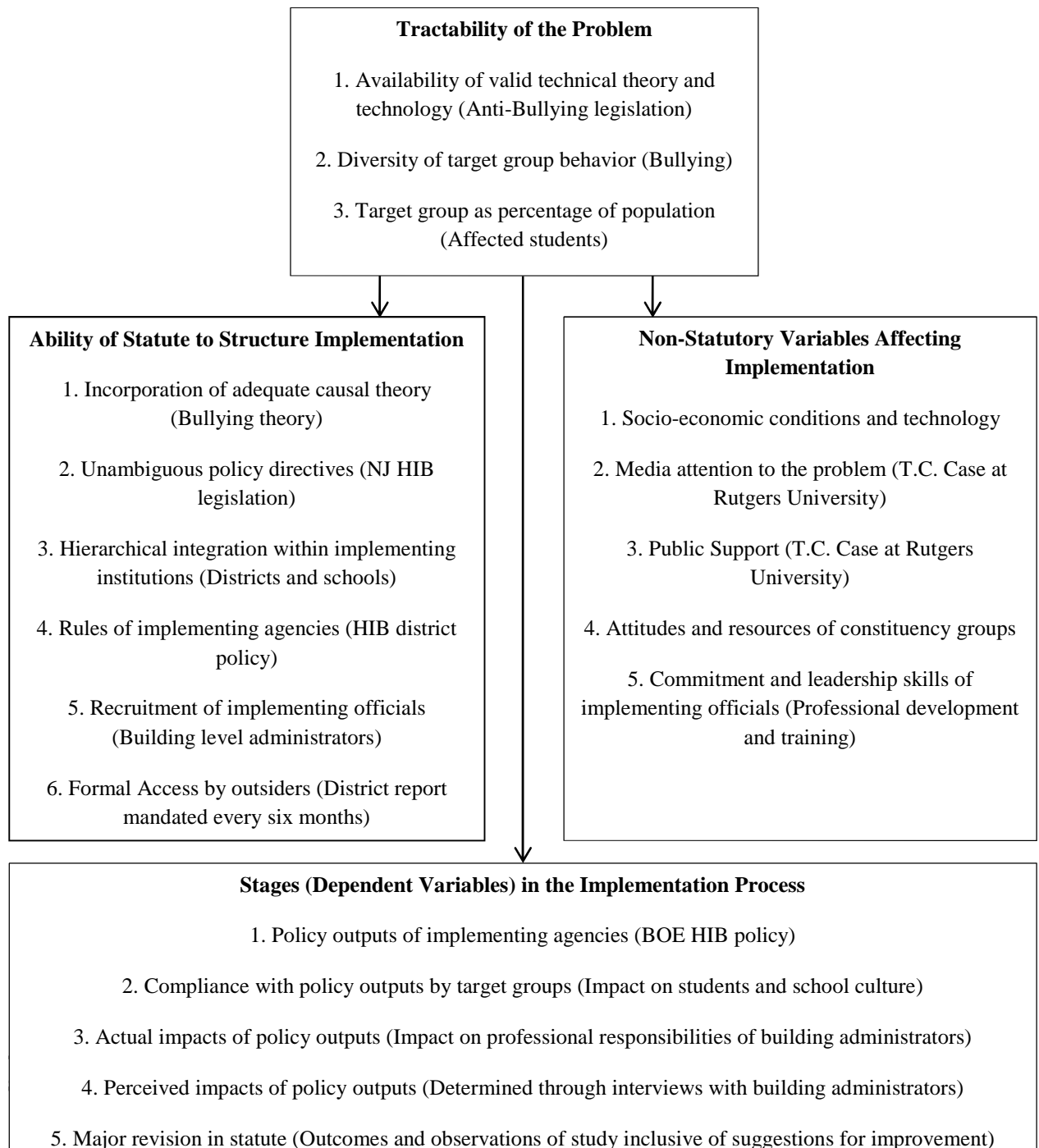
Figure 1: New Jersey HIB Legislation- Theoretical Framework



As Bolman and Deal (2008) examine the assignment of job responsibilities and the impact of HIB legislation on resource allocation, Sabatier and Mazmanian's (1980) model includes themes of understanding implementation such as the tractability of the problem, as well as the ability of the legislation to structure proper application (p. 541).

Also impacting implementation will be a number of independent and dependent variables, including such examples as media attention and policy output (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980). A detailed description of the four themes is seen below:

Figure 2: HIB Implementation Analysis



Taken from: Sabatier, P. & Mazmanian, D. (1980). The implementation of public policy: A framework of analysis. *Policy Studies Journal*, 8(4), p. 542.

The above four major themes will be addressed through examining an overview of literature in the following areas: a bullying overview, an examination of the bullying problem, principals' professional responsibilities, and current legislation implementation issues that are affecting the professional responsibilities of building level administrators.

Bullying: An Introduction

Dan Olweus (1993) defines bullying as, "A person is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students" (p. 9). Additionally, bullying is broadly defined as a class of intentional and repeated acts that occur through physical, verbal, and relational forms in situations where a power difference is present (Olweus, 1993). This behavior can occur at home with siblings, in school with classmates, at work with coworkers, or online with strangers. One of the most important characteristics of bullying is repeated behavior that occurs over time in a relationship characterized by an imbalance of power (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). Numerous studies report the most bullying taking place among middle school students between the ages of 10 to 12, including cyberbullying (Frisen, Jonsson, & Persson, 2007; Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007; Beale & Hall, 2007; Limber 2003). In a predominant amount of bullying cases, the two most identified reasons students are bullied is appearance and behavior (Frisen et al., 2007).

Bullying occurs regularly in schools across all countries. When European children were asked if bullying was a problem in their schools, affirmative responses were provided for the following countries: Italy (33%), Portugal (35%), Netherlands, (16%), UK (48%), Belgium (21%), Scotland (43%), Wales (32%), Germany (29%),

Spain (22%). In the United States, 28 percent of children in both public and private school reported to have been bullied at school (Harlin, 2008). Another study stated 76.8 percent of students in the United States enrolled in middle or high school reported having been bullied while in school, with 11 percent of students in grades six through ten stating they were frequently bullied (Higdon, 2011). More recently in 2009, a New Jersey Department of Education survey indicated 17 percent of high school students had been cyberbullied over the past year through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites, or text messaging (Schwartz, 2010).

Bullying can lead to fear of school, absenteeism, and stunted academic progress, which in turn are precursors to dropping out of school. Bullying can lead to psychosomatic complaints, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, loneliness, social incompetence, stress, illness, and school avoidance, as well as, possible suicidal ideations (Townsend, Flisher, Chikobvu, Lombard, & King, 2008; Pontzer, 2010). Weinhold and Weinhold (1998) found that 10 percent of high school dropouts left school prematurely because of bullying (as cited in Townsend et al., 2008). The long lasting effects of bullying on our students can continue through their adult years as they attempt to address these feelings of inadequacy that were thrown upon them at an early age. With the consistency of bullying in our academic institutions and the documented effects of bullying on our students, leaders throughout the United States have taken to legislation to curb these acts of bullying within our schools.

Bullying Legislation: Implementation Issues

Bullying legislation began gaining national attention after several incidents of lethal school violence, highlighted by Columbine High School in April of 1999. Students who commit acts of lethal school violence were usually targets of bullying by their classmates during school (Hall & Hayden, 2007; Pontzer, 2010). In a study conducted by the Secret Service of 41 school shooters between 1974 and 2000, 71 percent of were bullied in school (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). Since 1999, bullying legislation steadily grew throughout the United States. In 2003, 14 states had adopted some form of bullying legislation to oversee issues in schools (Limber, 2003). However, as the topic of bullying grew with sensationalized cases in the media, more states implemented legislation to address the concerns of the public. To date, all 50 states in America have bullying legislation, with South Dakota being the last state to pass legislation in March 2012. 35 states have implemented legislation banning hazing, and 25 states have legislation in place to address cyberbullying (United States Department of Health and Human Resources, 2012). These various forms of legislation have begun to address accountability within the school districts and among staff whose responsibility it is to oversee our students.

States have been the primary legislative vehicles for creating initiatives to fight bullying, in part because NCLB provides funding for research and demonstration programs that address school violence (Limber & Small, 2003). However, the merit of any law passed to address bullying depends upon the care with which the law is written and how the law affects school programs. In the past, issues plaguing state bullying legislation included little documentation evaluating school programs, little staff initiative

in implementing programs, and school personnel believing the current system is working so they do not need additional measures (Limber, 2003). Also most programs target elementary and middle schools because that is where most of the bullying takes place, while leaving high schools to fend for themselves (Limber, 2003). State mandated legislation, such as the HIB law, impacts both our school staff and students. Concrete examples of mandated legislation implementation raise more specific issues surrounding the development of such programs, including the role and responsibility of the building level principal.

Principal Responsibilities

Strong administrative leadership is a recurring variable in every list of attributes of successful schools and directly impacts student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Provost, Boscardin, & Wells, 2010). Numerous characteristics impact how principals approach their jobs, including personal characteristics, school size, student socioeconomic status, school level, and community type (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Principals serve these school communities in various ways, in particular through five core functions: school management, instructional leadership, planning and setting goals, boundary spanning, and personal development (Camburn, Spillane, & Sebastian, 2010; Portin, 2004). These five core functions rise out of seven overarching themes of principal responsibility including building operation, finances, community and parent relations, school district functions, student affairs, personnel issues, professional growth, school culture, and resource allocation (Camburn et al., 2010; Potin, 2004). While specific responsibilities vary from school to school and district to district, the expectations within each community remain similar: the principal guides school instruction by setting clear

goals and providing vision, while addressing the needs of the staff, students, and community (Portin, 2004; Hallinger & Heck, 1998).

Numerous studies have examined the role of building principals and the array of activities they undertake on a daily basis. Horng, Klasik, and Loeb (2010) used an observational time study to examine the activities of high school principals. They found that on average, principals spent most of their day working on administrative activities including managing student discipline and ensuring compliance regulations (Horng et al., 2010). Next, they spent approximately 20 percent of their time on managerial tasks, including budgets, staff, and personnel, while another 15 percent was dedicated to internal relations tasks (i.e. developing relationships with students, communicating with parents, etc) and five percent on external relations (i.e. fundraising, communicating with central office, working with community members, etc.) (Horng et al., 2010, p. 502). The least amount of time was dedicated to instruction-related activities, including day-to-day instruction and general program responsibilities (Horng et al., 2010).

Spillane and Hunt (2010) also examined the daily routine and activities of building level principals in relation to distributed leadership. Utilizing a mixed methods research design including experience sampling method (ESM) logs, an end-of-day principal log (EOD), a principal questionnaire, a school staff questionnaire, observations of school principals, and in-depth interviews with school principals, Spillane and Hunt (2010), concluded that 22 percent of principal's time was spent on curriculum and instruction matters, 16 percent of their time was spent reviewing student classwork, school data, and standardized tests, and only three percent was dedicated to teaching related activities such as observing classroom instruction or reviewing lesson plans (p.

303). This differed from the self-reported results of the administrators who reported spending at least 1/3 of their time on administrative tasks while spending at least 1/5 of their time on instruction and curriculum-related activities (Spillane & Hunt, 2010). No one reported spending more than 10 percent of their time on professional growth or relationship-fostering activities (Spillane & Hunt, 2010).

In these studies, the amount of time dedicated by principals to addressing administrative tasks was substantial. Principals must dedicate a significant amount of their day on the purely administrative tasks necessary to run a successful school building. However, as expectations of principal behavior are developed and disseminated from national and state levels, they may be at odds with the expectations that central office, parents, and teachers have of their school principals (Provost et al., 2010). These expectations continue to evolve as new legislative policies, such as HIB legislation, are implemented by our building level principals in conjunction with changing federal and state laws. An example of how legislation implementation affects principal responsibilities can be seen with the passing of the Guns Free School Act of 1994 and its impact on our schools.

Case Study: Zero Tolerance Legislation and Administrative Implementation

To compare the impact of HIB legislation on administrators, this researcher examined previous legislative mandates that have affected our schools. One such government policy was the zero tolerance laws established after the Gun Free School Act of 1994. The Gun-Free School Act (GSAF), otherwise known as PL 103-382, required schools to institute a zero-tolerance policy for students who brought a firearm on school

grounds with a minimum punishment of a one year expulsion (Martinez, 2009). School administrators were given limited discretion under GSAF to apply the statute, and under the law, schools needed to report discipline statistics to the United States Department of Education (MacGillivray, Medal, & Drake, 2008). If districts did not establish this policy, then they would forfeit federal funds from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Eventually, this policy evolved to include other weapons, alcohol, fights, drugs, swearing, truancy, insubordination, and dress-code violations (Martinez, 2009). With this expansion of the code, pressure was placed on administrators to apply the code universally throughout their schools with the idea that if all students were treated equally under the law, issues such as academic standing and race would be mitigated (MacGillivray et al., 2008). However, as research has shown, this law has led to issues within the schools, especially within the implementation of the law amongst administrators.

One example of this issue was seen in a study conducted by Christopher Dunbar and Francisco Villarruel (2002) in which 36 principals in an urban, mid-western school district were interviewed about their perceptions on Michigan's zero tolerance law. During this study, many inconsistencies were found among the respondents about their comprehension, initiation, interpretation, and implementation of the law (Dunbar & Villarruel, 2002). Administrators were generally unclear about the definition of "zero-tolerance" as definitions of the law varied from administrator to administrator. Also, the legislation's implementation in schools was inconsistent. While district handbooks were commonly referred to for justification of zero-tolerance policy and subsequent discipline, the policy was implemented differently across various schools, especially on the

elementary level when dealing with toy guns (Dunbar & Villarruel, 2002, p. 94). Finally, while the researchers received a wide range of responses when discussing how much the zero tolerance policy affected the duties of building level principals, many principals did not see it as an encroachment on their culture or school community (Dunbar & Villarruel, 2002). Using a similar lens, this study will examine New Jersey's HIB Legislation, its implementation within a large suburban school district, and its impact on the professional responsibilities of school administrators.

Impact of Bullying Legislation on Educational Leadership

With the implementation of New Jersey's Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights in January 2011, district administrators have been given numerous new responsibilities. Central level administrators need to write comprehensive reports on bullying and ensure all elements of the law are being followed (New Jersey Department of Education, 2011). Building level principals have additional responsibilities including HIB investigations, parental phone calls, attendance of Board of Education meetings, and creating professional development programs for the staff, all the while maintaining their current responsibilities and leading educational instruction (New Jersey Department of Education, 2011). The same conditions that make it difficult for teachers to develop and implement new instructional practices, including time, lack of resources, and turbulent work environment, make it difficult for administrators in schools and districts to develop and exercise new responsibilities demanded by school improvement programs and new legislative measures (Hatch, 2001). The realignment of professional responsibilities caused by this legislation, as well as, the additional responsibilities heaped onto building level administrators has had a massive impact on the daily routine and life of

administrators without re-evaluation of regular day-to-day activities (Bolman & Deal, 2008). This study will address how school administrators perceive the impact of HIB legislation on their professional responsibilities and how it has affected their daily routine within their buildings.

CHAPTER III

Research Design

This study focuses on the perceived professional impact that HIB legislation has on building level administrators. This group has clearly defined roles within HIB legislation and can be found in all school buildings throughout the state. These individuals implement HIB legislation, investigate reported cases, and monitor the outcomes. In many cases, their HIB responsibilities have altered their professional role within their buildings, and it is this perceived shift in the professional responsibilities of building level administrators that was examined within this mixed methods study. This study mirrors the purpose of Dunbar and Villarruel's (2002) study on the impact of the Gun Free School Act on schools in Michigan while drawing from the methods section of an article by Gardiner, Canfield-Davis, and Anderson (2009) entitled, *Urban School Principals and the "No Child Left Behind Act."* This article examined how six practicing principals responded to the requirements of NCLB using qualitative case study methodology.

This mixed methods study examined the perceived impact of HIB legislation on building level administrators through the use of semi-structured interviews and weekly on-line surveys administered over a four month period, 16 times in total. The semi-structured interview guide was developed through the framework of Sabatier and Mazmanian's (1980) implementation analysis and Bolman and Deal's (2008) human resource frame for reframing organizations. The weekly on-line surveys were crafted from the principal's responses to the semi-structured interviews and highlighted the amount of time dedicated weekly to HIB implementation. The remainder of this chapter

highlights other important characteristics of this project, including the research site, the selection process for research participants, data collection procedures, the data analysis plan, and limitations of this study.

Research Site

Happy Valley Township is a forty-two square mile suburban school district located in central New Jersey. The district had a total student enrollment in 2012-2013 of 9,103 pupils (New Jersey Department of Education, 2013). Ethnicity varied throughout Happy Valley's total student body with 62% of the student body reported as White, 17% reported as Asian, 12% reported as Hispanic, 8% reported as Black, and 0.5% reported as other. Approximately 24% of the students within the district are on Free or Reduced lunch during the 2012-13 school year (New Jersey Department of Education, 2013). Students are housed in twelve elementary schools grades Pre-K-5, two middle schools grades 6-8, and one high school grades 9-12 (Brennan, 2012). These schools are staffed with 801 teachers and support staff, 16 elementary and secondary principals, and seven secondary vice principals (Happy Valley School District, 2013). Each of the seven elementary schools within this study have one building principal, one guidance counselor, and varied amount of teaching staff based on student population and special education needs. The two middle schools each have one building principal, two vice principals, three guidance counselors, and a varied amount of teaching staff based on student need. The high school has one building principal, three vice principals, 12 guidance counselors, and approximately 181 teachers (Realtime Information System, 2013).

This district was selected for its size and is currently the employer of the chief investigator. To adequately examine the implementation of HIB legislation and determine the impact on the professional responsibilities of school principals within the district, seven elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school were chosen for this study. For the purpose of this study, the elementary schools will be listed as elementary school(s) one through seven, the middle schools will be referenced as middle school one and middle school two, and the high school will be referred to as the high school.

Research Participants

Schools were selected purposefully with the understanding that they would be information-rich cases (Patton, 2008). Utilization-focused evaluation can be useful to understand a problem, situation, or program in great depth and identifying case rich schools can provide the most insight for this project (Patton, 2008). The high school and both middle schools were selected because of the size of their student population and the need to diversify the participants among various age groups district wide. The selection of these three secondary schools fulfills the goal of the study to ensure district-wide participation.

The elementary schools were selected by their student body characteristics, one of which was the size of their student body. Elementary School One and Elementary School Two are two of the largest elementary schools in the district with 519 and 358 students respectively. These two schools draw students from various sections of Happy Valley Township (Realtime Information System, 2012). Elementary Schools Three through Seven are considered neighborhood schools and are populated with students from one

particular section of town. As of August 2012, these five schools educated between 262 and 302 students grades Pre-K to 5 (Realtime Information System, 2012). Four of the chosen elementary schools are also designated Title I schools through the district's formula. These sample schools represent the cultural and socio-economic diversity of the Happy Valley Public Schools, which maintains a district factor grouping of FG (New Jersey Department of Education, 2012b).

The confirmed amount of HIB incidents was another factor considered when selecting these schools. Nine of the ten schools selected had at least one confirmed case of HIB within their building over the course of the 2011-2012 school year. In total, the 10 schools examined during this study had 54 confirmed HIB incidents during the 2011-2012 school year (New Jersey Department of Education, 2012). During the 2012-2013 school year, the principals in the same 10 buildings reported 91 total HIB claims, but only 16 confirmed HIB incidents (Happy Valley Public Schools, 2013b). These 16 incidents were reported to the state as part of the Happy Valley School district's violence and vandalism report for the 2012-13 school year.

Data Collection Procedures

This study utilized mixed methods to gauge the perception of building level administrators on how implementing New Jersey's HIB legislation in their buildings has impacted their professional responsibilities. The semi-structured interview questions addressed the allocation of human resources for implementation of this legislation, as well as, the ability of school administrators to resolve conflict among their stakeholders during the first two years of HIB enactment (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Also, these

questions examined the tractability of the problem, the ability of the statute to address the issues at hand, and the impact the legislation had on building level administrators and their professional responsibilities (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980).

A weekly survey was generated from the results of the semi-structured interviews and pre-interview survey. The weekly survey questions specifically examined how principal participation in HIB investigations, HIB related parent contact, HIB related paperwork, and meetings necessitated by a HIB claim impacted the daily activities of building level principals. These questions provided data including the number of times over a sixteen week period HIB legislation impacted the building level principals, what responsibilities HIB implementation affected, and how elementary, middle, and high school principals were differently impacted by this legislation. Also gleaned from this survey were the amount of HIB reports and HIB conversations the building level principals had over the course of the 16 weeks.

To begin this study, a timeline for participant notification and schedule of interview dates was created (See Appendix A). Next, participants were contacted and a request for their participation was completed. If the candidate was willing to participate, a consent form was distributed via e-mailed to the participant for their review prior to the interview process (See Appendix B). This consent form was again e-mailed to the participant prior to the date of their interview for a second review, as well as, a copy of the interview questions. Then, data was collected through semi-structured interviews using an interview guide with the building level principal of the participating schools to determine the influence of HIB legislation on their professional responsibilities (See Appendix C). Interview questions were tested with two (2) building level principals prior

to data collection to determine their validity and reliability. Interviews, lasting approximately forty-five minutes, were completed with ten building level principals in December 2012 and January 2013.

The interviews occurred at the school location of the interviewee and were audiotaped and transcribed. An interview guide was used during each interview and once the interview was complete, the researcher completed a summary sheet to maintain anecdotal notes on each interview, as well as, highlight themes or explain disruptions to the interview protocol (See Appendix D). After the interviews were transcribed, they were sent via e-mail to the participants for a member check. This ensured the validity of the information and provided the interviewee the opportunity to clarify any answers provided during the interview.

Next, the participants responded to weekly surveys about how HIB legislation impacted their weekly activities. The electronic weekly surveys (EWS) were e-mailed to all participants every Thursdays, beginning on February 7, 2013 and ending on May 30, 2013. The EWS responses were tracked for 16 weeks, not including Happy Valley School District's spring break, and the content inputted into the researcher's final analysis. Twice during the 16 week period, once prior to week eight and once prior to week 15, Dunkin Donuts gift cards were given to the principals to encourage their continued participation within the study. The distribution of the gift cards was established as a motivational tactic to ensure consistent participation over the four month time period during which the EWS were distributed.

To establish the content of the EWS, including a list of meaningful activities which impact principals' professional responsibilities, a pre-interview survey was created and distributed to all participants (See Appendix E). From this survey, a common task list was created for the principal participants and the EWS formulated (See Appendix F). Once the data was collected using the EWS, the principal responses were coded based on the code instructions and impact HIB activities had on the daily routines of the principals (See Appendix G). The EWS data collection method was chosen because studies have found inaccuracies in annual survey reports depicting principal practice due to the long periods of time from the initial action or behavior to moment of actual reporting (Spillane et al., 2007). The implementation of the weekly survey recorded principal responses with accuracy while still determining the impact of HIB legislation on their school-based responsibilities.

Data Analysis Plan

Once the data was collected through the semi-structured interview and the member check complete, the interview responses were coded based on the participants' contributions. Common themes and trends were analyzed and compared to the summary sheets completed by the researcher after each interview. These themes were then compared with the literature on the impact of state mandated legislation on the professional responsibilities of building administrators. The EWS results were then compared against the responses from the semi-structured interview to glean similarities between the perceived impact of HIB on building level principal responsibilities and the actual impact on their weekly activities.

This study provides insight into the immediate impact bullying legislation is having on building level administrators and other school personnel, as well as, a school's structure and culture. Due to the sample size and constitution of the district, this study should also provide some transferable conclusions on HIB legislation from district to district, especially on the elementary level. In this project, the researcher has a dominant role within the collection of data, transcription and coding of information, as well as, the analysis of data. Since the researcher is a central administrator in the district, some participants might feel obligated to participate and not provide as truthful of a response to questions about the implementation of HIB legislation in their school. This is just one limitation with this study. Another limitation is that the researcher is only examining the impact on the building level principals and gathering their perceptions on the implementation of the law. Students, parents, other administrators (i.e. vice principals, supervisors, etc), and additional school staff (i.e. Anti-bullying specialists) might have much different perceptions on HIB legislation implementation, which would necessitate another study.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

This study explored what principals know about Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Legislation, how they implement the law on a daily basis, and what impact the legislation has on their professional responsibilities. This was completed through the examination of three research questions:

1. What training and resources were provided by the district when implementing HIB legislation?
2. How is HIB legislation implemented across buildings in a large, suburban New Jersey school district?
3. What perceived impact does New Jersey's HIB legislation have on the professional responsibilities of building level administrators?

In examining these questions, I found that most principals felt that there was adequate training for implementing HIB legislation provided by the district in year one; however, follow-up training and professional development was identified as an area in need of improvement and would have helped expand the principals' knowledge and implementation of the law. Also, the district's commitment to full-time elementary guidance counselors was imperative to implementing this legislation and was generally agreed upon by the elementary principals as the most important commitment made by the district towards this initiative.

Second, this study shows excellent consistency amongst the elementary school principals' HIB implementation, though slight differences are seen from one building to the next. At the secondary level, implementation was more isolated to the vice principals

and Anti-bullying specialists (ABS). Finally, each principal stated that their professional responsibilities were affected by the HIB legislation. Analysis of their responses further identified the impact of HIB on principals' time allocation within their buildings, specifically how HIB legislation took away from their other functions. Out of necessity, many principals reallocated their professional time away from academic tasks, school functions, and other important district responsibilities to address HIB issues when they arose within their schools. However, differences remained between the elementary and secondary principals as staffing, building size, and the distribution of responsibilities differed between the two types of academic settings.

Policy Implementation

As outlined in the work of Harry Wolcott (1973), *The Man in the Principal's Office*, a building principal bears many responsibilities. The implementation of state and federal legislation is just one of those many responsibilities and directly impacts the daily activities of these administrators. Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) highlight four frameworks of policy implementation within their work, *The Implementation of Public Policy: A Framework of Analysis*. Three of those frameworks, the Ability of Statute to Structure Implementation, Non-Statutory Variables Affecting Implementation, and Stages in Implementation Process, were examined within the application of HIB policies within the schools in this study (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980). While examining these frameworks and the implementation of HIB legislation, it is vital to define the role of the principal, identify their understanding of the legislation, highlight the training provided, and define some differences between year 1 (2011-12) implementation and year 2 (2012-

13) implementation. Each of the above will facilitate a greater understanding on the impact of HIB on principals' overall responsibilities.

Role of the Principal

When asked how they would define their role within their building, the words most used to describe the principals in this study included facilitator, school leader, instructional leader, and chief security officer. Principal Lauren, an elementary school principal for eight years, stated she was the, "School leader and an example for all to follow." Principal Dave, a Middle School Principal for three years echoed her sentiments, "The role of the principal is to serve as a model of how the school or how the individuals of the school (should act). My leadership style would be through my examples...but I want to be able to show them that if I am willing to, that I am never going to ask them to do something that I would not do myself." Principal Maria, an elementary school principal for seven years states, "I view myself as the leader of the building. It is my responsibility to set the climate for the building. To make sure I set really clear expectations as to what is expected of the teachers, what is expected of the students, and even what the expectations are for the parents."

While leading through example was one theme highlighted by the principals, their professional impact on classroom instruction and school security was emphasized as well.

Principal Bob, a second-year elementary school principal, stated:

I try to be a motivational leader who is supportive of the staff and try and facilitate their growth as teachers. Secondly, on an equally important level, I always want to make sure that students feel safe in school, that parents are confident that their children are safe in school.

Principal Jane, another second-year elementary principal agreed:

As the instructional leader, I am not only providing instruction for my staff members, but ascertaining that our students are getting the most inclusive education possible. Especially in light of what has been going on lately, it is really in the forefront that we are the school chief security officer.

The role of the school principal differs for each person in that position. However, modeling leadership practices and improving instructional practices, while providing a safe and secure learning environment for their students were the themes highlighted by these building principals.

However, these were not the only mentioned roles of the building principals. Succinctly stated by Principal Susan, a ten-year elementary principal veteran, “I am the glue that holds everything together....Everyone comes to me and I have to fix everyone’s problems. I outline the way I want my school to go and I am the glue that holds it all together.” This summary provides important insight into one of the more important roles of a school principal: problem solver. It is this last role that helps building level principals successfully implement HIB legislation within their respective buildings.

Principals are central figures in schools whose actions directly shape their schools' climate (Price, 2012). As seen above, their role as an instructional leader, facilitator, school security officer, motivational leader, and general problem solver all impact their professional responsibilities. However, when implementing HIB legislation and identifying the perceived impact on professional responsibilities, it is important to gauge the principal’s understanding of the legislation prior to examining its impact.

Principals’ Understanding of HIB Legislation

Various studies have outlined how legislative understanding impact implementation of state and federal mandates. For example, Dunbar and Villarruel (2002)

examined how school leaders interpreted the zero-tolerance policies instituted in Michigan and how their interpretation of the policies affected the educational experiences of students. Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) state when implementing legislative statutes, the specific problem being addressed must be clearly stated with appropriate objectives (p. 544). The need for implementation officials to provide the new program with a high priority during its introduction, as well as, support the measure thoroughly was also stressed (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980). Principals' interpretation and implementation of New Jersey's anti-bullying bill of rights holds similar implications when examining the impact on our students. Of the ten principals interviewed, all had a different level of experience with the law, much of which was based on the amount of time they served as principal. Principal Susan summarized her understanding of HIB through the following statement:

The definition of harassment, intimidation, and bullying has changed. The new definition is much more comprehensive than the old definition. Any time someone claims that they were harassed, intimidated, or bullied, we don't make the decision on whether that is actually true. We have to take that report and investigate it. So that kicks into place a very long investigative process where we have to get in touch with parents, talk to students, talk to adults, talk to anyone who may have been involved in the situation and of course then my school anti-bullying specialist, my guidance counselor, is extremely involved from the very first day, helping, doing all the investigation.

However, each of the ten principals maintained a different level of expertise within their understanding of the law. Three of the ten principals were on the committee that reviewed the state's legislation and created the district's policy, forms, and procedures. One of those three participating principals, Principal John, a former elementary principal recently elevated to middle school principal, states:

I was part of the HIB bullying committee when the program first got passed. It was our job to create the forms and the process for it and how it would be disseminated to the principals. After that initial process ended at the building level, now as a middle school level principal, it is now just making sure that they are following the law and our checklist, meaning they are meeting the requirements.

Principal Maria reiterated Principal John's point:

I was actually on the core team that worked the summer before last on taking the legislation and taking the requirement, the sample forms, and I was on that committee that worked at putting that into a format that was accessible for the administrators and the teachers. I kind of got on the front end of this, so my understanding of the law, I believe I am pretty well versed in it.

In both cases, Principal Maria and Principal John were well versed in the legislation because of their input in implementing the law. For newer principals, like Principal Donna, the understanding of the law was more general, with an emphasis on the procedures to document each HIB claim. Principal Donna, a second-year elementary principal, outlined her understanding:

I know that there was a new law put forth last year. And that made the harassment, intimidation, and bullying process much more formalized and required building administrators to have documentation of investigations and to take every claim seriously and make sure that there isn't bullying, harassment, or intimidation being done to our students that be being ignored.

This understanding of the law was shared by the high school principal, Principal Marshall, who was in his first year as high school principal after serving as a high school vice principal for six years:

The law basically required that there be documentation and timelines followed. It is designed to protect kids. And certainly documents the results of investigation or outcomes and things like that. I guess there is more accountability for kids who are found guilty of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

When other principals were asked about their understanding of the legislation, they focused on the steps towards implementing the law. The various building principals

who referenced the steps to HIB implementation all understood these procedures towards applying the law appropriately. This was best summarized by Principal Bob:

I know that our protocol within the district is that when a matter gets reported, it should go to the principal. The principal immediately tries to initiate an investigation. A report has to be written to the principal within two days about the alleged allegations that the principal then assigns an anti-bullying specialist, whose typically a guidance counselor to investigate....Then I believe you have ten school days after the, I believe twelve school days after the initial report, to forward the findings from the investigation to the superintendent's office. From there, it gets reviewed and the superintendent passes along his determination to the Board of Education. And then the Board either approves and supports, or does not approve the recommendations and findings.

The consistency amongst the building principals concerning their knowledge of the legislation and the necessary steps when implementing the law shows success within the training activities provided by the district. Without proper training of the administrators, their understanding about the implementation of this legislation would be limited. It was obvious to this investigator through his contact with the principals that the training offered during year one was adequate and from their responses, allowed the principals to gauge an understanding of the legislation.

Training

Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) highlight the need for adequate funds and professional commitment to achieve the statutory objectives within any legislative implementation (p. 548, 553). The principals' training and the district's resource allocation to this legislative initiative reflect adequate planning and implementation of New Jersey's HIB legislation. All of the ten principals participated in the same training and each of the ten mentioned the two-day training with David Nash, NJPSA Attorney in August of 2011. Principal Susan noted:

We had very intensive training, we had two workshops and online training. We had Dave Nash from New Jersey PSA and we talked about different scenarios and activities that might have caused problems and what we should be doing about it and how as administrators we should be acting.

Principal Lauren also stated she believed the training received by the principals was adequate:

The administrators were trained in HIB prior to the law being implemented last year. I think we were given good information and we had resources available to us if we had questions. We were then able to train our staff to communicate with parents as to what the law's purpose is and how it impacts them.

The necessary actions, personal interaction, and parent communication piece were all instrumental towards implementing the HIB legislation appropriately. As stated by Principal Susan and Principal Lauren, most principals felt that the training provided by the district on implementing HIB legislation was adequate and provided a good foundation from which to move forward.

However, subsequent district offered professional development opportunities seemed limited. Five of the principals stated they would like additional in-service on the law and its requirements. Principal John stated, "I think you should have on-going (HIB) training every single year. And I think the training can shift away from what exactly the law is as opposed to how you are practicing it within your building." Principal Tim stated he receive no additional training after the two day in-service provided by the district and similarly believes that administrative collaboration is necessary, "I think more importantly is having administrators sitting down and discuss it (HIB implementation) with each other. What are you finding, what are some of the things you are doing....Elementary principals could meet together and discuss." By following up on the implementation of HIB within each school, the district can ensure that the law is being

applied appropriately throughout the district. While there is evidence of consistency in HIB application within the district, regular professional development opportunities to address the principals' concerns would relieve some common issues seen within implementation and allow for more appropriate distribution of resources when necessary.

HIB Resources

When asked about the amount of resources dedicated by the district towards HIB implementation, many principals stated adequate district resources were provided; however, the state inadequately addressed HIB implementation throughout the districts.

Principal Bob, an elementary principal stated:

I feel that our district did a very nice job responding to the legislation, particularly (District HIB Coordinator) did a good job as the district's HIB coordinator in working to prepare forms that streamlined the process and made it very clear to everyone involved what had to be done and by when. I don't feel there were necessarily enough of state resources allocated. I believe the state enacted legislation that looked good to the public and made for good newspaper headlines, but did not provide additional funding, to my knowledge, for districts to hire additional staff that may have been needed to properly execute the HIB procedures.

Principal Susan reiterated this point:

Resources by the district, yes. Our district tends to take these kinds of things by the horns and run with it. Our district does absolutely takes this kind of thing seriously and we have used a great many of our resources including the fact that the district has gone out of its way to make sure we hired enough guidance counselors in the building to make sure we had anti-bullying specialists in each building to help with this because this is such a massive undertaking each year from now on. No I do not think that the state actually thought it through. I think their intentions certainly were of good intent, and I think that we absolutely need to be addressing bullying. But no I do not think that the state actually thought through.

Principal Susan's statement highlights a very important element towards implementing the HIB legislation which was the need for adequate personnel to address the bullying complaints that are reported.

To begin the 2011-2012 school year, many elementary schools within the district were sharing guidance counselors, meaning guidance counselors would be split into as many as three elementary schools. For the 2012-2013 school year, the district hired an additional eight guidance counselors to distribute throughout the elementary school buildings. These guidance counselors were assigned to be the anti-bullying specialists (ABSs) within their elementary schools and handled the investigative responsibilities outlined under the law. The total cost to the district for hiring these additional eight staff members was approximately \$ 485,723.00 (Happy Valley User Friendly Budget, 2013). This amount was derived from comparing the increase in guidance counselor costs from the Happy Valley school district's 2011-12 district budget and 2012-13 district budget. The expenditure increase from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013 represented the eight additional counselors entering the district at Step One with a Master's Degree on the Happy Valley teacher contract. Once each of these individuals was hired, they had to be trained by their building principals on the district's HIB policies and procedures, yet another way that HIB legislation impacted principals' responsibilities.

The training of these new staff members was highlighted amongst the principals as another concern for HIB implementation going into the 2012-13 school year. Principal Maria states:

Last year, I don't think there was enough time provided to properly train people. I think that especially because there was this sense that this is something that can

lead to litigation, this is something that can have very serious consequences for students, and because of the intensity and the way that the law was written, there was a lot of concern about doing the wrong thing. So there was not enough time to provide the support and we did not have enough personnel to expedite the interventions and investigations because we were sharing school counselors. So last year (2011-2012) was very challenging in terms of alerting those who were responsible (to investigate the HIB claims).

The employment and training of new staff members showed a commitment by the district to properly implement the HIB legislation; however, their training remained an overall implementation concern as seen above.

While HIB training of new staff members was raised as a concern for some building principals, the training and expertise of our district HIB coordinator was mentioned by four of the ten principals as a positive resource when determining if HIB was applicable within a given situation. This was highlighted by Principal Bob earlier and by Principal John as well:

I think the district put together a team of administrators to review the policy. I think that they not only complied but I know that our former principal in this building as the former bullying coordinator also went out on extensive training and it showed when he turn-keyed the information to us. He (District HIB Coordinator) also was a wealth of knowledge whenever we had individual problems. He was able to come to the building and address them. So I feel that the district as a whole had someone who was not only well-versed in it, but know how to handle each individual problem or each individual question that came up when it came to the law.

Access to a knowledgeable district HIB coordinator and the impact of that individual on the schools and building principals was an invaluable resource for the district as the legislation was first addressed in the 2011-12 school year. However, the principals offered some differences between the first and second year of HIB implementation within the district. These differences in HIB implementation from the 2011-12 school year (Year

1) versus the 2012-13 school year (Year 2) did greatly impact the professional responsibilities of building principals.

Year 1 vs. Year 2

Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) outline a number of dependent variables impacting effective implementation of legislative statutes including policy outputs, compliance with policy by target groups, actual impact of policy, perceived impacts of policy, and major revision to the law (p. 553). Many new pieces of legislation have initial start-up problems, which must be adjusted accordingly by the policy makers (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980). New Jersey's HIB legislation was no different. Beginning in the 2011-12 school year, the potential impact of HIB legislation was unknown for many building principals and district level administrators. Principal Lauren, a veteran elementary school principal stated, "When state mandates come out that are not thought through thoroughly and were quickly implementing with things that need to be changed repeatedly, we (the district and principals) are not working efficiently." In many ways, the issues and concerns about HIB implementation in 2011-12 were pervasive throughout many schools. The novelty of the legislation without previous precedent or experience with specific cases made initial implementation difficult for many principals. Principal Donna testified, "I think the newness of the legislation brought forth more investigations than were necessary. I would say 90 percent of our investigations last year (2011-12) were not found substantiated." This sentiment was agreed upon by Principal Jane:

I think that as a district and as a whole, people were almost over sensitive with HIB last year (2011-12).... I must say that something that concerns me is that I do find that some parents and even students on the elementary level have become very savvy. They understand that as soon as that word is said verbally, or if it is

put in writing, then of course we have an obligation to react. In my experience during the past year and a half as an administrator, I found that we have had a number of situations where some HIB complaints have been unfounded.

Principal Bob felt that the first year of implementation was trying as the district and administrative team addressed the legislation:

I feel the first year was the worst. And I have noted a reduction this year. It seems that as parents learned about the multiple steps involved in HIB, the paperwork, and the reporting that happens, I believe it has been a process. Although last year it seemed it to be too much and a bit overwhelming. I know the intentions behind the legislation were primarily good intentions and I believe that parents saw, in our district, our attention to detail and following through with all aspects of the legislation.

When asked specifically if more time was dedicated to HIB in Year 1 (2011-12) or in Year 2 (2012-13), five of the ten principals surveyed stated Year 1 of HIB implementation impacted their responsibilities more for a variety of reasons. Principal Maria stated:

I think the first year, it did require more of my time. Probably a couple of hours a week that were directly related to some situation which was related to an incident that was occurring or training. We did put a school safety team in place which involved parents, so it was probably a couple hours a week. This year, much less, in part because I have a school counselor here everyday. So some situations which might have escalated to an incident of bullying, she is able to get in, get into classrooms, meet with children much more frequently, so I would say that this year, we have had one situation and it was not a situation of bullying.

Her sentiments were supported by Principal John:

In the first year it did because we were so concerned with the letter of the law that I think we were more concerned about actually following the procedure and policy. I think that now it is more about taking that information and applying it to what we are already doing at the school. So we can use a lot of how we handle bullying cases and really incorporate it into what we would do normally for a child that is acting out. I think the impact has gone down in terms of how you handle a situation.

As reported by the building level principals, the HIB legislation implementation had less of an impact on their daily responsibilities from Year 1 to Year 2. The steep decline

outlined by some of the principals could be accounted for by the increased amount of guidance staff on the elementary level, as well as, a better understanding of the law by parents, students, and staff.

Differences in Implementing: Elementary vs. Secondary

The responsibilities of elementary, middle, and high school principals vary greatly. Depending on the structure of the district and amount of administrative and support staff, the impact of state and federal legislation can greatly impact the daily activities and responsibilities of all administrators within the district. This was evident through examining the impact that HIB legislation has had on the building principals at Happy Valley School District. There arose some glaring differences between elementary and secondary principals implementation of this legislation. One difference was highlighted by Principal Tim, a current elementary principal who was previously a middle school vice principal:

One difference between middle school and elementary schools are that the investigations are easier on middle school level because there is more opportunity to interview students. You are looking at 1200 students versus 280. Big difference. Kids in class all day here where at middle school students are transitioning in the hallway and busses and stuff. Easier to do investigations in the middle school because of the fact that there are 300 kids at each grade level. You look at their schedules, you make sure they are not in the same classes, you call them out to interview them.

This difference in the investigation opportunities and overall number of students who could be involved in an HIB investigation are two differences between the elementary and secondary school levels.

Another difference included the impact on the professional responsibilities of the high school principal versus the elementary principals. While the sample size was

significantly different, one high school principal versus seven elementary school principals, it was obvious to this researcher through his formal interview and subsequent weekly surveys that the high school principal relied heavily on his large support staff (vice principals, multiple ABSs, and guidance staff), while the elementary principals did not have that luxury of additional staff. Hence, the elementary principals were much more involved in HIB investigations, communication, paperwork, and meetings than the high school principal. Regardless of the many differences between elementary and secondary levels, the impact of the HIB legislation on the school buildings was an important trait mentioned by all the principals involved in this study.

As evidenced above, the building principals in Happy Valley School District implemented HIB legislation using the training, resources, and staff afforded to them by the district. These resources were expanded from Year 1 to Year 2 to ensure proper implementation of the HIB legislation. However, the increase in staff members did not change the role and responsibilities of the building principals when implementing the law. The specific roles and responsibilities outlined in the initial law starting in September 2011 are still in effect today. While there are implementation differences within the district from 2011-12 to 2012-13 and between on the secondary and elementary levels, the impact on the principals' professional activities, including building management, student supervision, and instructional leadership, has not changed. It is the impact on these other responsibilities that will now be examined.

Human Resource Frame

New Jersey's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Legislation enacted in September of 2011 had the potential to greatly impact districts financially and legally. Recent court cases filed against the Tenaflly School District and Ridgewood School District epitomize the potential impact of HIB legislation on school districts and school administrators (Rundquist, 2013; O'Connor, 2013). Bolman and Deal (2008) highlight the need for balance between the requirements of the organization and the needs of the individual employee within their Human Resource Frame (p. 117). As previously stated, the onus of these HIB procedures falls on the building level principal and it is these responsibilities which makes them regulate their daily influences while impacting their professional role within their respective buildings.

Daily Influences on Building Principals

There are numerous daily influences on building level principals, which can differ significantly between the elementary and secondary levels. Principal Lauren, a veteran elementary school principal, provided a general summary of her daily responsibilities:

My typical day is observing the staff and students. Making sure the environment is safe. Making sure appropriate lessons are taking place within the school. Making sure that the individual student's social and academic needs are being met. Conducting I & RS meetings. Meeting with Child Study Team, individual staff, running the main office.

Principal Donna provided a similar sentiment, generalizing her responsibilities within the building while highlighting a few specific needs:

Advising teachers in academic concerns and progress. Assisting teachers in making sure their lessons are reflecting the common core standards and preparing students for assessments and subsequent grade levels. Dealing with discipline

issues, whether it is in the classroom, on the bus, at recess, in the bathroom. Dealing with bullying issues, answering parent questions about the academic program or any special events. Speaking to the nurse about student absences and welfare. Talking with the I & RS committee about student progress and action plans. Reviewing any follow-up data for those action plans. Observing teachers, coordinating communication with home such as new letters and notices. Having 504 meetings and follow-up plans put into action.

Other elementary principals provided more specific responsibilities which govern over their daily routine. These more specific personal agenda items reflect the very structured nature of the elementary school and represent a very specific allocation of time, which at any point can be interrupted by a claim of HIB within a school building. Principal Tim stated:

A typical day includes coming in, handling any phone calls. From there it is doing some observations. I probably have fifty (50) observations to do or reports. I am trying to work on end of the year reports, or budgeting. Then you have to get in all fire drills and all those types of procedures and answer all e-mails that you get. I usually get about thirty (30) e-mails a day from either central or parents. Then I always like to walk around the building and see the students. I like to do it at least twice a day, in the morning and the afternoon. I try to spend approximately 3 to 5 minutes in each class walking around. And then you try to eat lunch in somewhere between there. There is always something going on during the day. Either the guidance counselor needs to talk to you about a student having difficulties or something going on at home, or preparing agenda meetings, 504 meetings. School assembly came up the other day. We have three or four a year, we do assemblies with them. So that is all in a typical day.

This daily routine, or some similar proximity to it, was repeated by four of the seven principals. Principal Maria highlighted some of her general activities during the course of the day:

I start with being available on bus duty. I greet the students, I greet the staff. I facilitate the morning announcements. Once the school day begins, then I do a building walkthrough. I don't interrupt instruction...Throughout the morning, every day is a little bit different. Some days, I have grade level meetings which I have scheduled, other times I am in my office working on reports or paperwork or answering parent phone calls. Lunch and recess again, typically, unless I have

something else scheduled, I go down to the lunch room, go out to the playground, and just monitor what is happening during lunch and recess. And the same thing in the afternoon, going in doing classroom walkthroughs, meeting with teachers, and addressing needs as they come up....And sometimes that can be managerial things as well. You know if a bathroom is overflowing, I have to make sure that that is being addressed as well.

These two different types of interview responses, one of very specific responsibilities and the other of more generalizable job requirements shows the significant role the elementary building principal plays within their building. The elementary principal is the only administrator within the building during the course of the day and must address everything from student meetings to facilities issues to teacher instructional techniques. While these are not all time sensitive responsibilities, they all require professional attention by the building principal, which again can be interrupted at any time by a HIB related incident.

Secondary principals are equally busy, albeit in seemingly different ways. While elementary principals, being the only administrator in the building are involved in seemingly every activity, secondary principals have a bevy of additional supports to respond appropriately to their daily responsibilities. These supports include other administrators, numerous guidance staff, SAC counselors, and district level supervisors who facilitate instruction within the classroom. Principal Marshall summarized his responsibilities by stating, "My typical day involves spending time with kids and discipline, getting into the classroom, and observing teachers, formally and informally, as well as, maintaining a general decorum of positive energy." This sentiment was echoed by Principal John, middle school principal; however, due to the fact that his school has been identified as a Focus School or school in need of improvement, his daily responsibilities are more directed toward one specific goal:

Right now we are focusing on a number of topics because of the focus school that we currently have. So mostly I am focusing data related to test scores and student achievement. So I am primarily looking at special education and the mathematics program. But on an average day, it is really just overall management of the building. Making sure that the VPs are covering discipline, that they are in the halls, but again it is overall management of the building.

Principal Dave, middle school principal, summarized his typical day in a similar fashion to the other administrators:

My typical duties include observations of teachers, observations of students, um, a lot of administrivia, unfortunately. Also, trying to work with and collaborate with other administrators in the district to make sure the schools are aligned, especially, I work closely with (Principal John) over at (the other middle school). I work closely with central administration to make sure that we have and are implementing the new core standards that we are working with the benchmarks. I work closely with the supervisors, um. It's very comprehensive, the tasks of the day. It can go from disciplining a student, to meeting with parents, to meeting with administrators...So it is hard to say that the building principal's job is limited to the building only.

It is this type of daily routine which is impacted by HIB legislation and its implementation within our school buildings.

The narratives above coincide with research stating that principals' responsibilities are more comprehensive and time consuming today than ever before. They are involved in instructional leadership, must address staff needs, implement district initiatives, establish new educational practices, and appropriately allocate their time to adequately address the needs of their buildings (Spillane & Hunt, 2010; Spillane, Camburn, & Pareja, 2007; Hatch, 2001; Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010). These above responsibilities were repeated numerous times by the ten principals when discussing the priorities and responsibilities impacting their daily activities.

Priorities and Responsibilities of Building Principals

Some common themes were reported by the ten principals when examining the rationale behind their decision making on a daily basis. When asked to determine how they prioritized their decisions and actions, while defining their responsibilities, many principals described their desire to ensure the safety of their students. Principal Bob stated, “I would say anything that is safety related always comes first. And then, it is an interplay between deadlines and the importance of the different tasks that are on my plate.” Principal Dave repeated the same, “Safety of students is the top priority”, as did Principal Marshall, “And how I prioritize, you know, you do your best to take care of every situation, you prioritize safety comes first so if there was any issues dealing with that I would deal with that and work my way from there.” Principal Maria and Susan took a slightly broader look at their personal priorities and responsibilities. Principal Maria stated:

The number one priority is what is in the best interest of the student. So if there is a choice of three different things that need to get done, those that have the most impact on a child, or children, or the entire student body, those are the things that are number one priority. Then second to that, if everything is good with the kids, then what do the teachers need. And then there are things that are expected of you from central administration, deadlines and things that need to be done, and that at times will drive what your day is going to look like.

Principal Susan provided generalized priorities as well:

The first thing that always influences me is the desire to make sure the children come first. Every decision I make is made with what is going to be most beneficial for my children at the time. An upset parent is of course in that mix as well. Probably, the last on my list of any type of priority is paperwork. Paperwork, no matter how important it may be is usually the last thing that is going to get done.

Principal Tim also emphasized the need to address parent concerns as well. “Obviously, any kind of concerns, parent concerns and teacher concerns take priority.” Other general influences on the principals included their own personal educational philosophy and

directives from the state (Principal Donna), parents, staff, and student input (Principal Lauren), and behavioral issues or serious situations which need immediate attention (Principal Jane).

While each of these responses differed slightly from each other, their answers show that numerous individual influences impact the daily routine and priorities of the building level principal. However, each of the above activities and responsibilities involve time reallocated from other daily events. HIB legislation implementation adds another responsibility which limits the time principals can dedicate to the activities and responsibilities listed above.

Principal HIB Responsibilities

The Happy Valley School District has 16 different school buildings and principals. As previously mentioned, there are 12 elementary schools, two middle schools, a Grade Nine Center, and a Main Campus High School. While each school has a principal, these 16 buildings are all staffed differently which impacts the implementation of HIB in the school district. In each elementary school, there is one principal. In each of the middle schools, there is one principal and two vice principals. The Grade Nine Center has one principal and no vice principals, while the Main Campus High School has one principal and three vice principals. This difference in staffing impacts the implementation of HIB across elementary and secondary levels, especially among the building principals. Since the secondary principals can rely on their vice principals to shoulder some of the burden surrounding HIB, the division of responsibilities differs greatly between the elementary and secondary principals. For purposes of this study, the principals'

responsibilities surrounding HIB were separated between elementary and secondary to build on the comparison of HIB implementation that was previously described in this chapter.

Elementary principal HIB responsibilities. Due to district administrative staff distribution, elementary principals must rely on their teaching staff and guidance counselors much more than the secondary principals. Each of the seven principals summarized their impact on HIB implementation in distinct steps including notification of the HIB incident by parent, staff member, or student, ABS notification, initializing a HIB investigation, contacting the parent, summarizing the findings with the ABSs, and finishing all necessary HIB related paperwork. These steps were consistently repeated during the elementary principals' semi-structured interviews.

When receiving the initial report of HIB and initiating an investigation, many principals responded similarly concerning the steps necessary to begin the investigation.

Principal Tim stated:

The staff member in the building, or any person in the building who believes that an incident or has knowledge of any type of incident has to report it to me on the first day. From there, I would speak to our ABS coordinator who would initiate the investigation.

Principal Donna repeated these steps almost verbatim:

As the administrator, when a claim of harassment, intimidation, or bullying is brought to the school, I am informed immediately. Whether it is told to a teacher, bus driver, to me directly, to a secretary, I am told about it. I then meet with the guidance counselor and we discuss it and we start an investigation.

Principal Jane's statement delineated her responsibility and the subsequent role of her building ABS:

Typically, when we get started, it is brought to my attention by the teacher, whoever is involved. They will bring for us a letter or a concern. And then it is my responsibility once we get started to call the parent of the alleged victim, call the parent of the alleged bullier, so to speak, and then I meet with the guidance counselor, and then we commence the investigations. Typically I do the telephone calls to the parents and last and this year, the ABS took the lead on investigations.

The similarity between these three statements and the subsequent statements from the other four building principals reflect a well-rehearsed and coordinated approach to dealing with HIB within each of the elementary schools. The use of similar language and the listing of exact steps show an excellent knowledge of the procedures governing the legislation by the elementary principals in the district.

While all seven principals reported exactly the same procedures for reporting HIB incidents and initiating the investigations, there was a slight divergence concerning the participants doing the investigations. Five of the seven elementary principals stated that the HIB investigations were conducted solely by the ABSs, or building guidance counselors. Two principals, Principals Bob and Susan, stated they co-investigate with their ABS. Principal Bob states, “In every investigation so far, I have been one of the investigators looking into the HIB matter in conjunction with her. My part is to review and revise the drafts of the paperwork, to help lead the investigation with her.” Principal Susan also co-investigates many of her reported HIB cases:

And most of the time, we do the investigation together for a few reasons. Now I know that at some of the upper grades they don’t need to do that, but in the elementary school, I felt, and I think, my ABS and I discussed it, and we agreed that doing it together adds a benefit for the child.

This difference in the HIB investigation participants among the elementary principals’ responses was the first reported inconsistency between the seven elementary principals.

While district administration has placed the building guidance counselors in charge of HIB investigations, the prerogative of the principals to insert themselves into investigations is one reason for different levels of impact on principals' professional responsibilities from building to building. However, in some instances, such as the situation described by Principal Maria, it was necessary to have the building level administrator involved in some element of the investigation:

There was very few occasions where I actually interviewed students, unless it was a time issue or if it was a situation, where we had one or two parents who had in writing said they did not want their child seen by the counselor so we were sensitive to that. But very rarely did I have a situation where I actually interviewed with any students.

Upon review of the HIB legislation, there is no exclusion provision for principals within the investigative process (New Jersey Department of Education, 2011). While Happy Valley School District is a large school district with multiple elementary buildings and appropriate resources, smaller districts with less guidance staff and building principals might be forced to use building principals as their ABSs, leading the HIB investigations. The size and resource base of the district allowed principals to take a back-seat for many of the investigations with the hiring of guidance counselors who would act as the ABSs for each of the elementary buildings.

The addition of the eight elementary guidance counselors made a difference for HIB investigations and legislative implementation for many of the principals, especially between year 1 implementation (2011-2012) and year 2 (2012-2013). Principal Tim best summed up this sentiment stating:

Years ago we (the principals) would do the investigation. Parents calls up, they are concerned about bullying, we would do the investigations as administrators.

Now here the ABS for the building does the investigation....So it has freed up that time, but it caused additional time. I guess it balanced out, to be honest with you.

The communication and role of the building guidance counselor/ABS was highlighted by most principals, many of whom stated they could not fulfill their HIB responsibilities without their guidance counselors' professional support.

Communication with guidance counselor/ABS. When an active HIB is being investigated on the elementary level, six of the seven principals stated they are constantly in communication with their guidance counselor. When asked about the importance of the guidance counselor within the implementation of HIB legislation, Principal Donna proclaims, "The guidance counselor is my best friend." Principal Tim repeated the importance of communication with the ABS within the building, stating, "HIB is always that you work closely with your ABS in the building. You have to have that partnership because you always have to be updated with stuff." This close relationship and communication begins with the investigatory stage, but extends beyond the investigation into the summary of each HIB case as well.

After the initial communication, building principals differ in their level of participation in each HIB case. As previously mentioned, some principals actively participate in investigations, while others allow their ABSs to work alone. Similarly, some elementary principals maintain higher levels of oversight when the investigations are ongoing, including having multiple conversations with their ABSs about individual cases. After Principals Maria and Susan communicate the initial HIB report, both stated they let the ABS investigate as needed. In contrast, Principals Donna, Jane and Bob reported that they regularly meet with their counselors as a follow-up to the initial report

and determine the progress on the case. Principal Donna states, “(After the initial report) the counselor then does her interviews and then we meet again at the end of it and discuss what information we found and what recommendations.” Principal Jane agreed:

But I must say that with both people, because in her day she can meet them in the guidance room and in a different type of setting, we always have a conference. While I am not always sitting with her, we always have a meeting and see where we are and what the progress is with the case.

Finally, Principal Bob reported he read and discussed any and all reports that are sent through his ABS within his building to ensure both the principal and ABS are on the same page: “I instruct my guidance counselor, the ABS, when to begin the procedures. She has normally written the reports, as draft of the reports, and we always sit together as a matter of practice and fine tune the reports, compare our collective notes, etc.” The difference in communication between elementary school principals and their ABSs reflects a second difference within the HIB implementation process.

Communication with parents. Each of the seven elementary principals stated they inform the parents when an investigation begins. Universally, the elementary school principals stated they make initial contact with the parent since the timelines outlined in the legislation are very stringent. Principal Tim states, “It was my responsibility to contact the parents to let them know on day one the situation has arose and we will be completing our investigation.” Principal Donna repeated that point, “When an investigation starts, I notify the parents of all the students involved, and speak with them at length about the process and what is going to take place involving their children.” Principal Jane described the division of labor when a HIB case is reported, “Typically I do the telephone calls to the parents and last year and this year, the ABS took lead on

investigations.” As reported in the weekly surveys, in at least three instances, the elementary principals stayed after contracted hours to ensure parents are notified. In many cases, especially within year 1 of implementation, the investigation timelines played widely into the actions of the elementary principals and their communication with the parents.

Outcome notification. The final step in determining whether a case is accepted as an HIB incident moves through the Board of Education as established by the HIB statute. A letter is generated from the Superintendent’s office once approved by the Board of Education and sent to the parents of all students involved in a particular case. This letter can take up to six weeks to deliver from the time of the initial report until the actions are approved by the Board of Education. Principal Tim explained the timelines:

Depending on when it fell and when the board meeting was. You did your ten day investigation, most of the time, I believe we were always done within five days or so. Average, some took a little longer, but for the most part they were pretty quick on that...There were some times where we had just concluded the investigation and the board meeting had just ended so we had to wait to the next board meeting. I would say anywhere between four to six weeks mainly.

While there is a significant difference in the time from the initial incident report until the actual outcome notification, only two of the seven principals communicated the impending outcome notification to the parents through a phone call. Principal Donna stated, “Then when a letter goes out about a Board of Education meeting, I notify the parents that a letter is going home and I am the one that actually fills out the letter to send home.” Principal Bob also highlights this action taken prior to outcome notification.

And one thing I have done as a matter of practice, is when it came time for the letter to come out from the superintendent, which is several months later due to all

the steps in the process, I always take it upon myself to call the parents to give them a heads up about what is coming. And to refresh their memory about the case and to explain the letter so there is not, so nothing gets stirred up again and there is not unnecessary worry or confusion.

This difference highlighted a third area of inconsistency between implementation of HIB legislation at the elementary level.

While the elementary school principals identified many areas where implementation of HIB was similar, three main areas differed amongst these principals: level of involvement within the investigations, the amount of communication between the ABS and building principal on certain cases, and finally, the outcome notification on a case-by-case basis. While these slight differences in HIB implementation seems inconsequential, it can help define the reason why some principals are more impacted professionally than others. As evidenced from the information above, HIB implementation is a lengthy process from beginning to end, involves numerous individuals, and usually concludes with a decision by the Board of Education. However, each of the responsibilities outlined above by the elementary principals takes away from other activities to be completed during the course of their day. Since elementary principals are the lone administrators in their buildings, all HIB implementation falls on their shoulders. On the secondary level, the building principals have many more ancillary staff (vice principals, SAC counselors, more guidance staff, etc.) to address some of the concerns of HIB. The implementation of HIB on the secondary level has proven to be much different than implementation on the elementary level.

Secondary principal HIB responsibilities. There are several differences between the elementary buildings and the secondary buildings in Happy Valley School

District. First, the secondary buildings are much larger. The largest elementary building has 519 students, while the middle schools average 1103 students and the Main Campus of Happy Valley High School houses 2259 (Realtime Information System, 2013).

Administratively, both middle schools and the high school have a total of seven vice principals. Each middle school has two and the high school has three. Since in each of these schools the vice principals are assigned a grade, the grade level administrator has become the point person for many HIB cases. This can be seen through the secondary principals' responses to their role within HIB implementation. Principal Marshall, high school principal, glossed over his role within implementation stating:

To make sure that everyone is aware and they know about the law and they know what their role within the law is. And students for that matter. To make sure that they understand that it is the law now, so that social media, any of the other things that they partake in, what they say and what they put on paper, what they say in the hallway, can affect their daily lives.

Middle School principals Principal John and Principal Dave provided more specific steps within the process of implementing HIB. Principal John stated:

Due to the requirement of deadlines and how much attention is focused in on every single step and procedure, it really, it basically impacts how you can operate during the course of the day because you do have to drop everything to address the issue in its immediate. With the deadlines on making sure the building principal is informed, making sure student interviews are conducted, and making sure that parents are contacted within a certain timeframe.

When asked about his role within the HIB implementation process, Principal Dave stated he "provided staff training including a powerpoint on how to fill out forms and review the necessary timelines. The principal makes all the phone calls home at this middle school. The principal should make the phone calls because they are the ones who will be called by the parents later." The impact of HIB was not felt among the secondary

principals as much as it was among the elementary principals. The perspective of the secondary principals was that HIB impacted their vice principals professional responsibilities much more than it impacted their daily professional routine.

Vice principals' responsibilities. Each of the three secondary principals addressed the impact that HIB has on the vice principals within each of their buildings. Principal Marshall, high school principal, states:

Here at the high school we have three vice principals, and so they are sometimes on the front lines when a HIB complaint is filed, it will go to them first. They will give me a heads up on the situation, but often I don't get into the guts of the HIB unless they are having some issues, until the investigation is over the vice principal makes a recommendation for counseling or discipline. They then come to me to sign off and review the case. Often times, if it is not a cut and dry situation, the vice principals or the coordinators will come to me during the middle of the investigation for assistance. The vice principal has a much bigger role throughout the process because often times they are talking to the parents, helping the coordinators through an investigation. So ultimately I have to sign off on the entire thing that it was all done properly. The ultimate responsibility is more on me as the principal, but as far as each individual investigation, the vice principals have a tougher job.

Differences exist between the high school and middle school principal responsibilities.

Principal John, middle school principal states:

So I would say my building level VPs and my ABS, it impacts them far more than it does me personally, until a case is challenged or whenever a case goes beyond when a parent feels is considered bullying, or should be considered bullying. That's when it hits my level, because that's when its individual conversations explaining the law to the parents, explaining the law to the children, explaining how it will impact them currently and in the future. And that seems to be more of the questions that parents need answered.

Principal Dave, a middle school principal, takes a more active role within the investigation states:

The issue is either reported to me or one of the vice principals, and I make the phone call home. I felt that was the obligation of the building principal since it...that is the way that I understood it from the initial trainings. Since it ultimately comes back to me and it is something that goes up to the central administrative team, to have the vice principals do it is a matter of convenience, it would help. But if the parents are going to call me and ask about the situation, which they usually do, they usually ask for the building principal, it is good that I make the phone call cause then I can always reference "Do you remember when I called you on the following date?"

There exists a difference between the implementation of HIB between the middle school and high school principals. The high school principal reported he only involves himself within the implementation of HIB when absolutely necessary and upon staff request. He relies heavily on his vice principals and ABSs to address the HIB implementation within his building. In the middle school, the principals take a larger role within the process, especially when addressing the parents. The impact on the middle school principals and high school principal is especially evident when examining the results of the weekly survey.

Weekly Survey Responses of Middle School vs. High School Principals

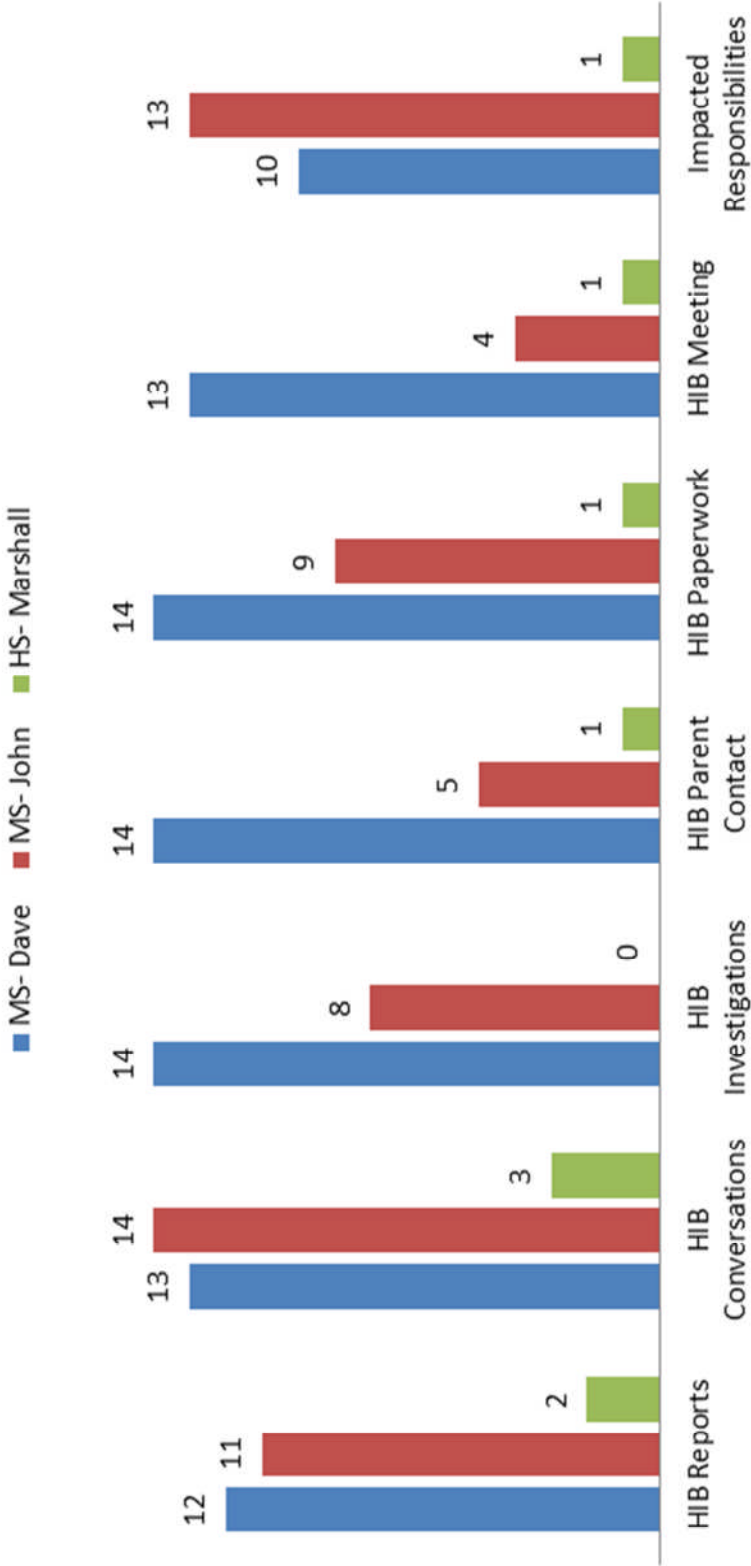


Figure 3. Middle School and High School Principals’ electronic weekly survey responses separated by targeted HIB categories

As stated previously, each secondary principal was asked to complete electronic weekly surveys during a 16 week period. Dave and John, the two middle school principals, each responded to the survey 14 times out of the 16 opportunities and Marshall responded all 16 times. Their responses were further scrutinized by the various categories examined within the study.

As seen from the responses reported by the secondary principals, both middle school principals Dave and John, received significantly more reports of HIB (23 total reports), had more conversations concerning HIB (27 total conversations), and contacted more parents (19 total parent contact reports) than the high school principal. They also were involved in 22 HIB investigations combined and reported 23 total instances of completing HIB paperwork, as well as, participating in 17 HIB meetings. In fact, the middle school principals were affected more across the board in every category measured by the electronic weekly survey. The high school principal reported that HIB impacted his overall responsibilities only once during the sixteen weeks period, while the two middle school principals reported HIB impacted their overall professional responsibilities 23 times. Based on their self-reported implementation of HIB, it is evident that either the middle school principals rely less on their vice principals to address HIB than the high school principal or there is significantly less HIB incidents at the high school compared to the middle school. This is yet another difference between implementation of HIB legislation across grade levels and buildings within the district.

Anti-Bullying Specialist Responsibilities

Another vital component to the implementation of HIB policies across all school buildings is the responsibilities of the Anti-bullying specialist (ABS). Eight of the ten principals interviewed stated the importance of a dedicated Anti-bullying specialist in the building at all times. In Happy Valley School District, the ABSs at the elementary level are the guidance staff and at the Middle School and High School level, it is the Student Assistance Counselors (SACs). As previously mentioned, beginning in the 2012-2013 school year, each elementary school was assigned one guidance counselor, who consequently served as the building ABS. Many principals found this to be beneficial. Principal Bob summarizes, “I believe it has definitely made life a lot easier that she (the guidance counselor) works exclusively here (in the building). I don’t have to call her and hope that she can assist in some manner while she is at some other school and worry about what day she is here.” Principal Lauren stated:

The counselor is instrumental in working to complete the investigation and they can be very time consuming. Depending on how many people are involved, I’ve seen where my counselor has spent several days in a row just interviewing. And if she was not present and conducting the investigations, I would see it as a detriment to the school day and me being able to take care of the rest of my responsibilities.

Principal Tim also highlights the important role on the elementary level the guidance counselors play in investigations, “HIB is always that you work closely with your ABS in your building. Legislation freed up time because the administrator is not the only one doing investigations on HIB.” Principal Donna best summarizes the impact of anti-bullying specialists within her building:

HIB process is much more formalized and required building administrators to maintain documentation of investigations. Phone calls can take up to three hours when contacting multiple parties. Good to have a guidance counselor help with the investigations and have them available five days a week. One thing I do appreciate with the process is the interviewing process that the counselor goes through where they interview the alleged victim, the accused, any witnesses. It does provide a much clearer picture for parents to see, especially the parents of the accused.

This “extra” professional time outlined by Principal Lauren, Principal Tim, and Principal Donna emphasizes the importance of having a dedicated ABS in each building and the ABSs undertake the investigations. Under the HIB legislation, the timeliness of the investigations and the amount of hours necessary to complete one investigation is significant. While HIB impacts the responsibilities of the elementary principal, without a dedicated guidance counselor overseeing the investigations in each building, the impact would be far worse.

Another positive impact of having building dedicated guidance staff act as the Anti-bullying specialists was their ability to proactively address HIB with students and staff. Three principals stated that their ABSs facilitated communication with students and staff to instruct them on the law and deter potential actions that might lead to an HIB case. Principal Jane highlighted her ABS’s proactive approach to addressing HIB and attributed the ABSs actions and character education program to the decline in HIB incidents in her building:

I think because I have somebody here who is full time, that that has been very instrumental at reducing the amount of HIBs that I have this year. It allows for more time to interact with my staff. She spends a lot more time for example, getting into all of the classrooms and doing character education lessons. She also does lunch bunch groups where she is able to pinpoint the needs of specific students. She has more time to interact with parents. And I do think that there is a direct correlation between, as I said, the decline of incidents this year compared to

last year, so yes, in that respect, it is something that was sorely needed and we are seeing great results.

Principal Lauren reiterated the importance proactive ABSs can have on an elementary building:

I think my anti-bullying specialist works so hard she needs to be cloned. She is in the classroom doing powerpoints on respect and tolerance and she does so many different things with them. Every week there is a new project she brings to another grade level or another project or she gets somebody else involved in something. She runs the peer mediation, she is involved in character education, and she works so hard to get these children to be nice to one another so we can reduce HIB that it is just an amazing thing to me.

The high school principal, Principal Marshall, also emphasized the importance of his ABSs discussing the law with his staff, students, and parents:

Within the school we still spend a lot of time discussing it and reviewing cases between the SACs and the other vice principals in the high school. There is always ongoing training as you look at each HIB case. I mean the most important thing is that whoever is the anti-bullying specialists, here at the high school we have two, and they are both excellent and they get the law and they get kids and they have a good relationship with staff and students which goes a long way to closing out some of these difficult cases.

In the Happy Valley School District, the Anti-bullying specialists primarily serve as the chief investigators and interpreters between the description of events by the victims, alleged bullies, and the principal. To a lesser extent, depending on which building, they also serve as the character education instructors, informing students, parents, and staff about the importance of positive behavior and the impact HIB can have on their academic and social lives. This communication with necessary stakeholders, including students, staff, and parents, was one of the many ways that the Anti-bullying specialists impacted their building when implementing HIB. Without the assignment of HIB Anti-bullying

specialists in each building, the impact of HIB on the professional responsibilities of building level principals would be much more significant.

The impact of HIB legislation on the professional responsibilities of building level principals is one example of the conflict over organizational requirements and stakeholders (i.e. students, teachers, parents, principals) needs (Bolman & Deal, 2008). One main influence on HIB implementation is the principals' allocation of time towards HIB procedures. As previously discussed, one group significantly impacted by HIB implementation was the Anti-bullying specialists who investigate claims and communication with necessary stakeholders including parents, students, teachers, and administration. However, the implementation of HIB falls under the auspices of the building principal, who as the building leader must guide the HIB process, train staff, and when necessary act on behalf of the district to justify their actions. It is the impact on the time and responsibilities of the building level principals that have driven this study to this point.

Time

Steve Jobs once stated, "My favorite things in life don't cost any money. It is really clear that the most precious resource we all have is time" (Isaacson, 2011). This statement rings true for school administrators as well as captains of industry. As previously stated, building principals like Harry Wolcott's (1973) Ed Bell and each of the ten principals interviewed for this study are impacted by numerous outside influences including student issues, parent complaints, and staff concerns. Building principals are also responsible for building maintenance, school safety, and district initiative

implementation, while maintaining their position as an instructional leader within their buildings. The impact of HIB on these responsibilities further siphoned off time from the needs of their staff and students and condensed the time to facilitate instruction and lead their buildings. This sentiment was repeated consistently by all ten principals throughout this study.

Each of the ten principals interviewed for this study stated that the time to implement HIB legislation was taken from other responsibilities within their school buildings. For example, Principal Bob stated on average,

I would say for any HIB case, I am typically taking approximately three hours investigating it, for the average case, and an additional four hours related to paperwork. Thankfully because a lot of things have not risen to the HIB level, as I said before, I don't find that it is a daily issue for me. But at times it has come up, it can consume an entire day or two of work.

Principal Tim concurred with Principal Bob's assessment that significant time is allocated to the implementation of HIB. "It does take time away from other activities here. Ideally, you want to have more time to be in the classes and watching instruction. But it has taken time." Principal Donna provided more specific examples on how HIB implementation has impacted her responsibilities:

There is a lot of time spent on paperwork, a lot of time spent typing up reports, a lot of time spent making phone calls to parents to inform them about the investigation and the process, and explain the process, and talk them off the ledge of you are going to show up on the front page of the newspaper that your kid is a bully....When there is an investigation going on, it pulls me away from other things that I have to do....When you have a lot of paperwork, a lot of interviews, a lot of phone calls back and forth, it definitely multiplies your time that you are spending on one case, instead of just doing it, talking and having an end result and moving on, now it is this while formal procedure and weeks later, we now have to send the letter home because it is going to the board of education

Outside of the time component to investigate and discuss HIB incidents, Principal Donna targeted another major concern for building principals when implementing HIB: paperwork.

A common theme highlighted among eight of the ten building principals was the impact of additional paperwork on their professional responsibilities. Principal Bob stated:

At times, it has impeded my ability to do other parts of my professional role. For example, in the time I spent doing the paperwork, related to this, I can be planning a proactive activity that could also reduce bullying. I could be spending it working with teachers to improve their practice in the classroom and improve the environment of the school. The only thing that has changed is the amount of paperwork when an HIB, when something is reported as HIB.

Principal Jane reiterated the impact that additional HIB paperwork has had on her daily routine:

I really felt it last year because we had so many and it takes a lot away from your day. It also takes a lot away from the ABS. Because when the ABS is supposed to be dealing with grievance groups or helping children who have anxiety, or with any number of issues and you are, for lack of a better word, stuck doing hours and hours of paperwork... So we are talking about phone calls, paperwork, interviewing, then of course the amount of pages you have with the report itself, the ABS and I write up that report together, but we really try to cross every T and dot every I, so we do a lot of comparing in terms of the children's drawings, their statements, and we want to make sure we have that conveyed in an appropriate manner before it goes to the superintendent.

Principal Dave, a middle school principal, states that the overall implementation impacts his day, both on his professional time in the building and on the completion of necessary paperwork:

The phone calls, the interactions with the SAC and guidance counselors, time and the other vice principals' time, not only do we have regular discipline, but now we have to do discipline and then we have to do all the paperwork for the HIB. Then she has to do the investigation, then I have to do a return call, then when central

sends me the papers then I have to send out the letters. I have to create them, so yeah, it takes time. It occupies my time, so some of the time I would be in the classroom observing, or in the cafeteria, or walking and doing pop ins, or it makes me reallocate the time, which means that something else is getting missed. Whether it is building beautification, or more attention spent to analyzing, not critical test scores, but aspects I think would be interesting.

While some principals were not as specific on how their time and their responsibilities were directly impacted, some of their general comments outlined within their answers provided telling information on the impact the HIB legislation had on their buildings. Principal Maria stated, “I think the first year, it did require more of my time. Probably a couple of hours a week that were directly related to some situation which was related to an incident that was occurring or training. We did put a school safety team in place which involved parents, so it was probably a couple hours a week.” Principal Susan shared this belief that HIB implementation took away from her other daily responsibilities:

Because when HIB is in play, I don’t get out on the recess playground, I don’t get into the lunchroom, I may not get down the hallway to see the little program they are doing in one of the classrooms, I may not get into the library to see the students on the n-computing doing their research projects. So I am missing other things. Absolutely, it takes away from my day.

Two of the secondary principals shared slightly different beliefs than the elementary principals. Principal John, a middle school principal, believed the HIB implementation affected his vice principals as well as himself:

It affects my building level administration, my vice principals on a daily basis. It affects me more so on a weekly basis. That at least something is brought to my attention that either a case is being investigated or they want clarification on language, whether a case should be considered bullying. So there are more than a conversation about it at least once a week at my level. But it does impact you in terms of the paperwork, the timelines, and the follow-up that needs to be done. That really affects my VPs and affects their ability to get their normal plan for the day done. It impacts parent meetings, it impacts team meetings where we are

talking about instruction normally, because those meetings need to be canceled because they need to follow-up on a HIB case, or contact a parent for meeting a deadline of a timeframe. So I would say it does take away and there is only so much time in the day.

Principal John again highlights a very important point: the secondary schools have additional administrators to implement the legislation and facilitate the necessary paperwork and communication. However, even with the additional administrative support, the secondary principals, especially the middle school principals, are impacted by the law, its stringent timelines, and paperwork requirements. Principal Marshall, high school principal, summarized,

Again, I think that it was stuff that we were doing. We were still having interventions, we were still talking to kids, but I think it allows you to think more, because it goes on paper now. You have to sign off on this and it is the law. So you see how kids are affected by HIB all over the country. So I think that the law has had a positive impact on me because it does not allow you to push it to the side to deal with other issues. And kids' safety is the most important thing so I would just reiterate to that to see how important it is.

Principal Lauren provided the best description on how HIB implementation impacted her professional time within her school building:

Usually, the time. When we have an incident, we want to resolve in immediately. So even though we have ten days to investigate because the kids don't remember if too much time has gone by. However, sometimes those investigations take a lot of time, and there are other things going on in the building, so it can be difficult. I can think of one situation where there must have been a lot going on in the building, and maybe I had meetings outside the building, but yet I had to get to the parents in that same day and it was problematic. So I was either calling them from home at night or there was one instance where I asked the counselor to notify the parent, but let them know that I would be calling them the next day because I wasn't available to communicate with them, but I at least wanted to let them know that I was aware.

As seen above, HIB implementation adds to the already massive workload of building principals. While the standardized timelines and structured paperwork provide clear guidelines for all New Jersey building principals, the HIB legislation decreases the

available time administrators have to commit to the other activities necessary for running a building.

Finally, an indirect consequence of the legislation was presented by one administrator. The HIB legislation dictates that district must appropriately investigate, inform parents, and present the findings to the Board of Education for its approval. The amount of time from initial report and parental contact to final action by the Board of Education can take anywhere from four to six weeks. Principal Tim provided a general timeline, “From the initial complaint until the final letter sent by the board of education, the length of time can be upwards of four to six weeks.... But through the whole thing, you get parents calling you. Even through the whole investigation, they are trying to get information.” Principal Tim’s experience is common amongst building level principals. Two other principals, Principal Donna and Principal Bob, both stated they inform the parents of the students involved in HIB prior to the superintendent’s letter being sent to the home because of the length of time between the initial report and the final decision by the Board of Education. This length of time from initial referral to final notification provides more of an opportunity for principals to be affected by HIB cases on a day-to-day basis.

Weekly Impact of HIB Implementation on Professional Responsibilities

The above responses concerning the impact of HIB implementation by building level principals on their job responsibilities was supported through the data collected from the weekly surveys. Over a 16 week period, from February 7th, 2013 until May 30th, 2013, the above ten principals were surveyed weekly to gain insight on their job

responsibilities directly impacted by the implementation of HIB within their school buildings. The initial findings are listed below:

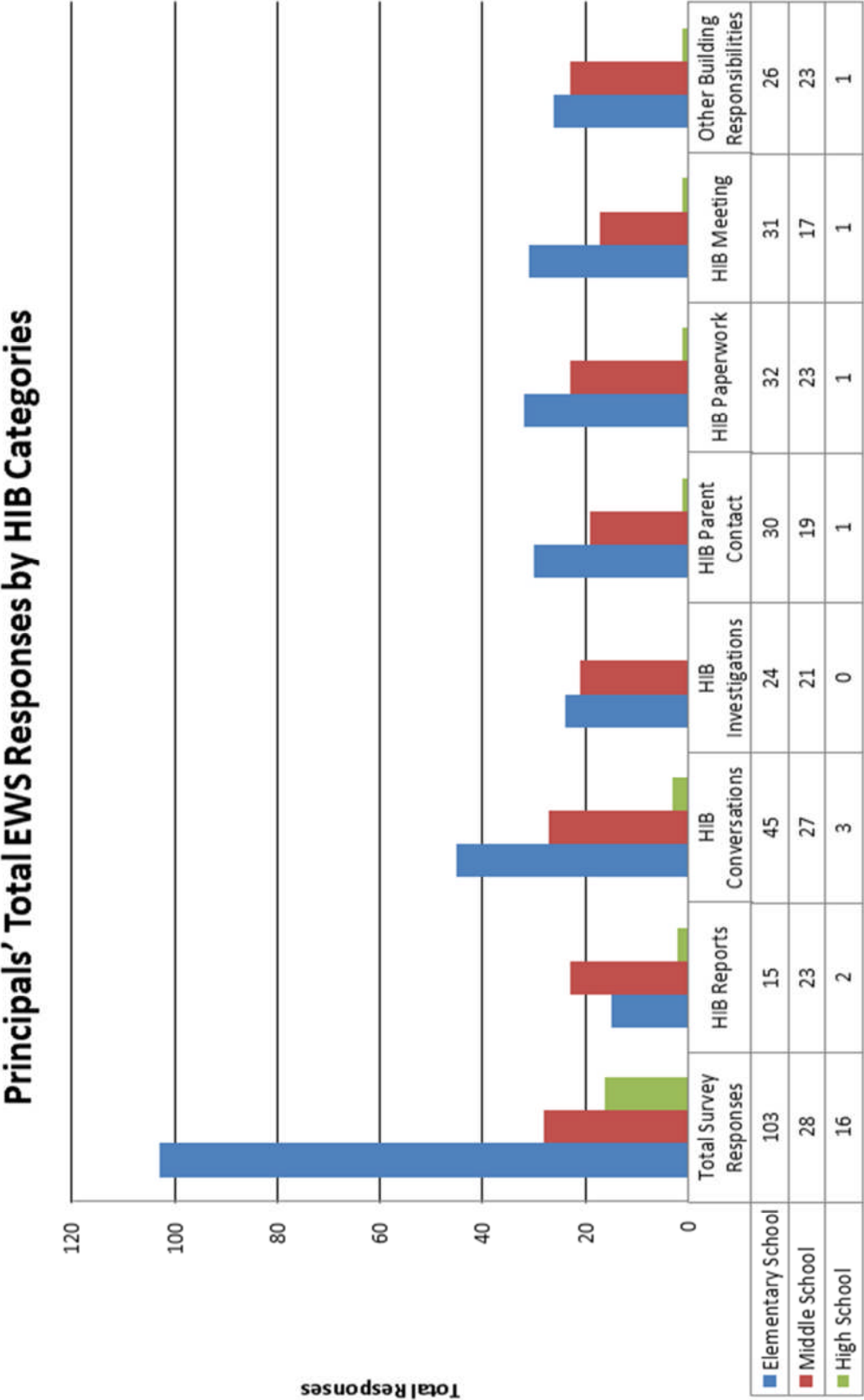


Figure 4. Response totals for all principals' electronic weekly surveys (EWS) separated by targeted HIB categories and academic level.

Out of a total possible amount of 160 principal responses, the researcher received 147 electronic weekly survey (EWS) responses from the principals included in this study for a 92 percent response rate. The researcher received 103 survey responses from the seven elementary principals out of a possible 112 responses. The researcher received 28 responses from the two middle school principals out of a possible 32 responses, and 16 responses from the high school principal. Out of the total 147 principal responses received by the researcher, the ten building principals stated they had a report of HIB 40 times, as well as, 75 reported conversations about HIB or potential HIB issues between themselves and their staff and/or parents. In total, 45 investigations were done across all grade levels, elementary, middle, and high school during this 16 week period. Other reported HIB related activities by the principals included 50 total instances of parent contact, either via phone or e-mail, 56 total reported instances of completing HIB related paperwork, and finally, 49 total instances of staff and/or parent meetings which sapped time away from other building responsibilities. As seen in Figure 4, the impact of HIB varied across grade levels from elementary, middle, and high school as seen in the number of HIB related incidents reported by each principal.

The four major areas the researcher examined to determine the impact of HIB on building principals included the time spent on HIB investigations, parent contact concerning HIB, completing HIB paperwork, and having parent or staff meetings concerning HIB. These four areas were identified by the principals in the general interviews as areas where their time was most impacted by HIB implementation. Within the electronic weekly surveys (EWS), if a principal reported they initiated an HIB investigation, had parent contact concerning an HIB incident, completed HIB paperwork,

or had a meeting concerning HIB, they were prompted to describe how the time dedicated to these HIB activities took away from their other professional responsibilities. The other professional responsibilities were derived from the pre-interview survey (Appendix E). These activities included:

1. Teacher observation (TO)
2. Staff Observation (SO)
3. Informal Building Walkthroughs (IBW)
4. School Function (SF)
5. Student Supervision (SS)
6. Planning/Implementing Professional Development (PD)
7. Scheduled staff meetings (SM)
8. 504 Meeting (504)
9. Intervention and Referral Service Meeting (IRS)
10. Child Study Team Meeting (CST)
11. Building Management (BM)
12. Managing School Resources and Budget (RES)
13. District/Parent/Community Communication (COM)
14. Writing School Reports or Completing paperwork (PAP)
15. Other (OTH)

As seen above in the principals' interview responses, significant differences were seen between the implementation on the elementary and secondary level, especially with high school. For further investigation, each of these four areas were divided by their academic level, elementary, middle, and high school to determine the impact on each of the

academic levels when looking at HIB implementation within the building. Figure 5 highlights the first of these differences within HIB implementation: investigations.

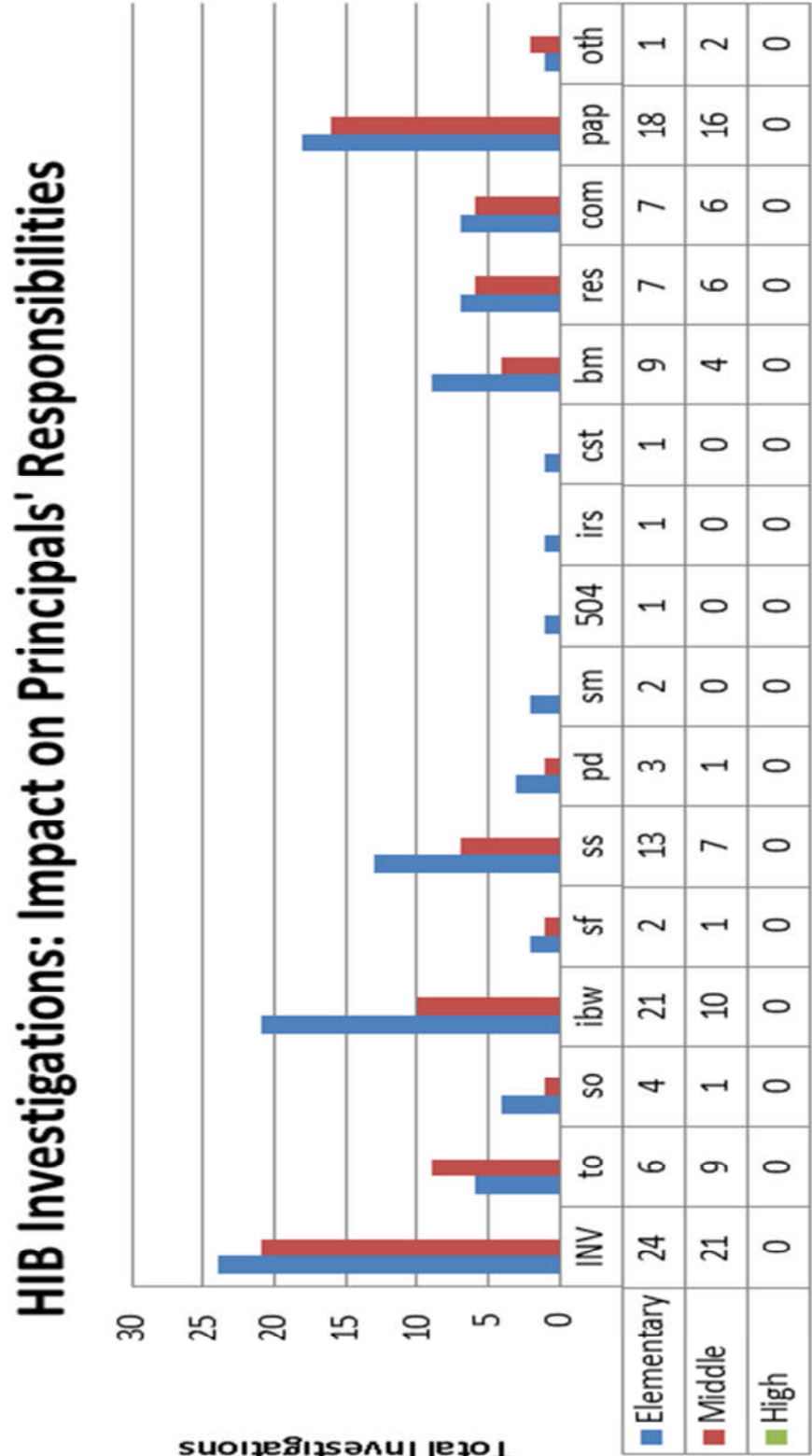


Figure 5. Impact of HIB investigations by grade level

In Figure 5, the researcher examined the impact of HIB investigations on building principals in the 45 total reported investigations. Seven elementary principals reported 24 investigations, an average of 3.4 investigations over the course of the 16 week period. However, the two middle school principals reported having 21 investigations, for an average of 10.5 investigations each over the same 16 week span. The high school principal reported zero involvement in HIB investigations. Figure 6 outlines the amount of HIB investigations per principal over the 16 week period.

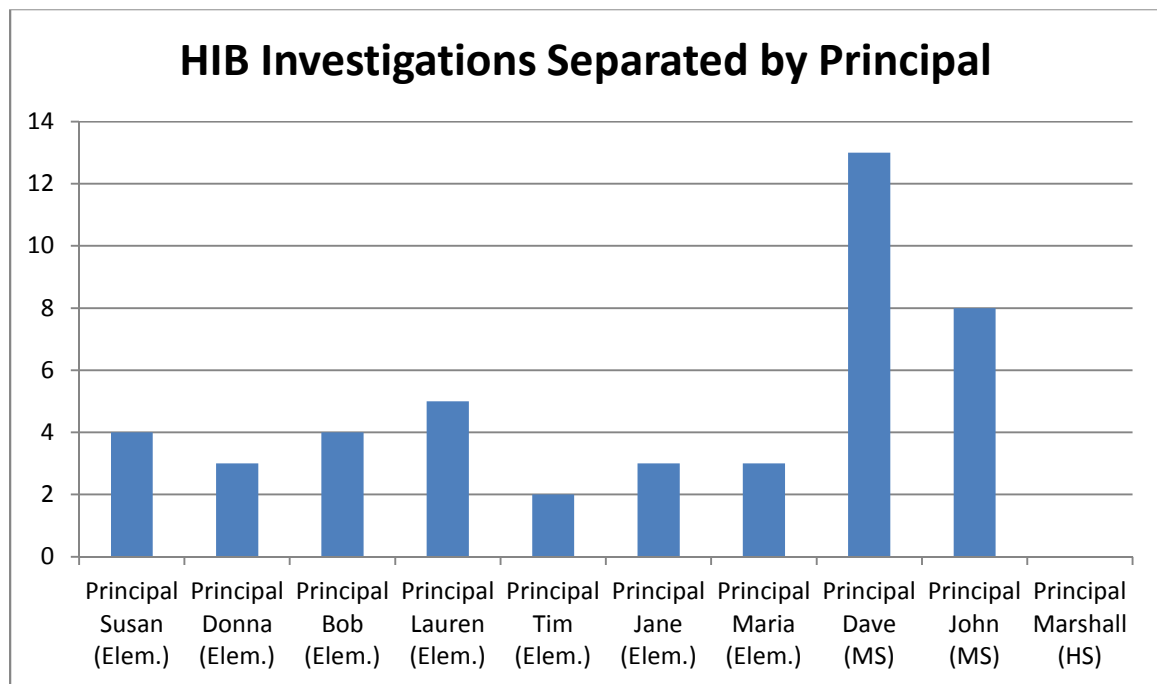


Figure 6: Impact of HIB Investigations on Individual Principals

These statistics are consistent with the researcher's findings that the high school principal relies heavily on the vice principals and ABSs in his building to lead and investigate cases of HIB. It also supports that the Middle School Principals, John and Dave, are most impacted professionally by their involvement in HIB investigations. However, while the middle school principals reported the most involvement in HIB investigations, the

professional responsibilities of all elementary and middle school principals were impacted from this activity.

When elementary and middle school principals were involved in HIB investigations within their buildings, they reported that their district paperwork, 76 percent of the time, and informal building observations, 69 percent of the time, were affected the most by the investigations. To a lesser extent, student supervision (44%), teacher observations (33%), building management (29%), managing building resources (29%), and district communication (29%) were affected as well. These trends continued as other areas of HIB responsibilities were identified.

Communication between parents and building principals was a second area of examination to determine day-to-day responsibilities affected by HIB implementation. Figure 7 highlights the impact of contact between parents and building principals separated by grade level:

HIB Parent Contact: Impact on Principals' Responsibilities

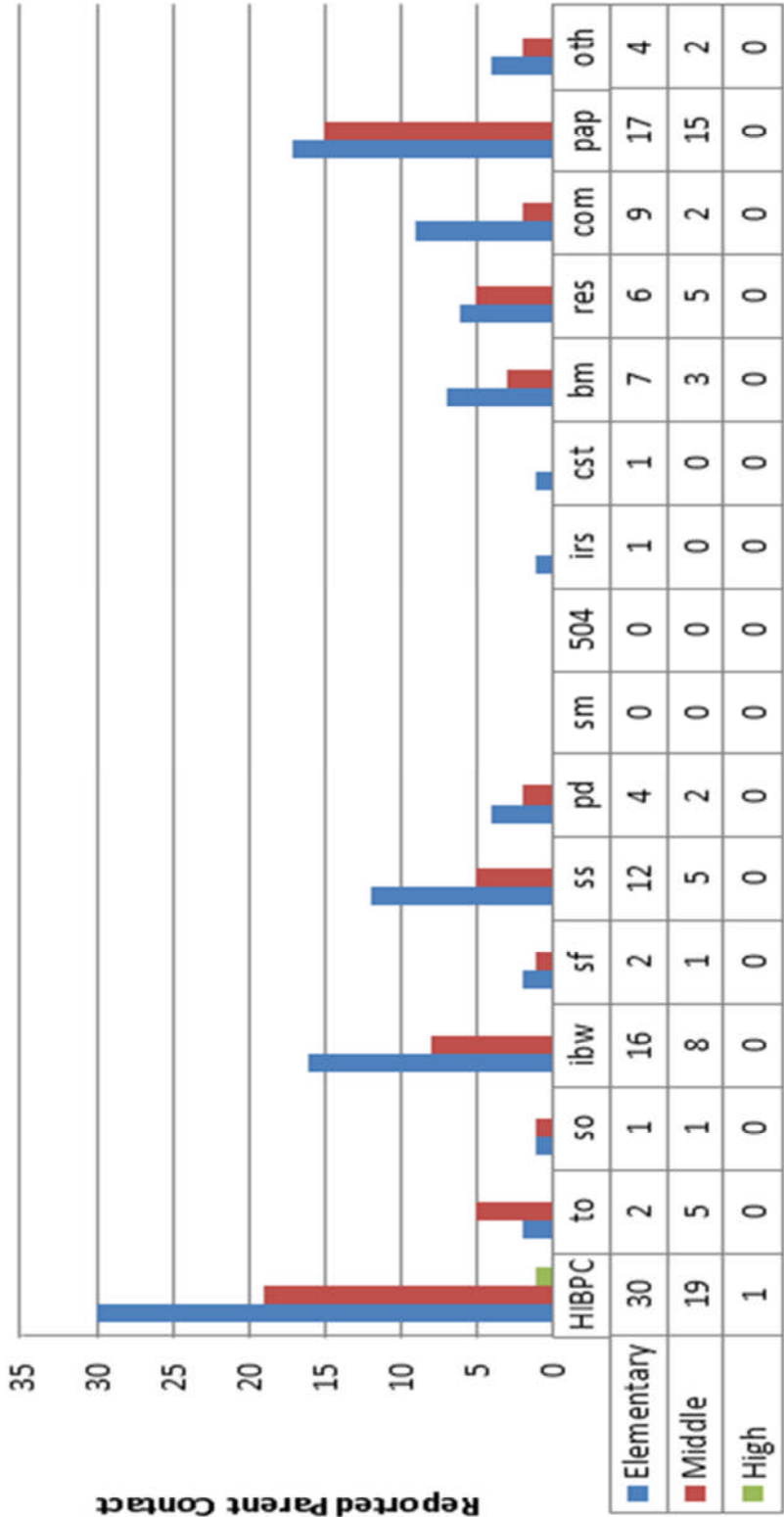


Figure 7. Impact of HIB parent contact by grade level

There were 50 total reported instances of parent contact concerning HIB over the 16 week period. Elementary principals reported 30 instances of parent contact, middle school principals reported 19 instances, and the high school principal reported one. As seen in the figure above, the elementary school principals more frequently reported parent communication concerning HIB, while the middle school principals reported approximately the same number of parent communication incidents as HIB investigations. Figure 8 depicts the per principal report of HIB Parent Contact over the 16 week period.

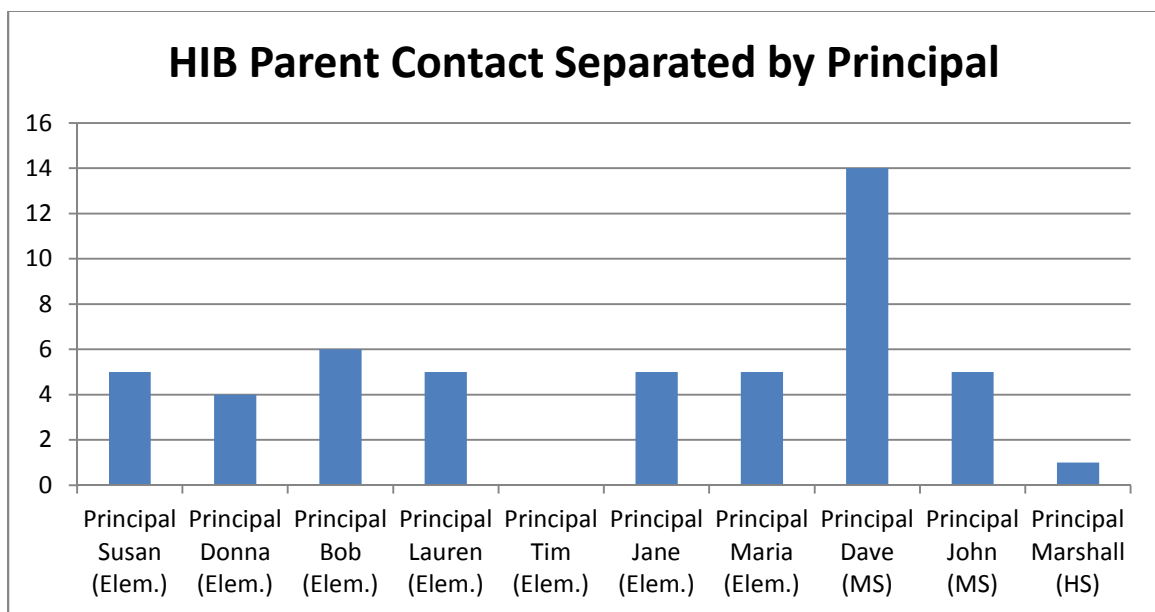


Figure 8. Impact of HIB Parent Contact on Individual Principals

Again, the high school principal's reliance on his vice principals and support staff to implement HIB was evident with only one reported communication with a parent concerning HIB. Conversely, Middle School Principal Dave was most impacted with 14

cases of HIB parent contact, while Middle School Principal John reported five instances of parent contact, which was average in relation to the elementary school principals.

Similar to the impact of HIB investigations on principal's responsibilities, the areas of completing paperwork (64%), informal building observations (48%), and student supervision (34%) were most impacted by the responsibility of parent contact. To a lesser extent, managing building resources (22%), district communication (22%), and building management (20%) were also affected as reported by the building principals. Slightly different from the reported impact of HIB investigations which seemingly affected the middle school principals more than the elementary and the high school, elementary principals reported by 60 percent of the reported instances of parent communication.

State mandated HIB paperwork was consistently highlighted as an area of concern for building principals within the general interviews and was the third area of examination to determine day-to-day impact of HIB implementation. Figure 9 highlights the impact of HIB paperwork on the building principals separated by grade level:

HIB Paperwork: Impact on Principals' Responsibilities

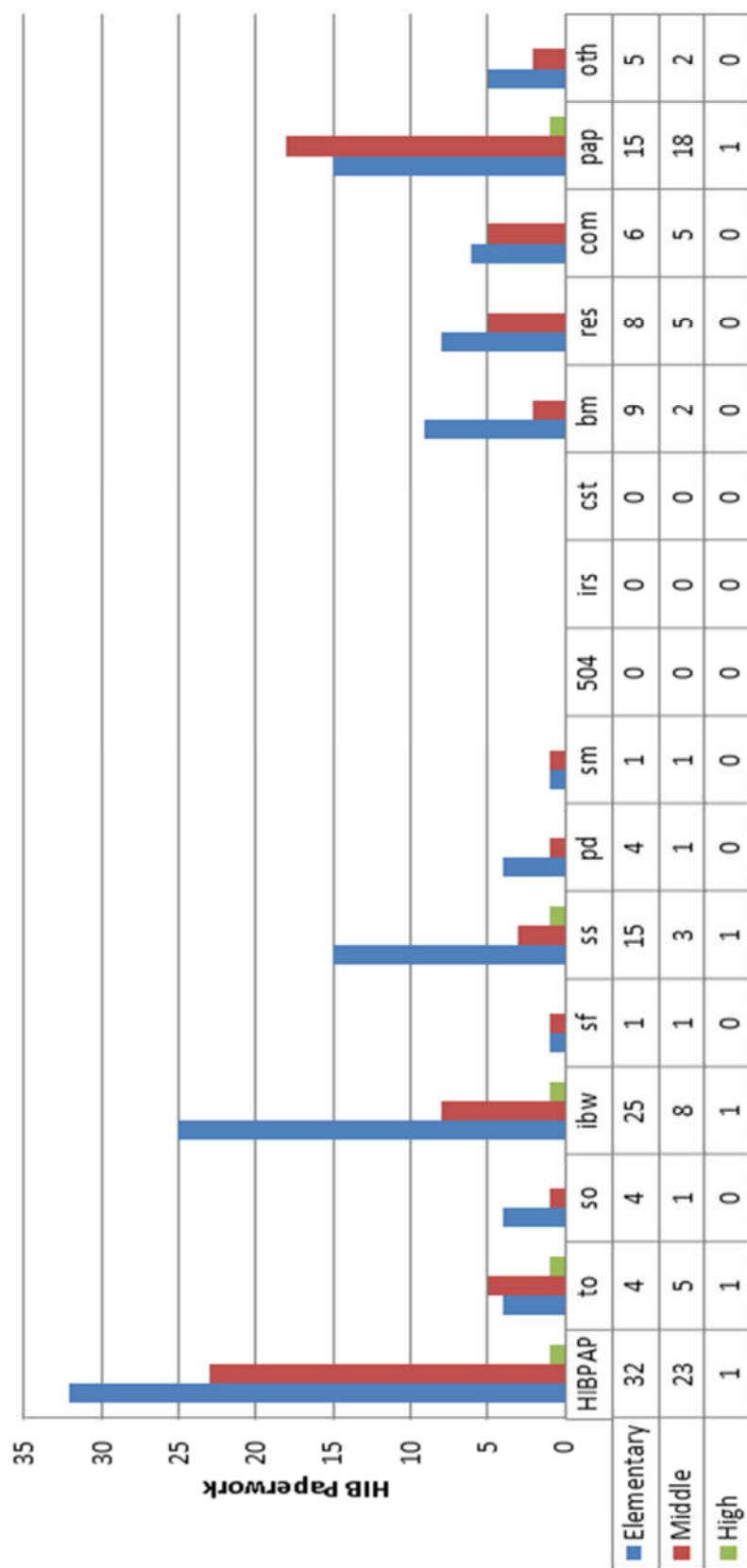


Figure 9. Impact of HIB paperwork by grade level

The impact of completing HIB paperwork affected building principals the most based on their self-reported weekly surveys. There were 56 total reported instances of completing HIB related paperwork over the 16 week period. The impact of HIB paperwork on principal responsibilities affected mostly the elementary and middle school principals, who made up 98 percent of all reported cases. Its impact on principal's responsibilities was more evident than the investigation and communication with parents. Figure 10 represents the division of HIB paperwork separated by principals reported over the 16 week period:

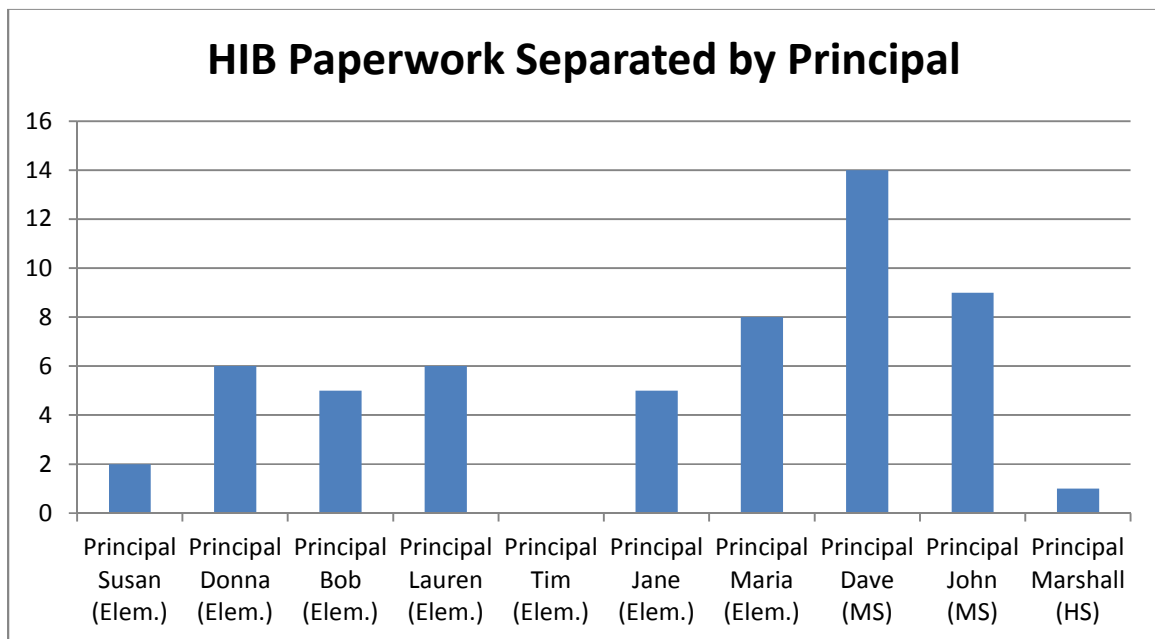


Figure 10. Impact of HIB Paperwork on Individual Principals

Reports of completing HIB paperwork were seen predominately by the middle school principals with Principals Dave and John reporting the highest amounts, 14 and nine, respectively. The elementary principals reported between eight and zero instances of completing HIB paperwork, and the high school principal reported only one instance over 16 weeks.

Overall, the completion of HIB paperwork impacted the areas of completing other district paperwork (61%), informal building observations (61%) and student supervision (34%) the most. Managing building resources (23%), building management (20%), and district communication (20%) were comparably affected in relation to the previously discussed two areas, HIB investigation and HIB communication. HIB paperwork did have a slightly larger impact on teacher observations (18%) than parent communication.

One difference seen between the elementary and middle school principals is what professional areas were affected by the completion of HIB paperwork. Elementary principals reported HIB paperwork took away from informal building observations 78 percent of the time, student supervision 47 percent of the time, and building management, 28 percent. In comparison, middle school principals reported HIB paperwork took away from informal building observations just 34 percent of the time, student supervision 13 percent of the time, and building management 9 percent of the time. However, the middle school principals reported completing HIB paperwork impacts the completion of other district paperwork 78 percent of the time while elementary school principals reported HIB paperwork affected their other district paperwork only 49 percent of the time. This difference provides insight into the daily routine of both elementary school and middle school principals. Elementary principals consistently reported during their individual interviews that they made a regular effort to complete informal building walkthroughs on a daily basis. Neither of the middle school principals mentioned informal building walkthroughs during their individual interviews. This difference was supported by the data collected during the 16 week survey.

The impact of HIB meetings on principal responsibilities was the final area examined by this researcher. During the weekly surveys, principals reported 49 instances of an HIB meeting either with staff, parents, or students. Figure 11 shows the impact of HIB meetings separated by academic grade level:

HIB Meetings: Impact on Principals' Responsibilities

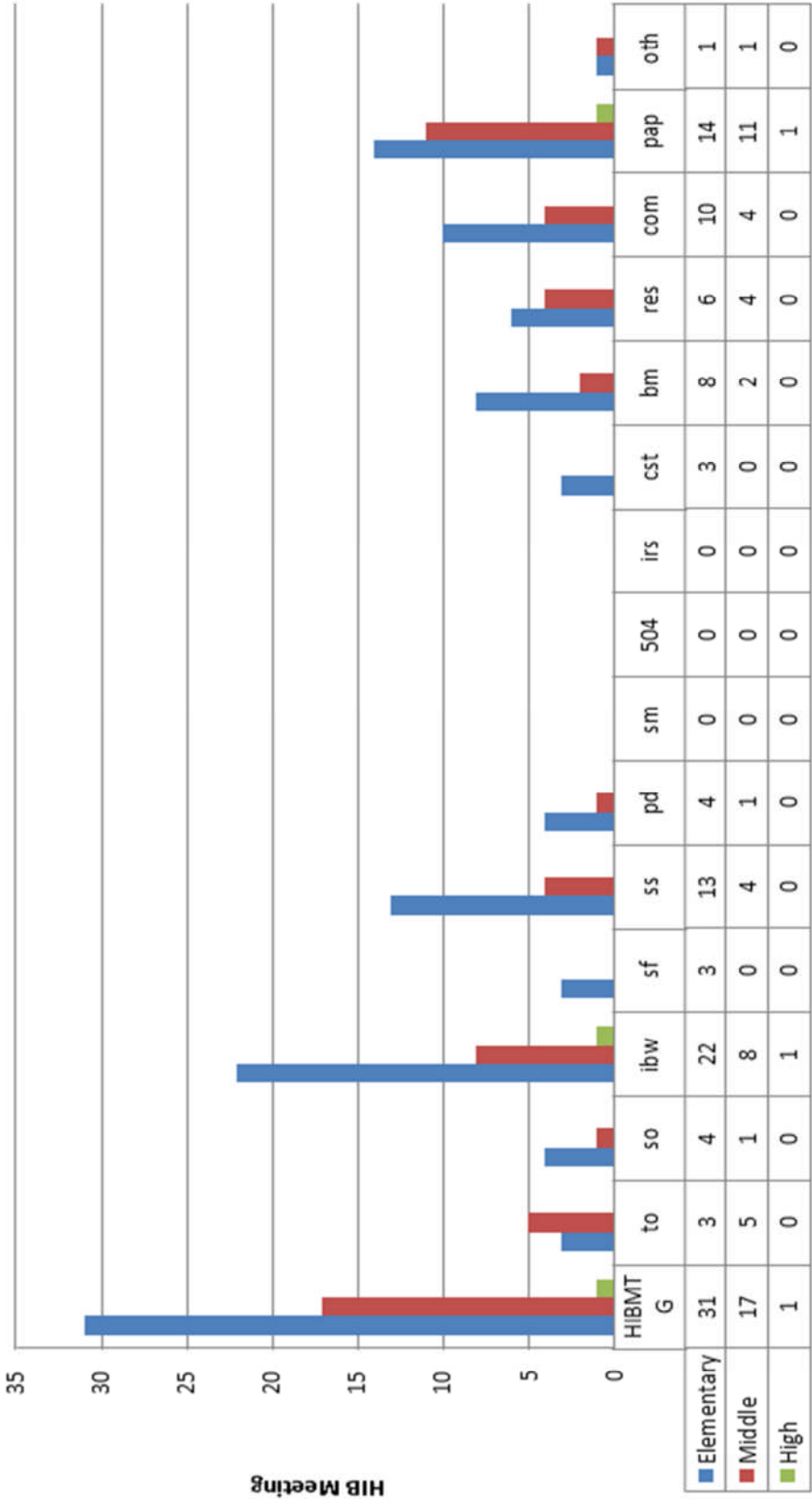


Figure 11. Impact of HIB meetings by grade level

As mentioned earlier in Harry Wolcott's examination of Ed Bell, Wolcott stated, "The time that Ed Bell spent in formal, prearranged meetings restricted the time in his total day at school for handling other routines. The net effect was that the busier a day with scheduled meetings and appointments, the busier were the unscheduled moments available for handling daily routines" (Wolcott, 1973, p 123). As seen in Figure 11, informal building walkthroughs, completing paperwork, student supervision, district communication, building management, managing building resources, and teacher observations were all areas directly impacted by principal participation in HIB meetings.

Individual reports of the principals' participation in HIB related meetings had a similar impact on the areas already discussed above. Figure 12 highlights the individual impact of HIB meetings on the ten principal participants over the 16 week period.

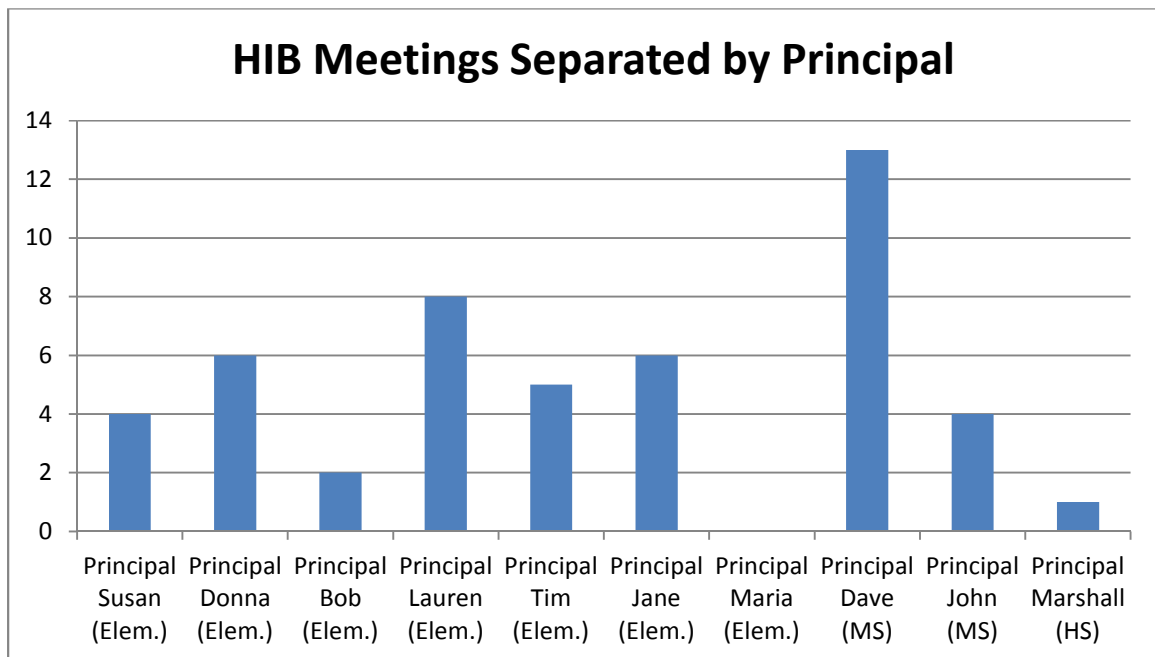


Figure 12. Impact of HIB Meetings on Individual Principals

As seen within the previous three examined areas, Middle School Principal Dave reported the highest number of HIB related meetings with three elementary school principals also reporting six or more parent meetings over a 16 week period. The primary impact of HIB meetings occurred at the elementary level, where 63 percent of the reported meetings took place.

During those meetings, the areas most impacted for the elementary principals included informal building walkthroughs (71%), student supervision (42%), and other district paperwork (45%). 35 percent of the reported HIB meeting occurrences were at the middle school level and they impacted the completion of other district paperwork (65%), informal building walkthroughs (47%), and teacher observations (29%). In the one reported instance by the high school principal, the HIB meeting impacted his ability to complete informal building walkthroughs and other district paperwork.

There remains an apparent impact of the HIB legislation on the professional responsibilities of the principals in Happy Valley School District. The time allocated toward HIB activities, as outlined above, must be reallocated from other mandatory responsibilities necessary to run a school building. The professional impact of HIB legislation affects not only our building principals, but also impacts our schools and school community in both positive and negative ways.

Impact of HIB on Schools

As seen above, HIB implementation has impacted the daily responsibilities of building level principals. The difference in staff allocation among the elementary, middle, and high schools represent one reason why the legislation impacts the building level

principals differently. The introduction of dedicated anti-bullying specialists (ABSs) on the elementary level for the 2012-13 school year was one change that impacted the HIB mandate and its effect on the elementary principals. Overall, the HIB legislation's influence on professional responsibilities of building principals was measureable and defined. However, the influence of the HIB legislation on the school structure was yet another area highlighted by the principals during their individual interviews. Both positive and negative elements were highlighted and helped to define the professional impact of the law on these district administrators.

Each of the ten principals highlighted both positive and negative elements of the HIB legislation. Positive elements listed by the building principals included an increase in documenting bullying situations within their school, increased awareness of bullying by teachers, parents, and students, and more responsibility on school administrators to act rather than ignore a potential bullying issue. Negative elements highlighted by the principals include the limited amount of resources available on the elementary level to implement the law, as well as, the time and paperwork necessary to complete one case and discerning the difference between legitimate HIB cases and false claims.

Positive Elements. Principal Tim summarized some of the most important positive elements of the HIB legislation stating, "Positive elements: Documented incidents, ability to do investigation, (and using the) umbrella of law to use for protection." Principal Donna reiterated his points:

I think something positive is the level of investigation because they (the ABSs) do have to interview and get so much documentation. Things aren't just "you picked on me, no I didn't" and it's left at that. It is a much more in-depth investigation which leads to more information for us as school personnel, but more information

for the parents so they again are not as easy to say you are just picking on my kid or it's not a big deal. There is some kind of ammunition you could say when talking to parents about their children.

Other positive elements concerning the law were described by Principal Lauren, "The positive is that it is a record. It is helpful to an administrator who has put things in place and maybe doesn't have a parent who is following through with appropriate action at home."

Along the same lines of parent knowledge and documenting HIB concerns within schools, Principal Bob stated:

I think a positive of the legislation is that it has given parents an increased confidence when they see the extent of the paperwork; however, voluminous it is and perhaps unnecessary at times, I think it has created some good. And I believe now that parents will not exercise an option to pursue something through HIB and they are often reporting it as an issue between two students that can be addressed and perhaps discipline invoked without it rising to the level of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. The positives are it creates increased pressure on school districts to do a very thorough job in handling HIB. Another positive is that there is probably better tracking of students who are victims and offenders in bullying cases over time. It probably has happened everywhere.

The need to properly document HIB cases and use the data to address HIB concerns was repeated by Principal Dave, "You're taking the data, you're analyzing the data, and you're coming up with a plan based off the data. So that's all good. It helps you mark improvement. So that's all positive." While the increased documentation of HIB incidents by school employees and an overall greater amount of parent understanding about the legislation were two positive elements, a third positive element of the legislation as highlighted by the principals was an increase in student accountability.

Principal Jane detailed student accountability as the most positive element derived from this legislation, "I think a positive element of the law is that it makes children

understand that they are going to held accountable for their actions.” Principal John, a middle school principal reiterated her perspective, “It is good because it brings awareness and requires you to focus on it. In terms of day-to-day bullying, I think it has improved because more students are aware that you can’t be nasty.” Principal Susan had a slightly different perspective about the impact it has on her elementary students.

I think that children who are overly assertive tend to realize that the things they are doing are really too assertive and it sort of checks them. It does not change their personality. It does not change the fact that they are assertive. It does not change the fact that they have strong personalities and they are leaders in their group. But it does make them think twice before they say anything because they realize that the other children in the group are following them.

Principal Marshall summarized the positive elements of the HIB legislation the best:

So I think that the law has had a positive impact on me because it does not allow you to push it to the side to deal with other issues. I think it is still too early to see at this point. It is still pretty new, but on a positive, it is all you see and all you hear. Kids are aware, staff are aware. So I think that it was brought the whole element of HIB and kids treating other kids, staff treating kids, it has made people much more aware of what they say or do and how it can impact other people and their lives.

The improved documentation of HIB related events and increased parent and student awareness of issues were two of the main positive elements discussed by the building principals. These two positive elements were combatted by a number of negative elements discussed by the building principals during their individual interviews.

Negative Elements. While some positive elements of the legislation were highlighted by the principals, they stated numerous negative elements to the legislation as well. Principal Tim stated, “limited resources and working in a smaller school can lead to implementation issues” as two of his main issues. Paperwork was another major concern for the building principals. Principal Bob, elementary school principal, stated, “Negative

elements for all those administrators, including myself, who have always done a very good job with harassment intimidation and bullying, etc, it has merely created an exorbitant amount of additional paperwork that is not necessarily creating much benefit.” Principal John, middle school principal, restated this issue, “But it’s bad because in many situations, it is a lot of time on an unnecessary event. And I don’t mean unnecessary in terms of helping the children. Unnecessary in the amount of paperwork that has to be processed in order for you to get to the same end that you could have by just addressing it as you are professional responsible to do.”

Time allocation, as mentioned previously above, was restated as a negative element related to the implementation of HIB legislation. Principal Dave, “Well the negatives are all the time you are reallocating, time you are taking away from other creative and important aspects of the day.” Time was an issue for Principal Lauren as well. However, she stated both time and the impact of minor infractions on the time of principals was a negative impact: “Time. (Also) the negative is that sometimes a minor infraction can be termed as bullying and really be blown out of proportion. When you’re dealing with kids on an elementary level, you have to be able to decide what is, they say it can be a one-time incident.” This discretion to discern between one-time incidents and a reportable HIB incident is limited due to the scope and scale of the HIB legislation and was generally considered a negative element of the law.

Victim self-reporting. Another negative element mentioned by two principals was the impact the legislation has on the self-reporting of HIB victims. Principal Donna was the first to mention this issue. “Because it is so formal (a process for HIB investigation) and so many people need to be notified of an investigation, I believe it is impeding

victims from coming forward.” This was elaborated on by Principal John, middle school principal:

I think as much good as it did, it did as much harm. Because where it is protecting some students that you might not normally have seen bullying, I think the target audience for whom it was created for, students who were being bullied for very specific cases of their lifestyle choice, or ethnicity, those students are less likely to come forward, especially in situations or lifestyle choices, where they may not have been known by their parents of their sexual orientation and due to the extreme requirements of the case, children do not want to come forward because they do not want their parents to know. So I think in that sense, it has hurt that population of students because it is far less likely those students will come forward.

This issue, self-reporting among students who might have previously sought help at school for an issue of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, should be studied further as it brings to light a serious inconsistency within the HIB law: legislation which was meant to address bullying and help students might actually be deterring victims from coming forward to address their concerns with school officials. This concern about self-reporting runs contrary to another negative issue raised by administrators concerning false claims by students and parents.

False claims. Principal Jane first mentioned the issue of a false HIB claim, “In my experience during the past year and a half as an administrator, I found that we have had a number of situations where some HIB complaints have been unfounded.” Principal Donna reiterated that false bully claims are a negative element of the legislation: “Just because the word bully was used, or because some brought that up, we have to investigate it and our time really could be spent better. (Previously) people were in the habit of using the word bullying very frequently, and now they understand when that word is used, what is going to happen, so they are more hesitant to use it as well.”

Principal Tim restated her point, "But I think it has also created where everybody calls the situation, the parents immediately say their student is being bullied.....But the word bully is thrown out there all the time now." Principal Marshall, high school principal summarized the best, "From a negative standpoint, you just hope that it is not used to get back at someone. You have to make sure that each case is legitimate."

Creating Safer Schools

When asked if the harassment, intimidation, and bullying legislation was creating safer schools for their students, many of the principals had mixed responses. Only one principal, Principal Bob, adamantly defended the positive impact of the legislation stating:

I believe that the legislation has in fact done that (made schools safer). I believe that in schools that I have been in, and most schools that I have seen in this district... I believe (Happy Valley) has always been very proactive and responsive to addressing these issues, but the reality is that we have heard stories over the years of school districts that were not doing that, and this does not give any out for districts to avoid the responsibilities to responsibility address issues involved teasing, harassment, intimidation, etc.

Principal Maria directly disagreed with Principal Bob:

The short answer is no. I don't think that the legislation and all the procedures in place make a difference. I think the good thing that came out of it is there is a heightened sense of awareness about what we need to do in terms of prevention. Because once there are all these rules to follow once things unravel and we found there was a problem, I think it forced administrators, teachers, and school personnel to say we really need to do something to prevent this from happening.

These two very contrasting responses show the vast difference between how the law is perceived among school principals in the same district, much less throughout the entire state.

Other principals surveyed were less adamant about their responses and were less sure of whether the legislation was creating safer schools. When asked if the legislation was creating safer schools, Principal Tim stated, “Yes and no. I believe that a law needs to be in place. I believe that in years past, there have been incidents that have been reported and schools and administration did not do what they were supposed to do and it led to some unfortunate consequences.” Principal Lauren also was tentative about the impact that it was having on her school, “I would say yes. I would say at this level you have to be cautious on what a HIB is and what isn’t HIB.” Also, as mentioned previously, Principal Donna and Principal John both stated they were concerned that the legislation deterred students from self-reporting instances of HIB, therefore making the law less effective within its purpose and impact. With the varied responses above, it is evident that while the legislation provides a heightened awareness to harassment, intimidation, and bullying within our schools, the true impact of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights will not be felt within our schools for many years.

Bolman and Deal (2008) state “Leaders must know when the rules of the game change and redesign the structure accordingly” (p. 116). As districts have worked through implementing HIB legislation within their schools over the past two years, both positive and negative elements were seen through the implementation. As the HIB mandate continues to become more ingrained into our schools, school leaders are going to need to address the negative elements highlighted above by the building level principals. By continuing to evolve with the HIB legislation, districts will be better prepared to address the continuing needs of its students who potentially face bullying on a daily basis within our schools.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

Building level principals are responsible for numerous activities on a daily basis within their school buildings. They provide guidance and leadership for teachers, students, parents, and staff. They facilitate instruction, provide a safe and secure school environment, and implement necessary district, state, and federal initiatives. To complete these tasks, building principals must communicate clearly with stakeholders, be knowledgeable of the needs of their faculty and staff, and be driven to improve the academic environment for all students (Riehl, 2000; Portin, 2004; Camburn et al., 2010; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Greenfield, 1995). Each of these responsibilities limits the professional time allotted by building level principals to any one task. Any additional responsibilities, including implementing state legislation, further diminishes the time available to dedicate to improving school culture, classroom instruction, and pupil learning.

The final chapter of this study outlines the lessons learned through an examination of principals' responsibilities and the impact that HIB legislation has had on their daily activities. This outline is divided into three sections: the foundation of HIB implementation within Happy Valley School District, the evolution of implementation from year 1 to year 2, and the overall impact on principals' responsibilities within the district. Also addressed in this chapter are the limitations of this study and recommendations for future research. A bevy of additional areas of study arose by looking at the impact of HIB legislation on the daily routine of the elementary, middle, and high school principals. Future research on the impact of HIB legislation on school

culture, the professional responsibilities of vice principals and ABSs and the impact of the law on student self-reporting would be additional areas of potential study.

HIB Implementation

Almost universally, the principals of Happy Valley School District believed the district provided enough resources and adequate training for the implementation of HIB beginning in the 2011-12 school year. From the consistency of principals' responses surrounding policy implementation, it was evident to this researcher that the professional development supplied by the district provided a solid foundation from which the principals could apply the HIB law within their buildings. However, as was noted by numerous principals, additional training and/or an opportunity to discuss HIB cases among their peers was generally stated as a need moving forward. Additionally, the district's hiring of eight guidance counselors for the elementary schools at a significant cost to the district showed a commitment to providing the principals with the necessary tools to implement the law efficiently and effectively.

Some general inconsistencies within HIB implementation were noted by the researcher even with the legislation's rigid timelines and procedures, especially on the elementary level. Principal participation in HIB investigations and general communication between their building ABSs and parents were two areas that differed within the implementation process across elementary schools. However, unlike the major differences outlined by Dunbar and Villarruel (2002) in their study on the implementation of the Guns Free School Act (GFSA), these inconsistencies among the elementary school principals could be deemed relatively minor. The overall uniformity of HIB

implementation amongst all ten (10) principals provided a testament to the district's professional development and principals' understanding of the law.

Evolution of HIB Implementation

The researcher noted an evolution of the legislation's implementation within the district over the first two years. As previously mentioned, the additional guidance staff provided to each elementary school greatly streamlined the implementation process and allowed the elementary principals the ability to directly hand off the investigations to their ABSs, rather than waiting until the guidance counselor arrived at their school for their assigned day. Another reported difference between Year 1 of implementation (2011-12) and Year 2 (2012-13), was a better understanding of the law by faculty, staff, students, and parents. As previously mentioned, the 10 schools examined during this study had 54 confirmed HIB cases during the 2011-2012 school year (New Jersey Department of Education, 2012). During the 2012-2013 school year, the principals in the same 10 buildings reported only 16 confirmed HIB incidents, a 70 percent decline in confirmed cases from 2011-12 to 2012-13 (Happy Valley Public Schools, 2013). Many of the building principals highlighted the increased knowledge about the legislation as one of the primary reasons for a decline in the number of HIB cases within their schools. Other reasons attributed to the decline of HIB cases from year 1 to year 2 included the assignment of a full time ABS to each elementary school building, proactive programs in character education seen on the elementary level, and an overall better understanding of the HIB issues in each of the district's school buildings.

However, the evolution of HIB legislation also changed the dynamic of the HIB claims themselves. Three principals outlined their concern about the validity of all the claims they receive, stating the need to separate the “false claims” from the legitimate HIB incidents. This negative evolution of the legislation within the district contributes to the impact that the legislation continues to have on building principals.

Impact of HIB on Building Level Principals

New Jersey’s Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights, first implemented in September 2011 has had a significant impact on the responsibilities of building level principals within the Happy Valley School District, particularly on the elementary and middle school levels. As stated by the principals, the time allocated to each HIB case siphons away hours that were previously spent on other administrative tasks. In particular, the seven (7) elementary principals reported they reallocated time away from informal building walkthroughs, student supervision, and completing other district paperwork when incidents of HIB were brought to their attention. This corresponds to research on principal time allocation which states principals spend a majority of their time on building management, personnel issues, and student affairs and devote a great deal of attention and time to working with students, student related issues, and fostering relationships (Camburn et al., 2010; Horng et al., 2010). Camburn, Spillane, and Sebastian (2010) state, "The consistent finding that principals spend substantial time running the building and attending to student affairs suggests to us the existence of persistent structural constraints on principals' time that press them to attend to such issues rather than instructional leadership." (p. 730). While many elementary principals stated

they were more prepared and better staffed in the second year of HIB implementation, their professional activities were still greatly impacted as a result the legislation.

The two (2) middle school principals reported the most impact on their daily activities. Out of the 28 EWS responses received from the two middle school principals, they reported the highest amount of HIB cases per administrator at 10.5 investigations per middle school principal over the 16 week period. They also consistently stated multiple areas of their professional day that were impacted by HIB cases including investigations, paperwork, and meetings. These middle school statistics also support research which state most bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation cases occur during the middle school years (Frisen et al., 2007; Limber, 2003; Beale & Hall, 2007) and is more of a general concern among middle school staff and students (Bradshaw et al., 2007). Finally, the high school principal was least impacted by the legislation, in part because of the additional staff at his disposal to help facilitate the implementation of the law.

While many of the principals reported one positive element of the legislation was the increase in documentation of HIB related instances, they also reported that the paperwork associated with the law was a negatively impacted their professional responsibilities. The voluminous amount of paperwork associated with each case, in conjunction with the strict timelines and necessary parent contact, had an immediate impact on time that principals could spend on other professional activities within their schools. Elementary and Middle school principals combined reported that completing HIB paperwork took away from their informal building walkthroughs and the completion of other district paperwork 60 percent of the time, as well as impacted the supervision of their student 32 percent of the time. This reallocation of time away from these and other

responsibilities including facilitating instruction and building management impacted their professional role within their school buildings. Spillane and Hunt's (2010) research support the above findings by highlighting the amount of time allocated within each respective administrative area for the principals within their daily routine. The introduction of additional paperwork, meetings, and investigations, associated with HIB legislation further impact the professional responsibilities of building principals, especially on the elementary and secondary level.

Implication for Practice

The lessons learned by this study provide a forum from which to discuss and review the impact of state and federal mandates on the day-to-day responsibilities of building level principals. Many principals felt that the HIB regulations detrimentally impacted their time allocation within their buildings, especially on the elementary and middle school levels. Also evident within this work is that elementary school principals in Happy Valley School District are very isolated from other administrators and must rely on their staff, in many cases the Anti-bullying specialists, to make decisions based on HIB related issues. It was evident that middle school and high school principals rely heavily on their support staff including vice principals, ABSs, and guidance staff to address HIB incidents within their buildings. Overall, elementary and middle school principals are affected the most by implementing HIB legislation, while a more expansive study would be necessary prior to making any conclusions on HIB's impact on the high school level. Other areas of implication for practice include the need for on-going and comprehensive professional development, a unified data base of HIB incidents, and the potential impact for other school districts.

Consistent Professional Development. When he studied HIB legislation and its impact of South Carolina's schools, Terry (2010) determined professional development was one of the only ways to positively impact school culture and deter bullying within the school system (p. 98). The need for additional professional development on HIB implementation was a common theme repeated among all principals. Regular HIB updates and professional development meetings were routinely mentioned as an area of concern by the principals. Many asked that during these professional development meetings, discussions on common practices and implementation strategies could provide all principals with the same vocabulary and strategies to address issues of HIB within their schools. Included in these trainings should be the secondary vice principals, who consistently implement the legislation as the designee of the building principal. Elementary and Middle School principals should be provided an opportunity to discuss HIB issues with each other to determine if they see patterns across schools or grade levels, since most of the impact of the legislation appeared to be isolated to these two academic levels.

Unified Data Base of HIB Incidents. In combination with more comprehensive professional development, the district should create a unified data base of HIB incidents to ensure the documentation of these events is uniform and standardized. Bradshaw and Waasdorp (2009) found that adopting a web-based data collection system at a state or district level can promote greater consistency in survey administration, improve the quality of the data collected, facilitate comparisons and surveillance efforts across schools, and encourage data-based decision making at multiple levels (p. 360). Using one data base to identify students who are perpetual bullies, as well as reported victims, can

help the district address the needs of all students and provide the safe school environment necessary for learning. A unified data base also protects the district from litigation especially if the district can identify the actions taken to ensure the safety of the identified victims. Finally, a unified data base can ensure consistent communication between school buildings and building principals as students move from elementary to middle to high school.

Implications for Administrators in Other Districts. Besides additional professional development and the call for a unified data base of HIB incidents, school districts should do an internal assessment of the amount of time building principals and ABSs are dedicating towards the implementation of HIB. This self-assessment will help standardize HIB related activities within the district, will determine if additional staff is needed, or if a change in the district's implementation policy is warranted. These internal assessments can be shared with the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education, helping to define the role of the building principal, as well as, to justify additional staff requests when necessary. Finally, these internal assessments can be used to provide district administration a look into the daily routines of their building principals to determine how their day-to-day activities are most impacted by HIB related incidents.

Contributions to Literature

This study contributes to the growing literature on the impact of state and federal legislation on the professional responsibilities of building level principals. As the state and federal government continue to implement mandated changes tied to school funding formulas (i.e. GFSA, NCLB Legislation, Federal Common Core Standards, etc), school districts and their leadership teams must adapt accordingly. These changes have the

potential to impact districts financially, legally, and professionally as they continue to implement these unfunded mandates while still trying to maintain a high level of education for the students who populate their buildings on a daily basis.

This study also provided insight into the daily routines of building level principals on the elementary and secondary levels. Many studies examine the daily routine of building level principals in relation to instructional leadership and student achievement (Supovitz et al., 2010; Spillane & Hunt, 2010; Spillane et al., 2007). However, this study looked at the impact of state and federal mandates in relation to overall daily responsibilities of building principals. As a broader examination of the legislation's impact, the researcher was able to determine the expansive impact that one state law can have on the professional responsibilities of the building principals. Hence, this study contributes to the growing literature on principal responsibility and time allocation on a day-to-day basis.

Limitations of Study

While this study provides insight into the daily routines of building principals and how their professional responsibilities are impacted by HIB implementation, there are some limitations of this study. One of the limitations to the study was the sample size. While Happy Valley School District is a large suburban school district with multiple schools, the sample size was not able to provide generalizable results, especially on the secondary level. While seven elementary school principals were included in this study, only one high school principal, and three secondary principals overall, was included. By having only one high school principal included within this project, the ability of this study to generalize its findings across high school principals is limited. Also, since all

principals were employed by the same district and provided similar professional development, generalizable information and transferable implications on professional development needs could not be derived from the professional development plan implemented in Happy Valley School District in relation to other school districts.

Happy Valley School District was able to implement various measures to ensure the successful implementation of the HIB law, including the hiring of eight additional elementary guidance counselors to act as ABSs and facilitate the legislation's implementation and district compliance. The district's expenditure for the eight new guidance positions was \$ 485,723.00, or a per pupil cost for the district of \$ 53.36 (Happy Valley User Friendly Budget, 2013). For smaller school districts unable to fund additional staff members or larger districts whose guidance staff works with a more diverse population and larger issues, the ability to hire additional staff might not be an option. While this is an advantage for Happy Valley School District and a characteristic of a well-funded school program, it is also is a limitation since it is not a generalizable characteristic across all New Jersey school districts.

This study was initiated to determine the professional impact of HIB on building level principals. The data collection methods included one formal, semi-structured interview and sixteen (16) self-reported weekly surveys by the principals. Both of these collection methods represent limitations. While the formal interviews provided some excellent insight into the workings of the principals, their HIB professional development and training, and the impact of HIB on their time, there was not an opportunity for additional follow-up. Since there was a single interview, the ability for the researcher to delve into more details on the impact of HIB on principals' job responsibilities after the

interview was completed was limited. Also, the weekly surveys were generalized from responses provided to the researcher through the pre-interview survey (Appendix E). Therefore, some potential areas of impact, including planning for standardized test administration, grade level meetings, and reading lesson plans, were excluded from the weekly survey. A more diverse list of options on areas of HIB implementation impact could have provided more depth and breadth for this study.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study provided insight into the workings of building level principals and the impact of HIB implementation on their professional responsibilities. However, as was evident within this study, the building principals were not the only group affected by HIB implementation. This study did not examine the impact of HIB on vice principals or building Anti-bullying specialists (ABSs). As seen throughout the testimonials by the principals, the Anti-bullying specialists are on the front lines of HIB implementation. They investigate the incidents, interview students, and in many cases complete necessary paperwork. A further examination on how HIB implementation impacts the ABSs in each building would glean an important dynamic on the application of the law in our schools.

On the secondary level, the vice principals were also placed in the sightline of HIB implementation. The high school principal appointed his vice principals as his designees for implementing HIB within his school. Both middle school principals highlighted the role of their vice principals within their building. An additional study on how HIB impacts the daily professional responsibilities of the vice principals would provide additional insight to the impact that HIB legislation has had on our schools.

A third area of potential future research should be how the legislation has impacted student self-reporting instances of harassment, intimidation, and bullying to school officials. Two different principals, Principal Donna and Principal John, both stated that they felt that the formal steps, mandated parent contact, and compulsory paperwork associated with HIB implementation was a deterrent for students who are victims of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. A study based on student perceptions of the HIB legislation, its ability to positively affect HIB incidents within their schools, and its impact on student self-reporting of HIB instances would provide invaluable insight into the impact of the law on the group for which the legislation was implemented: the students.

A quantitative study on the financial impact of the HIB legislation on school districts, including additional staff needs to implement this legislation, would provide the a broader understanding on the legislation's economic impact on district resources. Included in this subsequent study should be the total amount of professional hours dedicated by district administration, building principals, ABSs, teachers, and other staff, as well as, any ancillary costs associated with the law, including litigation costs and additional staff costs. For example, Happy Valley School District employed eight additional guidance counselors for the 2012-13 school year at a cost of approximately \$ 485,723.00 (Happy Valley User Friendly Budget, 2013). While this is just one example of the additional costs associated with this legislation, other financial impacts, such as legal settlements and staff discipline, can also impact school districts and those costs should be accounted when looking at the impact of this legislation.

Another area of future research should be gathering the perspective of parents to determine their understanding of the law and the impact they believe it is having on their children and the school culture. Many of the principals within this study reflected that there was less HIB referrals from the 2011-12 school year to the 2012-13 school year. This study could examine why parents referred less HIB cases in 2012-13 in comparison to 2011-12. Some research questions that could drive this study include:

1. Did the parents see that reporting under HIB was not the help their children needed?
2. Did they think the time the process took was not good for their students or for the school?

Each of these questions could help facilitate a larger study on the impact of HIB legislation on the entire school community, particularly school culture.

Finally, a study on how HIB legislation is impacting school culture and student safety would help determine whether or not the law was making schools a safer learning environment for its students. As seen through this study, the principals implementing HIB legislation were professionally affected through allocating their time away from other building activities. However, the New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights was conceived to provide a safer school environment for students who are being bullied on a consistent basis. At least two principals stressed their concern that the legislation was going to deter students who were being bullied to step forward and report their situation due to the formality and paperwork associated with the law. A comprehensive study on the impact of the legislation and if it is making schools a safer place would be instrumental to determining if the law is succeeding in its purpose and goal.

The New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights presents numerous advantages and disadvantages to the students, parents, staff, and administration of school districts throughout New Jersey. Particularly for administrators, the legislation draws time away from the limited amount of hours they have during the day to improve classroom instruction, complete mandated paperwork, and manage their buildings. As evident through this study, HIB implementation, including the mandated investigations and parent communication, the requested meetings, and required paperwork, greatly impact the professional responsibilities of the elementary and middle school principals involved in this study. While this study expands on previous examinations of the professional responsibilities of building level principals, particularly when implementing mandated state and federal legislation, further examination on the financial and cultural impact of the HIB legislation on our schools is recommended as the law becomes further ingrained into the administrative responsibilities of our building level principals.

Appendix A: Timeline for data collection

Date	Measures and Procedures	Individual Involved
September 2012	Select schools and verbally ask building level administrators to participate in project	Researcher
October 2012	E-mail Consent Form to each participant and ask them to review the consent form to address questions or concerns	Researcher
October 19, 2012	E-mail participating individuals to set up interviews on HIB implementation	Researcher
October 2012 to November 2012	Develop interview protocols and use questions in interview trial	Researcher
December 2012 to January 2013	Semi-structured Interview with participants- 10 total interviews	Researcher
January 2013	Transcribe and code interviews	Researcher
February 1 to 7, 2013	Distribution and collection of Pre-interview surveys	Researcher
February 7, 2013 to May 30, 2013	Distribution of weekly surveys to principals. Distribution will occur every Thursday for sixteen (16) weeks.	Researcher
June 2013	Analysis of weekly survey results and formal interviews conducted in December 2012. Common themes will be documented and outlined in analysis section of dissertation	Researcher
June to August 2013	Finalize dissertation through interpretation of interviews and description of findings	Researcher
September 1, 2013	Share findings with Dissertation Committee within Final Draft	Researcher

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form



INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Investigator: James Tuohy

Topic: Impact of HIB Legislation on Building Level Principals

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by **James Tuohy**, who is a student in the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers University. The purpose of this research is to **identify perceptions of building level administrators implementing New Jersey's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Legislation and the perceived impact this legislation has on principals' professional responsibilities.**

Approximately 10 subjects between the ages of thirty (30) and sixty (60) years old will participate in the study, and each individual's initial participation will last a total of one hour. The participants will include building level administrators from ten (10) different schools within the district.

The study procedures include a structured interview with James Tuohy about the implementation of HIB legislation on the building level principals. Once the interview is transcribed, the interview will be reviewed with the subject to ensure that all statements can be clarified and further explanation provided if necessary. Principals will then receive a pre-interview survey sheet to be completed prior to the distribution of the weekly surveys. Finally, principals will receive a weekly survey to determine the impact of HIB legislation on their professional responsibilities.

Participation in this study will involve the following:

- One (1) forty-five minute interview in December of 2012
- One (1) member check after the interview is transcribed.
- One (1) pre-interview survey will be distributed to principals prior to the beginning of weekly surveys.
- From February until May 2013, principals involved in the study will receive weekly surveys concerning HIB implementation and its impact on their professional responsibilities.
- Subsequent interviews are possible concerning HIB implementation depending on the answers to the weekly surveys.

This research is confidential. The research records will include some information about you, and this information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between your identity and the response in the research exists. Some of the information collected about you includes your place of employment, your years of experience, and your position within the institution. Please note that I will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. All information will be kept on a password protected external hard-drive which will be stored in a location outside any district facilities.

The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the

results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept for three years and then will be destroyed.

Based on the type of questions and possible impact of this study, there are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study.

The benefits of taking part in this study may be:

- A better understanding of the implementation process of HIB legislation throughout each school
- The impact HIB legislation is having to the professional responsibilities of the school administrators and ABSs throughout the district
- A general understanding of the impact the program is having on our students and schools

While these are some possible benefits, it is possible you may receive no direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact myself at:

James Tuohy
19 Ellen Ct.
Ocean, NJ 07712
Cell: 732-682-4021
Work: 732-360-4461
Email: james.tuohy@gse.rutgers.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the IRB Administrator at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559
Tel: 848-932-0150
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

If you have additional questions, you may contact my faculty advisor at Rutgers University at:

W. Steven Barnett
73 Easton Ave.
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Tel: 848-932-4350 x23132
Email: sbarnett@nieer.org

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

Sign below if you agree to participate in this research study:

Subject (Print) _____
Subject Signature _____
Principal Investigator Signature _____

Date _____
Date _____

Appendix C: Interview Guide

Description: This study will examine the professional impact of the HIB legislation on building level administrators in a large suburban school district. A building level administrator in ten (10) schools will be interviewed. These include 7 elementary, 2 middle, and 1 high school.

1. In what school do you work? What academic level? What is your current position?
2. Please list the professional duties you undertake on a “typical day?” (Describe how you begin your day, general activities during school hours, and how you end your day.) How would you describe/define your role within the school environment?
3. What are some influences on how you make decisions and prioritize your activities? Do you believe that federal and state legislation affects your daily routine and professional duties?
4. Describe what you know about the Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) legislation. What type of training did your district provide for implementing the HIB legislation in your school? Was the training continuous or a one-time event?
5. What resources have been allocated toward the implementation of HIB legislation? (PROBE: TIME, ACTIVITY, SOURCE, VOLUNTARY OR MANDATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, HELPFUL OR NOT?) How have these resources helped implement the HIB mandate?
6. In your role as a Building Administrator, describe how you are involved in the implementation of HIB legislation in your school? What specific procedures are you responsible for when HIB incidents are reported to school personnel?
7. What are the main challenges when implementing the HIB legislation? What impact has the HIB legislation had on your day-to-day activities in your school/job? (PROBE: IMPACT ON RELATIONSHIPS, PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES, PROFESSIONAL GOALS)
8. What impact has HIB legislation had on your professional responsibilities? Do you find that HIB related issues take away from the responsibilities within your building?
9. How is the HIB legislation affecting your effort to create a safer school and protect students from harassment, intimidation, and bullying? What positive elements can be derived from the HIB law? What negative elements do you see?
10. Is there anything you would like to add about your role as a building administrator/anti-bullying specialist implementing HIB within the district?

Appendix D: Interview Summary Sheet

1. Where was the interview held (In which room and under what general conditions)? Were there any interruptions or issues during the interview? If so, explain.

2. What were three themes (per area of study) within the interview?

Professional Responsibilities

a.

b.

c.

3. If you had to summarize the interview in two sentences, what would they be?

4. How did this interview clarify/muddle your view on HIB legislation implementation within the district?

Appendix E: Pre-Interview Survey

Prior to the weekly surveys, please review the list of district policies, as well as, state and federal legislation that were compiled by this researcher*. Please check **any** that apply to your daily professional activities for the 2012-2013 school year:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Current School: _____ Grade level: (Circle one) Elem MS HS

1. ____ No Child Left Behind Legislation (Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001)
2. ____ PAARC Assessment
3. ____ 504 Implementation (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973)
4. ____ Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA Building Compliance Codes)
5. ____ Core curriculum content standards
6. ____ NJ HIB Legislation
7. ____ Tenured and non-tenured teacher observations
8. ____ New teacher observation model to be implemented for the 2013-2014 school year.
9. ____ Special Education law (N.J. Title 6A, Chapter 14)
10. ____ New Jersey CAP Program
11. ____ Homeless Liaison (McKinley & Vento Homeless Act)
12. ____ Intervention and Referral Service
13. ____ Title I (Academic Support Program)
14. ____ Student absence due to religious holidays (N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16)
15. ____ Observance of Designated State Holidays (Title 18A.36)
16. ____ Reporting missing or abused children (N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.2(a))
17. ____ School Security Drill Law (18A:41-1)
18. ____ Home Instruction Procedures
19. ____ Violence, Vandalism, and Substance Abuse Incident Reports
20. ____ Board of Education District Policy (1000 to 9000)

* Legislation compiled from Old Bridge Public School District Administrators' Manual, New Jersey Department of Education website, and United States Department of Education website.

Appendix F: Principal Weekly Survey

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Principal Survey

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Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Principal Survey

This survey will be sent to the principal's participating in James Tuohy's dissertation study on Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB). This survey will be sent every Thursday beginning on February 7, 2013 through May 30, 2013. Your responses will remain confidential throughout all levels of this study. Thank you for your continued participation in this study.

* Required

Name: *

School:*

Did you have a HIB case reported to you this past week from a staff member, district employee, parent, or student?*

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Did you have a conversation with a staff member, including your Anti-Bullying Specialist, this week about a potential HIB?*

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Did you investigate an HIB case this past week? *

This would include interviewing students for a potential HIB case

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

The HIB investigation took time away from the following building responsibility:

- ☐ Teacher Observation
☐ Staff Observation (Paraprofessional, Noon-hour supervisor, etc)
☐ Informal Building Walkthrough
☐ School Function (i.e. assembly, classroom activity)
☐ Student Supervision (i.e. lunchroom, recess, classroom, hallways, etc)
☐ Planning/Implementing Professional Development
☐ Scheduled Staff Meeting

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Principal Survey

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- ☐ 504 Meeting
- ☐ Intervention and Referral Service Meeting
- ☐ Child Study Team Meeting
- ☐ Building Management (i.e. School Security/Fire Drills, maintaining facilities, addressing building needs, etc)
- ☐ Managing School Budget and Resources (i.e. books, classroom technology, supplies, etc)
- ☐ District/Parent/Community Communication (i.e. phone calls, e-mails, in-district administrative meetings, etc)
- ☐ Writing School Reports or Completing Paperwork
- ☐ Other:

Did you contact parents concerning an HIB case this past week?*

Examples could include communication by phone, e-mail, or written correspondence

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Contacting parents took time away from the following building responsibility:

- ☐ Teacher Observation
- ☐ Staff Observation (Paraprofessional, Noon-hour Supervisor, etc)
- ☐ Informal Building Walkthrough
- ☐ School Function (i.e. assembly, classroom activity)
- ☐ Student Supervision (i.e. lunchroom, recess, classroom, hallways, etc)
- ☐ Planning/Implementing Professional Development
- ☐ Scheduled Staff Meeting
- ☐ 504 Meeting
- ☐ Intervention and Referral Service Meeting
- ☐ Child Study Team Meeting
- ☐ Building Management (i.e. School Security/Fire Drills, maintaining facilities, addressing building needs, etc)
- ☐ Managing School Budget and Resources (i.e. books, classroom technology, supplies, etc)
- ☐ District/Parent/Community Communication (i.e. phone calls, e-mails, in-district administrative meetings, etc)
- ☐ Writing School Reports or Completing Paperwork
- ☐ Other:

Did you complete HIB related paperwork this past week?*

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Principal Survey

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Examples could be Board of Education correspondence or letters to parents

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Completing HIB paperwork took time away from the following building responsibility:

- ☐ Teacher Observation
- ☐ Staff Observation (Paraprofessional, Noon-hour Supervisor, etc)
- ☐ Informal Building Walkthrough
- ☐ School Function (i.e. assembly, classroom activity)
- ☐ Student Supervision (i.e. lunchroom, recess, classroom, hallways, etc)
- ☐ Planning/Implementing Professional Development
- ☐ Scheduled Staff Meeting
- ☐ 504 Meeting
- ☐ Intervention and Referral Service Meeting
- ☐ Child Study Team Meeting
- ☐ Building Management (i.e. School Security/Fire Drills, maintaining facilities, addressing building needs, etc)
- ☐ Managing School Budget and Resources (i.e. books, classroom technology, supplies, etc)
- ☐ District/Parent/Community Communication (i.e. phone calls, e-mails, in-district administrative meetings, etc)
- ☐ Writing School Reports or Completing Paperwork
- ☐ Other:

Did you attend any HIB meetings with staff, parents, or district leadership this past week? *

Examples could include meetings with anti-bullying specialists, central administration, parent appeals to Board of Education, or parent meetings, etc. This would not include student investigations.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Attending the HIB meeting took time away from the following building responsibility:

- ☐ Teacher Observation
- ☐ Staff Observation (Paraprofessional, Noon-hour Supervisor, etc)
- ☐ Informal Building Walkthrough
- ☐ School Function (i.e. assembly, classroom activity)

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Principal Survey

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- ☐ Student Supervision (i.e. lunchroom, recess, classroom, hallways, etc)
- ☐ Planning/Implementing Professional Development
- ☐ Scheduled Staff Meeting
- ☐ 504 Meeting
- ☐ Intervention and Referral Service Meeting
- ☐ Child Study Team Meeting
- ☐ Building Management (i.e. School Security/Fire Drills, maintaining facilities, addressing building needs, etc)
- ☐ Managing School Budget and Resources (i.e. books, classroom technology, supplies, etc)
- ☐ District/Parent/Community Communication (i.e. phone calls, e-mails, in-district administrative meetings, etc)
- ☐ Writing School Reports or Completing Paperwork
- ☐ Other:

Did a HIB case take you away from your other building responsibilities this week?*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please elaborate further on any specific impact HIB has had on your professional responsibilities over the past week.

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Appendix G: Principal Response Codes

Code	Explanation	Code	Explanation
Response	Yes -1, No - 0	Response	Yes -1, No - 0
RPT	Report- Question 1	HIBPAP	Paperwork- Question 5
CON	Conversation- Question 2	papto	HIB Paperwork- teacher observation
INV	Investigation- Question 3	papso	HIB Paperwork- staff observation
ito	Investigation- teacher observation	papibw	HIB Paperwork- informal building walkthroughs
iso	investigation- staff observation	papsf	HIB paperwork- school function
iibw	investigation- informal building walkthroughs	papss	HIB paperwork- student supervision
isf	investigation- school function	pappd	HIB paperwork- professional development
iss	investigation- student supervision	papsm	HIB paperwork- staff meeting
ipd	investigation- professional development	pap504	HIB paperwork- 504 meeting
ism	investigation- staff meeting	papirs	HIB paperwork- I & RS meeting
i504	investigation- 504 meeting	papcst	HIB paperwork- CST Meeting
iirs	investigation- I & RS meeting	papbm	HIB paperwork- Building Management
icst	investigation- CST Meeting	papres	HIB paperwork- School Budget and Resources
ibm	investigation- Building Management	papcom	HIB paperwork- Parent/district communication
ires	investigation- School Budget and Resources	pappap	HIB paperwork- Paperwork
icom	investigation- Parent/district communication	papoth	HIB paperwork- Other
ipap	investigation- Paperwork	HIBMTG	Paperwork- Question 5
ioth	investigation- Other	mtgto	HIB meeting- teacher observation
HIBPC	Parent Contact- Question 4	mtgso	HIB meeting- staff observation
pcto	parent contact- teacher observation	mtgibw	HIB meeting- informal building walkthroughs
pcso	parent contact- staff observation	mtgsf	HIB meeting- school function
pcibw	parent contact- informal building walkthroughs	mtgss	HIB meeting- student supervision
pcsf	parent contact- school function	mtgpd	HIB meeting- professional development
pcss	parent contact- student supervision	mtgsm	HIB meeting- staff meeting
pcpd	parent contact- professional development	mtg504	HIB meeting- 504 meeting
pcsm	parent contact- staff meeting	mtgirs	HIB meeting- I & RS meeting
pc504	parent contact- 504 meeting	mtgcst	HIB meeting- CST Meeting
pcirs	parent contact- I & RS meeting	mtgbm	HIB meeting- Building Management
pccst	parent contact- CST Meeting	mtgres	HIB meeting- School Budget and Resources
pcbm	parent contact- Building Management	mtgcom	HIB meeting- Parent/district communication
pcres	parent contact- School Budget and Resources	mtgpap	HIB meeting- Paperwork
pccom	parent contact- Parent/district communication	mtgoth	HIB meeting- Other
pcpap	parent contact- Paperwork	RES	Did HIB take away from responsibilities?
pcoth	parent contact- Other		

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