

THE ROLE OF NARRATIVES IN SUSTAINING REFORMS:
A CASE STUDY IN ORGANIZATIONAL MEMORY

by

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Title: THE ROLE OF NARRATIVES IN SUSTAINING REFORMS: A CASE STUDY
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This study employs a case-study methodology to examine the sustainability of reforms at an innovative young high school. A variety of factors present obstacles to the success of reforms, including loose organizational linkages and staff turnover. Using Linde's framework of the paradigmatic narrative, this study explores how the stories teachers tell each other about the origin and history of the school affect the way teachers currently implement the founding vision in the face of loose organizational linkages and staff turnover. In particular, this study focuses on the system of 9th- and 10th-grade Language Arts and Social Studies team teaching.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this dissertation is to describe a research study regarding the role of narratives in sustaining reforms at an innovative young school. The dissertation begins with a statement of the problem: why it is difficult to sustain innovative reforms in a comprehensive high school. This problem statement leads to a purpose statement and research questions about the role of narrative. Following the statement of the problem, this dissertation reviews the literature to develop the conceptual framework of the study. This is followed by a description of the methodology, including the rationale for a single-case study as well as protocols for conducting the data collection and analysis. The dissertation then proceeds to a report of the results, followed by discussions and conclusions. Finally, the dissertation ends with a brief discussion of the limitations of the study and opportunities for future research.

Statement of the Problem

At the end of *Animal Farm*, George Orwell's allegorical fable of the Russian Revolution, the pigs, the eloquent and visionary leaders of the communal farm movement, gradually morph into the form of the men they so desperately tried to supplant. The helpless farm animals look through the windows of the manor house to

witness the final stage of the pigs' transformation. "The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which" (Orwell, 1996, p. 139).

At times it seems like innovative new schools struggle against the same forces that overcame Orwell's pigs. The initial euphoria surrounding revolutionary educational reforms fades over time, often replaced by tedium, resignation, and burnout. Fink (2000) calls this the "attrition of change," the slow regression from innovation to conformity and stagnation. Eventually the innovative school becomes practically indistinguishable from the traditional institutions it sought to replace.

Challenges of Innovative Reform

America has a "deeply ingrained utopian conviction" that schools are essential to improving our society (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 14). We believe that societal ills, from teen pregnancy to a sluggish economy, result from or can be cured by our public schools. Policymakers and parents, business leaders and teachers have long proposed and implemented myriad reforms aimed at improving our educational system, and as a result, improving our society. Unfortunately many of the best ideas fail to reach these lofty goals. One key reason for this struggle is the concept of sustainability.

Sustaining educational reform is difficult. For decades, reformers and researchers have worked to identify obstacles to successful, sustained reforms. Early studies often laid the blame for failure on the design of the reform. These studies

assumed that good reforms, what would currently be called “best practices,” would naturally supplant ineffective instructional practices, resulting in improved learning (Cuban, 1990; Elmore, 2000). If a reform failed, it must have been poorly designed. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, researchers began to consider the role of implementation in the success of reforms. Reforms and policies may be well designed, but still fail to take hold and make a difference if they are not implemented faithfully and consistently (Gross, Giacquinta, & Bernstein, 1971; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1981). For example, a well-designed reform may be officially adopted into a school’s curriculum. But if teachers do not closely align their instructional practices with the published curriculum, then the reform will not have an opportunity to impact student learning (Corbett, Dawson, & Firestone, 1984).

Some reformers prefer incremental change, tinkering with pedagogical policies until the right balance is found (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Others have sought to revolutionize the school system through dramatic shifts in the education paradigm (Meier, 1995; Raywid, 1999; Sizer, 1992). One common opportunity for innovative reforms comes when a community opens a new school (Fink, 2000; Miles, 1980). From the design of the building to the hiring of staff, from the choice of curriculum to the establishment of schedules and routines, new schools can literally build innovations from the ground up. However, even new schools have to grapple with generations of historical traditions, what Tyack and Cuban (1995) call the “grammar of schooling.” With years of personal experience, the public believes that it knows what a “real school”

looks like. Deviation from that established model often faces strong community resistance, even if the reforms are based on sound research. Parents and taxpayers distrust schools when they don't resemble the adults' own school experience (Fink, 2000; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). The conservative forces exerted by the grammar of schooling contribute to the attrition of change. And yet many reforms do last. In fact, many reforms that have dramatically changed the grammar of schooling go unnoticed in our discussions of reform precisely because they have become so institutionalized that we no longer think of them as reforms. Compulsory attendance, age-graded schools, kindergarten, middle schools, and Carnegie units are major components of our education system that were once innovative reforms (Cuban, 1992).

The challenge of developing, implementing, and sustaining successful educational reforms remains a major strand of research. This study seeks to contribute to the field by examining one mechanism that may play a role in sustaining reforms: the stories teachers tell each other about the origin and purpose of the reform.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The primary purpose of this dissertation is to examine the relevance of Linde's (2000) theory of the paradigmatic narrative in the context of an innovative young high school. The following research questions are considered in this study:

1. What role does the communication of the founding narrative of an innovative young school play in the sustainability of reforms?

2. Can narratives help overcome the obstacles to sustaining reforms presented by loose organizational linkages and staff turnover?

3. What is the relationship between an individual teacher's role in the transmission of the paradigmatic narrative and his/her commitment to implementing the founding reforms?

Sustainability of Reform

So what makes a reform last? Of course, there is no simple answer, but many frameworks exist to guide the implementation of reforms. First, however, it will be useful to define how we measure the success of a reform.

Definitions of Sustainability and Related Terms

Educational researchers and policymakers have used various terms over the years to describe the process of reforms becoming ingrained as part of the normal function of the school. Gross et al. (1971) measured the *degree of implementation* of a reform by the way that organizational behavior conformed to goals and intentions of the innovation. *Incorporation* suggests that the reform has become part of the body of an organization. *Routinization* implies that the procedures of the reform have become part of the daily routines (Miles, 1980). *Continuation* speaks to the longevity of the reform beyond implementation, when the initial inputs of external resources are expended. Corbett et al. (1984) compare this to the survival of a patient after being removed from

life support. *Institutionalization*, the leading term in studies from the 1970s through the 1990s, also connotes that the reform has become established practice with full access to necessary resources (Fink, 2000). Miles (1980) points out the irony that because of its focus on systematizing processes, “institutionalization . . . can be the death of innovation” (p. 7). Similarly, Anderson and Stiegelbauer (1994) argue that institutionalization can have the effect of freezing or calcifying a reform, resulting in stagnancy and eventual obsolescence. *Sustainability*, a more recent term, combines the idea of codification with a sense of longevity (Datnow, 2005). In addition, sustainability suggests a certain fragility that requires conscious action to uphold and protect.

Corbett et al. (1984) established four conditions for determining whether a reform has been sustained: It is codified into rules, becomes part of training for newcomers, survives budget challenges, and lasts even after departure of the initiating leader. Tyack and Cuban (1995) add that successful school reforms must remain faithful to the original design and demonstrate effectiveness in meeting the intended outcomes. As Orwell’s animals famously discovered, reforms may be adapted or co-opted in the process of implementation. In other words, reforms change schools, but schools also change reforms (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Thus, fidelity in implementation is an important factor to consider in evaluating the sustainability of a reform.

In addition to the criteria for evaluating reforms discussed above, Corbett et al. (1984) explored eight conditions that impact the implementation and eventual sustainability of reforms: (a) the availability of school resources, (b) incentives and

disincentives for innovation, (c) organizational linkages, (d) existing goals and priorities, (e) faculty cohesiveness, (f) staff and administration turnover, (g) the degree of change required in instructional and administrative practice, and (h) the legacy of previous reforms. Anderson and Stiegelbauer (1994) emphasize that sustainable reforms also create structural conditions that support the continuation of the reform, including training, funding, and community support.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This section of the dissertation begins with a review of the literature on organizational linkages, focusing particularly on how loose organizational structure affects the sustainability of reforms. This is followed by an examination of modes of organizational communication. The review then proceeds to discuss theories of staff turnover and its impact on the sustainability of reforms. The literature on organizational linkages and staff turnover both lead to the proposition that narratives may serve to sustain reform in the face of inherent organizational challenges. Thus, the dissertation continues with a review of the literature on narrative analysis, focusing on the theories of Linde (2000, 2001). Finally, this section concludes with a statement about the gap in the narrative literature and the way this study intends to fill that gap.

How Organizational Linkages Affect Reforms

Weick (1976) observes that researchers, and the public in general, often assume that organizations operate in a rational manner. However, educational institutions in particular “prove intractable to analysis through rational assumptions” (p. 1). That is, schools do not always demonstrate what Meyer and Rowan (1977) call rationalized formal structures—predictable, stable, bureaucratic systems. In fact, Meyer and Rowan

assert, there is often a substantial disconnect between the formal structure and actual activities of an organization. To address the variation and flexibility within educational organizations, Weick introduced the concept of *loose coupling*. Loosely coupled systems are more flexible to local adaptation, and therefore less easily standardized. This allows for the possibility of elegant, organic solutions and adaptations, but it may also inhibit the spread of advantageous external reforms (Weick, 1976).

Corbett et al. (1984) define organizational linkages as the degree of independence within a system. In other words, how much do different parts of the system function independently? According to their analysis, greater autonomy within the organization leads to lower quality implementation. Formal mechanisms for facilitating reform, such as administrative supervision, do not work as well in loosely coupled organizations. This may be true of traditional compliance-based reforms, but if incentives for reform rise above mere compliance, it may be possible to sustain reform in loosely coupled organizations through more informal mechanisms. Meyer and Rowan (1977) argue that decoupling allows an organization to transcend the constraints imposed by rigid formalized institutional structures. Similarly, Pasternack and Viscio (1998) describe a centerless corporation where innovation thrives in small units empowered to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities. This shared spirit of innovation may serve as an informal linkage in place of more formal or hierarchical organizational bonds. However, the loose organizational structure of high schools has been faulted for contributing to the failure of countless reforms (Elmore, 2000; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

Organizational linkages have traditionally been categorized as vertical and horizontal (Corbett et al., 1984; Schwandt, 1995). Vertical linkages suggest a hierarchy in which policy, supervision, and other communications are imposed from higher levels of authority within the organization. In schools, vertical structures often include curriculum adoption, the enforcement of policies, and whether teachers are following agreements. Horizontal linkages are peer-to-peer relations. In schools, horizontal communications include more than just staff meetings, but rather substantive conversations about classroom practice. Horizontal linkages can be helpful for distributing the collected wisdom of an organization (Schwandt, 1995).

The effective transfer of organizational memory may serve to mitigate the effects of loose coupling and staff turnover. Mintzberg (1975) identified two forms of memory at work within an organization: hard and soft memory. Hard memory includes school rules, policies, and processes. Soft memory is situated in people, documents, and the social relationships within the school. Hanson (2001) suggests that hard knowledge is less vulnerable to organizational memory loss over time. However, the inherently vertical nature of the transmission of hard memory makes it less effective in a loosely coupled organization. Tschannen-Moran, Uline, Hoy, and Mackley (2000) agree that formalized “hard” memory can be effective, but only in stable and homogenous environments. When the organizational culture is more complex, unstable or diverse, the organizational memory needs to be more flexible or “soft.” High staff turnover and loose linkages are marks of unstable and complex organizational structure within

schools. In this kind of organizational culture, “soft” memory (e.g., behaviors, documents, social relationships) may be more effective than “hard” memory (e.g., school rules, policies, and codified processes) at keeping the spirit of reform alive (Mintzberg, 1975). However schools still face the structural obstacle that classroom teachers rarely have formal opportunities to engage in substantive discussions. This is what Argyris (1993) would call an organizational defense: a policy, practice, or action that protects the organization from embarrassment or threat, thereby inhibiting opportunities to learn. Many classrooms function as independent fiefdoms. Teachers, as petty rulers, occasionally pay tribute to accrediting or supervisory authorities, but most of the time they do not have the opportunity or necessity to cross their borders and collaborate with peers.

The prospect for sustaining consistent, effective reforms across loosely coupled classrooms may seem bleak. The loosely coupled organizational structure of schools may inhibit the transfer of organizational knowledge because that knowledge is often located in personal and social relationships rather than hierarchical structures (March, 1999). However, research in symbolic language, narrative, and discourse analysis suggests a third way. Meyer and Rowan (1977) identify myth and ceremony as key to bridging the gap between the formal structure and the actual activities of an organization. Corbett et al. (1984) recognize that in addition to traditional vertical and horizontal linkages, consistent beliefs about the vision of the school may serve to embolden reforms that are closely aligned to that vision. This collective vision across

autonomous units of an organization is what Linde (2001) calls institution making. This vision, communicated through narrative, serves to frame the organization's identity and values, orient newcomers, and deal with conflict.

Clark (1972) introduced the concept of the organizational saga, a story based on the unique accomplishments and history of an organization. As the saga develops, often recounting the visionary leadership of an innovative founder, it engenders belief within members of the organization. This belief, which Clark asserts is a crucial element distinguishing saga from mere history, leads to loyalty, pride, and identity, resulting in an individual's increased commitment to the vision and purpose of the organization.

Oberman's (1997) study of the Waldorf school movement presents a dramatic example of organizational memory sustaining reforms in the absence of traditional hierarchical structures. Each Waldorf school is run independently. There are loose coalitions of schools, but no overarching administrative or accrediting authority like school boards, state departments of education, or Catholic dioceses. Despite this lack of systemic organizational linkages, there is remarkable continuity in the day-to-day operations in Waldorf schools worldwide. Oberman argues that the rituals and symbols of the Waldorf philosophy remind teachers of their common beliefs, which serve to perpetuate organizational norms.

Modes of Transmitting Organizational Memory

The effective transmission of organizational memory is essential to the success of reforms. If something is not remembered and shared within the organization, it is not really learned (Kruse, 2003). Memory is both an individual neurological process and a collective social process (Linde, 2000). By working together, forming social bonds, and building communal memory, teachers can create a sense of shared meaning that keeps reforms alive, focused and successful. Teachers need to be able to identify where we have been, where we are going, how we will get there, and why (Fink, 2000; Kruse, 2003).

Of course, not all memory is inherently beneficial to a reform-minded organization. Nostalgia can be a key element in teachers' resistance to innovative change. Teachers' memories of a "better day," regardless of their historical accuracy, may inhibit motivation to engage in the hard work of present reform (Goodson, Moore, & Hargreaves, 2006). In addition, when organizational memory takes the form of rigid ideology, it can be dangerous. If the link to the past obscures or inhibits productive actions in the present, memory and ideology can be detrimental to growth and even survival (Meyer & Starbuck, 1993). However, organizational memory can also be employed to advance a vision of innovation, reminding members of their part in a legacy of reform (Kruse, 2003; Linde, 2001).

Memory moves through an organization in a variety of forms. Schwandt (1995) differentiates modes of communication into dissemination and distribution.

Disseminated knowledge is the purposeful transmission of processes and policies, while diffused knowledge is more informal communication. Dissemination often takes the form of vertical, hierarchical communication. Policies are formed at an administrative level and communicated through formal modes such as staff meetings, procedures, or all-staff emails. Distributed knowledge tends to be more horizontal in nature. That is, knowledge is shared between teachers in informal settings and modes (e.g., around the lunch table or in person-to-person emails). However in a loosely coupled organizational system, it is conceivable for dissemination to move in a horizontal fashion. For instance, the communication of departmental agreements would qualify as dissemination, but it is certainly horizontal in nature.

One important mode of building, transmitting, and reinforcing organizational memory is storytelling. Scholars have long ignored this role of storytelling. This may be attributed to Western culture's view of storytelling as a relic of childhood that should be abandoned in favor of more serious adult pursuits (Campbell, 1988). However, researchers in the growing field of discourse analysis are studying the roles stories play in corporate society (Boje, 1991; Linde, 2000, 2001; Tyler, 2007). Stories allow people to connect individual memory to organizational memory (Boje, 1991). In addition, stories provide models for learning as a framework for the acquisition of new knowledge (Tyler, 2007). In other words, people make sense of stories by telling them to others. In the process they build meaning and reinforce their understanding of their role within the culture of the organization. When listeners hear stories of the past, they

compare them to their present context and current events. This allows individuals to examine their current practice in light of past successes and mistakes by learning from the memory of the organization (Boje, 1991). This dissertation will address specific theories of narratives in a subsequent section.

How Staff Turnover Affects Reforms

Organizations, as networks of human social interactions, are constantly changing. This is particularly true of schools, where students move from class to class throughout the day and over the years. Teachers may also move from school to school within a district. The first 5 years of teaching often drive teachers to burnout. Because of the relatively limited opportunities for career and financial advancement in teaching, some of the longer-serving teachers move on to positions of administration or into the mainstream workforce. These problems can be particularly acute in new schools. An innovative school environment often draws teachers who are more likely to move on to positions of leadership outside the classroom (Fink, 2000). This loss of experienced staff may create a void of organizational memory, jeopardizing the status of innovative reforms (Rusaw, 2004).

When newcomers arrive in an organization, they are faced with three kinds of challenges: job function, hierarchical structures, and social networks (Louis, 1980). The foremost concern for new hires is to figure out how to do their jobs. In teaching, this means becoming familiar with the curriculum and designing new lessons in addition to

learning the basics: bell schedules, attendance systems, grade reporting, etc. New hires also need to learn where authority lies. Who really wields the power in the school and how does the new teacher find approval to get things done? In addition, a new staff member must navigate complex systems of social networks. In general, this involves figuring out where he or she fits in with the rest of the teachers. Levitt and March (1996) argue that organizational routines can help overcome the challenges presented by staff turnover. However, the loose organizational linkages of many high schools make the routinization of memory difficult to achieve.

If new teachers do not get adequately socialized into the organization, the sustainability of innovative reforms may suffer. Fink (2000) asserts that staff turnover can create two distinct cultures within a recently founded school: originals and newcomers. The originals may cling to their status as part of the founding group, in the process building barriers to integrating new staff. Newcomers may feel this tension and respond with resistance to the founding reforms, which may become associated with individual personalities rather than sound educational practice.

While the challenges of integrating new staff can be debilitating for reform, staff turnover can also provide opportunities for an innovative organization. The process of inducting new hires into the organization can serve to recommit all group members to established norms (Gardenswartz & Rowe, 2003). That is, long-established members of the organization may have drifted in their practice from the founding vision and

agreements. By helping new staff learn the ropes, veterans may reinvigorate their practice as well.

Linde (2000) describes the process of new hire socialization as a form of induction. Some institutions have highly systematic induction processes, such as military boot camp or medical school and residency. Less formal induction systems, including schools, may benefit from using narratives to embed the norms and values of the organization in the minds and behaviors of new staff. In addition to official orientation activities, informal learning for new staff includes interactions between the individual and the organizational environment (Brink, 2003) and stories reflecting the beliefs of the organization (Rusaw, 2004). Regardless of the methods, new staff members need to be inducted into the organization to begin to understand and contribute to its goals (Linde, 2000).

The Promising Role of Narrative in Sustaining Reforms

The literature reviewed in the previous sections has led to the prospect that the communication of organizational memory can help overcome the adverse effects of loose organizational linkages and staff turnover. The following section examines in more detail the role of narrative and details Linde's (2000) theory of the *paradigmatic narrative* and its role in sustaining organizational culture and innovative reforms.

Linde's Paradigmatic Narrative

The stories teachers tell each other about the founding of a school may play a role in sustaining the innovative reforms that the school was based on. The founding vision of a new school greatly affects the direction it takes, from curriculum adoption and hiring decisions to classroom design and daily bell schedules (Fink, 2000). Huber (1996) asserts that this founding vision or “what an organization knows at its birth, will determine what it searches for, what it experiences, and how it interprets what it encounters” (p. 128). However, as Fink (2000) has shown, innovative schools often face the “attrition of change” and come to resemble the traditional schools they sought so enthusiastically to replace. Even in a school with a history of innovation, it is still possible for reforms to fail if they are not implemented properly (Gross et al., 1971). Linde's (2000) theory of the paradigmatic narrative provides a framework for analyzing the part that narratives can play in sustaining reforms within an organization.

In her study of the uses of narrative in a major American insurance company, Linde (2001) identifies five practical media for transmitting organizational memory: official biography and history, official periodical publications (i.e., newsletters), speeches at meetings and other gatherings, training materials, and informal individual conversations. If an organization had a charismatic founder, an official biography can be a powerful tool for codifying the paradigmatic narrative. A newsletter or magazine may publish formal features about the organization's history, or they may implicitly remind members of their history through statements of goals, values, or even policies. Speeches

at staff meetings, graduations, conventions, and other formal gatherings may draw on and reinforce a common memory to advance a present goal. Training for new staff, and professional development in general, may call on members to revisit the history of the organization through stories. Finally, individual retellings of narratives in the context of informal conversations serve to index stories (Linde, 2001). That is, by referring to familiar elements and context-rich associations (e.g., organizational jargon, inside jokes, etc.), speakers assume their audience is familiar with the history. Boje (1991) calls this terse storytelling. The speaker may only need to speak a few words to evoke a rich volume of memory. The listener fills in the details, either verbally or mentally. In this way indexing reinforces the strength of the narrative and further embeds it in the organizational memory.

This last medium for transmitting organizational memory may be the most powerful because it is so ubiquitous. It does not require a formal audience or a position of authority (as official biographies, newsletters, and speeches do). Rather, every member of the organization plays an incremental role in preserving memory through the practice of daily conversations. In loosely coupled organizations, this form of organizational communication is essential. This communication forms part of what Pettigrew (1979) calls the “social tissue” that ascribes meaning to everyday tasks and binds the organization together. Linde (2001) argues that if history does not exist in narrative form in the context of relationships, then it cannot serve to inform and influence the life of the institution. Even if the formal history is recorded in beautifully

crafted biographies, if it is not actually read and retold, it will not be acted upon, and will therefore be forgotten.

Linde (2001) asserts that organizations employ narratives to reproduce power structures, orient newcomers, and develop, identify, and deal with conflict. These institution-making narratives remind members of their own identity and values as part of the institution or what they must do to become part of it. Linde calls these *paradigmatic narratives* because they establish the paradigm, or framework, within which organizational memory exists. A paradigmatic narrative is rarely told as a complete story, but rather recounted in fragments. Individual narratives within the organization often find ways to link to components of this epic narrative.

Another feature of paradigmatic narratives is that they are most often *nonparticipant narratives* (NPN). When a story is told, heard, and retold by people who did not take part in the events being recounted, a sort of mythic quality may develop. As Meyer (1982) observes, these stories become a mix of “historical facts, retrospective justifications, and wishful thinking” (p. 50). Stories of this type would not continue to be passed along unless both tellers and hearers believed that engaging in this form of narrative could help them not only remember the past but also create an identity for themselves within the institution.

One prominent example of a founding narrative serving to promote the perpetuation of educational reforms is the story of Jane Lathrop Stanford. The co-founder of Stanford University was instrumental in navigating the young university

through tumultuous times in its first 2 decades, including financial crises and faculty revolts. A contentious figure in her day—she may have been poisoned (Cutler, 2003)—Jane Stanford was already being beatified within a few decades of her death. George Crothers, a graduate of the university’s “pioneer” class of 1896 and later dean of the Stanford Law School, gave a series of glowing speeches highlighting Jane Stanford’s continuing influence on the university in the 1930s (Crothers, 1932, 1933). According to Crothers, the “guidance and ever-living spirit” of Jane Stanford remain evident. “For centuries yet to come that vision and that spirit will inspire the lives and works of Stanford students and create in them a love of that which is true and beautiful in life and public service” (Crothers, 1933, p. 32). Today, over 100 years after her death, Jane Stanford’s influence and vision are still credited for the growth and success of her university (Cutler, 2003; Wolfe, 2003). It is important to note that the accuracy of Jane Stanford’s biography is not particularly relevant, but rather how the stories of her life and vision continue to be told today to influence the direction of the university.

Three-Part Process

Linde (2000) identifies a three-part process through which NPNs develop and replicate the collective memory of an organization. First, the story becomes relevant to an individual. This relevance may derive from personal experiences in the organization or from the desire to become more deeply rooted in the organizational culture. Next, the individual begins to tell her own story, incorporating elements of the paradigmatic

narrative. These elements may include the plot, characters, symbols, or language of the familiar narrative as it is often told. Finally, the individual's story is heard and retold—in part or in whole—and becomes part of the broader narrative.

Analyzing the Paradigmatic Narrative

Linde (2000) provides a series of questions to analyze the role and potential impact of a paradigmatic narrative within an organization.

1. Who tells the narrative? The status of the narrator is important in Linde's conception of the *nonparticipant* narrative. By connecting to the essential history and core values of the organization, the storyteller is assuming a position of authority they may not otherwise occupy in the organizational culture. This not only adds legitimacy to her story but also serves to reinforce her status as an insider. As a result, retelling parts of the paradigmatic narrative can expedite the process of new members' becoming fully inducted into the organization.

2. Why is the narrative told? If the story is told as a series of unconnected idiosyncratic events, it may not serve as a paradigmatic narrative. Instead, the paradigmatic narrative contains recurring plot elements and symbolic patterns that reveal the values and vision of the organization.

3. What are the events? The paradigmatic narrative is not expressly composed by any one individual. Instead, it is often told in fragments that become comprehensive only in hindsight. The events may vary in each retelling, but a pattern gradually

develops that expresses the delicate balance between the founding and current values of the organization.

4. What values are expressed in the narrative? One major purpose of a paradigmatic narrative is to transmit and reinforce organizational values. Once those values are defined, they can be identified in the individual stories that are told each day. Stories that do not express these values may not be part of the narrative. In some cases, stories that express contradictory values may be part of an unofficial, underground narrative.

5. What are the relationships between the narrative and the reward structures of the organization? In her study of a major American insurance company, Linde (2001) found that the paradigmatic narrative clearly communicated that replicating the business patterns of the founder would result in success and promotion within the organization. Meyer and Starbuck (1993) found a similar effect in their study of corporate ideology. As an instrument of induction, this narrative serves to help new employees conform to the desired norms of the organization. In other words, the paradigmatic narrative is used as a measure of success for individuals within the organization.

6. What are the occasions for retelling the narrative? A paradigmatic narrative may be told in a variety of forms and occasions, including official publications, speeches, training materials, and informal individual conversations. The audience may range from a large group gathered specifically for the purpose of remembering to

individuals congregating in the lunch room. These opportunities for retelling pieces of the paradigmatic narrative will be explored in more detail below.

Opportunities for Remembering

Throughout the life of an organization, there are countless opportunities for activating sources of collective memory. These range from brief informal conversations to well-crafted, memory-raising ceremonies. Linde (2001) categorizes these memory triggers into regular occurrences, occasional occurrences, spaces, and artifacts. In addition, she distinguishes between those events, locations and objects explicitly designed for remembering and those not primarily intended for remembering, but used to provoke memory nonetheless. The data analysis portion of this study will classify and examine the opportunities for remembering at the case-study location.

Where This Dissertation Fits in the Literature

The role of narratives in perpetuating organizational memory has not been extensively studied in the educational field. Oberman's (1997) study of Waldorf schools employs a similar framework, focusing on the role of symbols and rituals to transmit the values of the organization. Clark (1972) studied sagas in higher education, and Pettigrew (1979) examined social dramas in a longitudinal study of a British boarding school. However, there is a gap in the literature concerning the role of narrative in American public schools. This current study will contribute to the field by examining

the role of narrative in sustaining the vision of reform in the context of a comprehensive suburban high school.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This methodology section begins with an explanation of the rationale for choosing a case study methodology followed by a description of the units of analysis. It proceeds to a discussion of the research design, including methods of data collection, storage and analysis. This is followed by an examination of the limitations of the methodology.

Rationale for Choosing Single-Case Design: Critical Case

Case studies can focus on either single or multiple cases in the data collection and analysis. In the interest of triangulation and external validity, multiple cases are often preferred. However, Yin (2003) presents five justifications for single-case studies: critical case, typical case, longitudinal case, extreme case, and revelatory case. The purpose of this study is to explore a theory of how narrative relates to the sustainability of reforms in the context of an innovative, young school (Linde, 2000, 2001). Therefore, it is an example of a critical case.

In other sections of this dissertation, I define and operationalize the theory, detailing the kinds of data I collected and what kind of results I would expect if the theory were valid in this context. My data analysis section examines whether the theory

is supported by the results (whether the actual results resemble the expected results) and whether the differences are due to contextual factors or theoretical flaws.

Units of Analysis

This study employs a multilayered unit of analysis. The case for this study is Eagle Mountain High School (EMHS), a comprehensive public high school founded in 1999. Eagle Mountain is part of the Cotton Valley School District, a large suburban district in the Pacific Northwest. (The name of the school, district, and all individuals are pseudonyms.) The age of the school and its founding commitment to innovative reform make it an ideal location to study the role of narrative in the sustainability of reforms. Many of the founding administrators and teachers have moved on to other positions, leaving new staff to wrestle with the history and vision of reform. The culture and context of the school will be explored in detail in the section on the description of the case.

One unit of analysis is the overarching narrative that encapsulates the vision for the founding of the school. This story has been told, in various forms and fragments, throughout the history of the school. The content of the narrative and individual teachers' familiarity with it are a major focus of this study.

Another unit of analysis for this study is the system of team teaching in the 9th- and 10th-grade Language Arts and Social Studies departments. This system is one element of the founding vision of the school. Other key innovations that make the

school distinctive are (a) democratic decision-making processes; (b) open, flowing architecture; (c) brightly-colored classrooms with moveable tables and collapsible walls; (d) interdisciplinary teacher office areas clustered in small learning communities; (e) biweekly advisory periods founded on a commitment to teacher-student relationships; (f) career academies and service learning to connect curriculum to real-world applications; and (g) trimester schedules for more flexible, student-centered academic programming.

Any of these innovative reforms could trace its sustainability to the perpetuating role of the narrative. However, this study focuses on team teaching for several reasons. First, the team-teaching system is bounded in 9th- and 10th-grade Language Arts and Social Studies classes. This allows for a more clearly defined pool of potential interviewees than other reforms. In addition, using many of the other reforms as outcome variables would require conducting interviews with or gathering data from students. The theory of the paradigmatic narrative (as a tool of organizational memory) applies primarily to teachers. Students, as consumers in the educational organization, may have a role in perpetuating the organizational memory of a school, but Linde's (2000) theory does not address this. Therefore, incorporating students into the study would add a potentially confounding factor. Finally, team teaching serves as an effective unit of analysis because of its history of uneven implementation. Some teams consistently demonstrate all components of the team-teaching system, while others do

not engage in any elements of teaming. This variation in implementation may result in potentially meaningful relationships in the final data analysis.

This study is designed to contribute to the literature on sustainability of reforms. Therefore, the description of the case includes an analysis of the teaming system as it was originally conceived and its current degree of implementation.

Individual teams, nested within the broader team-teaching system, make up the primary units of analysis for this study. Interviews with team members are a major component of the data collection. The variability between teams allows me to examine the relationship between the stories teachers tell each other about the founding of the school and the degree of current implementation of the team-teaching system.

Research Design

Collection of Evidence

Yin (2003) identifies six sources of evidence that case-study researchers can use to gather data: interviews, documents, archival records, participant observations, direct observations, and artifacts. The following paragraphs will consider the strengths and weaknesses of these sources of evidence as they contribute to my study.

Interviews

This mode of data collection forms the bulk of my study. I am examining the role of narrative in the sustainability of innovative reforms. One essential part of my

study is to identify what the narrative is. It is generally not one coherent story told by a single narrator. Rather, it is more likely to be a series of interrelated elements told by all participants. Each individual may tell and retell certain parts of the narrative that relate to his/her unique experience and interests. Only by interviewing a range of individuals was I able to reconstruct the paradigmatic narrative (Linde, 2000) that ties together the years of experience. I interviewed current Eagle Mountain teachers and administrators as well as those who were involved in the founding of the school but have moved on to other positions (see Appendix A for interview protocols).

Compiling the paradigmatic narrative about the founding vision of the school was a challenging, but manageable, process. The more intellectually strenuous component of the interviewing process was determining how that narrative may have influenced individual teachers' perceptions of and commitment to the team-teaching system. Yin (2003) asserts that one strength of the case-study methodology is precisely the flexibility to gather data on two levels at the same time. The researcher must be nimble both in the design of questions and data-collection tables and in the actual conduct of the interview.

Individual teachers have probably never given much thought to the connection between the founding narrative and their perceptions of team teaching. To ensure that interviewees had the opportunity to reflect on the familiar elements of the narrative and their role in its transmission, I provided interview questions in advance. After transcribing the text of the interviews, I made transcripts available for each interviewee

to review. It is quite possible that teachers may realize that they had more to say after the interview has ended. This review gave the interviewees the opportunity to clarify and add to their responses. However, I did not allow the interviewees to rescind or strike their comments if they felt uncomfortable about the data in the transcript. No interviewees requested such changes. Finally, I found that some responses were insufficient for data analysis. Therefore, I conducted brief follow-up interviews to allow respondents to clarify or add to elements of the transcript.

Yin (2003) makes two other suggestions that I incorporated in my interviewing process. A case-study protocol allows for more flexibility in the line of questioning than a survey protocol. Yin encourages the researcher to maintain a focus on the underlying purpose of the interview while exhibiting the flexibility to pursue interesting leads. In this process, the interviewer should use “how” questions instead of “why” questions because Becker (1998, as cited in Yin, 2003) demonstrates that “why” questions make the respondent more defensive. Nearly all of my interview questions began with “how.” A second suggestion from Yin is to treat all interviewees as if they are contributing new, original data, even if I expect their responses to provide confirmatory data. This was particularly important in my study because details of the narrative may vary in the memory of individual teachers. This is consistent with Linde’s (1993) assertion that the established “facts” of a narrative may be based on spurious or unreliable claims of authority.

As mentioned above, interviews served as the primary data-collection technique for this study. One strength of the interview protocol is that it allows for a balance of the consistency necessary to make valid judgments from the results with the flexibility to allow for variations in individuals' relationship to the narrative. Another strength of interviewing is that I could arrange to meet with individual teachers or pairs when it was convenient for them, rather than trying to arrange schedules to allow for larger focus groups.

The primary weakness of the interview method was that my access to the narrative was second-hand. During the interviews, I did not observe and record the narrative as it was told and retold. Rather, I recorded the narrative as teachers remembered telling it and hearing it told. This did not allow me access to the subtleties of interaction that are so important to discourse analysis. For example, I was not able to observe the body language, vocal intonations, or power relationships that punctuate the telling of stories within an organization. This may be a significant limitation of the study. However, I did record data on the transmission of the narrative during observations at staff meetings. This is discussed in the Participant Observation section below. In addition, the units of analysis are individual teams and the outcome variable is how these teams implement the founding reform. Therefore, interviews were sufficient for accessing individuals' knowledge of and experience with the paradigmatic narrative. In addition, the methodology of Linde's (2000) study, which formed the basis of her

theory of the paradigmatic narrative, relied heavily on interviews rather than direct observations.

Whenever possible, I conducted interviews as teams. This addressed a second weakness of the interview method. Individual teachers may not recall details of the paradigmatic narrative without significant prompting from an interviewer. This prompting could bias the results by leading interviewees toward certain responses and away from others. However, when teams were interviewed together, the teachers prompted each other in a way that may resemble the natural working of the team-teaching system. In addition, the interaction of team partners allowed me to gather data on the content and transmission of the narrative in a more natural, organic context.

Of course, in small-group interviews or focus groups some individuals may be more inhibited, thus limiting my access to valuable information. In several cases, teachers expressed that they did not feel comfortable doing a joint interview with their partners. This necessitated one-on-one interviews to ensure that individuals had the opportunity to express their ideas without undue pressure from their team partners.

Documentary Evidence

The goal of analyzing historical documents for this study was to ascertain the vision of the school as it was articulated at its founding and as it has been communicated over time. Some founding documents that pertained to my study include publications, memos, and PowerPoint presentations used to communicate the direction

and vision of the school. School Improvement Plans, motivational posters (with school philosophies and policies), the school website, and “design studio” pamphlets all contain elements of the founding vision. One particularly useful collection of documents was the Curriculum and Instruction binder that was presented to all teachers before the first year. These documents, which are discussed in the results section of this dissertation, were used to convey the founding vision to all new staff in the opening year of the school. In addition, during the interviews, some teachers cited certain documents as influential in their understanding and transmission of the founding narrative, particularly the school website and documents included in summer reading packets.

One advantage of document analysis is that I was able to look at documents at my own pace and compare similarities and differences over time. A major disadvantage of document analysis in my case was retrievability. That is, there may be documents out there that I was not able to access.

Archival Records

The most useful archival records for this study were lists of teachers in the Language Arts and Social Studies departments over the past 10 years. This information was useful for me as I developed lists of possible interviewees. These documents also helped corroborate interview data about classroom locations, team partners, and other structural impediments to teaming. This information, in conjunction with interview data,

added to my understanding of how teaming has worked for different sets of partners over the years. A further use of archival records was to gather data on the longevity of teachers' service at EMHS and staff turnover. Teacher longevity will be one factor in the data analysis discussed below. As demonstrated in the literature review, staff turnover is a potential threat to the successful implementation of reforms. Therefore, the patterns of staff turnover may reveal trends in the sustainability of the team-teaching system.

The major advantage of using archival records is that it enhanced the quality of my data analysis. The more information I had about teacher and team characteristics, the more possible explanations and conclusions I could explore. Of course, the more data I encountered, the more complicated my data-collection, storage, and analysis systems became.

Participant Observations

Proponents of discourse analysis would argue that participant observation is essential to uncovering the paradigmatic narrative in its myriad forms (Boje, 1991). Stories are told in informal settings, sometimes in nearly incomprehensible fragments. Only an intent listener with intimate contextual knowledge can collect, assemble and interpret such narratives. As a teacher at Eagle Mountain, I am part of the context.

Observing and recording every episode of storytelling throughout the school would have been unmanageable. However, it was feasible for me to record fragments of

the paradigmatic narrative or references to the founding vision as they were manifest in meetings or other contexts where I was present. There was not much dialogue about the narrative itself. Instead, fragments of the narrative, what Boje (1991) calls terse storytelling, were generally employed to illustrate a point, advance a position or establish a sense of common purpose. In the interest of systematic data collection and preserving the rights of human subjects, I conducted observations only during staff meetings and Language Arts/Social Studies department meetings. Limiting the observations to clearly defined meetings helped me clearly delineate my potentially intertwined roles as teacher and researcher.

I developed a protocol for collecting, recording and analyzing references to the founding narrative (see Appendix B). This matrix included basic contextual details (when and where), content (what was said), as well as the observable verbal and/or physical responses of listeners. If members of Language Arts or Social Studies teams were present, I documented their responses as well. This protocol is derived from Linde's (2001) framework for analyzing the paradigmatic narrative as discussed above.

This targeted individual observation, in the midst of larger meetings, raised issues about the rights of human subjects. At the beginning of the data-collection period, I communicated to my fellow staff members that I would be conducting observations at meetings. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the school, so activities for remembering were common. Teachers did not appear to be overly concerned about one of their peers documenting information about the transmission of organizational

memory. However, in my communications with staff (see Appendix C), I emphasized that I would not be observing behaviors outside of staff and department meetings, and that I would be using pseudonyms for the district, school, and all individuals in the data collection and eventual dissertation. I provided a passive consent form to allow staff members to opt out of the observations. If they elected to refrain from participating in observations, I would not record any data (comments, reactions, behavior) for those staff members. After receiving the consent form, if individuals remained concerned about their privacy, I offered to meet with them to discuss their concerns and to devise any additional protections. No teachers or other staff members opted out of the observations or requested any additional protections for their privacy.

Direct Observations

I did not use direct observation in this study. During the pair interviews for team-teaching partners, I could have included a component of discourse analysis, observing the interaction of the partners in the context of the interview. The advantage of this method would be that I could access the complexities of the teaming relationship. However, that was not really within the scope of the research questions, so it would have added unnecessary complication to the study. In addition, the interview context was not an organic interaction between team partners; thus, any analysis of their discourse would have suffered from the artificiality of the context.

Another possible forum for direct observation for this study would have been observing teachers in their classrooms to determine the degree to which they were implementing team-teaching reforms. The strength of this method was that I would not be relying on teachers' self-reported commitment to team teaching. Teachers may claim to be implementing the system more fully than they actually do. Of course, single observations would not be an accurate or legitimate measure of fidelity to the reform. It is quite possible for a teacher to implement the teaming system on a regular basis, but I may have observed a day where teaming did not take place for any number of reasons (e.g., test, team partner has a substitute, etc.). The amount of time necessary to observe every team multiple times would have been a prohibitive weakness of this method, particularly because the data gained from such observations would not likely have been substantially different from that retrieved from a well-structured interview.

In addition, direct observation of teachers' classrooms would be far more invasive than I intended this study to be. Such observations would heighten the risk to the privacy of the individuals in the study. Observing individual teachers' classrooms to ascertain fidelity to school policies may elevate the researcher to a position of undue authority. In addition to being a researcher, I am also a teacher in the school. Such direct observations, and the resulting imbalance of authority, could disrupt my peer relationship with the Language Arts and Social Studies teachers, and potentially jeopardize the interview process (my primary method of data collection).

Physical Artifacts

Linde (2001) asserts that physical artifacts and spaces serve as triggers for memory. Physical artifacts did not play a large role in this study, except as opportunities to remember elements of the paradigmatic narrative. In particular, the physical layout of the school, including collapsible classroom walls, served to remind teachers of the stories about team teaching embedded in the founding narrative. The primary advantage of this form of data collection is that the physical artifacts of the school could be accessed at any time (unlike the momentary conversations addressed in the previous sections). The weakness of relying on physical artifacts is that they do not tell the story themselves. They only serve as markers that reinforce or spark memory.

Selection of Interviewees

The pool of possible interviewees was relatively small. There are five 9th-grade teams and five 10th-grade teams. I did not expect to elicit 100% participation from the teams; however, I included them all in the selection process. I aimed to interview at least one team from each of the four administrative “neighborhoods,” at least two teams from each grade level, and at least two teams with longevity and two teams of relative newcomers. Because the interviews were voluntary, and I did not want to exert undue pressure on my peers to serve as human subjects, I did not get an even distribution of interviews from across the neighborhoods. I interviewed 12 teachers, nearly half of the possible interview pool. Ten of those interviewees came from two neighborhoods. One

of the neighborhoods was not represented in the interviews. Five of the teachers were from 9th-grade teams while the remaining seven taught 10th grade. Four of the interviewees were founding staff members, four had been at the school for 4 or 5 years, and four had been hired in the past 3 years. With the exception of the cluster of interviewees from two neighborhoods, the selection of participants did meet the criteria for diversity of experience.

Triangulation of Evidence

The sources of evidence discussed above contributed to the validity of the data through triangulation. For example, fragments of the founding narrative were corroborated by several individuals during the interview process. In addition, documents from the founding of the school, research articles about the school, and observations from staff meetings produced a pattern of data that coalesced into a coherent narrative. Rather than relying on one potentially faulty source of evidence, this study benefited from a convergence of evidence (Yin, 2003) resulting from multiple modes of data collection (see Figure 1). As a result, the data were more robust, and the analysis and conclusions may be more credible, authentic, and valid (Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001).

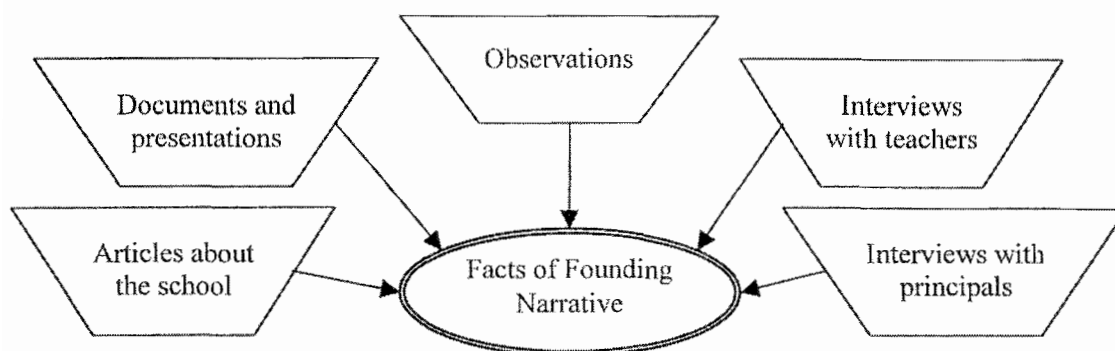


FIGURE 1. Convergence of evidence.

Analyzing the Evidence

In his seminal handbook on case-study research, Yin (2003) outlines a process of data analysis known as pattern matching. Using this approach, the researcher predicts a theoretical pattern of results, then describes the actual pattern and compares the two. This study was a critical case, intended to consider the accuracy of the propositions of a particular theory about the role of narrative in sustaining reforms in the face of loose organizational linkages and staff turnover. I began my data analysis by predicting what the data should look like if the theory were applicable in this context.

After collecting data, I analyzed the similarities and differences in the data patterns. I developed a data-collection matrix to manage the collection and analysis of interview data (see Appendix D). Cells are divided into five major categories: demographics; content of the narrative; transmission of the narrative; team-teaching philosophy, commitment, and practice; and the role of narrative in team-teaching philosophy and practice.

I sorted the data multiple ways. In the first sort, I looked at familiarity with the narrative, transmission of the narrative, and fidelity to the team-teaching reform using the technique of frequency counting (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This allowed me to address my research question about how an individual's role in passing on the story of the school's founding may contribute to that teacher's implementation of the founding reforms. The second sort was by years of service at Eagle Mountain, using Miles and Huberman's (1984) model of a role-by-time matrix. This allowed me to examine whether predicted patterns existed between years of service and implementation of the founding reforms. In a final sort, I examined the relationship between a teacher's commitment to team teaching and structural factors that may facilitate or inhibit teaming. I displayed the results of these analyses on matrices, including the relative location of individual teachers and quotes from their interviews. These matrices are presented in the results section and considered in more depth in the discussion section.

One of the major tasks in the data collection and analysis process was identifying the core elements of the paradigmatic narrative. I made a chart, based on frequency counting, that displayed the number of interviewees who referred to each specific element of the founding vision. I created codes based on similar responses. Then I categorized the coded responses into five groups derived from the core principles cited in the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's (NWREL, 2001) "Schools Making Progress" article and interview data from the founding principal.

To address questions about the relationship between the transmission of the founding narrative and the sustainability of the team-teaching reform, I examined the strength of association (Miles & Huberman, 1984) and rival explanations (Yin, 2003). Considering the explanatory power of rival explanations in relation to the theory under consideration contributed support to the validity of the conclusions.

As I gathered data, patterns of causes, events, and consequences emerged. Rather than focus on one linear chain in the web of events, I developed a causal network (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to display and analyze data. I examine this causal network in the discussion section of this dissertation.

Data Storage and Confidentiality

The data gathered in this study were primarily in three forms: (a) hard copies of previously published documents, (b) handwritten interview and observation notes, and (c) typed transcripts and digital audio recordings of interviews. I stored paper copies of documents and notes in a locked filing cabinet in my office. Digital data, including audio recordings and interview transcripts, were stored on my personal laptop computer. I regularly backed up to two external hard drives to protect against the corruption or loss of files. For both paper and digital documents, I used logical naming and filing systems that allowed me to access the data efficiently while still protecting the confidentiality of participants.

To protect the confidentiality of interviewees, I kept lists of pseudonyms separate from the other sources of data. After the study is complete (and I no longer need to follow up with interview participants), I will destroy the lists of pseudonyms, thereby reducing the risk of participants being identified.

Limitations of the Methodology and Threats to Validity

The case-study methodology for this study primarily involved extracting and recording the narratives that current staff members tell about the founding of Eagle Mountain High School. Several limitations arose from this methodological approach, including issues around the role of the researcher, the difficulty of accounting for unspoken evidence, the potential artificiality of the interview format, and the problem of contradictory narratives. In addition, the data collection and analytic techniques introduced certain threats to validity. The following paragraphs address each of these limitations and how I minimized their impact on the validity of the interpretations and conclusions.

Role of the Researcher

If a paradigmatic narrative is present in an organization, often it is told in fragments that would be unrecognizable to an outsider. In fact, part of the purpose of the narrative is to establish the teller and listener as part of the inside group, emphasizing their common membership in the organization. A researcher from the outside, who is

unfamiliar with the intricacies of the narrative, may miss subtle references and coded allusions in the everyday conversations of staff members. Therefore, participant observation is an important data-gathering technique for this kind of study.

As I report and interpret the data from this study, it is essential to address my role as a participant observer. I have taught at Eagle Mountain for 5 of its 10 years of existence. During those years, I have taught ninth-grade English and been a part of two team-teaching partnerships. I have also served as the head of the Language Arts department, as a member of the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment committee, and in various other leadership roles. Of the 27 teachers currently in the Language Arts and Social Studies departments, 11 have been at the school longer than I have, 6 came the same year as I did, and 9 have been hired in the last 4 years. I know all of the teachers in the study on a first-name basis, though I have more developed relationships with those in my neighborhood.

In the interest of absolute objectivity, I could have attempted to ensure that the background knowledge I brought to this study did not influence my data collection and analysis. In reality, however, absolute objectivity is not attainable in participant observations. I recognize that my interactions, relationships, and experiences at Eagle Mountain constitute a frame for interpreting the data. If I tried to eliminate all of my background knowledge about Eagle Mountain High School, the comprehensiveness of the study and the eventual validity of the conclusions would be deeply compromised. Rather than ignoring or suppressing my bank of knowledge and experience, I aimed to

be transparent about how I filtered the data through my prior knowledge of the school and its dynamics.

My experiences at Eagle Mountain may have influenced the following elements of this study: (a) the initial conception of the research questions; (b) assumptions about the founding vision and narrative; (c) the choice of team teaching as the particular element of the founding vision for analysis; (d) the development of interview questions, particularly those relating to the essential elements of the team-teaching system; (e) a filter for interpreting which statements are worth documenting and including in representations of data; (f) familiarity with conflicts and controversies that may be tangentially related to this study; and (g) the description of the case.

My familiarity with the history and daily operations of Eagle Mountain High School, and the relationships I have formed with the staff, may have influenced the objectivity of this study. However, these elements have also strengthened my position as a participant observer, giving me access to nuances in the data that an external observer may not be privy to. On balance, the benefits in data collection and analysis outweighed the potential risks of subjectivity and bias.

Methodological Limitations

In the process of recording interview data, a somewhat paradoxical issue arises: how to record what is not said. Of course, there are infinite possibilities of what teachers may not say, and speculating about intentions can be dangerous territory for a researcher

to tread. However, there are several reasons to believe that teachers may not have told me the complete story. First, I am one of their peers, so they know that they will need to work with me in the future. In addition, because of my involvement in several major administration initiatives and my enrollment in an administrative licensure program, I have reason to suspect that some teachers may view me as a tool of the administration rather than a nonpartisan observer. Finally, because this dissertation will be a public document, some teachers may have been reluctant to speak openly for fear of being identifiable in the final report of the research. I addressed each of these concerns in my protocols and consent forms. Nonetheless, some reticence may have remained, resulting in teachers' failure to reveal salient features of the narrative as they understand it. In particular, the transition from the founding principal to the current one is a watershed moment in the history of the school. It is possible that some teachers who have a rocky relationship with the current principal may have withheld comments during interviews. When this occurs, Linde (2001) recommends looking for opportunities to identify what could or should have been said and wasn't. I document an example of this in the section on "opportunities for remembering."

The use of interviews introduces a complication to the process of studying the narrative. Boje (1991) and others have argued for studying the context of storytelling by observing the behavior of tellers and listeners and applying the methods of discourse analysis. Asking interviewees to recount their experiences with the paradigmatic narrative is an artificial context. However, I conducted participant observations to

record the natural transmission of the narrative in staff and department meetings. Interviews were still valuable because they allowed me to access the history of the narrative as well as teachers' experiences in spontaneous or private conversations that a researcher would not be present to observe.

Another important limitation derives from the question of whose narratives become part of the organization's story. Can an official narrative coexist alongside contradictory accounts or do competing narratives battle for limited space in the arena of legitimacy? Linde (2001) observes that each organizational unit may have its own history and memory within the context of the comprehensive institution. If these memories overlap or contradict, Linde argues, the researcher should begin with the official record and then proceed to the informal or competing accounts. For this study, variations in narratives of the founding vision are profoundly important because they may point to weak links in the mechanisms of transmitting organizational memory.

Threats to Validity

As with any data-collection and analytic techniques, the methods and instruments used in this study presented certain threats to validity. One important consideration was the issue of content validity in the interview protocols. That is, would the interview questions generate responses that would help me answer my research questions? To ensure that I did not lead (or mislead) interviewees, I employed an expert panel review (see Appendix E). I chose two individuals who have intimate knowledge

of both the founding narrative and the team-teaching system at Eagle Mountain High School. To maximize the range of experience and perspective on the panel, I chose an expert who was a founding member of the faculty and another who had arrived in the last 5 years. In addition, one was a Language Arts teacher and the other taught Social Studies. One expert judge still served as an interviewee. I provided all interviewees with the interview questions in advance, so members of the expert panel were not necessarily biased by having seen drafts of the interview questions.

In addition to the interview protocols, another place where threats to validity may reside is in the data analytic process. Whitemore et al. (2001) identify credibility, authenticity, criticality and integrity as essential components of validity in qualitative research. To ensure the credibility of my data analytic tools, I had the expert panel review my data-collection matrices in conjunction with their evaluation of the interview questions. By providing interview transcripts, conducting follow-up interviews, and encouraging interviewees to clarify or correct any errors or omissions, I enhanced the authenticity of my data and the subsequent analysis.

One of the biggest challenges in data analysis is avoiding what Whitemore et al. (2001) call “uncritical verificationism” (p. 531). The goal of the study should be to describe and interpret situations as truthfully as possible, even if that means the data do not end up confirming the underlying assumptions or hypotheses. To enhance criticality and integrity, I continually returned to the data and considered alternate explanations as I analyzed and discussed my results. This was certainly not as easy as it sounds.

However, as I entered the data-collection process, I had a healthy degree of doubt about whether the founding vision at Eagle Mountain High School constituted a paradigmatic narrative and whether it had an effect on the sustainability of the founding reforms.

The limitations presented here, and any potential validity issues arising from them, are further addressed in the section on the discussion of the data.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the data collection. The first section is a description of the case, focusing on the vision, organizational structure, and team-teaching system at Eagle Mountain High School. This is followed by the results of the expert review of data-collection materials. The bulk of this chapter compiles data from interviews, observations and document review into a description of the founding narrative using Linde's (2001) framework. Finally, this chapter concludes with data on the current implementation of the team-teaching system at Eagle Mountain.

Description of the Case

This section describes the high school selected for the case-study analysis. I begin by outlining the vision, mission, conditions and context of the school, followed by a description of the organizational culture and structure. This leads to details about the team-teaching system, the founding reform that serves as the primary unit of analysis for this study.

Triangulation of Data

Several sources of data contribute to this description of the case, including interviews with the two principals, interviews with teachers, participant observations,

review of documents and presentations used for staff development, and externally published articles about the school. The interviews with the two principals focused entirely on the founding vision of the school and the modes of transmitting that vision. Interviews with teachers also addressed the team-teaching system.

Vision and Mission

According to founding principal Pam Armour, Eagle Mountain High School was intended to be “the most innovative high school, using state of the art practice.” The founding vision of Eagle Mountain was derived from the philosophies espoused by the Coalition of Essential Schools, the New American High School, and Breaking Ranks. As the planning team began developing the goals for the school in 1997, they chose four core principles: personalization and relationships, democratic decision-making, community involvement, and professional learning communities (NWREL, 2001). These principles guided everything from the design of the building to the kinds of courses offered. Before the school opened, the founders sought to involve the greater community in planning their school. Through phone and mail surveys and community meetings, the planning team worked to gather substantial data from local parent and business communities. Armour said that in these meetings parents repeatedly asked the school to “Quit telling us whether our kids are headed to college.” Armour interpreted this to mean that parents wanted a variety of opportunities rather than traditional course schedules governed by ability tracking. This led to a commitment at Eagle Mountain to

heterogeneous classes, open access to technology, and unrestricted enrollment in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. In addition, the founders developed a system of pathways, known as Career Academies, to help all students make direct connections between their coursework and their postsecondary aspirations. As Armour said, the superintendent had given her the mandate to “remove all barriers.”

Another key element of the founding principles was personalization. The planning team saw that large comprehensive high schools often create a factory-like atmosphere, where students can drift through 4 years barely noticed by the system (Oxley, Barton, & Klump, 2006). At Eagle Mountain, many concepts were implemented to create the feeling of smaller learning communities as promoted by the Coalition of Essential Schools (Sizer, 1992), including neighborhoods, advisories, and team teaching.

The purpose of the team-teaching system is to allow instructors to build relationships with a small group of students who spend most of their high school experience (especially the first 2 years) in the same “neighborhood” within the school. In addition, teachers are expected to align curriculum and design lessons, projects, and assessments for joint classes (60-70 students and two teachers in the same room for up to 140 minutes per day). Teachers regularly cited relationships and these other elements as key factors in their philosophy of team teaching. The structure of the team-teaching system is addressed in further detail below.

Conditions and Context

Eagle Mountain is a large comprehensive high school (approximately 2,000 students) in an affluent neighborhood of Cotton Valley, a large suburban district in the Pacific Northwest. It was founded in 1999 as an innovative learning environment that was supposed to be different from the traditional American high school. The students are primarily white (71%), although there are significant populations of Asian American (14%) and Latino students (9%). The parent community is very involved in both curricular and extracurricular activities, and 90% of students plan to attend college. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program exerts a large influence over the curriculum and master schedule.

Two demographic realities have exerted pressure on the school in recent years. The growth of the English Language Learner (ELL) population has strained the capacity of core subject teachers. In addition, a significant population of lower SES students (primarily White and Latino) has led to occasional socioeconomic class-related conflicts within the student body.

Despite its reputation as an excellent academic school, Eagle Mountain continues to struggle with unacceptably high failure rates for freshmen and sophomores in core classes. This has been the subject of much data-driven discussion and various ongoing interventions (including the team-teaching system).

Organizational Culture

The culture of Eagle Mountain is generally supportive of innovation and autonomy within the context of professional expectations. That is, teachers are encouraged to pursue innovative curriculum, instruction and assessment practices. The founding principal encouraged creativity and innovation in the process of the founding of the school and in its initial operation. She said she sought to create a “transparent, respectful, collaborative, democratic culture. . . . Once people see what happens when people are given the opportunity to speak their minds and own their voices in public they do the same thing for their students.” The current principal has continued to support autonomy and innovation in classroom practice.

In some ways, the organizational culture resembles Ghoshal and Bartlett’s (1997) “individualized corporation.” The administration aims to hire energetic, committed teachers who are willing to take risks and try progressive approaches to teaching. Thus, the administration recognizes (and for the most part respects) the professional integrity and autonomy of individual teachers as “frontline managers” engaging in entrepreneurial, integration, and renewal processes to design their curriculum, instruction, and assessment in ways that the teachers believe are best for their particular subject and students. According to Armour, “you don’t get anywhere superimposing or being dictatorial or mandating or being top-down with teachers. Even if they beg you to do it.” The organizational culture of the school grew out of this respect for the professionalism and leadership potential in each teacher.

Organizational Structure

Consistent with the vision of the Coalition of Essential Schools and Breaking Ranks, Eagle Mountain is divided into four smaller learning communities known as “neighborhoods” (Barton, 2004; Sizer, 1992; Smylie, Lazarus, & Brownlee-Conyers, 1996). These neighborhoods function as semi-autonomous units. In many respects, it is like a “centerless” organizational model (Pasternack & Viscio, 1998). Teachers’ desks are in an interdepartmental office cluster within the neighborhood. Thus, a Language Arts teacher may share a four-desk pod with math, world language, social studies, science, or business teachers. Departments exist, but most teachers associate themselves with a neighborhood first because they have much more social and collegial interaction with the other members of the neighborhood than with their departments. In addition, departments do not have an executive “chair.” Instead, departments are led by a “contact,” who serves as a liaison between the department and the administration and Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (CI&A) committee. Communication and decision-making also flows through a series of other channels, including the Flight Council and the Student-Staff Action Committee (Brewster & Railsback, 2003). According to Armour, “The tenets that underlie that culture had everything to do with democratic decision-making and staff getting together in a collaborative structure.” These multiple, overlapping components of organizational structure may lead to the

kind of holographic redundancy that enhances performance (Morgan, 2006). However, this structure often leads to disruptions in the communication pipeline.

The Language Arts and Social Studies Departments are further divided into two-person teams. Each team is responsible for teaching either 9th- or 10th-grade core classes. The intended, or ideal, structure for these teams, which form the primary unit of analysis for this study, is discussed below.

Staff Turnover

Like any organization, Eagle Mountain High School faces the challenge of staff turnover. Because of the culture of democracy, innovation and autonomy, Eagle Mountain could be seen as a career destination school. That is, teachers may arrive at Eagle Mountain, recognize the elements that make it a unique and desirable school, and decide to stay for a long time. Founding principal Pam Armour said,

We had a lot of staff who didn't really feel safe in their previous school setting. Because they knew they would feel safe if this were a democratic culture that respected all, this would be a place where people would not feel fear.

Teachers who came and felt empowered by that democratic culture may have been more inclined to stay for a long time.

On the other hand, certain elements of Eagle Mountain's culture may lead to higher staff turnover. The school tends to hire innovative, energetic, young teachers. Several teachers who had experience at other schools before coming to EMHS commented on the culture of hard work among the staff. Alaina Cook said, "The work

ethic here is that people work very hard. . . . [The teachers] work and work and work. It's amazing what they give." This might lead to staff turnover resulting from burnout. In addition, the school's strong international focus (Uganda Sister School, World Affairs Council, International Baccalaureate) draws teachers with international experience and aspirations. As a result, each year one or two teachers leave to work overseas. Finally, the school's commitment to teacher leadership has led to numerous teachers pursuing administrative positions. Three of the administrators were former EMHS teachers. The current staff has at least six teachers in administrative license programs. In addition, at least five current or former staff members are in doctoral programs in education.

These forces have led to a considerable degree of staff turnover. To display this, I have grouped members of the Language Arts and Social Studies departments based on their years of service at Eagle Mountain. I chose 5 years rather than 6 years as the cut point between the two middle groups for two reasons: there are no teachers remaining in either department who were hired in the 5th year, and the founding principal left after the 5th year. Table 1 shows that nearly 60% of the teachers in these departments have been hired in the last 5 years, and nearly 30% have arrived in the past 3 years. Only 5 of 27 teachers in the Language Arts and Social Studies departments remain from the founding of the school.

Staff turnover within the Language Arts and Social Studies departments averages about 14% per year. In one year, the turnover was as high as 7 teachers out of

TABLE 1. Longevity of Language Arts and Social Studies Teachers at EMHS

Longevity by department	Number of teachers
10 years (founding staff)	
Language Arts	1
Social Studies	4
6-9 years	
Language Arts	4
Social Studies	2
4-5 years	
Language Arts	4
Social Studies	4
1-3 years	
Language Arts	4
Social Studies	4

27 (26%). In other years the departments only replaced one departed teacher. This rate of turnover is much higher than the district average for certified staff, which is slightly less than 9%. Of course, the district employs several thousand teachers, while the Language Arts and Social Studies departments at Eagle Mountain are made up of only 27 teachers. Thus, the departure of one or two teachers can lead to substantial fluctuations in the rate of staff turnover within the departments.

Communication and Organizational Linkages

As discussed earlier, Schwandt (1995) identifies two modes of communication: dissemination and distribution. Disseminated knowledge tends to be top-down directives or policies, while distributed knowledge is less formal and generally horizontal in nature. At Eagle Mountain, dissemination is not always exclusively vertical. The decentralized decision-making culture at Eagle Mountain allows

departments to determine their priorities and action plans. Communicating those decisions, made among a group of peers (without even a formal department “chair”), would be a form of horizontal dissemination.

The concepts of horizontal and vertical modes of communication may be inadequate for describing communication at Eagle Mountain. The transmission and exchange of knowledge and information at Eagle Mountain must navigate a complex web of overlapping organizational units. It is not unusual for a single teacher to be part of a neighborhood, a department, an interdisciplinary team, a Professional Learning Community (PLC) or data team, a Critical Friends Group (CFG), and one or more standing or ad hoc committees and task forces. Each committee or group will share some, but not all, of its members with the other organizational units. These committees have been extolled as “a five-part governance model” that serves to integrate each neighborhood into the larger school community (Oxley et al., 2006, p. 3). This may result in the kind of positive redundancy expressed in Morgan’s (2006) model of a holographic mind. However, it often leads to gaps in communication and inconsistent distribution of messages. Information does not necessarily get recontextualized into useful a form when it moves between organizational units. For example, teachers reported that they regularly felt disconnected from other neighborhoods and from administrative decisions.

Ideal Structure for Team-Teaching System

According to the founding vision, as it was communicated in original documents, interviews with founding staff members, and interviews with more recent hires, the ideal structure for the team-teaching system involves several factors: team teachers share the same students; adjoining classrooms with collapsible walls; back-to-back class periods; a common planning period; only one teaming partner; and the same students for the entire school year. The following subsections detail the intended structure and potential challenges of each element of the ideal structure of team teaching.

Team Teachers Share the Same Students

It is not unusual in the average high school for core-subject teachers to have some overlap in their class rosters. At Eagle Mountain, the teaming system makes these overlaps explicit and comprehensive. That is, all of the students in a ninth-grade Language Arts class will be in the same Social Studies class as well. This is intended to provide continuity for the students as they move from class to class. In the midst of thousands of students, freshmen find familiar faces and build community with a small group. This community feeling leads to a heightened sense of belonging, which, in turn, contributes to greater student engagement and, eventually, higher achievement (Coladarci & Cobb, 1996; Eberts & Schwartz, 1990; Sizer, 1992).

Adjoining Classrooms With Collapsible Walls

The architecture of Eagle Mountain was designed with the team-teaching system in mind. Most of the classrooms have at least one collapsible wall, allowing the rooms to incorporate two full classes at once. When teachers open the walls (often referred to as opening the “doors,” even though it is really a collapsible wall rather than a door), they can teach both classes at once. The benefits of this may not be intuitive. Some may wonder how two instructors teaching a class of 60-70 students leads to better learning than one instructor with 30-35 students. Depending on the lesson, however, the larger class environment can actually be quite beneficial. For example, one teacher can lead the class in an activity while the team partner can work in small groups or one-on-one with struggling students.

Back-to-Back Class Periods

Each class period at Eagle Mountain is 60-70 minutes long. If the teamed classes are taught during consecutive class periods, then teachers can design extended lessons that allow ample time for multiple learning styles and outcomes. For instance, a lesson may begin with a period of direct instruction followed by related readings. Then students may participate in an activity to reinforce or extend the readings, after which they synthesize their learning through writing. Finally, the students can share their ideas and revise their writing. It would be difficult to complete all of these components in a single class period without rushing and therefore sacrificing the value of the learning

process. A two-hour class period allows for the teachers to allocate adequate time for each phase of the lesson. If the periods are not back-to-back, the lesson may be interrupted at an inopportune moment (e.g., in the middle of the activity or writing), and student learning may suffer.

Common Planning Period

At Eagle Mountain, each teacher has one planning period per day. In the ideal teaming system, team partners share the same planning period, and their desks are near each other in the neighborhood office cluster. This common planning time (and geographical proximity) is essential to designing integrated curriculum, instruction, and assessments. In addition, because team partners share the same students, the common plan time allows teachers to discuss the progress and needs of individual students. In interviews, teachers repeatedly identified the common planning period (or its absence) as the foundational factor in the success (or failure) of the teaming system. That is, even if all of the other elements of the system were in place, without the collaborative planning time, teachers were not able to fully implement the team-teaching model for optimal student learning.

Only One Team Partner

The work of team partners is intensely collaborative. They spend a large portion of their common planning time aligning curriculum and preparing meaningful lessons

for their combined classes. Therefore, it is essential that each teacher have only one team partner. The additional workload of planning with more than one partner would significantly limit the ability of the teacher to successfully team with either partner. Teachers who have had multiple partners during the same term reported that this additional level of complexity led to limited success with the teaming model.

Students Stay With One Team for the Entire Course

Core language arts and social studies classes at Eagle Mountain are 1-year courses. In the trimester system, each term is equivalent to one half of a year, so a full year's worth of language arts or social studies occupies two trimesters in a student's schedule. According to the founding vision, for the teaming system to work at its best, students should remain with the same team for both trimesters. One of the key mechanisms through which the team-teaching system aims to improve student achievement is the development of a community culture (Barton, 2004; Oxley et al., 2006). By the end of the first 12-week trimester, teachers report that classes are usually beginning to coalesce into a learning community. If the students are then uprooted and transferred to another teacher, they must begin to build new community norms and culture, even if the group of students remains the same. This can be quite disruptive for the learning process, though teachers report that it is not as essential as the other elements of the teaming model.

Results From Expert Review of Data-Collection Materials

After developing my interview protocols and data-collection matrices, I empanelled a team of experts to review the data-collection materials. I enlisted two teachers who were familiar with both the founding narrative and the team-teaching system at Eagle Mountain High School. To increase the range of experience and perspective on the panel, I chose two experts: One was a founding member of the faculty, and the other had joined the staff within the last 5 years. In addition, one was a Language Arts teacher and the other taught Social Studies. To help the expert judges evaluate the interview questions and data-collection matrix in relation to the purpose of the study, I included the proposal abstract and research questions in addition to some specific questions about clarity, organization and bias (see Appendix E).

In general, the expert judges determined that my protocols were sound. They did have a few suggestions for minor revisions, including simplifying the language of some questions because interviewees would not be not familiar with the literature of discourse analysis. One reviewer also suggested that I make a clearer distinction between philosophy and practice of team teaching in the last two questions on the interview protocol. Otherwise, teachers may not know how to answer the questions.

Key Elements of the Paradigmatic Narrative at Eagle Mountain

As discussed in the review of the literature, Linde (2000) provides a framework of six questions for analyzing the paradigmatic narrative as it travels through an organization:

1. Who tells the narrative?
2. Why is the narrative told?
3. What are the key events?
4. What values are expressed?
5. What are the relationships between the narrative and the reward structures of the organization?
6. What are the occasions for retelling the narrative?

This section employs Linde's framework to access and evaluate the narrative of the founding of Eagle Mountain High School.

Who Tells the Narrative?

At Eagle Mountain, the narrative is told in various forms by both old-timers and newcomers, depending on the situation and purpose. Those who were present at the founding of the school and its first few years are more aware of their role as storytellers. In interviews, they tended to indicate that they have transmitted the story of the early years of the school in both formal and informal ways to their peers. They recognized that they had a high degree of familiarity with the narrative. For example, Jason

Jefferson, a founding member, said he could easily retell the whole story and had repeatedly recounted fragments of the story in new-teacher seminars, staff-development meetings, and various informal conversations. Another founding staff member, Rosemary Grant, said, “I know just about everything about [the narrative] because I was close to all of the planning team.” She said that she regularly tells her team partner about the early days.

Leslie Alter, the current principal, claimed that it takes about 3 years to fully integrate into the Eagle Mountain philosophy. Not surprisingly, those who have been hired in the last 3 years expressed much less familiarity with the narrative and less comfort with retelling. For example, when Adam Bacon, in his 2nd year at Eagle Mountain, was asked whether he had communicated the story of the founding of the school to his fellow teachers, he exclaimed, “Oh, no!” In other parts of his interview, Bacon expressed that he felt that his knowledge of the narrative was inadequate for him to comfortably tell the story.

It seems intuitive that teachers who have been at the school longer would be more familiar with the narrative and therefore more likely to retell parts of it. However some of those recent hires who reported that they did not tell the story did, in fact, recount elements of the narrative in the context of department meetings. These fragmentary retellings were often preceded with a qualifying statement like, “I haven’t been here long, but from what I’ve heard . . .” or “As I understand it, when the school

started we were supposed to. . . .” The purpose for these kinds of statements is explored in the next section.

Why Is the Narrative Told?

According to Linde (2000), individuals retell fragments of the narrative for a variety of purposes, including establishing their role as an insider, building community, and advancing their personal agendas. These last two purposes were particularly evident in staff and department meetings at Eagle Mountain.

This is the 10th year of the school, and several activities have attempted to build morale and foster collegiality by invoking the spirit of the founding. At the first staff meeting of the year, teachers, counselors, and classified staff were asked to sit at tables based on the year they were hired. Staff members then recounted to their table group a favorite memory from their first year at Eagle Mountain. Selected memories were then reported to the entire staff. As these explicit fragments of the paradigmatic narrative were told, listeners reacted in both verbal and nonverbal ways. Several of the stories elicited laughter and cheers. Staff members turned to each other and commented on their recollection of or involvement in the episodes being retold. Others smiled, nodded in recognition or made eye contact with peers, as if to say, “Do you remember that too?” Staff members reported leaving that meeting feeling reconnected to their colleagues and to the vision of the organization. This is an example of the narrative being explicitly employed to build community.

The narrative has also been used to advance a particular agenda. By linking current programs and goals to the founding vision, a teacher can establish or augment the legitimacy of her position or proposal. For example, in a Language Arts department meeting Ashley Steffens asserted, “We say we are about building community, but then we don’t make vertical looping a priority. So the community we build in ninth grade doesn’t carry over to 10th grade.” Matt Wilson, Stacey Harwood and Steve Richards each echoed a variation of “We say we are about . . .” to advance their particular arguments for action or reform. The tone of these comments is usually authoritative, and slightly derisive, as if the speakers, imbued with righteous indignation, are chastising their peers, or the school in general, for failing to adhere to the revered founding principles.

These references to the founding narrative are sometimes progressive, in support of active innovation and reform. Other times, the narrative is invoked to maintain the status quo in the face of a proposal that appeared to deviate from a teacher’s interpretation of the founding vision. In both cases, an appeal to the authority of the founding narrative is almost always received with reverence, even by those who disagree with the proposal. Listeners tend to respond by nodding their heads or speaking simple phrases of affirmation. Even those who have previously expressed disagreement with the proposal rarely respond in a way that would appear to challenge the proponent’s interpretation or invocation of the founding vision. For example, in the cases mentioned above, no one responded with, “But that’s not what the school was

founded on,” or “That may be what we were founded on, but we should do something different now.”

One particularly interesting result of this use of the narrative is that it seems to be employed to some degree by both old and new staff. Recent hires (i.e., those who joined the staff within the last 3 years) tend to speak with less authority or certainty. However they still draw on the narrative to bolster their assertions in department meetings. For example, Jennifer Nelson, in her first year at Eagle Mountain, began a comment about course forecasting by saying, “I thought I heard that in the beginning all seniors were expected to take this class.” By referring to “the beginning” she may have increased the legitimacy of her position, particularly in an organization that places a high value on its founding vision of innovation and reform.

What Are the Key Events?

The key events of Eagle Mountain’s paradigmatic narrative can be classified in two categories: the founding philosophy and the stories about the early days of the school. They are generally closely related. For example, stories about the days when there was only one lunch period carry a coded reference to the philosophical emphasis on community and relationships. In meetings, teachers and administrators often make reference to both strands of the narrative. However, they tend to have differing purposes. Stories about events from the early days tend to be used to evoke nostalgia

and a sense of shared community, whereas appeals to the founding philosophy tend to be used for advocacy.

In its article about the innovative reforms at Eagle Mountain High School, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2001) identifies four core principles guiding the school's planning and design: personalized and relevant student learning, democratic decision-making, community engagement, and professional learning communities. I have combined this framework with data from interviews, observations, and early documents to generate five categories for grouping fragments or references to the founding narrative and vision: Personalization and Relationships; Democracy—Teacher Leadership, Decision-Making, Equity and Access; Rigor and Innovation; Community Engagement and Relevance; and Challenges. Interviews with the principals and PowerPoint presentations from planning team meetings were particularly instrumental in developing these categories. Table 2 lists the elements of the narrative by category and the number of interviewees who referred to each element in their discussions of the narrative and their team-teaching practice.

Each element in Table 2 was mentioned by at least two teachers or administrators during the interviews. Within each category, elements are sorted by the number of interviewees who referred to the element. I did not account for the frequency of an element within each interview. That is, one teacher may have referred to democratic decision-making only one time in her interview while another teacher may

TABLE 2. Key Elements of the Founding Vision as Expressed
in the Paradigmatic Narrative

Element of founding narrative/vision	Number of interviewees who identified this element (<i>n</i> = 14)
Personalization and Relationships	
Smaller learning communities (neighborhoods)— advisory, intimate and safe	12
Teaming and collaboration	11
No 12 th grade during first year	2
Democracy—teacher leadership, decision-making, equity and access	
Teacher leadership—democratic decision-making	6
Flexibility—professionalism, autonomy	5
Opportunity and access—course offerings, IB	3
Critical Friends Groups (CFG)	3
Rigor and Innovation	
International Baccalaureate (IB)	7
Innovation—open to new ideas/programs, brain based learning, project-based assessment, cooperative learning, heterogeneous grouping	6
Architecture—layout	3
Trimester	3
Hard-working teachers	2
Charismatic founding principal	2
Community Engagement and Relevance	
Community involvement—service learning, internships, international perspective	6
Design team—community input	6
Challenges	
Putting vision into practice	4
Class size—classroom space	4
Staff turnover	3
Building not physically ready	3
Democratic decision-making = endless meetings— painful	3
Overextended—chasing educational fads	3
Blending students from two high schools	2
Planning team vs. rest of staff	2
Keeping up technology	2

have recounted numerous stories about Eagle Mountain's democratic processes. In this table, both interviews would count as one reference to this element.

Teachers generally do not perceive these elements as distinct, as they are coded and categorized in Table 2. Instead, the core principles of the founding of the school flow together in the retellings of the narrative. For instance, one teacher identified Eagle Mountain's strengths as a "culture of rigor and collaboration and still a desire to ensure personalization for all kids." Another said, "Many of the ideas I associate with the founding of the school still influence my practice, specifically the emphasis on collaboration, teaming, and teacher autonomy and leadership." This blending of elements is key to the identity of the school. Innovation, collaboration, democracy, and relationships are literally built into the architecture of the building, so it is not surprising that teachers would express this integration in their retellings of the founding narrative.

What Values Are Expressed?

There are multiple levels of values expressed in the paradigmatic narrative at Eagle Mountain. First are the core values discussed above: personalization and relationships, democracy and access, rigor and innovation, and community involvement? As fragments of the stories are told, these values are reinforced in the teller and communicated to the listener (Boje, 1991). In addition, other values may be expressed, including the nostalgic desire to restore the innovative spirit of the early days. Some teachers also use the narrative to express frustration or resignation. One

Language Arts teacher said that when people talk about the history of the school, “Some people are very discouraging. They say, ‘This is the founding philosophy, but it’s not really happening, so don’t even try.’”

The values expressed in the narrative are likely to be closely linked to the purpose and opportunity for telling. For example, if a teacher is using the narrative to help build a sense of community in the context of a formal meeting, she may draw on fragments that express the values of personalization and relationship. On the other hand, if she is venting to a colleague in the lunchroom, she might choose fragments of the narrative that resonate with her frustration. Either way, the role of the narrative in communicating values was clear when Brett Hughes said:

I picked [the founding vision] up informally (like during lunch conversations) and formally (at staff development meetings). I came away with the impression that the founding of the school was a seminal event, and that we needed to be very aware of it. . . . One of the impressions I got was that this was a school that really emphasized collaboration. It’s part of the reason I still try to do it, though the hectic daily pace often gets in the way. But I have to say that this message was communicated successfully. . . . I really do feel that collaborating with other teachers is very much an expected and necessary part of my job.

What Are the Relationships Between the Narrative and the Reward Structures of the Organization?

At Eagle Mountain, there appear to be no explicit connections between the narrative and the reward structures of the organization. In Linde’s (2001) study of narrative in a major American insurance company, she found that the relationship was embedded within the narrative itself. That is, the narrative says that if you conduct your

business according to the model espoused by the charismatic founder, you will advance within the hierarchy of the organization. In a public school like EMHS, salaries, benefits, and teaching assignments are determined by longevity and educational attainment as enumerated in a collective bargaining agreement. Therefore familiarity with or adherence to the founding narrative does not contribute in any explicit way to a teacher's advancement at the school.

There may be implicit rewards and benefits that accrue from an individual's participation in the transmission of the narrative. For example, several teachers expressed frustration about unequal access to the structural components of teaming. Year after year, a few teachers consistently have common planning periods, back-to-back classes, collapsible walls and the other necessary elements of teaming. Meanwhile, other teams are regularly left without those essential components. One teacher suggested that this inequality could be related to a teacher's familiarity with and participation in transmitting the narrative. However, accessing the data necessary to reach such conclusions is beyond the scope of this study.

What Are the Occasions for Retelling the Narrative?

Linde (2001) categorizes the occasions for retelling the narrative into regular occurrences, occasional occurrences, spaces, and artifacts. These categories are further divided into events, locations and objects that are designed specifically for remembering and those designed for other purposes but that still serve as opportunities to remember.

Table 3 arranges opportunities for remembering at Eagle Mountain into Linde's categories.

TABLE 3. Occasions for Remembering Within Eagle Mountain High School

	Designed for remembering	Not primarily designed for remembering—but still used for remembering
Time—regular occurrences	Graduation Homecoming End-of-school-year staff party Preservice staff meetings, including “welcome back” ceremony Preservice reading packet, including articles about the school	New Staff Orientation Monthly staff meetings Weekly staff calendar (website) Monthly newsletter Department meetings Forecasting
Time—irregular or occasional	Retirement parties Design studio	Staff/neighborhood social events New course proposals Hiring process Counselors providing guidance to students and parents Staff conversations
Space	Trophy case Newspaper clippings on bulletin boards—athletics, drama Athletic record board	Murals in hallways—freedoms, peace, sister school Architecture—collapsible walls, open computer labs, neighborhoods Career Academy signs
Artifacts	Founding plaque Framed groundbreaking ceremony memorabilia in offices Yearbook Trophies Posters from drama productions	Student newspaper—back issues Website—section on founding/history T-shirts celebrating past events (“10 years of excellence”)

Note. Category headings from “Narrative in Institutions” (p. 526), by C. Linde, in D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen, and H. E. Hamilton (Eds.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, 2001, Malden, MA: Blackwell.

As a relatively young school, Eagle Mountain does not have generations of memory to archive and recall. Instead, the lifespan of the school from the initial

planning team to the present is about 12 years. Nonetheless, there is a vibrant sense of history in the ceremonies, spaces, artifacts, and conversations that inhabit the school. From staff meetings to state championship banners, from the school website to the architecture of the building, history permeates the culture of Eagle Mountain. As mentioned above, the preservice meeting at the start of the current school year illustrates both formal and informal opportunities for remembering the paradigmatic narrative at Eagle Mountain High School. The first part of the meeting was led by members of the 10-year anniversary committee, with the explicit goal of retelling important fragments in the story of the school. One member of the committee introduced the purpose of the meeting as “look[ing] to the past to see where we’ve come from, and maybe where we are headed.” Teachers, administrators, and classified staff were instructed to sit in table groups based on the year they came to Eagle Mountain and discuss memorable events from that year.

After about 10 minutes of animated conversations, each group shared some of their favorite memories. The founding teachers talked about the sense of community and purpose. In particular, they remembered that during the first year there was only one lunch period and most staff members ate together in a common teachers’ lounge. They also joked about excessively hot classrooms and frantically assembling student desks the weekend before school opened. Teachers who came the 2nd year echoed the sentiments about purpose and unity. One expressed that coming to Eagle Mountain from a more traditional school environment felt like arriving in “Shangri-la for teachers.”

Particularly, he remembered being thrilled by challenging professional discussions, insightful summer readings, and teacher input for school decisions.

As the meeting progressed, staff members recalled humorous moments, state championships, and crises, including a lockdown during the spring carnival, an evacuation due to burnt popcorn and the terror of 9/11. The teachers who arrived in the 6th year remembered that the school had grown so much that there were now two lunches, and the former staff lounge was now being used as a science classroom. As these details were recalled, several founding staff members looked at each other and sighed—as if part of the community spirit of the early days had been lost.

Despite this moment of bittersweet nostalgia, the tone of the remembrances was essentially upbeat and hopeful. The public and official nature of this recollection of history may have served to suppress any unpleasant or controversial stories. For example, the group hired in the school's 7th year arrived in the midst of a major controversy about a cancelled drama performance. The furor drew national attention and dragged on for nearly the entire school year. Several staff members resigned as a result of the crisis, and one has since filed a lawsuit against the district. The teacher who presented the 7th-year hires' recollections at the preservice meeting was deeply involved in that crisis, yet his comments completely ignored the major event. Instead, he told a hilarious story about some silly ongoing pranks in one of the neighborhoods. The staff were heartily laughing as the story went on. However, no mention was made of one of the most contentious and divisive issues in the history of the school. This was

a clear example of Linde's (2001) observation that what is not said can still be a significant part of the narrative.

This lively and entertaining session was overwhelmingly positive. People seemed to enjoy sharing their memories in such a formal but lighthearted way. After this formal opportunity for remembering, the meeting continued to draw on the history of the school, but in informal ways. Additionally, these informal appeals to the narrative tended to be in the form of coded fragments for the purpose of advocacy.

The next item on the agenda was a vote to approve a proposal to amend the advisory system. Like team teaching, the advisory system was one of the founding reforms. It was designed on the principle that students are more successful if they feel part of a small community, and particularly if they have consistent healthy relationships with adults (Brewster & Railsback, 2003). In its original design, the advisory system included 2 weekly periods where students would start in their home room, but then check out to other destinations to meet with teachers, make up tests, or work on group projects with their peers (Barton, 2004). In practice, many students use the time effectively, but many others seem to view the advisory period as an opportunity to socialize, sleep, or worse. Administrators have reported that fights, vandalism, and drug deals tend to be more common on advisory days.

Not surprisingly, this unstructured time has been controversial since the school opened. On advisory days, normal class periods are 10 minutes shorter. Some teachers, students, and parents feel that advisory is an indispensable opportunity for students and

teachers to connect outside of normal class hours. Others argue that it is an inefficient waste of instructional time. The administration and staff have tinkered with the advisory system over the past 10 years, making minor changes, but leaving essential questions about advisory unresolved.

After the formal remembering and light-hearted reminiscing at the beginning of the preservice meeting, Principal Alter led a discussion about making significant changes to the advisory system. A committee had worked during the spring and summer to craft a new system, and they seemed to be expecting a rubber-stamp vote at this meeting. Before the voting process began, Alter reviewed Eagle Mountain's philosophy of democratic decision-making—another core element of the founding narrative. She started with a direct reference to the founding narrative by saying, "We are going back to the root of how we make decisions. Any time we change a procedure or policy, we use a five-finger vote." As Pam Armour, the founding principal, described in an interview, "The tenets that underlie the culture had everything to do with democratic decision-making and staff getting together in a collaborative structure."

However, this decision-making process has evolved over time. Upon hearing reference to the five-finger vote, the staff began to turn and grumble to each other; some made coded references to the "iPod vote." This fragment of the narrative referred to a controversial policy decision where the hallowed five-finger voting system had broken down. During the iPod debate, instead of serving as a consensus-building tool, the five-finger vote had resulted in a deep split in the staff. The policy was eventually adopted

by an up-or-down vote of 50-49. In the bitter aftermath of the iPod vote, the staff did not have a five-finger vote for nearly 2 years. At the beginning of the advisory debate, the principal obliquely referred to the five-finger voting hiatus by saying, “It’s been a while since we’ve done this.”

The meeting dragged on for another half hour. Administrators, teachers and classified staff made direct and indirect references to the founding narrative to support or oppose the change in the advisory system. Eventually a vote was taken and the proposal passed.

This meeting served as an opportunity for remembering and transmitting Eagle Mountain’s paradigmatic narrative through the formal remembrance activity and through the more practical business of the meeting.

Transmission of the founding narrative also happens at department meetings. Kelly Rosen, in her 2nd year at Eagle Mountain, said, “You glean a lot from meetings. That’s where I’ve learned the most, when people say things like ‘we founded this school on these principles,’ which you hear a lot.”

Another tool for remembering is the packet of forms and reading materials that the principal sends to all staff near the end of the summer each year. On at least two occasions in the past 5 years, the packet has included an article specifically reviewing the founding vision of Eagle Mountain. One year, the article was part of the Schools Making Progress series published by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2001). Before the current school year, the packet included an article prepared for a

presentation at the Model Schools Network annual conference. Both articles highlighted innovative elements of Eagle Mountain's design, including the neighborhood system, service learning, career academies, democratic decision-making, and team teaching. It is not unusual for innovative schools to be profiled in these kinds of articles. The important factor in the case of Eagle Mountain is that these articles have been explicitly used as a tool for remembering. Principal Alter explained the purpose of these readings by saying, "we really need to do something like that every year to remind people of what we do, the programs we started and developed 10 years ago. They were done for a reason, and they've been successful."

As a result of Eagle Mountain's national profile, reform-minded educators from across the country have made pilgrimages to the school to learn what is working and why. This reputation for innovation and success has led to the development of the Design Studio program. School leaders come to Eagle Mountain for a 2-3 day visit, during which they tour the school, observe classes and advisory sessions, and hear a presentation about the founding vision and current programs. Consistent with the founding ideal of teacher leadership, the Design Studio is organized and led primarily by EMHS teachers. This serves to reinforce the stories of the founding of the school for those teachers who participate. In addition, the whole staff participated in an intramural Design Studio in August 2005 to help introduce them to or remind them of the stories of the founding vision.

Physical objects and spaces can also serve to transmit the stories of the founding of the school. In the main entrance lobby, there is a display case chronicling Eagle Mountain's first 10 years through artifacts, photographs and newspaper clippings. Carron Peters, in his 2nd year at EMHS, said he learned about the founding of the school from "that display case at the front of the school. I've looked through the display case at some of the pictures. It has pictures and a dedication plaque . . . the early artifacts of the school." These artifacts, explicitly intended for remembering, help remind teachers and students of the origins and history of their school.

The design of Eagle Mountain is consciously unconventional, and its uniqueness serves as a cue for memory. The founding principal, Pam Armour, described the building as a place where decentralization of services led to personalization. Instead of students coming to a central administrative office to meet with counselors or administrators, the support services are located in the neighborhoods for familiarity, easier access, and personalization. Classrooms could open their doors to create large meeting spaces for all students in the neighborhood to participate in the democratic decision-making process. Over time, overcrowding of classrooms and the distractions from noise led to closing off some of the open spaces. As the current principal, Leslie Alter, put it,

Philosophically it was a great idea. But it was so noisy you couldn't hear anything. So we started closing them off. . . . We used to be able to open all of the walls in the neighborhood. And every student in the neighborhood could be together for a massive meeting. But we outgrew our ability to live in that space. So we had to close off those spaces.

When we opened we had the idea that we would be creating these large open forums, but then we couldn't do it any more.

The physical spaces in many neighborhoods are no longer open, but other components of the original design remain, including the collapsible classroom walls and the decentralized services. In his study of the transmission of organizational memory in Waldorf schools, Oberman (1997) observed that the physical spaces, including the shapes and colors of the walls, can serve to remind students and staff of the school's heritage. At Eagle Mountain, the distinctive shapes and colors of the neighborhood open spaces remain, though they are not nearly as prominent as they had been at the founding.

Current Implementation Status of Team-Teaching System

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the stories teachers tell each other about the founding vision of the school and the sustainability of the founding reforms. This study focuses on one of the founding reforms: the team-teaching system. Data from interviews show a large degree of variation in the implementation of the team-teaching model (Table 4). Some teachers actively implement all parts of the teaming system, including collaborating on common curriculum and assessments and opening the collapsible walls for enrichment activities. Other teachers rarely even consult with their partners or align their lessons. Teachers tend to be aware of the differential implementation, particularly those who are not

TABLE 4. Implementation of Elements of Team Teaching

Elements of teaming	Frequency of implementation—by teacher				
	Most days	About once a week	Every few weeks	About once or twice a trimester	Never
Common curriculum design	5	1	2	1	0
Aligned daily lesson plans	2	1	2	3	1
Common assessments	0	0	3	6	0
Referring to lessons/activities from the other class	3	5	0	1	0
Open classroom doors for joint lessons/activities	0	2	5	2	0
Open classroom doors for differentiated instruction (pull-out groups)	0	0	1	0	8
Discussing student progress or comparing grades for shared students	6	2	1	0	0
Joint communication with parents	0	2	0	6	1

teaming to the fullest extent. For example, several teachers who are new to teaming or new to their current team partner repeatedly used the word “yet” in their responses. This suggests an aspiration to expand their teaming practice beyond its current implementation. Adam Bacon, a 2nd-year teacher, said, “I’m not the greatest team teacher. I would like to do better . . . we may not be doing as much as we could. . . . It seems to be something that is valued at this school.” This variation in implementation will be addressed in detail in the discussion section.

To explore the variation in teachers’ implementation of the team-teaching system, it is essential to consider a range of possible explanations. Table 5 shows data compiled from interviews and coded into categories for commitment to team teaching

TABLE 5. Relationship Between Teacher's Commitment to Team Teaching and Longevity, Structural Factors, and Familiarity With the Founding Narrative

Teacher	Commitment to team teaching philosophy and practice	Longevity	Structural factors	Involvement in transmission of founding narrative
Courtney Knudson	Strong philosophy and practice	Planning team	All factors consistently in place	Strong knowledge, active transmission
Jason Jefferson	Strong philosophy and practice	Planning team	All factors consistently in place	Strong knowledge, active transmission
Rosemary Grant	Strong philosophy and practice	10	All factors consistently in place	Strong knowledge, active transmission
Brett Hughes	Strong philosophy, moderate practice	4	All factors consistently in place	Strong knowledge, high-moderate transmission
Kari Cannon	Strong philosophy, moderate practice	10	Most factors often in place	Strong knowledge, moderate transmission
Karen Garcia	Strong philosophy, moderate practice	5	Many factors in place, occasional obstacles	Moderate knowledge, little transmission
Alaina Cook	Moderate philosophy, moderate practice	5	Consistent major structural obstacles	Moderate knowledge, little transmission
Clinton Harris	Moderate philosophy, Low moderate practice	5	Consistent major structural obstacles	Strong knowledge, moderate transmission
Kelly Rosen	Moderate philosophy, moderate practice	2	Major structural obstacles 1 st year, most factors in place this year	Weak knowledge, little transmission

TABLE 5. (Continued)

Teacher	Commitment to team teaching philosophy and practice	Longevity	Structural factors	Involvement in transmission of founding narrative
Jennifer Nelson	Low moderate philosophy, moderate practice	1	Many factors in place, occasional obstacles	Weak knowledge, little transmission
Adam Bacon	Weak philosophy, low moderate practice	2	Major structural obstacles 1 st year, most factors in place this year	Weak knowledge, little transmission
Carron Peters	Weak philosophy and practice	2	Major structural obstacles 1 st year, most factors in place this year	Weak knowledge, little transmission

longevity at Eagle Mountain, structural obstacles to teaming, and involvement in the transmission of the founding narrative. Some teachers are actively implementing the team-teaching system according to its original design, while others do not demonstrate a high degree of commitment to the philosophy or practice of teaming. There is similar variability in a teacher's familiarity with and involvement in transmitting the founding narrative. In addition, teachers demonstrate a substantial range of longevity and structural obstacles to teaming.

Data from Table 5 led to the creation of three matrices for representation and analysis. The matrices were derived from Miles and Huberman's (1984) models of frequency counting and role-by-time matrix. Chapter V includes a detailed discussion of

these matrices and the potential relationships between commitment to team teaching, familiarity with the founding narrative, longevity and structural obstacles to teaming.

Factors Determining Placement on Matrix

The interview matrix (Figure 2) has two axes: familiarity with the founding narrative, and commitment to team teaching. The familiarity axis includes both familiarity with the founding narrative and involvement in transmitting the founding narrative to others. The commitment axis also includes two elements: philosophy and practice. The multifaceted nature of this matrix results in a significant degree of complexity. However there is a logical progression within these variables. For example, if a teacher is generally unfamiliar with the narrative and the founding philosophies of the school, she is not likely to be active in transmitting the narrative to her peers. On the other extreme, if a teacher is regularly engaged in transmitting the story of the founding vision, then she is likely to be quite familiar with the major elements of that story. Similarly, on the commitment to team teaching scale, if a teacher is not committed to the philosophy (on the left side of the matrix), she will probably not be committed to the practice. And if she is highly committed to the practice (on the right side of the matrix), she would logically be committed in philosophy.

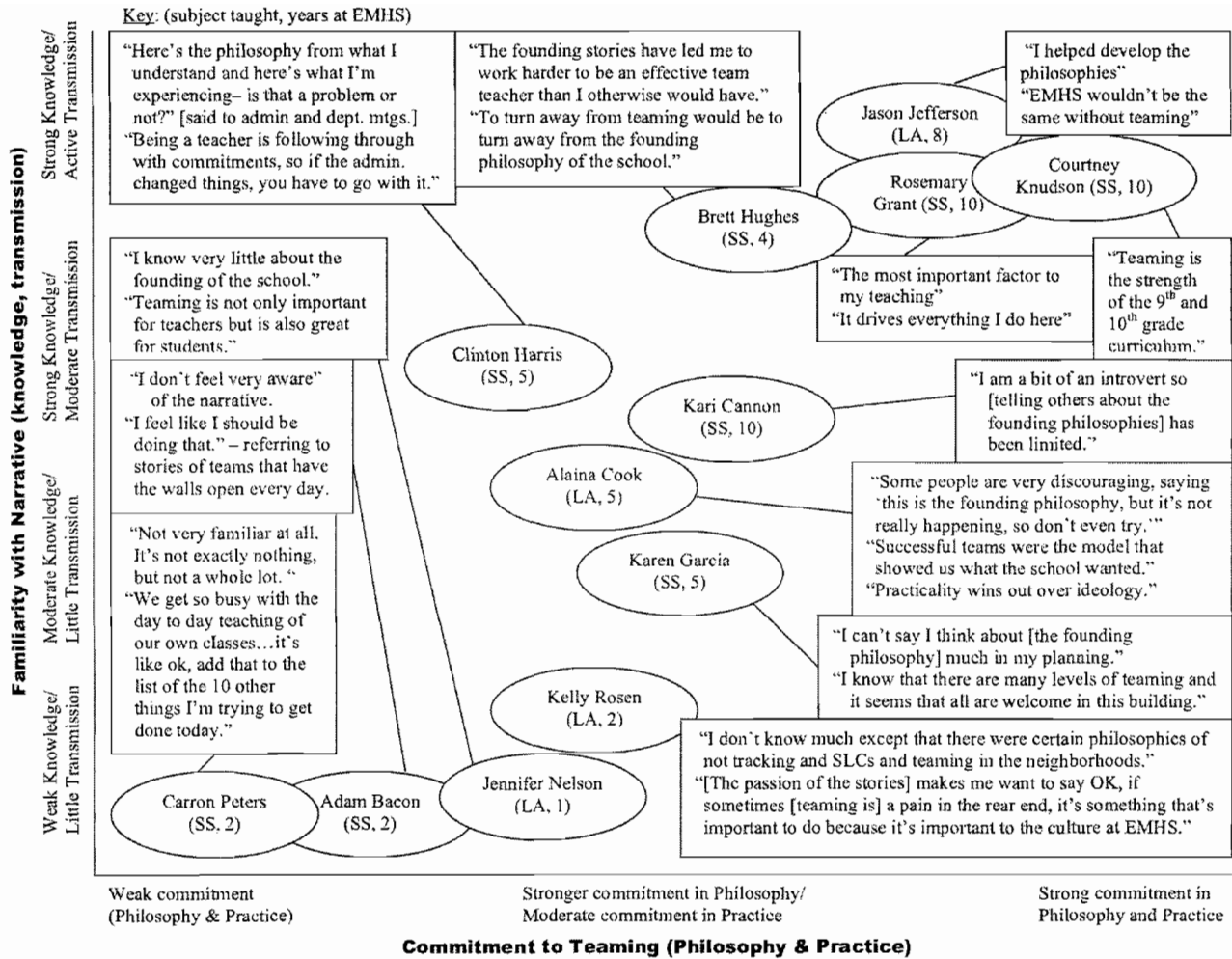


FIGURE 2. Interview matrix.

Of course, it is conceivable that a teacher could be actively involved in passing on the story without knowing the details. That is, she could be transmitting an inaccurate narrative. This matrix is not concerned with the accuracy of the storytelling, but rather with the potential relationship between that process of storytelling and the philosophy and practice of one of the founding reforms.

It is also possible that a teacher may be committed to the practice of teaming without being deeply committed to the philosophy. For example, a teacher may be in the habit of teaming and may continue the practice not for the sake of adhering to any philosophical principle but because of inertia. However, this is unlikely because successful team teaching (according to the model at EMHS) calls for a high level of collaboration that requires more energy and commitment than traditional single-teacher classrooms. Thus, attrition and entropy would likely result in a weaker commitment to team-teaching practice in the absence of a strong commitment to the philosophy.

The results of the interviews confirmed the assumptions underlying the progression of each axis. No teacher demonstrated a high degree of commitment to the practice of teaming without first being committed to the philosophy. In addition, no teacher was actively involved in transmitting the narrative without a strong sense of confidence in her familiarity with the story.

In both cases, the middle portion of the matrix becomes more confusing. In their interview responses, some teachers demonstrated a degree of ambivalence that made placement around the middle more difficult. For example, Alaina Cook was wavering in

her commitment to team teaching. She talked glowingly of how teaming could produce a meaningful impact for struggling students, but seemed resigned to the idea that it could not work for every teacher. Rather than pushing the administration to provide the necessary conditions for teaming, she acknowledged that “practicality wins out over ideology.”

Placement on the Familiarity Axis

Placement on the familiarity axis was determined by six interview questions, including “How familiar are you with the story of the founding of the school?” “If you were interviewing a new English or Social Studies teacher, what would you tell them is unique or innovative about this school?” and “How have you told others about the founding philosophies of the school?” (see Appendix A for interview protocols). In addition, placement on this axis could be influenced by statements made at staff and department meetings. For instance, in a department meeting about revising the honors component of the 9th- and 10th-grade Language Arts and Social Studies teams, one teacher said, “This goes counter to the philosophy of the school.” Another added, “That’s something we talk about every year.” In one particularly passionate moment, a long-serving English teacher said, “It makes me want to cry to think about destroying the core values that some of us came here for.”

If a teacher rated herself low on the familiarity questions in the interview but then demonstrated stronger familiarity by invoking the narrative in a meeting, she

would move up the familiarity axis. In fact, because meetings are more organic environments for communicating elements of the founding narrative than interviews, I assigned much greater weight to observation data for placement on the familiarity axis.

Placement on the Commitment Axis

Placement on the commitment axis was determined by a variety of interview questions, including, “How important is teaming to your personal philosophy of teaching?,” “If a new administration came along and proposed eliminating the team-teaching system, how would you respond?” and “How often do you implement the essential elements of the team-teaching system?” For some teachers, implementation is affected by structural factors, including schedule and classroom assignments, which were addressed in an additional interview question.

If a teacher’s answers to all three questions demonstrated a high commitment to teaming, he would be placed farther along the right side of the axis. If, however, there was a discrepancy in the degree of commitment expressed in the answers, he would be placed closer to the middle. Clinton Harris showed a strong belief in the value of teaming for his students, but admitted that he would not actively fight for the system. He said this was due, in part, to the structural obstacles he had faced in his attempts to team. But he added that “being a teacher is following through with commitments, so if the administration changed things, you have to go with it.” As a result, I placed Harris near the middle, but slightly left of the center of the axis.

Longevity Matrix

To examine the relationship between a teacher's commitment to team teaching and her longevity at Eagle Mountain High School, I created Figure 3. This graphic representation of the data is based on Miles and Huberman's (1984) role-by-time matrix. The placement on the horizontal axis (commitment to the philosophy and practice of team teaching) is the same as Figure 2. Vertical placement was determined by a teacher's years of service at Eagle Mountain. Some adjustment was made for teachers who have not been part of the team teaching system every year. Many teachers remained in the same section of the matrix (roughly divided into thirds) as in Figure 2. Those whose vertical position on the longevity matrix is significantly different (in a different third of the matrix) are outlined with a double line.

Structural Obstacles Matrix

To complete the analysis of the data in Table 5, I created a third matrix, representing the relationship between a teacher's commitment to team teaching and structural obstacles to teaming (Figure 4). Again, placement on the horizontal axis is the same as on the interview matrix (Figure 2). Vertical placement was determined by various structural factors that may facilitate or hinder a teacher's implementation of the teaming model. These factors (outlined in more detail in the description of the case

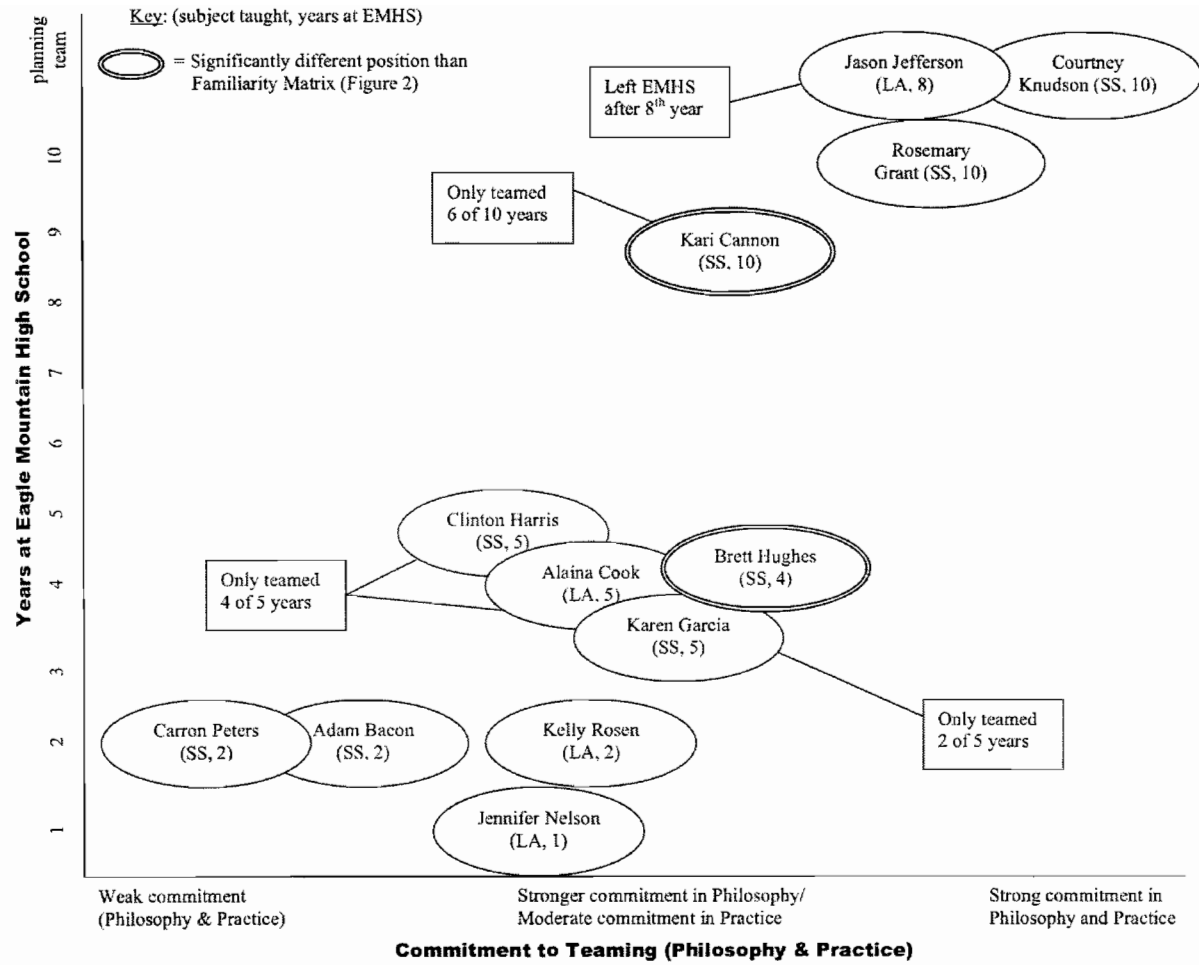


FIGURE 3. Role by time matrix.

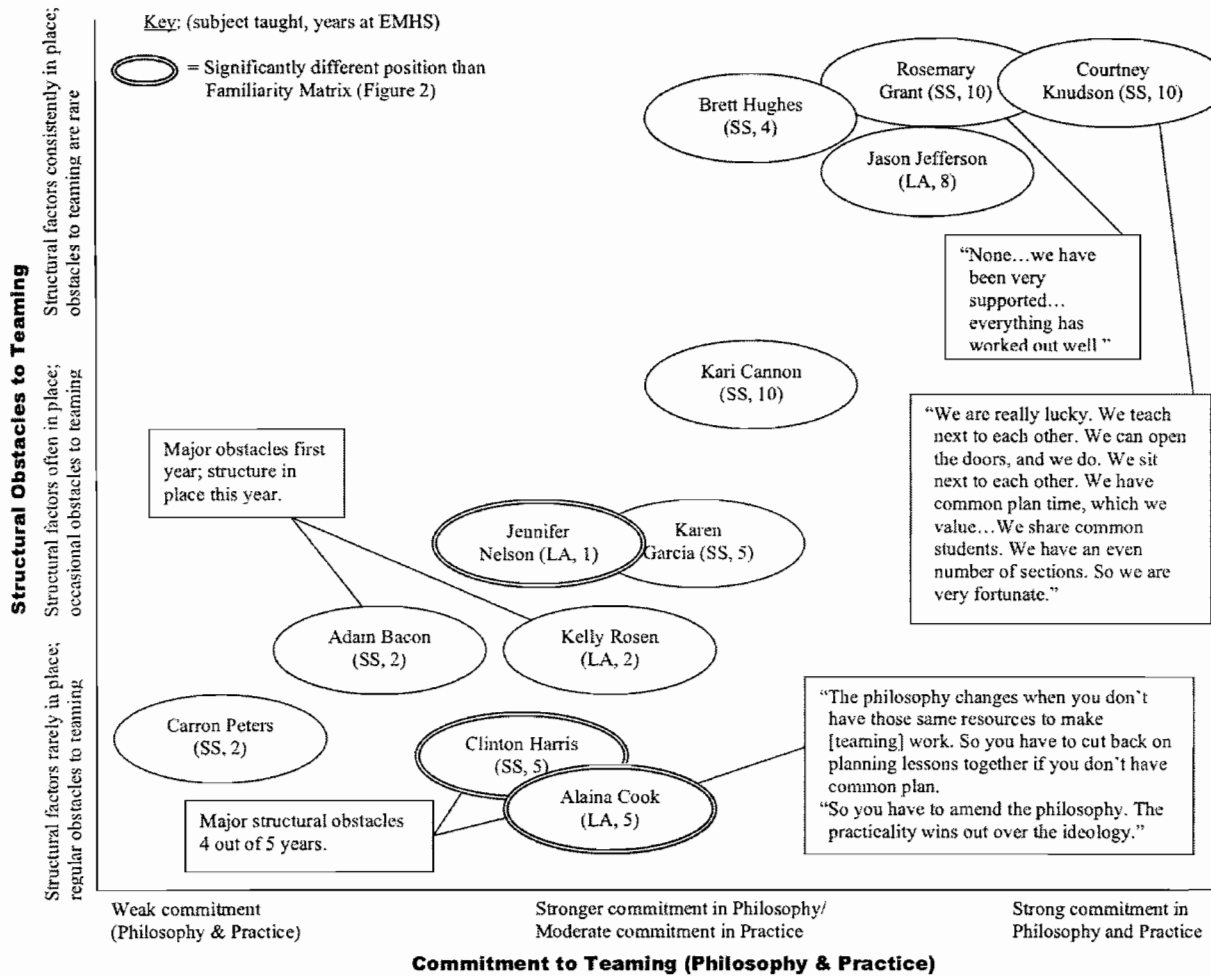


FIGURE 4. Structure by teaming matrix.

above) include collapsible walls, common planning periods, back-to-back class periods, and sharing the same students. Teachers who have consistently faced structural obstacles to teaming were placed lower on the vertical axis. Those who have encountered relatively few structural obstacles were placed higher. As with Figure 3, I highlighted with a double line teachers whose vertical placement on this matrix is significantly different from Figure 2. These differences will be discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This final section of the dissertation begins with an analysis of Eagle Mountain's founding narrative through the frame of Linde's (2000) criteria for the paradigmatic narrative. Next, I examine the relationship between the founding narrative and the sustainability of the team-teaching system, using three matrices for data representation and analysis. This analysis also includes consideration of rival explanations. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study and implications for future research.

Criteria for Linde's Theory of the Paradigmatic Narrative

If Linde's (2000) theory of the paradigmatic narrative is an apt model for describing the transmission of organizational memory at Eagle Mountain High School, certain criteria would need to be met. First, a common narrative must be told, including recurring elements related to the origins, charismatic founder, and core values of the organization. This story should be a nonparticipant narrative. Next, there must be formal and informal opportunities for remembering. Members use these opportunities to induct new staff, create a shared sense of purpose and connection to the values and goals of the organization, and advocate for policy agendas. Finally, communication of this narrative

would result in sustaining key elements of the founding vision, and a clear relationship would exist between a member's familiarity with the narrative and his or her commitment to the founding vision.

Key Elements of Narrative Retold

The paradigmatic narrative, as Linde (2000) defines it, is a collection of essential fragments. It is not usually told as a single coherent story, though occasional circumstances provide opportunities for remembering the story in its entirety. The role of a charismatic founder often provides material for the narrative. However, many elements of the paradigmatic narrative do not fit the shape of a traditional story structure at all. Instead of episodes and actions, the narrative is often expressed as ideas and values.

If a paradigmatic narrative were present at Eagle Mountain, it would involve recurring stories of the experiences of the founders and the early years of the school. A significant number of the stories would likely involve the founding principal, characterizing her as a charismatic and visionary leader. Finally, a good portion of the fragments would take the form of reflections on the ideas and values that drove the founding of the school. These fragments may present themselves as components of traditional story structure, or they may not.

The data from observations and interviews demonstrate that certain key elements do, in fact, recur in the stories told at Eagle Mountain. Some fragments are retold in

story form, particularly accounts of the challenges that teachers and administrators faced in the first years. Many of the fragments of the narrative at Eagle Mountain do not follow a traditional story structure. Instead, they take the form of direct appeals to the founding vision. In addition, many interviewees identified the influence of the founding principal on their memory of the early days. Her perceived role as a visionary seems to have galvanized the fragments of the narrative around her.

Elements of Narrative Connect to Founding Vision and Values

Linde (2001) asserts that one distinctive characteristic of the paradigmatic narrative (as opposed to day-to-day, ephemeral narratives) is that it connects to the founding vision and values of the institution. She says, “for a member to know this story means to know what the institution is, and what a member must do to be a part of it” (p. 521). As a result, if Linde’s theory is an accurate tool for examining the case of Eagle Mountain High School, the paradigmatic narrative must express the vision and values of the early years. This is most certainly evident at Eagle Mountain. Teachers and administrators repeatedly draw on the founding stories to pass on their understanding of the innovative vision and values that guided the formation of the school culture. For example, in a discussion about creating an honors track for ninth-grade language arts and social studies classes, a teacher said, “I thought we were founded on the idea of equal access for all.” This does not refer to a specific event from the founding of the school, but rather to the vision and values present in those early days.

Nonparticipant Narrative

One distinguishing factor of Linde's (2000) paradigmatic narrative is that it is a nonparticipant narrative (NPN). That is, the teller and listener were not actors in the original story. Therefore, the act of retelling keeps alive elements of history and organizational memory that would otherwise fade into oblivion. Linde uses the nonparticipant nature of the narrative to distinguish between the ongoing, overarching paradigmatic narrative and the short-lived stories of day-to-day adventures, foibles and calamities. For instance, the stories of the copier breaking down or the surprising outburst from an irate boss may be told around the lunch table one day, but they do not deserve a place in the enduring memory of the organization. Therefore, these events are generally told by participants and then forgotten. On the other hand, Linde argues, if a nonparticipant tells a story, it is inherently more likely to be part of the paradigmatic narrative because the teller is choosing to draw on recurring stories he or she has heard from others rather than on fleeting personal experiences. Linde says, "NPNs have an extended life in the institution, since their very form assures us that they have been retold at least once" (Linde, 2001, p. 521).

The founding narrative at Eagle Mountain is not exclusively a nonparticipant narrative. At least 20 of the current teachers, administrators, counselors and support staff at Eagle Mountain (including five members of the Language Arts and Social Studies departments) have been at the school since its inception. Therefore, at least

some of the fragments of the founding narrative are told by those who actually participated in the founding. Linde derived her theory from a 3-year study of organizational communication and memory in a large American insurance company. The organization was founded in the 1920s, so the current employees—those telling and listening to the narrative—could not have been participants.

The key factor in matching this element of the pattern is not whether participants are involved in retelling the narrative, but whether nonparticipants also engage in its transmission. That is, the nonparticipant nature of the narrative in Linde's (2000) theory is not necessarily exclusive. In a relatively young organization, it is to be expected that founding members would be involved in transmitting the paradigmatic narrative. The story rises to the threshold of a nonparticipant narrative if those who were not present at the founding also engage in telling the stories. The results of my study demonstrate that the stories of the founding vision at Eagle Mountain are told by both original members and relative newcomers. Therefore, the narrative would qualify as a nonparticipant narrative in Linde's framework.

Opportunities for Remembering: Formal and Informal

In some senses, a story exists only if it has a teller and an audience. Linde (2000, 2001) identifies opportunities for remembering that allow tellers and listeners to participate in the transmission of the paradigmatic narrative. These opportunities are

described in detail in the Results section of this dissertation. For the sake of pattern matching, I will briefly discuss them here as well.

Linde (2000, 2001) asserts that opportunities for remembering can be both formal and informal. That is, some opportunities for transmitting the paradigmatic narrative are intended specifically for remembering. In other cases, remembering happens as an indirect or unintended consequence of some other activity. These opportunities for remembering include spaces, artifacts, and regular and irregular occurrences.

At Eagle Mountain, these formal and informal opportunities for remembering abound: from explicit staff development activities organized by the 10-Year Anniversary Committee to casual references to the founding vision in department meetings; from the artifacts in the lobby display case celebrating the school's first 10 years to the decentralized and community-focused architectural design of the building. Preserving memory through storytelling is a vital element of the culture of Eagle Mountain High School.

Founding Vision Used for Induction, Shared Purpose, and Advocacy

Linde (2000) describes several uses of the paradigmatic narrative that should be evident at Eagle Mountain if her theory is an accurate tool. First, it can be an instrument for inducting new members into the culture of the organization. Listening to, and eventually retelling, the stories of the founding vision incubates a sense of belonging

and collegiality that connects new members with the organization. Next, the stories of the founding remind tellers and listeners alike of their roots. This can serve to realign an individual teacher's values with the innovative vision of the school. In addition, it can renew a sense of common purpose for all members of the organization, not just new hires. Finally, the founding vision can be used for advocating a policy position. By appealing to the history of the school, teachers and administrators can establish a position of legitimacy to make their arguments more persuasive.

All three of these uses of the founding vision have been evident at Eagle Mountain in some form. Stories of the founding of the school have regularly been used to guide new teachers in their acculturation to Eagle Mountain. New staff have participated in formal orientation activities, including Design Studios and other activities consciously intended for remembering. In addition, many teachers reported that their team partners would tell them stories about the history of the school to help them understand what they perceived to be the unique and innovative spirit of Eagle Mountain.

The whole staff has also been involved in team-building activities that drew explicitly on the history of the school, including the Zoo retreat before the 6th year and the 10-Year Celebration at the preservice meetings prior to the current school year. In addition, the summer reading packets have regularly included articles for the whole staff to read about the history and founding vision of Eagle Mountain.

The most common use of the stories of the founding vision seems to be for advocacy. It is rare for a significant proposal to be discussed without coded or direct references to the stories and values from the founding of the school.

Interestingly, the use of the founding narrative for advocacy is not limited to those who are resistant to change. It is reasonable to expect that teachers would say, “We’ve always done it this way, so we shouldn’t change it.” The founding narrative is often employed this way. However, teachers also appeal to the innovative spirit of the founding, and particularly the values of community, equity and access, to advocate for progressive reform. These teachers might say something like, “I thought we believed in building relationships with students. This is exactly the kind of change we need to live up to that ideal.” Regardless of whether the advocacy is progressive or resistant to change, it is common to hear appeals to the founding narrative.

Communication of Narrative Results in Sustaining Key Elements of Founding Vision

The final element of Linde’s (2000) theory that we would expect to see if the model applies to Eagle Mountain is some relationship between the communication of the founding narrative and the sustainability of the founding reforms. If the stories of the founding of the school truly form a paradigmatic narrative, they should have some impact on current practice. Linde asserts that the narrative serves to realign the priorities of the organization to maintain a common sense of values and purpose. This can be

essential to sustaining reforms in the face of staff turnover and loose organizational linkages.

For this study, I considered whether the transmission of the paradigmatic narrative was related to the sustainability of the team-teaching system, one of Eagle Mountain's distinctive founding reforms. At first glance, there appears to be a positive relationship between an individual teacher's familiarity with and involvement in transmitting the founding narrative and her commitment to the philosophy and practice of team-teaching. The following section will look at this finding more closely, and consider rival explanations.

Relationship Between Familiarity With Narrative and Commitment to Founding Vision

As shown in Table 5, data from interviews with Language Arts and Social Studies teachers at Eagle Mountain High School reveal two interesting patterns. First, there is a high degree of variability among teachers' commitment to the philosophy and practice of team teaching. That is, some teachers are wholly committed to teaming while others do not demonstrate much commitment to teaming at all. One teacher said teaming "drives everything I do here," while another teacher said teaming is just "of medium importance. . . . The number one important thing to me is to be the best history teacher I can be" (suggesting that his social studies curriculum is more important than integrated teaming). The following sections will explore this intriguing variability.

Second, there appears to be a relationship between a teacher's familiarity with the founding vision and that teacher's philosophy and practice of team teaching. For instance, Brett Hughes said,

The founding stories have led me to work harder to be an effective team teacher than I otherwise would have. In some sense, I feel that to turn away from teaming would be to turn away from the founding philosophy of the school. I also have the feeling that, even though I think I'm teaming fairly effectively, I could be doing better—as the founders envisioned.

Carron Peters said he was “not very familiar at all” with the founding narrative. He went on to admit that teaming is not a particularly high priority: “We get so busy with the day-to-day teaching of our own classes . . . it's like O.K., add that to the list of the 10 other things I'm trying to get done today.”

This suggests a strong relationship between the founding narrative and commitment to team teaching. As Figure 2 demonstrates, teachers who expressed very little knowledge of the founding narrative, or very little comfort with transmitting that narrative, tended to be less committed to the philosophy and practice of team teaching. Similarly, those who expressed confidence in their familiarity with the narrative and their role in communicating it to others demonstrated a high degree of commitment to teaming.

Determining Causality, Strength of Association, and Rival Explanations

It is tempting to look at teachers' attitudes toward teaming, as expressed by Brett Hughes and Carron Peters above, and the data in Figure 2 and conclude that the

variability in implementation of team teaching can be explained by a teacher's familiarity with the founding narrative. Indeed, there may be a relationship. However, before causal conclusions can be reached, it is necessary to consider techniques of determining causality in a qualitative study. Miles and Huberman (1984) assert that it is possible to assess causal factors in qualitative data by using a variety of techniques, including constant conjunction, strength of association, plausibility, experiment, and analogy. The data from this study best fit a causal analysis by strength of association. If the variability in a teacher's commitment to team teaching is more closely associated with that teacher's familiarity with the founding narrative than with other relevant factors, then there may be a causal process in effect.

To assess the strength of association, it is necessary to consider rival explanations (Yin, 2003). That is, are there alternative factors that may contribute to the pattern of implementation of team teaching? And if so, do those rival explanations account for what appears to be the effect of the founding narrative on the sustainability of reforms? Table 5 shows data compiled from interviews and coded into categories for commitment to team teaching, longevity at Eagle Mountain, structural obstacles to teaming, and involvement in the transmission of the founding narrative. The following sections will discuss these data and their potential explanatory power.

Commitment to Team Teaching May Grow With Longevity

One rival explanation for the variability in commitment to team teaching may simply be longevity. That is, teachers may not become more committed to team teaching because they learn more about the founding vision of the school through the paradigmatic narrative. Instead, the key factors may be familiarity with the curriculum or comfort with a team partner. For example, as a ninth-grade language arts teacher works through her *Lord of the Flies* unit year after year, she will not need to spend as much of her time planning individual lessons. She will have more time to collaborate on integrating with her social studies partner. In addition, as she builds a relationship with her partner, she may become more willing to risk abdicating some of the autonomy and authority that she enjoys when she is not teaming. Several teachers identified familiarity with their curriculum and comfort with their team partner as important factors in their implementation of the teaming model.

Using a role-by-time matrix (Miles & Huberman, 1984), Figure 3 compares a teacher's commitment to the philosophy and practice of team teaching to her years of service at Eagle Mountain. The overall pattern between the two matrices is generally similar. Teachers who are highly committed to teaming tend to be those who have been at the school longer. Those who are less committed to teaming tend to be recent hires. In the original matrix comparing familiarity with the narrative and commitment to teaming (Figure 2), teachers were roughly grouped into three clusters. Most teachers in the role-by-time matrix (Figure 3) remained in the same cluster. Only two teachers demonstrated

a significant change. I defined significance in this situation by movement into a different third of the matrix. Because the parameters of this matrix did not allow for horizontal movement, a vertical change into a different cluster would be classified as a significant change. Brett Hughes has a strong knowledge of the founding vision and a high-moderate involvement in the transmission of the narrative despite the fact that he has only been at the school for 4 years. Kari Cannon, who has been at the school for 10 years, only has a moderate involvement in the transmission of the narrative.

There are several possible explanations for the movement of these two teachers on the vertical axes. Kari Cannon's differential placement on the two matrices may be partly a result of structural factors and personality. Her longevity may have contributed to her commitment to teaming. However structural factors may have tempered her teaming practice. Her self-professed shyness may have led to less involvement in the transmission of the founding narrative. Cannon said, "I am a bit of an introvert so [telling others about the founding of the school] has been limited." Similarly, Brett Hughes' leadership roles may have impacted his placement on these matrices. Hughes is a vocal and visionary teacher leader both in his department and in the teachers' union. Therefore, he may be more likely to transmit the stories of the founding vision despite his status as a relative newcomer (4 years at EMHS).

Commitment to Team Teaching May Be Affected by Structural Factors

Another rival explanation for the apparent relationship between a teacher's familiarity with the founding narrative and her commitment to team teaching may involve structural factors. Throughout the data-collection process, I encountered teachers who expressed that they would like to have teamed more, but were limited by certain obstacles. As detailed in the description of the case, ideal implementation of the team-teaching system, as conceived in the founding vision and communicated in the paradigmatic narrative, involves certain structural necessities. These structural factors include: team teachers share the same students; adjoining classrooms with collapsible walls; back-to-back class periods; a common planning period; only one teaming partner; and the same students for the entire school year.

It is possible for a pair of teachers to consider themselves a team without all of these factors in place. However, if several of these structural elements are missing, teachers will probably not be able to implement the teaming system to its fullest potential. This will certainly impact a teacher's practice of team teaching. If a teacher faces few obstacles to teaming, she may have a more positive view of the possibilities of the team-teaching system. Courtney Knudson, the teacher who demonstrated the highest commitment to team-teaching practice, identified this influence of structural factors, saying,

We are really lucky. We teach next to each other. We can open the doors, and we do. We sit next to each other. We have common plan time, which

we value. . . . We share common students. We have an even number of sections. So we are very fortunate.

These structural factor help facilitate successful teaming.

If a teacher consistently faces structural obstacles year after year, it may affect her philosophy of teaming as well. That is, a teacher who does not have the structural conditions necessary for optimal teaming may conclude that team teaching is not really a priority for the school. This could result in the teacher scaling back her view of teaming as a goal. Several teachers who have repeatedly faced such structural obstacles expressed that their philosophy of team teaching was impacted. Alaina Cook said,

Of course the philosophy changes when you don't have those same resources to make [teaming] work. So you have to cut back on planning lessons together if you don't have common plan. So you have to amend the philosophy. The practicality wins out over the ideology.

In addition, some teachers even expressed frustration at what they perceived to be systematic favoritism. One Language Arts teacher said, "it's really frustrating when it doesn't work out for you and it does work out for other people, and it continues to work out for others." Some teams consistently faced structural obstacles to teaming, while others had all of the elements in place year after year.

To examine this rival explanation in more detail, I created a matrix (Figure 4) derived from the data in Table 5. Teachers' placement on the horizontal axis (commitment to teaming philosophy and practice) is the same as the other two matrices. This time, the vertical axis represents the structural factors that facilitate or inhibit implementation of team teaching. Most teachers moved a little as a result of this new

sort. Four teachers made significant changes. As with the role-by-time matrix above (Figure 3), I defined a significant change as a vertical move into a different third of the matrix. Two teachers moved into a lower third and two teachers moved into a higher third. All four major movers were in the center of the horizontal axis. This suggests that structural factors are more likely to impact the team-teaching philosophy of teachers who are moderately committed to the teaming model.

Analysis of Rival Explanations and Causal Network

In all three matrices (Figures 2-4), a teacher's placement on the commitment to teaming axis is the same. The difference is her vertical placement, based on the variables of familiarity with the narrative, longevity, and structural obstacles. The similarities in the overall patterns of the data suggest that these three factors may each play a significant role in influencing a teacher's philosophy and practice of team teaching. The strength of association is not significantly greater in any of the three matrices. Therefore, it is not sufficient to conclude that a teacher's familiarity with the founding narrative has a consequential, causal effect on her commitment to team teaching.

Figure 5 is a causal network demonstrating factors that may inhibit or facilitate the transmission of organizational memory and the sustainability of reforms. Factors that block the sustainability of reforms include staff turnover, structural obstacles to teaming, and loose organizational linkages. These elements lead to the attrition of

change or the failure to sustain the innovative reform. Factors that may play a role in sustaining reforms at Eagle Mountain High School include longevity and the transmission of the paradigmatic narrative.

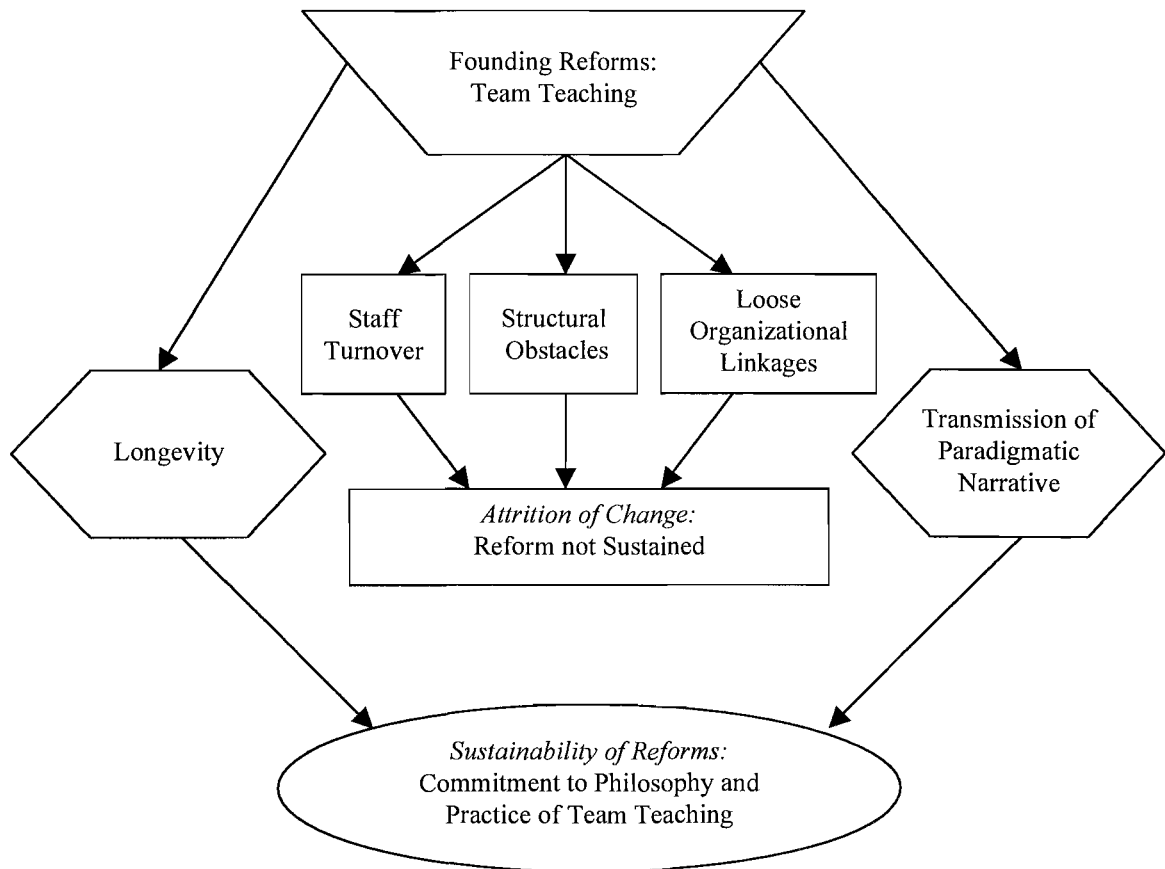


FIGURE 5. Causal network: Factors affecting the sustainability of reforms at Eagle Mountain High School.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the relevance of Linde's (2000) theory of the paradigmatic narrative in the context of an innovative young high school. At this point, it is appropriate to address the research questions that guided the study:

1. What role does the communication of the founding narrative of an innovative young school play in the sustainability of reforms?
2. Can narratives help overcome the obstacles to sustaining reforms presented by loose organizational linkages and staff turnover?
3. What is the relationship between an individual teacher's role in the transmission of the paradigmatic narrative and his/her commitment to implementing the founding reforms?

The pattern-matching analysis suggests that a paradigmatic narrative does exist at Eagle Mountain High School. The organizational memory of the school is transmitted through formal and informal opportunities for remembering. Teachers who were not present at the founding of the school are familiar with elements of the narrative, and the school seems to thrive on a vibrant sense of its own distinctive history.

The transmission of the founding narrative could play a role in the dissemination of organizational memory in the face of loose organizational linkages and staff turnover. A pattern exists suggesting a strong relationship between a teacher's familiarity with the founding narrative and her commitment to one of the founding reforms. However, the

existence of legitimate and plausible rival explanations precludes the conclusion that the paradigmatic narrative has a causal impact on the sustainable implementation of the founding reforms.

This lack of direct causal links between the narrative and the sustainability of the team-teaching system does not diminish the potential importance of the findings regarding the existence and role of the narrative. The workings of a complex organization, like a comprehensive high school, do not tend to lend themselves to clearly delineated causality. And, in the end, the purpose of the study was not to establish causality. Rather, the purpose of the study was to consider whether the theory of the paradigmatic narrative is applicable in the context of K-12 public education.

This study found that Linde's theory provides a useful frame for studying the role of narratives in schools, particularly young schools with a distinct culture of innovation. This study also aimed to examine the nature of the stories that are told within the organization and to shed more light on the dynamics of the relationship between storytelling and the day-to-day functions of a school. These findings may be useful for future researchers as they continue to explore narratives in schools.

Limitations of This Study

This study faced several limitations that may have affected the results and conclusions. First, only about one half of the members of the Language Arts and Social Studies departments participated in the interviews. The participants demonstrated

substantial variability in their familiarity with the founding narrative and their commitment to the team-teaching system. However several notable individuals did not choose to participate in the interviews. In particular, one team of teachers consistently implements many of the elements of team teaching at a high level. Interviewees repeatedly referred to these teachers as the model team. The data in this study would be more complete if they had chosen to participate in the interviews.

Similarly, the study may suffer from the limited participation of teachers who are no longer at Eagle Mountain. I contacted several former members of the Language Arts and Social Studies departments, but only one consented to an interview.

Another limitation derives from the changing educational environment. This study is concerned with the sustainability of reforms, but it is not reasonable to expect that an educational practice should be implemented in exactly the same form through time. In particular, the past 10 years have seen a dramatic change in education policy with the broad-ranging influence of the No Child Left Behind Act. The ensuing shift toward standardization and assessment may have acted as a countervailing force to the philosophies of collaboration and relationships that lay at the heart of the team-teaching system. Similarly, the Cotton Valley School District has been encouraging teachers to experiment with proficiency-based assessment and instructional processes. Not surprisingly, Eagle Mountain High School has been an active player in this innovative reform. The proficiency model is not inherently at odds with team teaching. However, the focus of proficiency is exclusively on individual achievement, which may impel

teachers away from the collaborative learning model that is the core of teaming. Thus, forces acting on district, state and federal levels may have influenced the results of this study. The interview and observation protocols were not constructed to account for these broader policy shifts and their potential impact on the sustainability of the team-teaching system at Eagle Mountain High School.

Opportunities for Future Research

The landscape of educational reform is scattered with the wreckage of countless well-intentioned reforms that could not overcome the attrition of change (Fink, 2000). The design may have been sound, but the implementation lacked the necessary qualities to become fully institutionalized and sustainable. As Orwell's pigs discovered, revolutionary vision may succumb to the habits and patterns of the old system. The more educational leaders can recognize and understand the mechanisms of successful implementation, the more likely they will be able to sustain innovative reforms. Organizational memory is a key component in this sustainability of reforms.

The role of narratives in the transmission of organizational memory has been documented in the business world and, to a lesser degree, in higher education. However, few studies have considered this relationship in K-12 public education. This study found that a paradigmatic narrative exists at an innovative young high school. Future research on this topic should further explore the relationship between the narrative and the broader culture of the organization. Researchers may attempt to isolate the function of

the narrative from other factors that may contribute to the transmission of organizational memory and the sustainability of reforms. In particular, further studies could attempt to differentiate between longevity in the organization and familiarity with the paradigmatic narrative as causal factors in sustainability. In addition, further studies could explore individual teachers' awareness of the narrative, and how consciousness of a paradigmatic narrative affects the status, sense of belonging, and/or teaching practice of the tellers and listeners.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Interview Protocols

Introduction & Welcome

Introduce myself

Thank the teachers for agreeing to participate in the interview

Purpose of the Study

This study is part of my dissertation research for a doctoral degree at the University of Oregon. I am examining the degree to which the stories teachers tell each other about the founding philosophies of the school affect current practice. In particular, I am interested in how the stories are passed along and whether they impact the implementation of the 9th- and 10th-grade Language Arts and Social Studies team teaching system. The data from this study will be used for a doctoral dissertation.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I am committed to maintaining objectivity and protecting the confidentiality of participants. This interview protocol will serve to guide the data collection, maintain consistency across interviews, and generate reliable data.

Review of Consent Form

Check off the following items:

_____ Thank you for participating in this interview. During this interview, you will be asked about your understanding of the founding philosophies of the school, your personal philosophy and practice of team teaching, and your role in organizational communication.

_____ If you have any questions or concerns during or after the interview, please feel free to ask me.

_____ Everything said in this interview will be audiotaped. This will allow me to transcribe your exact words. This is important as I attempt to reconstruct the common elements of the school's founding narrative. If you would prefer not to be audiotaped, I can turn off the recorder.

_____ I will be the only one who has access to the audiotapes. The audiotapes will be erased after transcription.

_____ To protect your confidentiality, I will use pseudonyms for the school, district, teachers and all other identifiable information in the publication of the dissertation. In reporting and analyzing the data, I will make every effort

to represent data in nonidentifiable forms. Despite these measures, it may be possible for individuals familiar with the school to determine the identity of respondents from their responses.

_____ As participants in a group interview, you have the responsibility to respect the confidentiality of your colleagues. If you want to discuss issues that arise from this interview, please contact me rather than sharing confidential details with others.

_____ The interview will take about 45-60 minutes. If you have additional thoughts or comments that you would like to add after the interview is over, please feel free to contact me in person or by E-mail.

_____ If there are any questions or parts of questions that you don't want to answer, please say so. I will move on without asking anything further.

Interview Questions for Teachers

1. How many years have you been at the school (including the current year)?
2. How many team partners have you had in your time at the school?
3. Tell me about the founding of the school?
 - Probe: Who were some of the major players?*
 - What were some of the key philosophies of the school at its inception?*
 - What were some of the challenges of the founding of the school?*
4. How familiar are you with the story of the founding of the school?
 - Probe: I know nothing about the founding of the school.*
 - I have heard a few things, but couldn't tell you many details.*
 - I could retell the basics if necessary.*
 - I feel confident telling the key points of the founding of the school.*
 - I could retell the whole story, including minor details.*
5. Think back to what you were told about the school when you were interviewing for your job. What were you told about this school?
 - Probe: What things did or did not live up to your expectations?*

6. If you were interviewing a new English or Social Studies teacher, what would you tell them is unique or innovative about this school?
7. How have you heard about the founding philosophies of the school?
Probe: website, design studio, preservice meetings, staff development, team partner, conversations with other staff, hiring interviews
8. How have you told others about the founding philosophies of the school?
Probe: website, design studio, preservice meetings, staff development, team partner, conversations with other staff, hiring interviews
9. In what ways are the original philosophies of the school still guiding your day-to-day work in your 9th- or 10th-grade classes?
10. What do you perceive as the key elements of the team teaching system?
11. How important is teaming to your personal philosophy of teaching?
*Probe: It is one of the most important negative factors in my quality of teaching
It is usually a negative factor in my teaching
It does not benefit or take away from my teaching
It is usually a positive factor in my teaching
It is one of the most important positive factors in my quality of teaching*
12. If a new administration came along and proposed eliminating the team teaching system, how would you respond?
*Probe: Would you go with the flow?
Would you lead active resistance?
Would you consider leaving the school if teaming were eliminated?*
13. How often do you implement the following elements of the team teaching system:
 - Common curriculum design
 - Aligned daily lesson plans
 - Common assessments (assignments graded for both classes)
 - Referring to lessons/assignments/discussions from the other class
 - Open classroom doors for joint lessons/activities
 - Open classroom doors for differentiated instruction (pull-out groups)
 - Discussing student progress or comparing grades for shared students
 - Joint communications with parents

Probe: Most days
About once a week
Every few weeks
About once or twice a trimester
About once or twice a year
Never

14. Are there logistical or structural factors that affect your implementation of team teaching?

Probe: multiple partners, multiple classrooms, lack of shared classroom walls, lack of common planning period, unfamiliar curriculum

15. How do the stories of the founding of the school affect your team teaching philosophy (not necessarily practice)?

Probe: Has your philosophy of teaming changed over time? Is that change related to your changing perception of the founding vision?

16. How do the stories of the founding of the school affect your team teaching practice?

Interview Questions for Administrators—Eagle Mountain Founding Vision

1. Describe the process of the founding of the school. When did it begin? What was the mandate? What were the key steps in the process?
2. What were some of the key philosophies of the school at its inception?
3. What were some of the challenges of the founding of the school?
4. How did you communicate the founding philosophies of the school to new staff members? How did you facilitate staff members passing on the founding philosophies of the school to the next generation of new staff?

APPENDIX B

FOUNDING NARRATIVE FRAGMENT MATRIX INCORPORATING
ELEMENTS FROM LINDE (2000)

Founding Narrative Fragment Matrix Incorporating Elements From Linde (2000)

Context	Date/Time	
	Location	
	Purpose of meeting or conversation	
	Speaker – role / authority (pseudonym)	
Narrative	Element of Narrative What was said?	
	Context in which narrative is invoked (What else is the speaker talking about?)	
	Unique Circumstances or Antecedents	
Response	Listeners – who heard it? members of LA/SS teams? (pseudonyms, of course)	
	Responses – verbal	
	Responses – physical (nodding, eye-rolling, glancing at peers, etc.)	
	Comments – other observations (values expressed?)	

APPENDIX C

ANNOUNCEMENT AT STAFF AND DEPARTMENT MEETINGS

Announcement at Staff and Department Meetings

The purpose of this announcement was to inform staff that I would be conducting observations at staff and department meetings. I also explained the consent process, confidentiality issues, and uses of the data.

“As many of you know, I am working on my dissertation for a doctoral degree at the University of Oregon. I am studying the role of narratives in sustaining reforms. In other words, how do the stories teachers tell each other about the founding of the school affect the way we do things today? In particular, I am studying the 9th- and 10th-grade Language Arts and Social Studies team teaching system here at _____ High School.

“The primary method of data collection will be interviews with Language Arts and Social Studies teachers. In addition, I will be observing and recording data during staff meetings and Language Arts/Social Studies department meetings. I will not be documenting everything that is said in the meetings. The only data I will be recording will be references to the history of the school and the story of its founding. I will observe the context of the comments and how they are received. I expect that these notes will make up a very small portion of the content of the meetings. I will not be recording (audio or video) any portion of the meetings.

“I will use pseudonyms for note-taking and describing all of the data in the study, including the names of teachers, administrators, and even the school and the district.

“I will not be observing or recording any conversations or behaviors outside of staff meetings and Language Arts/Social Studies department meetings. That means, any conversations that I am involved in outside of those meetings will not be part of the data collection.

“The District Research Committee and the school administration have given their approval for this study. In addition, the University of Oregon’s Office for the Protection of Human Subjects has reviewed and approved of my methods for collecting the data and protecting your rights.

“The data collected during these observations, combined with interview data, will help me determine the role that the story of the founding of the school plays in the implementation of the founding reforms in our current practice.

“Your participation in these observations is entirely voluntary. If you would prefer that I not record any comments that you make during staff or department meetings, you can

simply opt out. I will provide each of you with a consent form. If you choose to participate in the study, you only need to read the consent form. If you choose to opt out of the study, please sign and return the form to me before the next staff meeting.

“I will not begin collecting data until the next meeting to allow you time to review the consent form and opt out if you choose.

“Thanks for your time and for considering participating in this study. Please feel free to talk to me if you have any questions.”

APPENDIX D

DATA-COLLECTION MATRIX

Data-Collection Matrix

As I collected, sorted and coded data from interviews, it was necessary for me to have a structure to organize my results. This not only served a procedural purpose, but also aided in the data processing. In fact, the data collection and reduction process, including the design of the table and the process of assigning data to cells within the table, could be considered part of the data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Developing this table in advance also helped me maintain focus during the process of designing questions and conducting interviews (Yin, 2003). Knowing what kinds of data I was looking to process helped me know what kinds of questions to ask. This also helped me avoid the pitfall of gaps in the data. This data table also serves as part of the case study database, the raw data which could allow other researchers to independently analyze my data free of my own analysis and conclusions (Yin, 2003).

Demographics					Content of Narrative		
Interviewee Pseudonyms ¹	Years at Eagle Mountain ²	Current Team Partner ³	Number of Team Partners ⁴	Department ⁵	Key elements of founding narrative ⁶	Other familiar elements of narrative ⁷	Interviewee's general familiarity with narrative ⁸

¹To protect the confidentiality of individual participants, I kept a list of interviewee names and pseudonyms separate from this data table.

²Including the current year. F = member of founding faculty. I sorted the chart by this category to see if patterns existed related to the length of a teacher's service at Eagle Mountain (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

³Pseudonym, of course.

⁴In a teacher's career at EMHS.

⁵Language Arts or Social Studies.

⁶As this teacher retold it in the interview. Using this data, I developed a coding system to allow for comparison across responses. This was the most text-intensive section of the matrix.

⁷Revealed after probing questions. Interviewees tended to know more of the narrative than they initially recalled.

⁸Based on direct questions about familiarity and demonstrations of familiarity in other answers.

Transmission of Narrative		Team Teaching Philosophy, Commitment & Practice			Role of Narrative in Team Teaching Philosophy & Practice ⁴	
How interviewee heard about narrative ¹	How interviewee has passed on narrative to others ²	Personal philosophy of team teaching ³	Degree of commitment to team teaching	Elements of team teaching evident in practice	Impact of narrative on team teaching philosophy	Impact of narrative on team teaching practice

¹In what ways has the teacher heard the narrative told (e.g., school website, program planning guide, department meetings, team partner, design studio, etc.)? I defined “heard” loosely, as Yin (2003) does. Hearing, in this sense, may also include reading or observing.

²Part of the theory is that individuals within the organization pass on elements of the paradigmatic narrative in daily interactions (Linde, 2000, 2001).

³All teachers in the system have developed a personal philosophy of team teaching (whether they are consciously aware of it or not). I may have encountered issues of reflexivity here. Because teachers were being asked about their personal philosophy of teaming in a formal setting, they may have been inclined to tailor their responses to the “party line.” The interview protocol addressed this issue to some degree, but it may be impossible to eliminate altogether.

⁴These two elements were the most difficult to access. I asked teachers directly, but this may have required a degree of reflection that they were not prepared to do (without a foundation in the theoretical and empirical literature). Providing interview questions in advance and allowing opportunities for follow-up clarification supported the validity of these data.

APPENDIX E

EXPERT PANEL REVIEW PROTOCOL

Expert Panel Review Protocol

I enlisted two teachers who were familiar with both the founding narrative and the team teaching system at Eagle Mountain High School. To increase the range of experience and perspective on the panel, one of the experts was a founding member of the faculty and one joined the staff in the last 5 years. To help the expert judges evaluate the interview questions and data-collection matrix in relation to the purpose of the study, I included the proposal abstract and research questions in addition to the following questions:

Review of interview questions

1. Is the language of the interview questions clear? Would you know how to answer each question? Are there questions that you think should be revised for clarity?
2. Is the order of the questions logical and appropriate? Do you have any suggestions for reordering the questions?
3. Do any of the questions appear redundant? Can you identify distinctions between similar questions?
4. Are there any questions that you anticipate might make interviewees uncomfortable or likely to answer incompletely or untruthfully? Do you have suggestions for revisions to make these questions more neutral?
5. Look closely at the probes for Questions 2, 7, and 9. Do the options cover the range of possible answers? Are they appropriately balanced (unbiased)? Do you have any suggestions for revising these options?
6. Do I need to add or change any interview questions to help me answer my research questions?

Review of data matrix

1. Do the five main headings align with the subheadings?
2. Look again at the interview questions and the subheadings. Do the subheadings provide a location for recording information from each question?
3. Is there at least one interview question that will provide data for each subheading in the data-collection matrix? (I want to avoid having empty

columns resulting from the lack of an interview question that addresses the subject of that column.)

4. Are there additional headings or subheadings that would help with the recording and analysis of interview data?
5. Are there places where error or bias are likely to enter this data-collection matrix?
6. Do I need to add or change any elements of my data-collection matrix to help me answer my research questions?

APPENDIX F

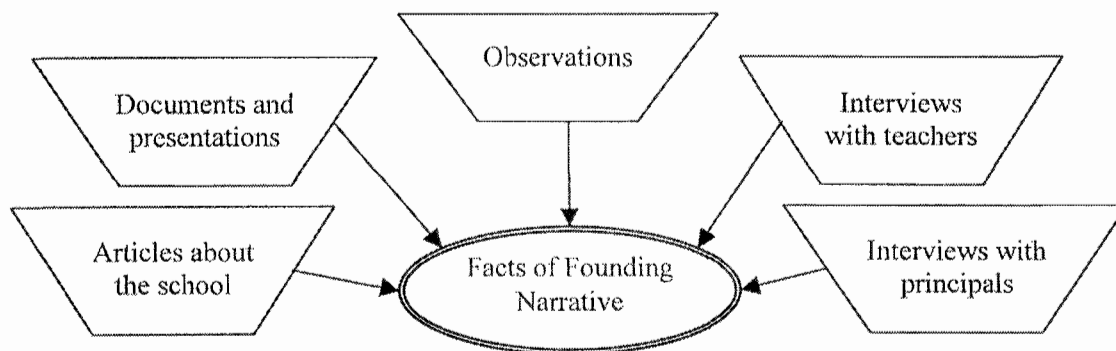
CONVERGENCE OF EVIDENCE

Convergence of Evidence

This case study benefits from a convergence of evidence (Yin, 2003). The diagram below represents the combination of data sources that I used to produce one of the key elements of the study. Rather than relying on a single source of data, I used multiple sources to derive the facts of the founding narrative at Eagle Mountain High School.

Because Eagle Mountain was designed to be an innovative school, it has repeatedly been the subject of articles about smaller learning communities, democratic decision-making, and professional development. These articles provided an external perspective on the origins of the school. Next, I reviewed documents from the early days of the school, including curriculum binders and school-improvement plans. Several PowerPoint presentations that were used to introduce new staff to the founding vision also helped support my data.

During observations at staff and department meetings, I regularly heard direct and coded references to the founding of the school. Using a data-collection protocol derived from Linde (2000), I documented those references and the visible responses from others present. Finally, I conducted interviews with teachers and principals, which included questions about the key elements of the founding stories. I have identified these interviews as separate data sources on this diagram because the founding vision was the sole focus of the principal interviews while it was merely one facet of the teacher interviews.



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