The Pennsylvania State University
The Graduate School
Department of Education Policy Studies

CHARTER SCHOOLS AND TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
A CROSS-SECTOR COLABORATION CASE STUDY

A Dissertation in
Educational Leadership
by
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of the Requirements
for the Degree of
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Abstract

Over the past 25 years, the rapid expansion of charter schools has been met with controversy and polarizing political rhetoric. Ironically and unfortunately, this anticolllaboration sentiment stands in stark contrast to the original vision of charter schools. In response, funding initiatives such as the 2012 Gates District-Charter Collaboration Compacts have begun to incentivize partnership through large grants. This case study examines one such cross-sector principal training collaboration between a traditional public school district and a charter school district. The researcher leveraged social psychology literature on in-group bias and intergroup collaboration to frame programmatic challenges cited by participants. The methods used for this qualitative study included interviews with principal trainees, mentor principals, collaboration staff, and partners. The researcher also performed observations and document analysis to both guide interviews and triangulate analysis. The results of this study yielded three primary conclusions: Collaboration positively impacted perceived in-group bias at the individual level; individuals from each sector had a different understanding of the purpose of the partnership, which impacted the collaborative experience and resulted in missed opportunities for a reciprocal flow of knowledge and best practice; and public rhetoric impacted stereotype development and the collaborative experience, particularly for participants who struggled with their competing identity. For further study, the researcher recommends the development of a quantitative bias self-assessment instrument to measure impact on bias before and after the collaborative experience at different levels of participation. Additionally, the researcher recommends further examination of the impact of public rhetoric on collaborations.
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I. Introduction

Overview

Since their inception in 1991, charter schools have rapidly expanded. In the 2012-2013 school year, 2.3 million students attended charter schools in the United States, nearly an eight-fold increase over the 0.3 million students who attended charter schools in 1999-2000 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Yet, this expansion has been met with controversy and polarizing political rhetoric such that the “charter wars” have become a barrier to collaborative school improvement (Stuhlberg, 2015). One example of this skepticism in charter schools’ potential impact on the broader education system can be evidenced in a study conducted by Good and Braden (2000). In their survey of superintendents in traditional public schools, these researchers found that only 25% of superintendents believed charter schools could help inform public education. The authors further noted that they found “no systematic effort on the part of charter schools to provide information and ideas to public schools” (p. 174). Ironically and unfortunately, this anticollaboration sentiment stands in stark contrast to the original vision of charter schools. Ray Budde (1989), originator of the charter school concept, believed that charter schools sharing their innovative ideas and experiences with the broader education system was of paramount importance (Budde, 1989).

Countering this trend is the 2012 Gates “Compact” Grants, whose mission is to rectify this chasm between charter schools and public schools. In fact, Yatsuko and Bruns found that “a growing number of cities are moving away from the idea that charter schools are the enemy and instead are breaking down barriers and openly discussing how to share resources, responsibilities and knowledge of what works” (p. 1). Due in part to the longstanding animosity between charter schools and traditional public schools, any partnership between them is a rarity. Nonetheless, a
few exceptional cases do exist wherein charter schools and public school districts have been working together. One such case is The College Academies Principal Residency (CAPR), which is the subject of this case study. In fact, CAPR was the first school-leadership training partnership between a charter network and a traditional public district. Through CAPR, College Academies (CA), a charter network, trains aspiring leaders to become principals and assistant principals in traditional public schools using a competency and fieldwork-based residency program. The purpose of this case study was to gain a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges that typically accompany the collaboration across two different approaches to public education. In this study, this researcher focused specifically on the intergroup relational dynamics that impact each group’s ability to learn from the other and apply that learning in their own contexts.

Although the advent of charter schools has been widely covered in the media, to date, little scholarship has documented and analyzed partnerships between charter schools and traditional public schools. This is no doubt due in part to the novelty and scarcity of these collaborations. This researcher was only able to find four 2015 policy research center reports, which are summarized in the literature review in the next chapter. Notably, other studies have covered the residency leadership training approach (e.g., programs that train future leaders through the medical residency rotation model). These studies include the New Schools Venture Fund; a documentation of the residency approach at Green Dot; New Leaders for New Schools; the internal program at Achievement First (AF); and the Wallace Foundation’s documentation of New York City’s Department of Education’s Aspiring Principals Program.
College Academies (CA)

College Academies (CA) is a nonprofit Charter Management Organization (CMO). CA operates schools in one large city and four medium cities across three states. All CA schools are supported by central office staff. I will refer to CA and similar peers as “achievement gap” charter schools, because their mission is specifically to close the achievement gap between low-income students of color and their higher income peers: In 2013-2014, approximately 36% of students at charter schools had attended a school in which greater than 75% of students were eligible for free or reduce-priced lunches (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). While it’s unknown how many of these schools were intentionally founded to serve low-income students, CA is not alone in the charter movement to address educational inequality.

CA admits students through a blind lottery. Notably, the ethnic makeup of their students is 98% African American or Latino, and with respect to socioeconomic status (SES), 85% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches (College Academies, 2016b). In fully grown schools, CA currently spends $14,996 per pupil and $13,059 per pupil in two states, compared to district spending of $15,366 and $13,878 respectively (College Academies, 2016b). To date, all students who have graduated from CA have been accepted into college, 85% of whom are the first in their families to attend college (College Academies, 2016b). Notably, this statistic does not reflect attrition between entering CA and graduation.

College Academies Residency for School Leadership (CAPR)

CAPR is a school-leadership training program created through a partnership between traditional public districts and CA. The purpose of the program is to train residents to become school leaders in district schools (i.e., traditional public schools) in their respective cities. The
three primary benefits for the residents include (a) robust and unique professional development, (b) a leadership job pipeline, and (c) an alternate route administrator certification.

**Program design.** CAPR consists of a one-half year residency rotation at a CA charter school and a one-half year residency rotation in a district school, as well as pre-residency and post-residency intensive training. During pre-residency, residents attend 1 week of CA leader training, 1 week of CA new staff training, and 1 week of a residency exclusive foundations institute. During residency, residents work full-time as leaders in CA and district schools. They also attend weekly seminars in the evenings, as well as school intervisitations every 5 weeks. Further, residents receive intensive coaching and mentorship from mentor principals and the CAPR program director and coaches. Post-residency, residents attend a technical skills boot camp and receive biweekly coaching in their 1st year as district leaders (1-year post residency). Figure 1 shows the timeline of each part of the residency; Table 1 describes each element of the residency program.

**Figure 1: Residency Experience Timeline**

![Residency Experience Timeline](image)

**CAPR staff.** CAPR has three full-time staff members and three part-time staff members. The program director leads the team, adjusts program design, manages partnerships with districts and mentor principals, facilitates seminars and intervisitations, directly coaches residents and 1st-year principals, and manages the other CAPR coaches and staff. The director of strategic partnerships supports the CAPR program director with the aforementioned responsibilities. The three residency coaches coach residents and lead some seminars. Each coach has been a teacher
and principal in both charter and traditional public school contexts. One additional team member executes program-related operations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Experience</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timeline/ Frequency</th>
<th>Primarily Interact with:</th>
<th>Also Interact With</th>
<th>Coached by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Training</strong></td>
<td>Attend and debrief CA New Teacher Training as cohort Attend and debrief CA Leader Training Foundations Training</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>Charter Teachers Charter Leaders</td>
<td>Cohort CAPR Staff</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seminar</strong></td>
<td>Weekly classroom instruction on varying topics across the framework</td>
<td>Ongoing every week for 10 months</td>
<td>CAPR Staff Cohort*</td>
<td>Guest Facilitators and Panelists [Mix of District and Charter]</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inter-visitation</strong></td>
<td>School visits to both charter and district schools in and out of CT. Includes classroom observations, staff interviews, and cohort debriefs</td>
<td>Ongoing every 6 Weeks</td>
<td>CAPR Staff Cohort</td>
<td>School Staff</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CA Residency Rotation:</strong></td>
<td>Residents perform dean-level responsibilities and execute a change management project</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Charter Teachers Charter Students Charter Leaders</td>
<td>Cohort CAPR Staff</td>
<td>Charter Principal CAPR Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Residency Rotation:</strong></td>
<td>Residents perform principal- and assistant-principal level responsibilities and execute a change management project</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>District Teachers District Students District Leaders</td>
<td>Cohort CAPR Staff</td>
<td>District Principal CAPR Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Training</strong></td>
<td>Attend “Technical Skills Boot Camp” on topics including organizational management systems, entry planning and managing up</td>
<td>1-3 days</td>
<td>CAPR Staff</td>
<td>District Residents</td>
<td>CAPR Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st Year Principals</strong></td>
<td>Receive ongoing coaching and support from Residency Coach</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>District Teachers District Students District Leaders</td>
<td>CAPR Coach Cohort Members Residency Connections</td>
<td>District Super CAPR Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st Year Assistant Principals</strong></td>
<td>Receive cohort PD and 1x a month coaching</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>District Teachers District Students District Leaders</td>
<td>CAPR Coach Cohort Members Residency Connections</td>
<td>District Principal CAPR Coach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cohort includes district residents and internal residents.

**Internal residents continue at their home CA school. They do not do a residency in the district.
**Curriculum and pedagogy.** A competency framework (Appendix A) supports CAPR’s curriculum and intended program outcomes. Competencies are divided into four major categories, with specific leadership actions within each category.

(1) Vision and Inspiration
   a. Set the Direction of Community with a Sense of Urgency
   b. Plan and Manage Monumental Change

(2) Cultural Leadership
   a. Set Standards of Excellence
   b. Create a Tenacious Focus on Scholars
   c. Create and Execute Tight and Detailed Systems

(3) Instructional Leadership
   a. Use Data to Strategically Drive Decisions
   b. Develop Effective Teacher Practice
   c. Deliberately Plan with the End in Mind

(4) Organizational Leadership & Management.
   a. Effectively Lead Teams
   b. Develop Great Talent
   c. Manage Peak Performance
   d. Delegate effectively

These competencies are taught through a combination of group training and individual coaching, as shown in Table 1. Competencies are then assessed through performance tasks, written work, and coach evaluation. Weekly seminars are the primary method of traditional classroom learning for residents. Seminars include direct instruction,
discussion of academic leadership literature, reflection on rotation school experiences, data analysis, and project work time. Seminars are led by a combination of facilitators from different contexts.

The following breakdown represents an approximate percentage of leadership types across seminars: 50% are led by CAPR staff, 12.5% are led by CA network or school staff, 12.5% are led by district staff, 17% are led by external facilitators, and 8% are led through shared leadership across CA/CAPR and the districts. The week-by-week seminar catalogue (Appendix B) describes each seminar and explicitly links each topic to the competency framework. Practicum is the primary method of on-the-job learning for residents. Practicum consists of the two residency rotations paired with intensive coaching. Practicum requirements include leading a school change project, coaching teachers, teaching students, and performing other leadership responsibilities, which vary by school.

Practicum requirements are then carefully reviewed by the program director to ensure that each resident is provided leader-level experiences. Residents are coached both by their CAPR coach and the mentor principal in each of their rotations. Coaches and mentor principals employ a feedback protocol to coach residents in achieving competency in the core values and habits in the framework through their practicum experiences. Residents receive structured coaching on a weekly basis, at a minimum.

Intervisitation is another programmatic learning experience wherein residents are exposed to different school contexts and leadership styles, both within and outside of their respective cities. Intervisitations are school visits during which residents review the school context, analyze school-level data, observe instruction in classrooms, interview
and give feedback to the principal, and observe school-specific practices such as leadership team meetings. Intervisitations culminate with a cohort debrief in which residents discuss and analyze the school leader’s theory of action.

Finally, there are additional training structures at different points of the residency. During their first summer, residents attend new staff and CA leader training. This training is dual purposed. First, these trainings prepare residents to work in CA schools during their fall rotation. However, CAPR also uses these trainings as an opportunity for residents to grapple with their new exposure to a very different approach to education and schools. The cohort meets privately and regularly throughout these trainings days. During this time, the program director encourages residents to be critical of their experiences, ask questions, and challenge assumptions. Residents also have 1 week of residency-specific training to prepare students for their fall experience. During mid-residency training, residents debrief during their CA rotation and prepare for their district rotation. This training includes structure time for residents to provide feedback to the CEO of CA. Finally, in the post-residency “technical skills boot camp” residents learn specific topics relevant to education, including school finance, operations, state education law, and special education law. Residents also begin entry planning for their post-residency year as a school leader.

**Assessments.** Competencies are evaluated through multiple assessments across the residency experience. The final assessment is a school design project that can also serve as the entry plan for the resident’s first leadership position after the residency. The quarterly assessment is a report involving rubric ratings and feedback aligned with the leadership competency framework. Other assessments include (a) the completion of and
reflection on school change initiative projects that residents complete in each rotation, (b) an intervisitation case study, and (c) leadership learning reflection logs that have been compiled throughout the resident’s training. Finally, residents receive 360-degree feedback from peers, those they manage, and their leaders.

**Residents.** Residents in the program are selected from the three districts across three of the cities CAPR serves in one state. CA operates schools in each of these cities, allowing for both parts of the residency to occur in the same city. The majority of residents in CAPR are “district residents,” meaning they are being trained to become leaders in traditional public schools in these three cities. District residents are the primary focus of the residency program. These residents’ experience is solely within a traditional district setting, and they have never worked for CA.

CAPR also trains a small number of “internal residents” who are currently midlevel school leaders at CA schools. Internal residents are full members of the cohort, attend all seminars and intervisitations, and are responsible for the same work as district residents. However, internal residents complete a full-year residency only at the CA home school where they have taught and led for at least a few years. Internal residents do not complete the spring residency in the district, which has become controversial in recent years. The following table displays the breakdown of alumni and current residents of the program.
Table 2

CAPR Residents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 1 – City 1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>District 2 – City 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>District 3 – City 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal – City 1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal – City 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal – City 3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The majority of my data is for these cohorts.

Schools. CAPR partners only with schools in three cities within one state. CA operates five schools in City 1, four schools in City 2, and two schools in City 3. The demographics of the CA districts are comparable to the demographics of the traditional public school districts, as shown in Table 3. As evidenced by the comparison to the state average, all of the impacted schools in this program are segregated, high-needs schools.

Purpose and rationale. Through this program, CA endeavors to share the practices and values of CA leaders with leaders in traditional district schools, as evidenced in this job posting: “A key aspect of College Academies’s long-term strategy is to broaden its impact in education reform through initiatives and partnerships that disseminate CA’s knowledge and practices” (College Academies, 2013). CA attributes their student achievement data to their approach to teaching and leadership, and consequently, they strive to share their approach with district schools. Limitations in comparing student achievement results between charter schools and district schools will be discussed later, and these limitations arguably make this assertion somewhat tenuous. There is no current data to confirm that CAPR-trained leaders outperform their peers who have been trained in other programs.
Table 3

School Demographics State Data Website SY 2013-2014 (expressed in percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CA City 1</th>
<th>TPS City 1</th>
<th>CA City 2</th>
<th>TPS City 2</th>
<th>CA City 3</th>
<th>TPS City 3</th>
<th>State Average</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>58.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>12.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>21.1</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>51.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>48.5</td>
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<td><strong>Student Need</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eligible for</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td>84.7</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>99.1</td>
<td>37.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Free or Reduced-Price Lunches</td>
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Research Questions

This researcher’s goal was to understand the opportunities and challenges that are made possible when there is collaboration between the two different approaches to public education. I focused specifically on the intergroup relational dynamics that impact each group’s ability to learn from the other and apply that learning within their own context. The central question in this study is: “How do in-group and intergroup dynamics in the charter and district contexts impact collaboration efforts?”

The following subquestions further define the purpose of this study:

- Does intergroup contact during the residency experience influence participants’ perceptions of in-group biases and in-group interactions? If so, how?
- Do the mindsets and skills taught in the residency program influence participants’ perceptions of in-group biases and in-group interactions? If so, how?
• From the residents’ perspective, how does their affiliation with charter districts impact their reception in district schools?

• Finally, how might the participation in the residency program impact all stakeholders’ perception of the “out-group” (specifically, the perceptions of those trained in the charter school model toward the traditional district public schools, and vice-versa, the perceptions of those trained in the public school model toward the charter schools)?

Limitations

First, the conclusions drawn from this study are not generalizable beyond the context of this bounded case of the CAPR program. Second, by virtue of the small program size and continuous improvement process at CA, finding trends in the data across the years reviewed may be difficult. Finally, there is little research on charter district partnerships. These gaps in the literature further restrict this researcher’s ability to analyze and connect data to the broader body of work.
II. Literature Review

Charter Schools

The literature review will begin with a brief review of the charter school literature to give context to the charter-district relationship in this study. This context undoubtedly influences the perceptions that each group has of the other (i.e., the in-group vs. the out-group). The intention of this study, however, was not to make a claim about the effectiveness of charter schools, or to make any policy recommendations with respect to the expansion or reduction of charter schools. Instead, this research is based on the assumption that charter schools will either maintain their current status or grow.

Lubienski and Weitzel (2010a), in *The Charter School Experiment*, best described the position of this researcher on charter schools generally:

> The overall picture is pretty clear that charter schools are no panacea for the ills that afflict the larger public education enterprise. Charter schools still represent a powerful idea both for policy makers and for parents…. We have no doubt that charter schools will be a prominent fixture on the educational landscape for some time to come. (p. 22)

In a world where charters and district schools are both working to maximize learning in our country and in our communities, this researcher wished to explore how peaceful coexistence and collaboration might occur.

**Purpose of charter schools.** The purpose of charter schools has evolved over their 25-year history. Charter school proponents believe that charter schools can improve student achievement both within charter schools and within the broader education system (Lubienski & Weitzel, 2010b). However, whether charter schools should impact the
broader education system – through innovation, choice and competition, or collaboration – remains unclear.

Charter schools were originally conceived of as teacher-run innovation labs in 1988 by Ray Budde and Al Shanker. However, in truth, this stated purpose, although often cited, has rarely been actualized. Rather, as noted by Scott and DiMartino (2010), “Despite the dominance of these early reformers’ visions, in reality, the charter movement has always been composed of advocates who held diverse educational and social policy goals” (p. 175). Charters have been developed for multiple purposes with multiple goals (Good & Braden, 2000). For the purpose of this paper, charters will be discussed as both innovation labs and choice instruments because these descriptions represent the primary ways in which CA positions itself. The other ways in which charters are characterized will not be used in this paper because they are not aligned with CA’s positioning. Therefore, they will only be identified here but not discussed in detail. These other purposes are charters as (a) a method for circumventing the separation of church and state (Hillman, 2008), (b) a method for modern de jure White isolation and racial segregation (Frankenberg & Siegel-Hawley, 2013; Renzulli & Evans, 2005), and (c) tools for personal financial gain through accounting schemes and for-profit education management organizations (Weil, 2009).

**Charters as innovators.** The idea of charters as innovation labs is compelling. Conceptually, with less regulation, charters conceivably have more freedom to make significant changes in the areas of teacher selection, staff development, curriculum choice, and pedagogical approach (Lubienski & Weitzel, 2010a). Successful innovation practices, in turn, can be shared with the broader education system. However, in reality,
because true innovation is expensive and most charter schools are start-ups, charters have fallen short of the innovation expectations. In fact, a SRI International Report showed that 85% of California charter schools use traditional pedagogical approaches (Good & Braden, 2000), and studies in Arizona yielded similar findings (Good & Braden, 2000; Stout & Garn, 1999). Rather, as described by Lubienski and Weitzel (2010a): “Charters introduce practices and curricula that were previously unavailable in a particular market…. They are more like showcases than research-and-development units…. Researchers are coming to a consensus on the limited performance of charters on this issue” (p. 23).

**Charters as choice instruments.** Alternatively, charter schools play an important role in the school choice movement. The market-based school choice argument is that charter schools are a “tide that lifts all boats” (Hoxby, 2003, p. 288). Proponents argue that if charter schools outperform district schools, parents will begin to choose charter schools over district schools. District schools would then need to improve their overall performance to remain competitive (Hoxby, 2003; Manno, Finn, & Vanourek, 2000). However, critics have argued that competition in the market does not necessarily improve the learning outcomes for all students (see section on Criticisms of Charters). Further, these critics have argued that families choose schools for many reasons, including location, athletics, and student population (Ni & Arsen, 2010).

Research has shown that the benefits of the choice argument have not, in fact, been actualized. Some researchers, notably Bohte (2004) and Sass (2006), found modest positive impacts on traditional public schools in Texas and Florida, respectively. On the other hand, Ni (2009) found slight negative impacts on traditional public schools in
Michigan. In the most comprehensive review of the existing research, Ni and Arsen (2010) concluded, “Charter competition clearly elicits little or no school district response at all” (p. 99).

**Effectiveness of charter schools.** In aggregate, there is no statistically significant difference between student achievement outcomes in charter schools and traditional public schools (Buckley & Schneider, 2009; Clark, Tuttle, & Silverberg, 2015; Lubienski & Weil, 2010a; Weil, 2009; Zimmer, 2009). The largest and most comprehensive national study on the impact of charter schools was conducted by Stanford’s CREDO center. In its most recent national report in 2013, the researchers found a modest benefit from charter schools:

> Overall, students attending charter schools have eight additional days of learning in reading and similar learning gains in math compared to their peers attending traditional public schools. While these average impacts aren’t very large, the differences for some groups of students are much greater. (CREDO, 2013, p. 3)

The researchers also found larger differences within certain subgroups and certain regions. In particular, data pointed to charter schools having stronger positive impacts on low-income Hispanic and Black students, as well as English language learners.

In 2015, CREDO focused their research on urban charter schools and found more significant impacts. This study corroborated their previous study while focusing specifically on urban charter schools.

Specifically, students enrolled in urban charter schools receive the equivalent of 40 additional days of learning growth (0.055 s.d.’s) in math and 28 days of additional growth (0.039 s.d.’s) in reading compared to their matched peers in
TPS. These figures compare favorably to those found for the national charter sector as a whole, where CREDO’s National Charter School Study found the national average impact of charter enrollment was 7 additional days of learning per year in reading (0.01 s.d.’s) and no significant difference in math. (p. 11)

This study showed a very large range in effect. In math, the study showed learning gains, relative to the state, from as little as -0.089 in El Paso, TX, to +0.324 in Boston, MA. In reading, the study showed learning gains, relative to the state, from as little as -0.083 in West Palm Beach, FL, to +0.236 in Boston, MA. Across all urban regions, Black, Hispanic, English language learners, and students living in poverty benefited most. These results, however, should be interpreted with caution. Critics have called into question the reliability of the “virtual twin” method of comparison that was used in this study. Maul (2015) in particular referred to this method as “insufficiently documented” (p. 3), asserting that CREDO would have attained more reliable results had they used propensity score matching. Finally, for the purposes of this study, this CREDO study did not include data from the cities impacted by CAPR.

**Criticisms of charters.** Charters – particularly “achievement gap” charter schools like CA – have been criticized for a number of limitations of their model and approach. Primary criticisms include (a) lack of service for special education students, (b) inequity of funding, (c) freedom from regulation, (d) de facto segregation, (e) disregard for noncognitive outcomes, and (f) a hidden curriculum of compliance with authority. The first three criticisms refer to an inequity that would make cross-sector comparison unfair. The latter three criticisms, however refer to wider-ranging concerns about charter schools’ approach and their impact on the broader education system.
**Special education.** Good and Braden (2000) likened special education to the “Achilles heel” of the charter movement. This is because charter schools tend to attract fewer students with special needs (Eckes, 2010). For the students with special needs charters do attract, there is a higher attrition rate, potentially due to “counseling out” (Eckes, 2010). In 1999, a study conducted through Michigan State found three-quarters of Michigan charter schools provided no special education services at all (Weil, 2009). And for those charters that do have students with special needs, they tend to spend less on special education than public schools in their areas. For example, Arizona charter schools spend only 1.4% of their funds on special education compared to 10% in public schools (Garn & Stout, 1998; Good & Braden, 2000).

**Funding.** Funding for charter schools varies widely depending on area and context. Generally, urban charter schools are better funded than district schools, while rural charter schools are less well funded compared to their district peers (Huerta & d’Entremont, 2010). Many charter schools are funded at an “average per pupil rate” within districts that are funded by real estate taxes, which results in funding disparity (Sugarman, 2002). Schools that seek philanthropic grants, whether they’re charter or district, tend to be better funded than those who do not seek similar types of grants. Furthermore, CMOs who have organized fundraising teams tend to be the best funded (Scott, 2009).

**Freedom from regulation.** Freedom from regulation is one of the defining characteristics of a charter school. Good and Braden stated, “Charter schools are held accountable for student outcomes and in return are virtually freed from state laws governing schooling” (2000, p. 119). Notably, a charter is a contract granted by a state-
level regulatory body, and this charter is the primary means for ensuring accountability for charter schools. The chartering body reviews performance every 3 to 5 years. And at the end of this review, the chartering body either issues a new charter or closes the school (Miron, 2010).

Because of this accountability structure, these schools have a great deal of leverage in nearly every aspect of the running of the school. This includes the freedom to hire and fire teachers more easily, as well as to pay for high performance. Moreover, school leaders are able to select or design their own curriculums and to structure their school day, learning activities, and staff as they like (Miron, 2010; Weil, 2009).

However, Carnoy, Jacobsen, Mischel, and Rohstein (2005) argued that this freedom from regulation is the proverbial “enough rope to hang oneself with,” contending, “Freed from bureaucratic regulations and union rules, many of the best educators can design excellent charter schools. But freed from these rules, many of the worst educators can design terrible schools” (p. 118). Whether freedom from regulation is to charter schools’ advantage or detriment, critics have argued that this fundamental difference in how schools are organized and run makes comparison across sectors inequitable.

**Segregation.** Charter schools have also been criticized for further segregating low-income students of color. Extensive research by Frankenberg and Siegel-Hawley (2013) has shown that charter schools in aggregate tend to be significantly segregated: To wit, 58% of students in charter schools are in predominantly minority schools, compared to 38% of traditional public school students. This de facto segregation has important cultural and legal implications (Frankenberg, 2011; Frankenberg & Siegel-Hawley,
CA, as well as the traditional public districts in which they operate, are highly segregated (see the analysis in the first chapter of this dissertation).

CA seeks to serve students of low socioeconomic status (SES) who are disproportionately students of color. This approach is in juxtaposition with a plethora of educational research showing that desegregation leads to the best learning outcomes for all students, particularly students from “excluded” groups, and this is well articulated by Orfield and Frankenberg (2013):

Desegregation, however it is accomplished, is powerful because it connects students from excluded groups to the information and opportunity networks that exist in better schools and that greatly enhance their prospects for later success in mainstream institutions and relationships. (p. 59)

In truth, integration is a notoriously challenging endeavor, for which “there are no easy or comprehensive solutions available within the existing constraints, but doing nothing is no solution” (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013, p. 61). And it is not surprising that charter schools, particularly achievement gap charter schools, are segregated. First, these schools draw from segregated traditional district schools. Second, donors are eager to support disadvantaged students, so there is an incentive to serve as many disadvantaged students as possible (Frankenberg & Siegel-Hawley, 2013). To rectify this issue, Frankenberg and Siegel-Hawley (2013) proposed legislative stipulations to ensure charter schools have a diverse population of students.

**Noncognitive outcomes and college persistence.** Charter schools have often been criticized for overfocusing on test scores and academic skills. However, CA, KIPP, and other “achievement gap” charters also explicitly include character-building components
in their curriculums. These schools are leveraging new social psychology research to inform their teaching. In fact, many studies (and one might go so far as to say that it is self-evident) have shown that students need more than academic skills to be successful in life. Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly (2007) found the character strength of “grit” to be more predictive of success than other traditional measures of academic success. Similarly, in a longitudinal study, Mischel (2014) found “self-control,” as measured in pre-school-aged students, to be correlated with positive life outcomes many years later.

Unfortunately, while these schools are leveraging this new character research to teach in their schools, the focus on character has not yet led to significant outcomes. Tuttle et al. (2015) found that while KIPP had statistically significant academic outcomes, there was “no statistically significant impact on most measures of student motivation, engagement, behavior, or educational aspiration” (p. 44). Further, KIPP has had disappointing college persistence outcomes. While 88% of KIPP 8th-grade graduates enroll in 2- or 4-year colleges within 5 years of graduating 8th grade, only 38% of these students graduate from those colleges (KIPP, 2011). CA cites an 85% college persistence rate in their annual report, though the calculation method is not provided, and this rate has not been independently verified (College Academies, 2016b).

**Hidden curriculum.** Hidden curriculum is the unspoken curriculum, or intangible lessons learned, in students’ schooling experiences. More specifically, hidden curriculum encompasses lessons students learn about the culture of power that are taught and reinforced by their teachers. Racial dynamics inevitably impact the hidden curriculum. This impact is greatest when primarily White teachers and staff teach Black and Latino
students from underresourced communities. Delpit (1995) described the inevitable tension:

To provide schooling for everyone’s children that reflects liberal, middle-class values and aspirations is to ensure the maintenance of the status quo, to ensure that power, the culture of power, remains in the hands of those who already have it. (p. 28)

While an issue in many urban schools, charter schools in particular have often been criticized for this issue (Stulberg, 2015). In fact, Golann (2015), in an ethnographic exposé on the hidden curriculum in a northeast charter school, found that school culture and behavior practices were unintentionally producing students who were “worker learners” instead of lifelong learners (p. 108).

**College Academies Within the Broader Context of Charters**

As a charter network, CAPR fully intends to share its “best practices” with district schools. This intention is based on CA’s belief that their leadership approach is unique and effective, as measured by state standardized tests. For example, students in CA schools in the state, on average, consistently have outperformed their district partners on state tests, often by 2-3 times (College Academies, 2016a). Specifically, in 2013, 62% of CA 4th-grade students were at or above grade level in math, reading, and writing. In comparison, their peer schools in City 1, City 2, and City 3 achieved 29%, 34%, and 36% respectively. Middle school results were similar with 75% of CA students at or above grade level in math, reading, and writing compared to 37%, 39%, and 45% in City 1, City 2, and City 3, respectively.
Moreover, CA students perform on par or above the state average in a state with an extremely wide achievement gap between rich and poor student (College Academies, 2016a). In 2013, the state average of at or above grade level in math, reading, and writing was 64% in elementary compared to 62% at CA, and 70% in middle school compared to 75% at CA. Notably, the subgroups described in the CREDO findings are aligned to the specific group of students who CA serves. However, the data provided by CA does not use any matching system that controls for peer-to-peer comparison such as the complex “virtual twins” peer matching technique used in the CREDO reports.

The essential question, however, is why do they outperform? CA believes the outperformance is a result of instructional practices and leadership; thus, they believe that sharing their leadership practices would be a key component to improving education overall. However, their critics have attributed their outperformance to attrition, “cream-skimming,” funding differentials, and other factors.

**Charter-District Collaboration: The Existing Literature**

While little academic research has examined charter-district collaboration, a growing body of work is emerging from foundations and policy centers. This body of work primarily contains case studies of existing charter-district collaborations. Notably, in 2012, the Gates “Compact” investment funded charter-district partnerships in seven cities across the country: Boston, MA; Denver, CO; Hartford, CT; New Orleans, LA; New York, NY; Philadelphia, PA; and Spring Branch, TX. One of the most comprehensive analyses of charter-district collaboration was conducted by Mathematica Policy Research Report (McCullough, Heinkel & Keating, 2015) that was based on interviews and site visits made by McCullough to these Gates-funded collaborations.
These charter-district collaborations took many forms, including school partnership and co-location, leadership training, teacher coaching, Common Core transitions, and community outreach. The goals of the Gates grant were to facilitate collaboration and improve equity of access, resources and accountability. The initiative outlined three types of approaches to collaboration that are particularly salient to this study:

1. Traditional public school district and charter partners jointly tackle specific challenges, working side by side to solve a problem that neither has a clear advantage in addressing alone.

2. High performers – one sector or specific schools within a sector – share expertise with lower-performing peers on raising student achievement.

3. The traditional public and charter sectors exchange resources or expertise in a fair exchange. (p. 1)

In this study, I will later argue that difference in opinion regarding how the CAPR collaboration fits into this model has impacted the ability of the groups to work together. McCullough et al. (2015) identified the most frequent types of practices that transferred from district to charter and charter to district in these collaborations, which are summarized in the table below. These types of collaboration are consistent with the type of collaboration occurring in the CAPR. Advocates of cross-sector collaboration would likely agree that sharing these types of practices would be promising for improving all schools and impacting student achievement.
Table 4

*Most Frequently Shared Practices via Compact Activities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices Most Frequently Shared From Traditional Public School Sector to Charter Sector</th>
<th>Practices Most Frequently Shared From Charter Sector to Traditional Public School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practices and systems for instructing students with disabilities or ELLs</td>
<td>School culture and behavior systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and family engagement approaches</td>
<td>Interim assessments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small-group instruction, especially guided reading</td>
<td>Teacher coaching models</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Data Use</td>
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Table adapted from McCullough et al., p. 20.

McCullough et al. (2015) also identified two primary barriers for collaboration; namely, negative perceptions and limited time. The most prominent barrier in their study was the negative perceptions of the out-group on both sides of the collaboration. As noted by McCullough et al., “Negative perceptions of the other sector among staff at both traditional public and charter schools also contribute to tensions that prevent collaboration, particularly at the school level” (p. 8). Specifically, researchers found a perception of unequal status on both sides of the collaboration, which further impacted these negative perceptions: “A perception that school leaders in other types of schools were not true peers also remained pervasive in most grantee sites and further contributed to a lack of collaboration” (p. 12). The authors of this study argued that collaboration will inevitably be impeded until these negative perceptions are addressed, writing, “When teachers, school leaders, and administrators see the other sector as fundamentally different from their own, cross-sector collaboration can seem unhelpful or unnecessary”
The authors further delineated the common negative perceptions of each out-group and in-group:

Frequently cited negative perceptions of the charter sector include that charter school populations are easier to serve than traditional public school student populations and that teachers are young, uncertified and more likely to leave the field after a few years. Charter respondents noted that many colleagues perceived traditional public schools as less effective and not sharing goals or vision. (p. 26)

Notably, even if participants in McCullough et. al.’s study didn’t share the negative perceptions of the out-group themselves, they still cited these negative perceptions as a barrier to collaboration.

The idea of negative perceptions and lack of trust impacting collaboration was also discussed across the body of work on collaboration between traditional public schools and charter schools. In a similar report by The Fordham Institute entitled “Is Détente Possible?” the authors cited deep-rooted distrust as a key barrier in Cleveland’s attempts at collaboration (Doyle, Holly, & Hassel, 2015). Further, in a report on co-location, the authors found that district teachers’ distrust stemmed from fear that co-location collaboration was a step toward eventually being taken over by the co-located charter (DeArmond, Cooley Nelson, & Bruns, 2015). This same distrust was also found in the Aldine/YesPrep multimedia case study, wherein one principal stated, “Staff of both programs must be clear about the goals and the purpose of the partnership. I believe at the start it wasn’t as clear as it needed to be for teachers, so because of that, there was this unknown – what it is the point? There was a lack of trust there” (National Charter School Resource Center, 2015).
While these studies illuminate the status quo of charter district collaboration and provide recommendations for programatically setting up effective charter-district collaboration programs, they provide relatively few recommendations for improving the negative perception barrier other than the recommendation to clearly lay out goals for all involved parties (DeArmond et al., 2015; McCullough et al., 2015; National Charter Resource Center, 2015).

High-level administrative support for collaboration was also cited as important for breaking down misconception or negative perception (Doyle et al., 2015; Yatsko & Bruns, 2015). Yatsko and Bruns (2015) emphasized the importance of having a boundary spanner in administration. The term boundary spanner is used broadly in organizational sociology to describe someone who bridges the gap between two sectors: in this case, charter schools and district schools. Yatsko and Bruns (2015) stressed the importance of boundary spanners, noting that they “perform critical functions, especially in cities where mistrust and combativeness between the district and charter worlds have been the norm” (p. 3).

While there are a few existing recommendations for breaking down negative perceptions in charter-district partnerships to improve collaboration, this study will add to the body of literature by examining the existence of negative perceptions in the CAPR case and reviewing the specific strategies used by CAPR to attempt to break down these perceptions on both sides of the partnership. Through the review of this literature and initial interviews and observations conducted for this study, this researcher has identified that in-group bias (as described by social identify theory) and intergroup collaboration (as described by contact hypothesis and the common in-group identity model) are a strong fit
to frame the case and this study. I will now transition to reviewing the literature on these models.

**In-group bias**

In-group bias, an alliance to a group identity that impacts the way group members view other groups, occurs naturally in almost all types of groups (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). While traditionally discussed in matters of race and ethnicity, in-group bias applies across a spectrum of group types. In fact, in-group bias even applies to groups without physical characteristic markers, such as two companies who are merging, stepfamilies, political parties, rival teams, and students and alumni of universities. In-group bias is a barrier to positive intergroup cooperation (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000).

**In-group bias: Social identity theory and realistic group conflict theory.**

Tajfel and Turner (1979) developed social identity theory (SIT) to explain bias, conflict, and intergroup relationships. They sought to answer questions such as, “Why do people in groups discriminate against each other” (Turner & Reynolds, 2001). According to SIT theory, membership in a group interconnects with an individual’s need for positive self-identity, which leads to viewing members of an in-group more favorably than members of an out-group (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). SIT outlines three processes: (a) social categorization, (b) social identification, and (c) social comparison (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Discrimination and bias stem from this group-level social comparison (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Although in-group bias occurs even before competition does, competition for scarce resources exacerbates in-group bias by creating a situation in which there is a winner and a loser (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Gaertner & Shoppler, 1998). This
connection between competition and social identity links SIT with Campbell’s realistic group conflict theory (Campbell, 1965). Realistic group conflict theory posits that bias is a result of competition for scarce resources. However, Tajfel’s minimal group paradigm experiments found that SIT was a stronger model to explain conflict because competition was not necessary for bias to develop (Bourhis & Gagnon, 2001).

The roots of in-group bias and intergroup cooperation are grounded in Sherif’s robbers cave study. In 1961, Sherif conducted a social psychology experiment in which 22 twelve-year-old boys were assigned randomly to two different groups. The groups were separated for 1 week without knowledge of the other, during which time each group created norms, names, and leadership. The groups named themselves The Eagles and The Rattlers. In the study, each in-group developed strong biases against the out-group which led to name-calling, cabin raids, and physical altercations. Bias occurred before competition began but grew stronger after competition was introduced. Then, Sherif used different techniques to attempt to dispel in-group bias and promote intergroup cooperation.

After Sherif’s robbers cave study, many additional studies continued to explore why in-group bias occurs and how it impacts intergroup dynamics. Park and Rothbart (1982) found that group members remember the details better during in-group interaction than out-group interaction (Gaertner & Dovido, 2000). Pettigrew (1979) found that individuals fall prey to a type self-fulfilling prophecy that he called “the ultimate attribution error” (p. 461) by being more forgiving of the behavior of in-group individuals than the behavior exhibited by individuals in out-groups (Gaertner & Dovido, 2000). Fielder and Schmid (2001) found that the use of pronouns and language shapes the
development of bias such as us/them and we/they (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Mackie, Gastardo-Conaco, and Skelly (1992) found that when the source of an argument is revealed, individuals are more likely to accept an in-group member’s position than an out-group member’s opinion, regardless of the quality of the argument (Mackie & Wright, 2001). Finally, Judd et al. (1991) re-affirmed the Dawes et al. (1979) finding that in-group members exaggerate the position of out-group members (Rothbart, 2001).

**In-group bias: Stereotypes.** Many of the studies discussed are cases in which participants have very little context about the out-group. These studies were designed in order to isolate the variable of group membership and emphasize how little is required to trigger in-group bias. These studies show that the mere act of categorization creates in-group alliance. Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, and Flament (1971) developed the minimal group paradigm to describe this phenomenon. In an experiment that has since been repeated many times over, Tajfel et al. (1971) found that, in an artificial case, arbitrarily created groups give more points or money to members of the in-group than the out-group for seemingly no reason.

However, unlike the majority of the experiments in this review where participants have no context, the participants in the CAPR case do have context about the out-group. In fact, in real-life intergroup dynamics, it would be very unlikely for two groups to not have any context of the other. Therefore, I must also examine how stereotypes form to show how stereotypes paired with categorization form in-group bias. As stated by Rothbart (2001), “Stereotypes play an important role in intergroup relations…. Categorizations plays an important, but by no means exclusive role” (p. 45).
For the purpose of this discussion, stereotypes are “positive and negative attributes about social groups” that are the “inherent byproduct of the human cognitive system, yet controllable with personal motivation and effort” (Operario & Fiske, 2001, p. 23). Operario and Fiske (2001) described the four primary structures in which stereotypes are formed: (a) the prototype model, (b) exemplar models, (c) associative networks, and (d) parallel-distributed processing (PDP) models. In the prototype model, individuals develop a “fuzzy” set of characteristics that would be attributed to “typical member of a group” (p. 28). In the exemplar model, individuals infer characteristics about a group based on actual experiences with one member of that group. Then, individuals attribute those characteristics to all members of that group. The associative networks model states that information stored in nodes controls stereotype processing at a neurological level. Finally, the PDP model asserts that it is the pattern of connection between nodes, rather than nodes themselves, that represent stereotype processing at the neurological level.

The CAPR case and in-group bias. In-group bias is a strong fit for the CAPR case, with the in-groups being CA and the district(s). I argue that the in-group bias in this case is a result of categorization (SIT) and competition (rational group conflict theory), which together encourage the development of stereotype. In accordance with SIT, each side of the relationship fits the definition of a social group, as explained by Turner and Reynolds (2001):

A social group is a body of real people that acts in the world; it is a social system. The members interact, behave and have relationships with each other. They share an identity, have goals, are interdependent, and they have social structures. A group has a social as well as a psychological reality. (p. 137)
Further, in accordance with realistic group conflict theory, the groups are implicitly competing for students and funding:

Pursuant to categorization and competition, stereotype develops. All participants have been exposed to the media and rhetoric around the “charter wars” referenced earlier in this paper. In accordance with the prototype model, media and rhetoric shape in-group members’ opinions of the out-group without individual interaction. As pointed out by Operario and Fiske (2001), “Prototype-based stereotyping is strongest when perceivers have little direct experience with the category yet possess strong group expectancies. For example, when people learn about an out-group through cultural socialization rather than interaction” (p. 28). In-group members also form stereotype through the cultural socialization gained through second-hand information from colleagues, friends, and family members.

The exemplar model of stereotype structure is also applicable as in-group members may have interacted with out-group members in the past. Operario and Fiske (2001) explained, “Perceivers compare target individuals with mental representations of actual category members when forming impressions and judgments (e.g., “He reminds me of my graduate school advisor”).… When targets resemble the exemplar, perceivers impute characteristics to the target (p. 29). Some in-group members have personal experience as a member of the out-group in previous employment situations. Other in-group members have worked with former members of the out-group in their current in-group. Still other in-group members may have had professional interactions with individual members of the out-group through personal, educational, or professional circles. According to the exemplar model, these positive and negative experiences with
individual members of the out-group shape the development of the stereotype of the out-group.

Collectively, these individual stereotypes, along with the group’s shared experience educating students within a community, lead to each group naturally and nonmaliciously developing bias about the out-group. Turner and Reynolds (2001) explained this tendency:

Stereotypes and intergroup attitudes are expression of collective cognition, of people’s attempt to make sense of the world, to create a meaningful but collectively shaped representation of group realities… They serve group purposes and are products of social influence and communication as much as they are products of individual cognitive processes. (p. 145)

This bias is arguably formed through a collective effort to explain the educational environment in their cities. Individuals who identify with each group develop in-group bias, both from the internal need for a shared positive group identity (SIT) as well as the external desire for more students and more funding (realistic group conflict theory).

**Intergroup cooperation**

In order to frame the residency’s strategies for reducing in-group bias, I will now review the social psychology literature on intergroup cooperation. There are a few major and complementary models highlighted in the literature. First, Allport (1954)’s contact hypothesis describes conditions for intergroup communication through contact. Second, in Hewstone and Brown (1986)’s mutual intergroup differentiation model, the authors recommend emphasizing group lines with mutual respect for each group’s strengths and areas of growth. Third, Gaertner et al’s (1993) common in-group identity model
highlights recategorization as a strategy for breaking down bias by creating an all-inclusive group with which all members can identify. Finally, Brewer and Miller (1984) recommended a focus on individuals rather than groups in a process called decategorization or personalization.

**Contact hypothesis.** Contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) is a traditional strategy for reducing intergroup bias and promoting intergroup cooperation. The key component of contact hypothesis is the conditions under which contact should occur for optimum cooperation. These four conditions are (a) intergroup cooperation, (b) common goals, (c) supportive norms, and (d) equal status (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Gaertner and Dovidio (2000) found that contact under these conditions leads to reduced in-group bias: “Intergroup interaction (that is not hostile or competitive) can increase knowledge about the out-group members and reduce intergroup anxiety, which in turn broadens the perceptual field to allow impressions of out-group members to become more accurate and more favorable” (p. 78; also see Stephan & Stephan, 1984).

The CAPR case is an example of intergroup contact. Later in this paper, I will discuss which conditions are met within the CAPR model and which conditions could be improved upon.

**Mutual intergroup differentiation model.** Hewstone and Brown (1986) introduced the mutual intergroup differentiation as a model in which groups work together while mutually respecting each other’s respective strengths and areas of growth. One approach for cooperation in this model is division of labor, which enables groups to appreciate and rely on each other’s areas of expertise. Deschamps and Brown (1983) highlighted the importance of “noncomparable” roles in establishing positive outcomes
from division of labor. In this model, in-group members view out-group members as such, rather than as individuals. The CAPR case utilizes this method by dividing the residency experience equally within both contexts, which I will discuss later in this paper. This method impacts only the residents, versus the broader group involved the collaboration, because there is little to no division of labor across sectors beyond the residency program.

**Decategorization/Personalization.** Brewer and Miller (1984) introduced the concept of decategorization/personalization as a natural occurrence during effective contact. They noted that during contact, decategorization/personalization breaks down the lines of group membership by pointing out the variety of types of out-group members. When in-group members begin to see out-group members as individuals—rather than out-group members—they become more empathetic and understanding of their point of view, which in turn, leads to smoother collaboration. After multiple points of contact, friendships often develop, and the further break down of existing out-group stereotypes continues to occur (Pettigrew, 1997). In this model, in-group members view out-group members more as individuals than as out-group members.

Decategorization is a component of the CAPR case because, through contact and semi-structured relationship building, members of each side do begin to see each other as individuals. This concept impacts not only the inner circle of residents, but also the mentor principals, teachers, and staff with whom the residents interact in both in-groups. In my discussion, I will address this idea, along with the concept of maintaining group bias while viewing individuals as “exceptions to the rule.”
**Common in-group identity model: Recategorization.** In the common in-group identity model (Gaertner et al., 1993)—and given the previous models—the most effective way to break down bias is through the process of recategorization, which involves creating a group encompassing multiple in-groups. By becoming a member of the new “all-encompassing group” and maintaining a “dual-identity,” individual group lines dissipate (Gartner & Dovidio, 2000). In turn, the inclusive group begins to develop its own in-group identity, which does not preclude its original smaller group identity (Allport, 1954; Gartner & Dovidio, 2000). Gaertner and Dovidio (2000) argued that the dual identity is powerful in dispelling bias. This is demonstrated well in the Gaertner and Dovidio’s study in Newark, Delaware:

In this study, we varied whether college students interacted with “Townie” out-group members either as Individuals, as members of Two Separate Groups, or with Dual Identity involving college students and townspeople from Newark, DE…. Participants perceived themselves as a “Newark, Delewarian” significantly more strongly in the Dual Identity condition relative to the other conditions. Second, the stronger this “Newark, Delewarian” identity, the more “townie” out-group members were generally regarded with positive affect (e.g., liked), which in turn predicted stereotype change and reduction (in terms of more counter-stereotypical ratings the out-group as a whole (p. 151).

I will later discuss how CAPR staff utilizes recategorization to promote cooperative habits by emphasizing and building the identities of “resident,” “educator,” and “leader” over “charter educator” or “district educator.”
Other strategies: Priming, seating, dress, language. Gaertner and Dovidio (2000) highlighted a few research-based strategies that encourage collaboration. First, positive priming through a variety of tactics to get participants in a “good mood” had positive impacts on the quality of collaboration. Second, mixing up in-group members with out-group members in seating arrangements was effective. Next, when appropriate, common uniforms or physical identity markers representing the all-encompassing group also impacted collaboration. Finally, as much as possible using “we” language and avoiding “they” language had a significant impact. While these strategies are somewhat commonsensical, they each had significant impacts on participants’ rating of their perception of out-group members. In the CAPR case, many of these strategies are intentionally leveraged, which I will discuss later.

Generalization. Generalization for these methods is weak to nonexistent beyond the individuals involved in contact or collaboration (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Stephan & Stephan, 1996). The most likely explanation for the lack of generalization is related to viewing the out-group members with whom they had contact as exceptions to the rule (Allport, 1954; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Promoting positive cross-sector collaboration would be much easier and less expensive if these contact experiences had broader impacts on the in-groups. However, there is still value in dispelling bias within the subgroups that are part of contact and collaboration. Further, if bias can be dispelled effectively in smaller groups, advocates can begin to design ways to approach dispelling bias across the broader in-group.

Trust. The establishment of trust was a clear through-line in my review of the charter-district collaboration literature to date. However, trust is not explicitly named in
the predominant social psychological theories used to explain intergroup cooperation. While not explicitly named, I argue that trust is inextricably linked to intergroup cooperation.

First, Brewer (1979) found that through categorization in-groups viewed the out-group as “less cooperative, honest, and trustworthy” (Kramer & Carnavale, 2001, p. 436). Therefore, in order to establish trust, the in-group/out-group boundaries must be broken down. Breaking down group boundaries is at least related to establishing trust, be it through emphasizing the individual (decategorization), emphasizing shared identity in a common supergroup (recategorization), acquiring mutual respect for each other’s strengths and weaknesses (mutual intergroup differentiation), or through setting optimal conditions for contact (contact hypothesis).

Second, in order to understand the relationship between trust and cooperation, I looked to the field organizational management. Scholars in the field have likened the relationship of cooperation and trust to the relationship of the chicken and the egg. That is: Is trust necessary for cooperation, or is trust a result of successful cooperation (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002)? Ultimately, both viewpoints are valid. While trust is not always required for positive cooperation to occur, trust significantly increases the quality of cooperation. It is helpful to apply Ferrin, Bligh, and Kohles’s (2007) findings to the language of in-group/out-group: To wit: (a) in-group trust increases in-group cooperative behavior, (b) out-group trust increases in-group cooperative behavior, and (c) in some very competitive cases, out-group trust decreases in-group cooperative behavior. Further, cooperation increases trust. One can also apply Ferrin et al.’s (2007) findings to the language of in-group/out-group: (a) Out-group cooperative behavior increases in-group trust of the out-
group, and (b) in-group cooperative behavior increases in-group’s trust of the out-group. Therefore, while only implicitly discussed in the social psychology literature, it is clear through the organizational management literature that trust does impact intergroup cooperation.

**Conceptual framework**

Through this review of literature, I have developed the conceptual framework shown in Figure 2 below. In this study, I will argue that each side of the partnership is a separate in-group. I will refer to CA as the charter in-group, and I will refer to City 1, City 2, and City 3 collectively as the district in-group. The collaboration efforts between these groups will be referred to as intergroup cooperation.

![Conceptual framework for this study](image)

*Figure 2. Conceptual framework for this study*
III. Design and Methodology

Overall Approach and Rationale

To best address my research questions, I conducted an intrinsic case study. CAPR is a strong fit for a case study for three primary reasons: The research question, program details, and researcher identity all align with the case study, as described in detail below.

Research question alignment to case study. First, I believe this method will best answer my research questions. I will note, however, that I first selected CAPR and then designed my questions about this specific case rather than first asking a question and then selecting a case or cases to answer said question. Selecting a set of questions based on the case is a common practice in case study methods (Maxwell, 2013; McMillan, 2008).

Before selecting CAPR, the broader questions I had asked in response to principal training research and education policy research were the following:

1. How are charter schools and district schools working together?
2. What are unique training methods that address the classwork to fieldwork gap in principal training?

CAPR is indeed the intersection of these two questions. Therefore, I “purposefully selected” this case to find out more about my above questions, though I am not able to generalize beyond the case (Maxwell, 2013). By choosing the case study method, I was able to analyze how this case functions and how it compares to the broader context.

Halfway through the study, I was able to significantly narrow the research questions and approach to examine bias and intergroup dynamics. The 1st year of the research was effectively a pilot study in which I was able to ascertain that in-group bias and intergroup cooperation were contributing factors to residents’ ability to learn from
and apply “best practice.” Honing and adjusting an evolving set of research questions is common practice in qualitative methods (Creswell, 2013).

**Program details alignment to case study.** The details of the program and my researcher access also make a case study a good match. First, CAPR is a specific case in a real-life context. CAPR is an individual program that can be studied within a bounded system of the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years in City 1, City 2, and City 3 (Creswell, 2013). Second, I was able to use multiple sources of information to conduct a strong case analysis. To that end, I had (a) access to curriculum and materials for document analysis; (b) access to seminars, coaching, and on-the-job work for observation; and (c) access to participants for recruitment for interviews across the school year. Finally, this case is a particularly good fit for an intrinsic case study because CAPR is a unique development partnership between a charter district and a traditional district. As noted by Creswell (2013), “The focus [in an intrinsic case study] is on the case because the case presents an unusual or unique situation” (p. 98). As such, a case study is a good method given the program details as well as this researcher’s access to all of the above-mentioned areas.

**Researcher identity alignment to case study.** Additionally, my research aligns well with a case study methodology. As a researcher, I identify primarily as a social constructivist, but I also ascribe to a few different interpretive frameworks. Ontologically, I identify with social constructivists, as I believe that multiple realities are possible through individual contexts and perspectives (Creswell, 2013). At the same time, I identify with pragmatists who believe that these multiple realities can reach a consensus of “what works.” Epistemologically, I also identify with social constructivists who
believe that through shared experiences, reality can be constructed between the researcher and the researched. Axiologically, I identify with a pragmatist view in that I believe that collected data reflects the values of the researcher and the researched. Finally, methodologically, I identify with social constructivists who believe that interviewing, observing, and document analysis can lead to consensus (Creswell, 2013).

Regardless of how or whether researchers identify with these various perspectives, they may choose to conduct all five types of research. Nonetheless, I believe case study research is particularly well aligned with my researcher identity. For example, case studies are able to provide a deep analysis through multiple methods (Creswell 2009). Methodologically, this component aligns with my identity as a social constructivist. With case studies, these multiple methods are used to describe and analyze a specific case. Ontologically, this component aligns with my belief that reality is a construction of multiple perspectives and experiences (Creswell, 2013).

**Data Collection**

In this case study, I used a variety of qualitative methods to gather data (Appendix C). I primarily conducted interviews and supplemented those interviews with observations and document analysis. Having a variety of data types allowed me to triangulate in my analysis, which is advantageous because, as noted by Maxwell (2013), “Triangulation allows you to gain a more secure understanding of the issues you are investigating” (p. 102). Each type of data collection method impacted the others. For example, I asked follow-up questions in interviews about concepts, ideas, or interactions I had observed. I also followed up on concepts discussed in interviews by referencing
session materials. Through this triangulation process, I was able to “learn by doing” (Dey, 1993, p. 6), while constantly reflecting upon and honing my approach.

In order to understand the perspectives of residents and other stakeholders, I conducted interviews. I conducted 9 interviews total with the same three focus residents over 2 years. I also conducted 17 interviews with general residents, 6 interviews with alumni, 3 interviews with the CAPR program director, and 8 interviews with mentor principals. Finally, I interviewed two district partners. I personally conducted all 45 interviews in this study. I audio-recorded interviews with focus residents, the program director, and external partners. I used a transcription service to transcribe these interviews. I took electronic notes while interviewing alumni and other general residents.

All interviews were semi-structured using an interview question matrix to guide my questioning (Appendix E). I selected this interview structure because, similar to unstructured interviews, this method “allows for more emic, emergent understandings to blossom, and for the interviewees’ complex viewpoints to be heard without the strict constraints of scripted questions” while still maintaining enough structure to keep alignment with research goals and the literature (Tracy, 2012, p. 140). I also adapted my questioning as conversations unfolded. Specifically, I sought communicative and conceptual reciprocity by asking three types of follow-up questions: clarification, meaning generation, and critical reflection (Cross, 2013).

In order to describe the key instruments CAPR uses to attempt to expand mindsets, I observed 1 day of pre-residency training, 2 intervisitation days, and 10 weekly seminars. In these observations, I was an observer as a participant; the residents knew me personally, but I primarily observed with occasional participation. My goal was
to be “accepted, trusted, and ultimately relatively unnoticed” (Owens, 1982, p. 14). I developed and used an observation protocol for each of my observations (Appendix D).

Finally, I used document analysis to explore topics I had identified as aligned to my research questions from my interviews and observations. The documents I analyzed included 2 years of weekly e-mail communication and 2 years of seminar materials made available to me through Google Drive. Seminar materials included PowerPoints files, interactive handouts, and readings.

**Sampling**

Because this case study had a relatively small number of potential participants (38 including both residents and alumni), I relied primarily on volunteer participation. The three focus residents were volunteers from the 2014-2015 cohort; as such, they are considered a convenience sample. I would argue that these three focus residents are “typical instance” (Tracy, 2012). After interviewing members of the broader group, I found that my focus residents were relatively moderate in their viewpoints in that none of the focus residents had extremely negative or extremely positive experiences. The most concerning drawback with my focus resident sample was that they were all from the same city. These focus residents, however, represented only 9 out of 32 total resident and alumni interviews. Therefore, my study was relatively broad, and although it was a convenience sample, it was, at the least, a robust sample of the population. In a few instances, I did conduct critical instance sampling (Tracy, 2012) by scheduling follow-up interviews with residents who had spoken in depth about evolving issues in the research.
Data Analysis

In order to analyze the interviews, observations, and data analysis, I used categorical aggregation to develop a coding scheme (Stake, 1995). To conduct this categorical aggregation, I used nVivo to organize and code interview transcriptions, observations notes, and notes made during document analysis.

I developed the following coding scheme (as shown in Table 5 below). These codes were identified from three sources: trends I recognized within the data across the study, the research questions themselves, and my conceptual framework. These codes were divided into four broad categories: perspective of the other, collaborative conditions, outcomes, and general. First, perspective codes were used to categorize individual perspectives of the out-group from each side of the collaborative relationship. These were often, but not always, the foundation for examples of bias in this study. Second, collaborative conditions codes were used to categorize types of conditions within the CAPR program that impact resident experiences. These codes were directly linked to the collaborative conditions and techniques discussed in intergroup bias literature. Next, outcomes codes were used to categorize the outcomes that participants linked to the CAPR program. Finally, general codes were used to describe other general topics that were germane to this study.
The codes in the scheme were a mix of a priori, or pre-existing, codes and in vivo codes (i.e., exact terms used by participants; Creswell, 2013). Decategorization, for example, was a priori because it was based directly on the literature and the conceptual framework. This code represented examples of participants decategorizing an individual from the out-group. “CA vs. CAPR,” however, was an in vivo code that developed after noticing that multiple participants had favorably differentiated the residency program staff members from CA staff members generally. I selected 26 codes in total, which is in accordance with Creswell’s (2013) 25-30 code guideline, regardless of study size.

In order to verify my coding and address potential bias, an additional researcher reviewed my coding scheme as well as 10% of the data. Cohen’s kappa for the review was 0.34, which is considered “fair” (Cicchetti, 1994). While a higher kappa would indicate greater reliability, this researcher remains confident in the quality of the coding.
Tracy (2012) described why divergence often occurs when examining intercoder reliability in qualitative research:

Indeed multiple data points, theoretical constructs, or different researchers may appropriately come up with results that are different from one another rather than convergent. Does this mean that the research is not credible? Not necessarily. Data analyzed and gather by two different researchers may differ because of the researchers’ age, race, gender, or past experience, and both viewpoints could shed important insight. (p. 22)

My colleague who performed this review has an extensive charter background, and yet, had a very negative district experience. While I have a similar identity, through this study and my graduate work, I have become much more moderate in my stance. Therefore, some differential in coding is to be expected.

**Considerations**

**Access.** As a previous teacher at CA, I gained access to CAPR through my personal education network. I worked with CA’s Director of Partnerships, to identify mutual research interests and prepare a Memorandum of Understanding. As an interviewer, I introduced myself highlighting connections between my personal career history and CA.

**Personal statement.** In this personal statement, I describe the interaction between my personal identity and my role as a researcher in this study.

**Identity markers.** I will first discuss the identity markers that have shaped the bias I bring to this study. I am an educated, White woman who was raised with both financial and social privilege. In elementary school (K-12), I attended well-funded, high-achieving
public and private schools. I attained a B.S. in Business Administration from a private university and an M.S. in Childhood Education from a public university. I am currently enrolled in a public university for my doctorate.

I taught kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade in a failing traditional public school in the South Bronx. Then, I taught 1st grade and 2nd grade at a charter school in Brooklyn, NY. In my 2nd, 3rd, and 4th years, I believe I was a relatively effective teacher. My students showed solid achievement results measured through progress on F&P, STEP, state-level standards mastery, and rubric-based writing growth. Unfortunately, I have no way of determining whether I helped my students further develop their own love of learning and strength of character. I definitely, and yet unintentionally, pushed a strong authoritarian hidden curriculum. As a White teacher teaching students of color, I certainly taught my students to comply with White authority. When I return to K-12 schools in the future, this will be a central consideration in my culture and curriculum design.

I started my career in education through Teach for America (TFA). I had a positive experience with TFA and trained new TFA teachers in New York City and Jacksonville, FL, in 2010 and 2013, respectively. As a TFA corps member, I was also a member of the first class of Teacher U at Hunter College (Teacher U), which was the incubator for Relay GSE (Relay). I was one of only seven district teachers in a group of 110 teachers. My interest in district/charter collaboration is rooted in that experience.

Because of my positive experience at Teacher U, I returned to Relay to teach. For the past 3 years, I have taught elementary teachers at Relay. My students are primarily new teachers teaching in all types of contexts in New York City. I have taught a mix of district, charter, TFA, and NYC teaching fellows. At Relay, I have taught or advised
nearly 50 graduate students who worked at CA, including 25-30 observations in CA schools per year. Relay is widely criticized for involvement in the charter school movement, founded through a collaboration of three large charter networks: Uncommon Schools, KIPP, and Achievement First. With the transition from Teacher U to Relay, the organization has worked to diversify its staff, curriculum, and students. Relay designers and professors aim to show a diversity of contexts in videos and curriculum.

**Bias and negative impacts of identity and methods for dispelling bias.** Bias inevitably is at play in my role as a researcher in this study, and this bias has a potentially negative impact on the quality of the study. I will first discuss how bias may negatively impact a study and describe how I will methodologically account for those biases.

First, from my personal experience, I believe that charter and district collaboration is important. I hypothesize that biases exist on both sides, and these biases need to be resolved—or at least in check—to achieve meaningful collaboration. Therefore, I will naturally want the results of this study to speak to that agenda. Also, as I had a positive connections with staff and students at CA, I recognize that I am more likely to trust the individuals I interact with who share that identity and less likely to push them critically in the interviews. Second, the pedagogy and curriculum, as a whole at CA, generally matches my own educational philosophy. Therefore, I am more likely to view certain pedagogical decisions as “good practice,” and I may be more likely to affirm interviewee response regarding those practices.

Finally, in my career, I operate with the general opinion that 99% of educators, parents, and students are “good people” who want what they believe to be best for their children and their schools. While I truly believe this, it’s also a tactical approach that
helps me keep maximize positive interaction with my colleagues within the education community. I recognize that this belief has the potential to hold back my critical eye.

These biases are natural; they impact all qualitative researchers. Through my methods training, however, I designed important study attributes to combat these biases. First, my interviews were semi-structured, and my questions were planned in advance (see Appendix E, Question Matrix). Having these questions in hand helped to ensure that the interviews, whether with charter or district individuals, were comparable. Second, I practiced giving neutral responses to the interviewees’ responses. When I listened to interview transcripts, I evaluated myself on neutrality and practice in advance of the next interview. Third, I used nVivo to code my data analysis and had another qualitative researcher review at least 10% of the data to ensure accurate coding. Fourth, the beliefs of my dissertation chair and advisor vis-à-vis charter school ideological is nearly the polar opposite to my own. Moreover, his skilled critical eye has continued to hold me to a high bar of excellence.

**Positive impacts of identity.** My identity has allowed me to gain both access and trust with CA staff, as well as internal and district residents. While I would like to believe this is a result of my interpersonal and quantitative research skills, I recognize that it is, in fact, more likely due to my identity as an educator with experience in both contexts. Nonetheless, this identity allows me to position myself as someone who is researching from an asset-based mindset.

From my perspective, I believe district residents view me as a nonjudgmental ally. As such, they were eager to share their experience with someone who was empathetic and understood important contributing factors, such as resource constraints, unions,
special education, and other unique characteristics of district schools. I believe I am viewed as both an outsider (independent researcher) and an insider (someone with both district and charter experience).

CA staff also view me as an ally. They were surprisingly willingly shared with me their less attractive mindsets and biases with me. I attributed their openness, in part, to my identity. From my perspective, there was a noticeable ease of tension after I had shared my background with the CA interviewees. They seemed to immediately relax, viewed me as an insider, and shared their viewpoints without worry. Also, because of this insider relationship, I am hopeful that CA will receive the results of this study with an open mind and use these results to improve their program and the collaborative environment in their city. I would like to note here that the CAPR program director is one of the most reflective and honest people I have ever interacted with. Without any hesitance, he is quick to point out his shortcomings and the shortcomings of the network. I believe he would be this open and honest with anyone, not just someone with my background.

Finally, there is a logistical benefit to my familiarity with CA. Because interviewees (both residents and CA staff) rarely had to explain jargon, our interviews moved along quickly, and we were able to delve into deeper topics without interviewees having to provide tedious, long-winded explanations.

**Personal risks.** I believe that in this study I have been able to approach the topic of intergroup cooperation between CA and districts with a critical eye. Further, I do not believe that this study poses no significant risk to my career. The only risk I could imagine would be if this paper was a scathing review of charter schools that was
published on the front page of The New York Times. Even then, the greatest risk of personal professional impact would be if I wanted to work at CA.

**Ethical considerations.** There are no serious ethical concerns in this study. The Pennsylvania State University Internal Review Board approved this study. There was minimal risk to participants as participation was voluntary, and all participants signed a consent forms (Appendix F). The first consent form was for participants who were interviewed, and the second consent form was for participants who participated in the seminars and intervisitations that I observed. Any participants in the observation who did not grant consent were not included in my observation notes.

The primary potential risk is linked to the support I have at CA in that the leader of the program strongly recommended residents’ participation. Thus, residents may have participated because they believed participation in the study would affect the program leaders’ opinion of them, and consequently, impact their evaluations. Similarly, current residents may have been less willing to speak critically about the program because they feared their statements could affect their success in the program. In order to address these issues, I created the recruiting script in Appendix G so that the program director would be able to temper his encouragement with a clear delineation between encouragement and requirement. Further, to encourage honest participation, I stressed anonymity, used code names, and built rapport with the study participants.

**Confidentiality and anonymity.** In order to keep participants quotes anonymous, I removed all identifying information from the quotes included in this report. This included the participant’s name, the details about the city within which the participant worked, the names of the schools or districts in which he/she worked, and any context
that would allow someone to identify the individual speaking. I also uniformly referred to all participants using the female pronouns “she” and “her.”
IV. Research Findings

I begin these findings with a review of the current state of CAPR from the perspective of the stakeholders. This review highlights the key challenge, which is to address the negative perceptions that have developed on each side of the collaboration. Subsequently, I thoroughly examine and compare these perceptions. Next, I discuss the different types of learning in this collaboration and the potential impact of perceptions on that learning. Conversely, I discuss how the structure of these learnings impacts perceptions. Finally, I will position my findings within my conceptual framework.

Satisfaction With CAPR

There was a clear consensus among most of the participants—including residents, mentor principals, and district leaders—that CAPR is a positive force for collaboration and leadership development. One district leader stated, “Quite frankly, I think this is by far the best part of the relationship between the charter and public education. It’s about the only thing from my perspective that they absolutely are doing right.”

Residents were the strongest supporters of CAPR. In the 2015 internal end-of-residency survey, 91% of residents agreed or strongly agreed with positively phrased indicators across a range of residency topics. One resident shared:

I am leaving this program with a much stronger understanding of how to earn the investment of the hearts and minds of adults. I also am starting the work of school leadership with a much stronger self-awareness of my core values to anchor me in the process of leading school change.

Another resident extolled its merits: “Transformative. I rave about the program to everyone and anyone who will listen.” Notably, four residents who had already
completed their traditional state certificate before joining CAPR all said the residency program was superior to their previous program. One resident highlighted her experience at CAPR by comparing it to her certification program at an institute of higher education: “CAPR makes us more reflective on our practice. I could never get the experience in the classroom at [the IHE] for my traditional state certificate than I do in seminar. I took classes there so I know.” In summary, residents were very satisfied with CAPR.

District mentor principals were also positive supporters. In a 2015 internal survey, 86% of principals interviewed agreed or strongly agreed that CAPR provides valuable training. One principal stated,

In my opinion, the residency program is an outstanding program for preparing new leaders for transforming schools into environments of high student achievement. I wish it had been available to me when I first started my career in leadership. I highly recommend it.

Notably, 60% of district mentor principals interviewed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “College Academies operates with a spirit of sharing, openness, and cooperation and sees itself as a key part of helping close the achievement gap for all students in the city.” The remaining 40% had a neutral response to this statement.

Call for improved relationship. While CAPR is generally a bright spot in the collaborative environment between CA and districts in these cities, this study brought to the surface significant challenges in the relationship between the two sectors. The range of concerns varies from mild to extreme. On one end, a district leader recommended more collaboration: “I loved to see us be able to collaborate more around ‘How do we help each other provide the best education for every child?’” On the other end, one
resident reflected on the relationship between CA and the district, stating, “Maybe this is what it feels like to be in an interracial marriage.”

Two major themes emerged regarding the opportunity to improve the relationship:

1. Many district residents feel the need to intentionally disguise and underplay their relationship with CA because they fear judgment from their district peers, despite having positive experiences in their CA rotation and wanting to leverage learnings from their residency experience.

2. District individuals argued that the program is one-sided and that CA doesn’t believe there is anything to learn from district schools.

Each of these themes will be explored in the subsequent sections in which I will discuss development of bias and its impact on learning and transfer of best practice. Finally, I will discuss how CAPR staff currently works to address each of these challenges.

**Bias.** Many strong perspectives exist on both sides of the relationship. These perspectives indicate the biases individuals bring to the collaboration. First, I will describe factors impacting these perspectives. These include personal interaction pre-residency, personal interaction during residency, second-hand interaction pre-residency, and broader media and rhetoric. Subsequently, I will compare each side’s perceptions of the other side’s perspectives on them with the actual stated perceptions shared by individuals on the other side.

**Factors Shaping Bias**

As discussed in the literature review, there are two stereotype models that primarily align with the shaping of perceptions in this study: the exemplar and the
prototype models (Operario & Fiske, 2001). In the exemplar model, in-group members form perspectives based on their experience with individual out-group members and broadly apply those perspectives to all members of the out-group. For example, in this study, the exemplar model described instances wherein charter individuals who had left the district broadly applied their experience from within one district school to all individuals within the district. This concept was affirmed in the out-group literature:

Out-group members are not only perceived as possessing less desirable traits than in-group members, they are seen as more homogeneous as well. A consequence of the so-called out-group homogeneity effect is that people believe that most out-group members share the attributes of the specific out-group members whom they encounter (Park & Hastie, 1987) and that group-level stereotypes are likely to describe individual group members (Park et al., 1991). (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996, p. 247)

The exemplar model is the prevalent model of perspective shaping for charter individuals in this study, but this model also describes some of the perspective shaping on the district side. There are many different examples of the exemplar model that will be highlighted in the upcoming perspectives section.

Alternatively, in the prototype model, individuals develop an indistinct set of characteristics that they then attribute to a typical member of the out-group. These indistinct characteristics that are applied to the broader out-group are shaped through cultural socialization (Operio & Fiske, 2001). Cultural socialization in this study encompasses a broad set of factors, including media, political rhetoric, and hearsay. Media and political rhetoric in this study pertain to commercials, rallies, newspaper
articles, and political statements. Hearsay represents perspectives that are developed as a result of the opinions and statements of colleagues, friends, and family. These factors are at play in both charter and district individuals in this study.

Political rhetoric and media are particularly salient within the context of this study. Scholars contend that media coverage of education meaningfully impacts public perception of education debates, such as the charter wars (Baker, 1994; Cohen, 2010; Lefstein, 2008; Rooks & Munoz, 2015). Moreover, because charter schools must attract students, raise funding, and gain political support to thrive and expand, as noted by Scott (2007), they must publicly advocate for themselves: “With pressure to show academic results fairly quickly… charter schools and MOs are vulnerable to the judgment of their donors about whether they are effective” (Scott, 2007, p. 127). This concept is particularly salient for CMOs such as CA that develop a brand. Scott emphasized, “External organizations, wanting to show the efficacy of their school design, need to demand of the school’s fidelity to their ‘brand’” (p. 130). Therefore, while humility is a consistently referenced and valued by the CA individuals interviewed in this study, there is a competing need for a positive public image. In turn, district individuals not involved in CA collaboration likely develop an exemplar model perspective about CA shaped through media and public statements that does not take into account the self-reflection and humility that were evident in this study.

Individuals in this study posited that this approach, which leads to exemplar model stereotyping, is unintentionally divisive and counterproductive to collaboration. One district leader stated:
Charter schools, I think, have made in some cases what I consider a fatal mistake and that they define themselves publicly and marketed, so the public [thinks] their solutions are different from the bad public schools.... The difficulty with that is, (1) it antagonizes the big role that they need to be partners with (2) in most cases—I mean almost all cases, it isn’t an even playing field.

Additionally, by positing there is not an even playing field, this leader is referencing the criticisms of charter schools and the limitations of comparing achievement data across sectors discussed earlier in the literature review.

Public rallies and political commercials were oft cited as shaping the negative perception of those on both sides of the relationship. One district resident described how rallies impact the perspective of district individuals on the charter and the overall collaborative environment: “The implied message [was] … Beware: Public schools suck. We deserve better ones.” A second district leader stated:

I think when they [AF] have rallies … that minimizes the work that teachers in the districts [do] to help their students. I think they [AF] don’t do themselves a favor. They [AF] have to be careful about messaging themselves.

Finally, as part of a political initiative, political ads shape the perception on both sides. “There were television ads … that basically painted [a] picture that young people are suffering in the public schools that need to be rescued.” These examples of media and rhetoric within the studied community are important factors shaping perceptions on both sides of this collaboration. With this foundation of potential perception-shaping factors, I will now examine and compare perspectives on each side of the collaboration.
Comparing Perspectives

I will first compare CA individuals’ perceptions of district schools to what district individuals perceive CA individuals believe about them. I will then compare district individuals’ perceptions of CA to what CA individuals perceive district individuals believe about them. The quotes used within these perspective sections were taken both from early or initial perceptions (either identified as such in one-time interviews by the participant) or from earlier interviews of focus residents who were interviewed over time. Some of these quotes are indicative of persistent perceptions. I will discuss the extent to which perceptions changed later in my findings.

District Perceptions of CA Perspectives on the District. The district participants interviewed for this study consistently stated they believe CA individuals think CA is superior to the district. Some of these statements are exemplar model stereotypes grounded in residency experiences and examples (Operario & Fiske, 2001). Other statements are more generally about the collaborative environment and may be attributable to the prototype stereotype model (i.e., stereotypes shaped through cultural socialization). Though, more general statements could alternatively be attributable to both stereotype models. One district resident speaks to the general persona she interpreted from her experiences: “CA believes like they are superior to public educators … this attitude and arrogance that just surrounds that persona that’s just like, ‘Oh, no, we would never go to work in public school.’” Another district resident drew the same conclusion, citing statements she had heard from individual CA teachers:

When people say things like, “Oh my God, you should totally stay here. I’m so sorry you have to go back to the public schools,” it’s like I don’t want to stay
here, like I actually don’t…. If I had a choice, I would not choose CA…. They were consistently putting down traditional public schools.

To this end, one alumna stated that since ending the residency, she has received informal job offers from CA, which made her very uncomfortable, particularly because there is an agreement that residents will work in the district after finishing the residency.

Beyond residents, these perceptions of the others’ perceptions are consistent among non-resident district individuals. One district mentor principal discussed her perception that CA generally believes that public educators are satisfied with the state of education in their districts:

There are some folks in CA that maybe believe at the end of the day that we are not working with the same urgency that they’re working with. I’m bothered by that. Just because we are public educators that we’re [satisfied with] the status quo—we are not! There are many principals who I know that work very hard to cause change in their building. Are there people in public who are satisfied? Yes, but I do think CA is too quick to judge every public school educator with that same thinking.

One district leader perceived that CA believes they have the solutions to the challenges facing students in the schools in their city:

I was very turned off to it when I first came in, because I felt like they were just judging us [the district], like we [AF] have all the answers. You [the district] have no idea what you’re doing, and you [the district] just need to follow us [AF], and if you do that, you are going to be awesome.
It’s not clear whether these perspectives are the result of the prototype model or the exemplar model. However, because each of these individuals has interacted with multiple CA individuals, I speculate that these perspectives were formed as a mix of both. Further, the second participant, in particular stated that this perspective made her somewhat nervous and skeptical about the collaborative partnership.

Overall, district individuals felt that CA as an organization believes they are superior to district educators. This is an important challenge because equal status is a key part of Allport’s (1954) contact hypothesis for promoting intergroup collaboration. Further, it indicates that districts are hesitant to be involved in the “high achiever to low achiever” collaborative structure (McCullough et al., 2015). Now I will share and compare the perspectives about district schools from interviewed charter individuals.

**CA perspectives on the district.** The interviewed CA individuals shared a consistent perspective that the majority of district individuals are well intentioned and hard working. All of the interviewed CA participants have had exposure to district residents through CAPR. CA individuals also shared the opinion that district schools are failing kids. An CA leader shared her perspective on the difference between district and charter schools:

I think there is very little difference between the caliber of people in charter schools and district schools. I think the people are just as smart, just as passionate in both sides. I think the major difference is people [at AF] get developed.

An CA principal affirmed the perspective that good people are working in the district despite systematic ineffectiveness:
There are really good people working in our public school system, even though I think the system as a whole is failing our kids in our city. I grew up here and I’ve seen the inadequacies. That’s pushed me to be in education in my community with CA.

Another principal shared her concern for the system in her city:

The public schools are really struggling. From my perspective, there’s a lot of stratification. There are schools doing really well. It’s exactly the type of achievement gap that CA is trying to address. There are also people in the district who want to address that disparity. I loved working with residency. I believe in the idea that schools can and should get better.

All interviewed principals spoke favorably about district individuals but less favorably about district results and systems. Overall, the perceptions of CA individuals were much less extreme than perceived by district individuals. Not a single person interviewed purported that CA had all of the answers to the challenges in educating students in their city. However, they did cite differentiating factors, such as teacher development and systems, that they believed impact the differences in achievement outcomes.

**CA perceptions of district perspectives on CA.** Interviewed CA principals identified a few different perceptions they believed district individuals held about CA. These perceptions were primarily related to school culture, special education, and the superiority complex referred to earlier in the discussion about the district individuals’ perceptions of CA. These are aligned with the literature discussed in the Criticisms of Charters section of this paper.
One principal stated that district individuals held misconceptions about her school, stating, “[They think] we kick kids out, we don’t support kids in SPED, we’re militant and unfeeling in terms of behavior.” Another principal shared her perception of resident perspectives’ on school culture: “They came in the door thinking sometimes we hold kids to unrealistic expectations and we’re too ‘strict.’” These perceptions were consistent with the perceptions provided by the district participants interviewed in this study.

**District perspectives on CA.** When asked about their colleagues’ reactions to joining CAPR, residents almost uniformly stated that their colleagues had negative reactions. One resident stated: “It was not well received. A lot of snide comments: ‘Why are you going to that prison?’” These comments represent a clear stereotype that I speculate is a prototype model stereotype based on cultural socialization. Despite these common responses from their colleagues, many residents expressed an open-minded and pragmatic approach to which their colleagues were more receptive. Another resident responded to those comments:

- *Anybody that wants to teach children and do well—I want to embrace it. I honestly see the good things and things [where] I have different philosophies. If I can take some of the CA stuff and some the district stuff to make my own school, [that would be ideal].*

Even when residents themselves had a neutral or positive perception, the negative perception of others impacted their experience. However, this small exchange between incoming residents and colleagues represents a first step in breaking down bias and intergroup collaboration. For example, when a colleague recognized that someone she
respects values the out-group, this may eventually impact her perception of the out-group as well.

Each resident brings her own perspective on charters. Residents primarily identified as having “no opinion about charter schools” (see the Color-blindness section). However, a few residents expressed reservations about the residency because of the charter affiliation. One resident shared her suspicion about CA’s positioning:

I have been suspicious of charter networks, and I think part of that honestly is like an accurate reading of some of the ways that CA and other charter networks go about positioning themselves in competition for funding…. It’s frequently like positioned against traditional public schools.

This criticism is aligned with the public rhetoric argument that shapes perspectives of charter schools more broadly. This criticism is further expressed by another resident’s interpretation of the district side of the CAPR partnership:

The district doesn’t have the greatest context. They think that CA isn’t as successful as it says it is. Sometimes the leadership coach doesn’t assume the best of CA. I don’t think they think CA is the best learning experience for us.

While this negative and critical viewpoint is uncommon, in one extreme example, a district mentor principal did not allow a residency coach access to a building to coach a resident.

**Analysis of Difference in Perspective**

I will now analyze the differences in perspective on each side of the collaborative environment. For ease of comparison, I have selected a representative quote for each type of perspective, as shown in Table 6 below.
Table 6

**Representative Comparison of Perception Differences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-group</th>
<th>CA Perception of District</th>
<th>District Perception of AF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CA Individual:</td>
<td>There are really good people working in our public school system even though I think the system as a whole is failing our kids in our city.</td>
<td>District Individual:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-group</td>
<td>District Individual on AF: CA believes like they are superior to public educators…. This attitude and arrogance that just surrounds that persona, just like, “Oh, no, we would never go to work in public school.”</td>
<td>CA Individual on District: There are misconceptions and some are misconceptions about my school. [They think] we kick kids out, we don’t support kids in SPED, we’re militant and unfeeling in terms of behavior.</td>
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</table>

I believe there are three primary reasons for these above-noted disparities in perceptions between the in-group and the out-group. First, the individuals interviewed have already had a level of contact with the out-group through CAPR. If I had interviewed teachers or principals not involved in CAPR as mentor principals, these perceptions may have been more extreme and aligned. Second, perceptions of perceptions are naturally somewhat exaggerated, as evidenced in studies like Dawes et al.’s (1979) “doves” and “hawks” experiment wherein the in-group’s description of the out-group stance on the Vietnam War was vastly overexaggerated. Finally, these individuals might be less willing to share their true perspective due to social desirability bias (Cheung & Monroe, 2003). Specifically, the individuals interviewed wish to appear humble, and thus, may have stronger perspectives that they are not articulating in order to be viewed as more socially desirable. Finally, district out-group perspectives may be negatively impacted by public rhetoric to garner charter support, which is more divisive than the more moderate individual opinions cited in this study.
“Color-blindness.” Many interviewed participants claimed “color-blindness” in their perspective on the other sector (specifically, four residents, one CA mentor principal, one district mentor principal). Charter individuals essentially claimed to “have no opinion of district schools,” and district individuals essentially claimed to “have no opinion on charter schools.” Given all the ways in which perspectives and opinions about out-groups are formed, I am skeptical that this is truly the case. I link the hesitance to fully reveal their true beliefs to social desirability bias (Cheung & Monroe, 2003). Recognizing that this is a much less extreme and complicated issue than systematic racism, I will also parallel this claim with race literature on color-blindness. Bonilla-Silva (2015) developed a framework for describing color-blindness as a way to maintain prejudice while still maintaining social desirability. She stated:

Whites’ contemporary racial discourse makes them “look good” as they no longer sound “racist.” By employing this frame, Whites appear “reasonable” and “moral” while opposing all kinds of interventions to deal with racial inequality. (p. 1364)

For example, one resident mentioned ironically that although she has had lots of exposure to varied opinions, because she doesn’t have firsthand experience with charters, she had no opinion:

I’ve heard different things in the news, the media talking about different things. I’ve heard some of my colleagues saying not so many nice things about them, but I’ve never known anybody to work for a charter school. I didn’t know any kids who went there, so I didn’t have anything positive or negative to say. I had no real background in it at all, and I never took it upon myself to do a lot of research into it or find out what there was about it. I don’t know if that was good or bad. I kind
of think it was actually good because I come in with just an open mind and just saying, “I’m here and this is who I work for the next 6 months so I am just going to do everything like I would do anywhere else.”

While this resident recognized that she didn’t have the prototype to develop a prototype stereotype, she did not acknowledge that she may have an existing exemplar model stereotype related to her exposure to the media or her colleagues.

Similar examples exist at the mentor principal level. One CA mentor principal stated, “I don’t have assumptions and perceptions about district schools. I will only form an opinion about a school if I’ve visited multiple times and know all of the context.”

Similarly, a district mentor principal stated, “I’ve never worked in a charter school. I don’t have an opinion toward charter schools.” Drawing a parallel between race literature and these findings, I hypothesize that these individuals did hold stronger beliefs about each approach, but due to the broader animosity between the two systems, they were reluctant to share them (Bonilla-Silva, 2015; Cheung & Monroe, 2003).

**Competing identity.** The biases at play in this partnership have the most notable impact within the concept of competing identity. District residents have a very unique identity. They have experience both at CA and in the district, but the vast majority of their experience has been in the district. They have committed to working in the district, and in many cases, they have worked in the district for a long time. However, they are often misinterpreted as CA representatives. I will now describe a variety of incidents cited to me by different residents as examples of the competing identity challenge that residents face. First, some residents were misconceived as working for AF:
They kept referring to me as a College Academies resident, and I had to constantly remind them and everyone else who could listen that, wow, I’ve served 10 years in the district as a classroom teacher. I started in the district, I’m not an CA person, but I did learn a lot from working at an CA school.

Other residents aren’t as quickly branded as CA, but this lack of branding is frequently due to specific decisions on their part. Notably, the following resident consciously covered up branded materials in order to avoid being labeled (see “Dressage” section): “I definitely don’t feel that anybody has labeled me like the CA person or like, you know, somebody who’s like procharter schools or anything among those lines, I guess. It has actually being a nonissue here.” Another resident consciously concealed her affiliation in a similar way. She explained why in detail here:

I just think that people in the district—teachers—really don’t like CA…. I was worried that it will make people think bad things about me…. I’ve been teaching in public schools my entire career, it’s been a long time…. I actually think the program is amazing. I don’t even talk like being in the program that much because I just want people to know that I’m from the district.

This resident’s motivation to conceal her affiliation with CA for fear of her reputation in her community represents the dire current state of the relationship. This resident perceived the bias to be so pervasive that she was hesitant to share what she believed to be a meaningful and important preparation program.

While residents are often able to work past their initial affiliation with CA, others struggle with the affiliation for a longer period of time. The impact ranges from benign jokes to more serious teacher and community push back. The following excerpts are from
one resident, and they represent the escalation of impact. First, she described a telling joke that involving having friends at CA and in the district:

I was just talking to the principal of an CA school, and somebody took a picture of me and then sent it to me, like, “Look at the traitor on the other side,” joking around like from a friend of mine who’s a principal but … it’s just [supposed to be] funny.

Further, she explained her need to cover up her affiliation and personal opinions for political reasons:

The board meetings were very contentious [regarding a new potential collaboration]. I would look at my friends from CA, and we would laugh at each other because they’re on one side and I’m on the other side. We can’t even acknowledge that we know each other. It is crazy…. I was in line with [the collaboration]…. If I was a parent, that would have been an option for my kid, that would have been something that I wanted, so I thought it was good for the kids…. I don’t think it lessened any of the great work that I’m doing here.

Next, she explained her affiliation’s impact on her initial interactions with teachers:

It was loud, the kids were off task and she goes "Well, you know this isn’t a charter school"… [They’re] supposed to be loud and supposed to be this and I’m thinking, that was such a nonsense answer because that lesson just stunk.

Finally, she described how the community reacted when she came in as the new principal at her school:

[They said] “We’re not happy you’re here.” I said, “Oh.” And they said, “We know you are charter school person…. We don’t want CA running our schools.”
… [I thought], “Wait a minute!” so then I have to defend that like I’m not a charter school person, I’ve been a public educator for 10 years.

This resident has since convinced her teachers and community that she is indeed committed to the district approach to education. She maintains quiet collaborative friendships with CA colleagues, which I will discuss later in this paper.

Another example of a struggle with competing identity is related to the CA practice of holding political rallies to promote awareness and support for their schools. As discussed earlier, charters like CA need to bolster support for their schools to attract students, attract funding, and garner political support (Scott, 2007). These rallies often occur during the resident’s CA rotation. A few residents shared how they actively navigated their participation in these rallies. One resident described this tension at hand:

My principal made a statement and was under the impression that I was going to be attending [the rally], and I just kind of stopped my principal, like, “Oh, you know, I’m happy to help plan behind the scenes,” but I said it would not be appropriate for me to go. Because I had made the decision and I knew when I first heard about it, I was like, “Whoa, I can’t go because … if my picture is taken and I’m in the newspaper, that’s it. I mean that very well could end my career in my district.

This is an additional example of residents fearing that their reputation will be impacted by their affiliation with CA. CAPR was supportive of this decision as evidenced by this e-mail communication in their weekly blast:

Team, we understand that this rally puts you in an awkward position. You are an acting leader in your building, and yet, you are also a member of your school
district, where you intend to work as principal. The “web” implications of all this are complex and delicate. Your participation in an CA rally might raise some organizational-awareness “web” alarms in your gut. If this is the case, we completely understand and encourage you to NOT attend the rally.

The program director navigated this conflict by connecting individual residents with organizational leadership concepts discussed in class. The “web” is a concept that residents return to over and over again throughout their experience. The program director described the web and how it is created:

They have to formally create a web within their building. Who are the stakeholders? What are their values? What is their noble story? What parts of their noble story might justify them hurting your program and how to contend with that. What is the power and influence they can use to push you forward or hold you back?... We have district stakeholders come in and they create the web together.

The intention of these webs is to help residents navigate many different types of challenges and decisions. One alumna kept a copy of her web up in her office in order to constantly reflect on how her decisions impact the stakeholders within her context.

**District Learns From Charter**

The original purpose of CAPR was to share knowledge, skills, and best practices from CA to the district schools. The extent to which the larger complicated collaborative environment just discussed impacts residents’ ability to transfer these learnings, if at all, is not currently known. However, I would like to share trends of learnings that are transferrable from the resident perspective as well as learnings that are not transferrable
from the resident perspective. These learnings represent the full potential of successful intergroup collaboration.

**Transferrable learnings.** There are two primary areas of learning that nearly all residents would like to replicate in their district schools. The first is *systems*. For this discussion, systems refer to clear and defined processes for academic practices, school culture, and operations. As defined by CAPR, systems are “an organized set of practices involving multiple steps (and usually multiple people) that accomplishes a specific set of tasks efficiently, reliably and with automaticity” (CAPR Seminar Materials). Examples of these sets of practices and structures are grade team meetings, hallway procedures, student work analysis protocols, and academic planning. The second primary area of learning is *professional development*. For this discussion, professional development refers to classroom style learning in groups led by education leaders. It also refers to the coaching method of developing teachers through observation debrief cycle, general coaching, coteaching, and other individualized support structures.

**Systems.** CA schools have robust systems. Each school adapts these systems to meet their individual needs; however, there is a universal expectation that schools have a detailed plan and timeline for any recurring school structure: for example, a common vision for culture, clear expectations for grade team meetings, and a detailed plan and timeline for coaching and evaluation. In school improvement literature, systems are cited as important levers in school turnaround. Leithwood, Harris, and Strauss (2010) described the importance of systems in building effective schools:

- Structures, culture, policies, and standard operating procedures are the types of conditions included among the conditions that influence organizational change.
Collectively these conditions constitute teachers’ working conditions, which have powerful influence on teachers’ emotions and their subsequent working practices…. School infrastructures should magnify the capacities of staff and make it much easier to engage in productive rather than unproductive practices.

(p. 246)

Residents are generally impressed by CA’s systems and seek to replicate personalized versions of CA systems in their own district schools. One resident shared how she adapted the systems from an CA school to set up school culture in her school after she had observed morning drop-offs, which she observed to be dangerous:

We have no manual for how students should walk in lines, what transition should look like—nothing. So I gave her the CA common picture, which is like a 100 pages, and I told her, I said, “Listen, this is extreme, this is way to the right wing of this document that I’m looking for, but we need one of these on some kind of level that outlines what is expected, and then we could hold teachers to that expectation.”

Another resident discussed her excitement at the variety of systems that she saw, appreciated, and consequently, sought to replicate in her own school:

What’s going on in this setting, either with this meeting or this coaching model or the system…. I saw these packets…. This is the way it should be done, and this works for me, and I’d like to take this.

Nearly all residents expressed admiration for CA systems, and in fact, they commonly tried to replicate and implement AF-inspired systems in their own schools.
*Professional development.* The other widely valued and replicated type of learning is professional development. Residents cited both traditional classroom style professional development, and more uniquely teacher coaching, as a strength of the charter. The strength of professional development is that it is grounded in a mindset that embraces continuous growth. CA encourages and fosters this mindset in its staff. One resident highlighted the culture of growth versus evaluation prevalent in many CA schools:

> With College Academies, it’s the view that feedback is a gift. You have people who have a genuine desire for people to come into the classroom, then to work with them and to coach them. That’s just a model that I haven’t seen in district for a long [time].... You know, if anything, I would like to bring that back.

Both types of professional development: traditional classroom style and teacher coaching, are embodied within this mindset of continual improvement.

CA has developed a robust teacher coaching model, wherein nearly all teachers are coached on a weekly basis through an observation debrief cycle. Also, teachers receive feedback from instructional leaders on any original lesson plans they prepare. Teemant (2014) found teacher coaching to be effective in improving instructional practices, particularly in schools with diverse populations. In particular, Teemant noted that this type of professional development often leads to “pedagogical transformation and patterns of sustainability and attrition” (p. 574).

Improving instructional practices is notoriously difficult, but critical, to effect real change in struggling schools (Stoelinga & Mangin, 2008). Therefore, by utilizing CA’s best practices in instructional coaching, residents may be able to effect change on
instructional practices in their school turnaround efforts. One alumna who has successfully launched coaching in her district school stated, “I believe coaching is the number one highest leverage thing that CA did that I wanted to bring to the district that was not happening.”

Residents also recognized traditional professional development to be a strength. One resident discussed her personal development through participating and observing the CA new staff and leadership training over the summer. She described her experience with enthusiasm: “The professional development is amazing. They develop their teachers and leaders phenomenally. I got more training from CA this summer than I did in 15 years in the district.” Notably, the vast majority of CA’s traditional professional development is internally developed. Also, CA teachers have a few weeks, rather than a few days, of professional development before each school year.

Both systems and professional development learnings are aligned with the findings in the McCullough et al.’s (2015) study on most common learning transfers from charter to district. Systems, as defined above, aligns with McCullough et al.’s (2015, p. 20) category of “school culture and behavior systems.” However, systems in the context of this study is not limited to culture and behavior. CAPR residents also replicate systems that are purely academic (e.g., student work analysis protocol, unit and lesson planning systems, and grade team meetings). I speculate this is because CA is uniquely systems oriented in both behavior and academics. The McCullough et al. (2015) study may have surveyed schools that were less academically systematized.

Moreover, the professional development category in this study aligns with McCullough’s (2015, p. 20) “teaching coaching model” category, although professional
development in the context of this study also includes classroom-style professional development learning. I speculate that traditional professional development was not included in McCullough et al.’s list of most commonly transferred practices because most districts already have classroom style professional development in place. The teacher coaching aspect of professional development in charters is therefore more unique and more often cited as an opportunity for meaningful transfer of knowledge.

One important caveat is that the intention of the program is not to directly replicate CA in district schools. In fact, the program director and the coaches constantly reinforce this caveat in discussions, seminars, and coaching. CAPR staff use the common language of “renting it.” You “rent it” while you are at CA, and then you decide whether a practice aligns with your core values, theory of action as a leader, and your individual school. This is true with every CA practice: You can use it as is, adapt it, or not use it at all. Creating customized plans for the unique contexts and needs of individual schools is consistent with turnaround literature. Leithwood et al. (2010) highlighted the importance of differentiating:

Because the mix of causes of underperformance can vary so widely, it follows that the array of approaches selected to tackle the ensuing underperformance should also be highly differentiated…. The main task of leaders is to constantly monitor the status of internal conditions in the school that influence student learning and improve the status of those conditions that are most in need of improvement and most likely to improve student learning. (p. 236)
Residents stated that they did not want to fully replicate CA practices—nor, in my opinion, should they. One resident described how she adapted an CA practice for her own school:

Taking the best of what I learned from AF—not replicating it because it wouldn’t work here. Although I admire the system, I’m not a 100% believer in it, but an 85% believer in it, and then how do you tweak it to where you are?

Residents take the “best” of what they learn in both experiences, align it with their core values as a leader and the context of their schools, and use that reflection to design an appropriate entry plan. Arguably, while residents typically see the CA “approach” as highly centralized and consistent, I would argue that school leaders at CA also strive to adapt to the needs of their individual neighborhoods, schools, and students.

**Nontransferrable learnings.** There are two primary categories of practices that residents labeled as nontransferrable to the district. Arguably, these learnings are “challenging to implement” rather than impossible. As will be evidenced in this section, some residents were able to think creativity to work past the challenge. The first category is practices that involve adjusting or circumventing union contracts to manage teacher time and implement systems. The second is practices that involve adjusting resource allocation to distribute leadership within schools.

Because CA teachers are not unionized, residents are aware that the CA practices they observe would violate the union contract in their schools if they replicated them exactly. This is, in part, because nonunionized teachers are often required to follow practices that are typically not required of teachers in unionized schools. For example, in many schools, lesson plans must be turned in at the beginning of each week, teachers
must participate in coaching within prep periods or after school, and grade level meetings are required.

Arguably, these are practices that enable instructional leaders to better guide their instructional staff. For example, teacher collaboration, as in the formal grade team meeting structure at CA, positively impacts student achievement. Killion (2015) found that “teacher collaboration has strong and positive effects on student achievement” (p. 64). As previously discussed, instructional coaching is also related to improved instructional practices (Teemant, 2014).

Residents often feel frustrated that certain CA practices aren’t always easy to implement in their own schools. For example, one resident wished she could do more with teacher prep periods: “I wish I could manipulate my time a little more. Teachers are given five prep periods. I wish I had a say. I can’t touch that with a long pole. Some teachers are being productive, some teachers aren’t.” Another resident wished she could extend her school day, stating, “A lot of it is the longer day, rigor, you can’t do that with the union. I would have to play around with the constraints of the contracts. That scares me a bit.” Another resident shared how she thinks creatively through the types of constraints she faces at her school:

I said, “Okay, now how do I get creative?” So where do I give and get, you know, barter? There’s some people who are in early and are morning people, and they’re willing to help me out in the morning. Then I could alleviate their afternoon duty. Or how quickly can I build up equity with someone to ask them for favors?

Because that’s what it is: The expectation isn’t there.
CAPR explicitly gives residents practice influencing and motivating staff through their school change projects so the residents can think creatively when they plan to implement a new practice at their own schools. One benefit of this creative approach is that when successful, principals inspire their teachers to voluntarily take part in these structures—for their own personal professional benefit as well as for the benefit of the school. When individuals are personally inspired, instead of required, longer-term sustainability and job satisfaction may ensue. For example, in a study featured by Harvard Business Review, the concept of vertical job loading by “removing controls while retaining accountability” resulted in measurable job enrichment (Herzberg, 1987, p. 93). Nonetheless, the challenge of inspiring an entire building of teachers to voluntarily spend their time collectively instead of individually is tremendous.

CA has a formalized process of distributing leadership through many compensated leadership positions within a school, which is widely supported by the literature. Day et al. (2009) described the impact of distributing leadership based on their study findings:

According to respondents, distributed leadership cultivated a sense of ownership and agency on the part of staff, helped develop a vision for the school shared by most staff, increased staff understanding and sense of responsibility for whole-school matters, buffered teachers from non-teaching responsibilities, and developed the leadership potential of other staff. (p. 15)

Because there are differences in funding and allocation of finances, the distributed leadership model can be difficult to replicate. First, the academic/operational split at CA often enables principals to focus primarily on academic leadership. One resident
expressed the wish that that structure was available to her: “Having an operations manager, a person that really, really knows the budget—that would save me SO much time.” Along those lines, many residents also expressed similar wishes to be able to replicate the dean structure at CA. To wit, CA schools have at least four academic deans, which perform similar roles to assistant principals.

Unfortunately, most residents stated that they must rely on influencing and motivating teachers and other members of the staff to step into distributed leadership roles. In a seminar on distributed leadership, an alumna stated that she used the schedule to creatively implement a distributed leadership model, even though she was unable to financially compensate her staff:

Building people up: At the end of the day, people do a lot of things for free.... You’re motivated by growth and your own personal feeling of being valued. So I asked, “Would you be willing to—?” Some people were union people, and they said “No!” and I was like, “That’s cool,” and that just wasn’t the right person then.... I called her the Dean of Students to everyone, but it wasn’t on paper at the district.... If you give them more time in the schedule—the schedule is your number one creativity in terms of making it work. I didn’t ask for anything new, I just re-adjusted.

This type of creativity allows residents to replicate the distributed leadership structure at CA in their own schools but doesn’t necessarily create systematic change. The principal quoted above stated that she would also like to fairly compensate teachers for going above and beyond their regular duties, so she attempted to find money in the budget for
them wherever she could. Ideally, this type of interim creativity would spark broad change.

Finally, one resident bought up an unexpected issue with a relatively minor practice she would like to replicate: offering staff unlimited free coffee, which is the practice at CA. She believed that even though this would be appreciated by the staff, the district would likely frown upon it:

They would look at that like a frivolous expense. CA’s reaction is kind of like, well, you know, like we’re trying to make our teachers happy, and I get that, and I think it’s awesome, but the district system could never afford to pay for coffee. And the reality behind that is I think taxpayers would question that, and they would say, “Why the hell are we using our tax dollars to pay for coffee for these teachers? That’s insane!”

While this resident said she would occasionally buy her teachers coffee, she pointed out an interesting challenge here that CA principals may not face: taxpayer accountability, albeit ironic because taxpayers also fund CA schools.

**Charter Learns From District**

The chief criticism of CA and the CAPR program expressed by residents and district partners alike is an unwillingness to learn from the district. As discussed earlier, McCullough et al. (2015) cited three types collaboration in charter-district partnerships:

1. Traditional public school district and charter partners jointly tackle specific challenges, working side by side to solve a problem that neither has a clear advantage in addressing alone.
2. High performers—one sector or specific schools within a sector—share expertise with lower-performing peers on raising student achievement.

3. The traditional public and charter sectors exchange resources or expertise in a fair exchange. (p. 1)

The current state of the CAPR relationship lies primarily in the second category: “High performers share expertise with low-performing peers.” Many district individuals interviewed in this study contested the presumption of CA schools being “high performers.” They contended that the partnership should focus on the first and/or third category (i.e., jointly tackling problems or fairly exchanging resources).

The disagreement between the two collaborative sides with respect to the purpose of the program was evident in this study. One district leader working closely with CA asked, “Do I think that the charter school folks believe that there are things that they can learn from public schools? I haven’t seen much indication that they believe that.” One internal CA resident echoed this concern: “I think the frame is still that district residents are put in CA schools to learn versus to share. With that lens, I don’t think the expectation is that there is a symbiotic relationship.” Even CA staff members recognized their unwillingness to learn from the district residents impacted the intergroup relationship. One CA principal stated:

I don’t see us willing to learn from them, which builds up animosity. At least from their perspective, and I can see that really clearly, “We know the right way, and you can learn from us,” but I don’t see us trying to learn from them. People in the district feel that and a lot of defense mechanisms happen in response to that.
The literature on trust shows that a lack of collaborative behavior on one side of a relationship leads to reduced trust (Ferrin et al., 2007). This lack of trust, or mistrust, in turn, impedes collaborative behavior. However, there is also a clear disconnect between individual interactions with CA leaders and the overall organizational sense of collaboration. At the end of the CA placement, CAPR systematically collects feedback from the district residents, and the residents directly present this feedback to one of the co-CEOs of CA. The program director, while acknowledging this is a growth area, constantly seeks to collect district residents’ feedback to provide to CA leaders. In an e-mail message, the director wrote:

You’ve had this experience. You’ve seen a lot and you’ve done a lot. What are you going to take with you? What are you going to leave behind? What can you give back to us? We’re always trying to get better.

One resident pointed out this misalignment between her experience with the CA Co-CEO and CA’s general collaborative efforts:

She presents herself in such a learner stance that it is absolutely humbling, and I am so respectful of her and her approach. And yet, the organization does not present itself as a learning organization. They are constantly learning new things.... But I don’t think, as an organization, they feel that they can get anything from the public schools.

I argue that the cause of this disconnect is due to different perspectives regarding what characterizes “learning from the district.” The primary way in which CA currently “learns from the district” is through the concept of the “mirror,” which I will discuss in an upcoming section. However, there was a general consensus with the individuals
interviewed in this study that CA could learn some best practices from the district. In this section, I will review learned best practices, missed opportunities for learning best practices, learning through the mirror, and the internal resident controversy.

**Actual Learned Best Practices.** Generally speaking, CA principals and residents believed they were gaining relatively little new knowledge or best practices from district residents. However, a principal cited two specific examples of direct learning from the district:

From the resident herself, she had a lot of knowledge about SPED. [Also], some of her strengths as a leader taught me a lot about when people are resistant to changes you want to make. She experienced the dynamic in the district.... If anything, coming from the district, she’s had to be more creative and savvy about how to get people on board. I learned a lot from her in that way.

The program director gave an example of an CA mentor principal who had learned from a district resident after they have developed a strong relationship:

The principal was coaching the resident mostly in instructional leadership, but then the resident was kind of coaching the principal in people leadership and managing her leadership team…. The last I heard, they were still meeting weekly beyond. The CA principal was consulting her ... to the point where the resident identified a growth area and had a learning plan going for the principal. It wasn’t out there, but there was some stealth coaching.

This story provides a powerful example of the mutually beneficial types of relationships that can form within a supportive, egalitarian, and collaborative context—specifically collaboration wherein the person with more power in the relationship, through humility and vulnerability, allows the relationship to be equal. Unfortunately, these stories are not
shared more broadly. I speculate that this is related to the public image of success that is required to maintain funding and support on the charter side.

Another resident noted that the leadership team in her school would have been open to suggestions if she had had any individual best practices she had wanted to share:

To be fair, my leadership team, if I had something, would be at least open to hearing it. I’m not sure about implementation but definitely hearing ideas or things come up when we are brainstorming, I’ll definitely contribute, but it’s not necessarily a district thing. It may just be a me thing.

This resident is referring to the concept of decategorization (Brewer & Miller, 1984). She speculated that if she did have a suggestion, her leadership team would have been open to this suggestion but would have viewed it as an exception to the rule rather than a formal learning from the district.

**Missed opportunities to learn best practices.** District principals, district residents, and CAPR staff alike cited very specific strengths of the district from which CA could learn. These strengths included (a) special education, (b) creativity in times of limited resources, and (c) school culture. All of these strengths are directly aligned to the criticisms of charter schools described early in this paper. Additionally, the first is directly aligned with the McCullough et al. study (2015, p. 20), which listed the number one practice most shared from district to charter as “practices and systems for instructing students with disabilities or ELL’s.”

With respect to the first strength, special education, one district leader contended that CA could learn from the district. Unlike most critics, he speculated that CA doesn’t
purposefully push out special education students. Rather, he posited, CA lacks the skills to keep and support these students:

I think they [AF] can learn a great deal about special education in kids with challenges and a broader range of support network for kids. My experience with treatment first in particular is that the program tends to be rigid, and they struggle with kids that struggle. And so they lose a number of students that have difficulties, and I know they would like not to, and so I think there’s things they can learn on how not to and other approaches.

This partnership proposition could first help CA better serve their special education students. Second, such a partnership could help CA dispel and address criticisms related to attrition and inadequately serving special education students.

As CA schools transition from founding years to “fully built” years, resources and funding are often more limited. One district principals posited that CA principals could learn how to operate schools under similar constraints:

How do we navigate within constraints to bring urgency of changes? How do we work sometimes with lack of funding or technology?… There’s things they can learn from us on being innovative in situations where you have less resources—that forces you to really think about how you are still going to support your staff when those resources are not there.

This learning opportunity is related to the funding criticism discussed earlier in the paper. This concept also connects with the skills cited earlier about district individuals developing the skill of creative thinking in the face of constraints. Working with the
district to understand their approach to constraints could help CA principals better prepare for the types of creative thinking they may need to employ in similar situations.

The CAPR program director holds a unique position. Compared to all other parties, he spends the most time in schools across both CA and district contexts. Regarding learning from the district, he described an important missed opportunity related to school culture:

It was the worst disaster turnaround, and I went in there today. The dean [only] gets three or four calls a day in the school of 800 kids. The hallways are silent all of the time. No one is in the hallways. Everyone is in their classrooms. Even in classrooms where there are struggling teachers, the kids just sat there silently and there’s no discipline system…. It goes against a lot of the assumptions that we [AF] are all about…. I always say that’s the interesting thing about going to these district schools. Discipline is not a problem, and somehow discipline is always a problem in most of our schools…. I just think it would be great for some [AF] principals to walk the hallways in that school.

If the program director’s suggestion was put into place, CA principals would be able to compare the hidden curriculum in both schools, as well as the noncognitive skills being taught in both schools. While the school described isn’t an exemplar in either area, visiting a school with a very different approach could force CA principals to challenge their assumptions about school culture in general.

**Mirror**

One way that CA believes they are able to learn from the district is through the idea of the “mirror.” This occurs through the existing CAPR structures wherein district
residents essentially hold up a “mirror” to CA’s practices. In so doing, CA is able to recognize important areas they need to improve that they would not necessarily have been able to identify within their own somewhat insular community. At the end of the CA fall residency rotation, the CA director solicits feedback concerning the CA program from district residents. In an e-mail communication, he stated:

We believe that you all provide us with a unique mirror for CA, and I hope that you will do this by sharing a specific illustrative example of what you have experienced, the impact you think it has had on your school, and the question it raises for you about CA’s theory of action.

As referenced earlier, residents meet with the co-CEO to share feedback and discuss their observations about the program. The program director believes that this feedback has led to real change:

Being the person, right there with the mirror, I’ve shared what we’re doing and what we’re not, and it’s come back to CA and has been a powerful kind of force for us to change. Specifically, how do we create strong and healthy adult cultures? How do we inspire people and re-inspire people? ... Attrition and suspension in particular were some things that the residents bring a unique mirror to.

During these feedback discussions, residents are often quite direct. They talk about how they grapple with CA organizational practices that do not align with their own core values. Their honest and candid feedback can be powerful, and notably, much of their feedback aligns with criticisms of charter schools. For example, one resident linked concerns about the behavioral system with the hidden-curriculum argument:
This puts into question for me CA’s vision of how to mold students into college-bound scholars: It appears to be through a mode of submission to authority. However, I do not think that is the intent behind the use of the merit system and taxonomy moves.

It is important to note that this resident separated intention and impact. Ames and Fiske (2014) found that “people are likely to see intentional acts as more harmful than unintentional ones” (p. 1760). This explanation is markedly different than the larger rhetoric around similar criticisms. In this case, this resident knew the people behind the practices. As such, she had decategorized them people from the organization and then applied a generosity of spirit back to the organization as a whole (Brewer & Miller, 1984; Pettigrew, 1997).

Similarly, another resident connected her concerns with the noncognitive outcomes and college persistence criticisms, stating: “How is CA’s current vision of education preparing students to be successful in college where students will have to make choices, deal with ambiguity, and be flexible to various instructional philosophies?” Also notable, this resident shared her concerns within an asset-based questioning technique. She chose to frame her criticism with the assumption that educators at CA are well-intentioned. Essentially, this resident could have sent the same message by saying, “CA isn’t preparing students for college because it’s one size fits all and overly rigid.” Like the previous resident, through decategorization, this resident also knew the instructors behind the practices (Brewer & Miller, 1984). Therefore, she offered her criticism within a frame that honored the relationships she had made and was more likely to put CA educators in a learning stance. Conversely, other residents also provided equally critical
feedback that in some ways could only have come from individuals who were not employed by CA. For example, one resident stated:

The learning environment for students and staff limits creativity and the open exchange of ideas. Teachers and administrators become “yes” people. Instead of offering different views and opinions, adults live in fear of making a mistake or saying the wrong thing.

This resident pointed out some of the limitations of a top-down approach. While there are benefits, such as strong support structures, there are clear disadvantages that CA should consider as well.

Finally, in one of the most popular discussions among educators, one resident considered whether she would send her own child to a CA school:

I have been asking myself if I would send my own children to CA schools. Each day when I walk through the halls, I rarely see a teacher smile at a student. Often when I see a teacher disciplining a student, it is done with a condescending tone and not using language to communicate that they know the student can do better.

Certainly, this type of feedback would make teachers and principals at the school cringe and think “not in my school”; yet, it is critical that CA leaders receive this feedback from external parties so they can recognize areas of growth in order to promote positive culture across all schools.

**Internal resident argument.** The most common feedback received from residents and partners alike was that CA internal residents should do a residency rotation in a district school in their city. This recommendation addresses a few important considerations. First, not sending CA internal residents into the district adds to the
district’s perception that CA as an organization is arrogant and believes it cannot learn from the district. Further, this goes against Allport’s assertion that “equal status” is optimal for intergroup collaboration (Allport, 1954). Second, by not having resident rotation in district school, sharing best practice opportunities is missed, which is particularly unfortunate in the areas wherein district schools have strength or an alternative approach, namely, special education, creativity in times of limited resources, and school culture. Finally, there is a missed opportunity for district individuals to decategorize internal residents from CA and break down stereotype.

One district principal reflected on the impact of increased equality that would result from internal residents going to the district schools:

One of the changes that I know CA is thinking about … why should it always be the district school principal going into the charter school? Why can’t the charter school principal come to the public education principals? I was glad to hear that there are things out there to expand our relationship.

One resident discussed how the lack of district rotation impacted the internal residents in her cohort:

I was so saddened for them because they never got to experience the district. That was a very common conversation I had with them and that went on throughout the whole year, and it was simply that, you know, they were frustrated.... They just felt like the evil queen.

In short, this criticism about internal residents appears to have actively impacted the feelings of internal residents who did not have agency in structuring the program.
On a larger scale, the same type of decategorization that occurs when district residents come into CA could also occur if CA internal residents went to the district. One resident speculates the reaction of other district principals:

I think that would help break down the stereotypes right, like you take these CA people and you shove them in a district school. People will fall in love with them just like everybody else around that table that, you know, they’re going to work their rears off, they’re very valuable. It takes away the label, and it just makes it about the people, because it’s like [Internal Resident Name] went into the school, they would love that, right? As a principal, I would say, “How lucky am I to have this woman for 6 months?” And it wouldn’t be about CA, it would just be about [Internal Resident Name], and then there would be such value in that.

Ideally, sending internal CA residents into the district would result in decategorization on both sides of the relationship. First, CA residents would see the struggles and challenges of the district context at a personal level, and with this observation, their bias would begin to dissipate. Second, the impacted district educators would see the CA residents as positive ambassadors for the organization, further helping to break down biases. Finally, internal CA residents could share CA best practices with the district mentor principal in the same way district residents sometimes bring district best practices to CA principals. Internal residents tend to be open to, if not enthusiastic, about the idea of doing a district residency rotation. One internal resident said, “I think it’d be a great opportunity to learn from different practices that can happen anywhere there’s a strong school culture and strong academics.” The program director also spoke on behalf of other internal residents,
stating, “My eyes are opened to what we do at CA, and I never thought about that before. They’ve all said to me, ‘I wish I could do that.’”

However, unlike district residents, CA residents currently maintain their regular job responsibilities of midlevel leaders at their home schools, which they will continue to work at after the residency. District residents, however, similar to a fellowship model, are in a gap year between their previous employment with the district and their future placement. Universally, internal residents were concerned about their responsibilities being adequately covered while they were away from the job. With respect to doing rotations at district schools, one CA resident stated: “If it did not impact my school, yes, if there was a plan for someone to coach and make sure the programs and initiatives and big buckets are taken care of it. But ... I would never say okay I’m leaving now without knowing there’s someone.” In the same vein, an CA principal shared her hesitancy in sending her internal resident to a district school because of her concern that the resident’s responsibilities would not be met: “Sending your internal CA person: I would have to [be] sold pretty hard on that. I would not describe myself as not open. I would need a lot of help and support for what to do without that person.” Therefore, CA would need to design a robust plan to ensure that resident responsibilities would be covered during the spring district rotation. However, myriad creative solutions exist. For example, a teacher leader could step into the dean’s role during the district rotation, and one of the teachers in residence (TIRs) could cover the teacher leader’s classroom. Further, internal residents could also do a shorter rotation if a full rotation would be logistically untenable.
**Changed Perspectives**

Although conditions for collaboration are imperfect, the overall effect of CAPR on the individual in-group participants has been positive in that many of the participants—including district residents, internal CA residents, and mentor principals—had changed their perspectives by the end of the program. At the beginning of the program, many of the district residents had had a neutral opinion of CAPR; yet, by the end of the program, these participants either maintained their neutral opinion or changed it to positive. One resident who had initially had a neutral opinion remained neutral; however, she had developed a more nuanced perspective through her experience with CAPR:

> I think it’s great for the people who opt into it, based on the charter’s philosophy. I think if they’re run efficiently, and have strong leadership, and a great school culture, then they could be absolutely phenomenal. So, I’m not adverse to it. Actually working in one and having the experience of traditional public schools, I can see the advantages, and I can see the disadvantages of both. Really, I’m not either for one or the other. It just depends on the leadership in the school, ultimately.

This resident’s final perspective is in line with the mutual in-group differentiation model: highlighting the strengths and opportunities for growth for each group (Hewstone & Brown, 1986). It is also in line with recategorization (Gaertner et al., 1993) wherein the resident attributed school success to the supergroup of good leadership rather than group type. Another resident, who had initially had an extremely anticharter school viewpoint, had a dramatic shift in perspective:
I think the difference has been that I have a deeper understanding of the rationale, why? It’s not just the habit. There’s a rationale, and I think, in some schools, it’s a very thoughtful, empathetic ethical rationale, and that the people who are leading and teaching in these building are truly committed to high expectations… honestly, I did not have that rational before.

This is a prime example of decategorization. After meeting and working with the people at CA, this resident’s negative bias was significantly reduced (Brewer & Miller, 1984). Another resident had a similar shift in perspective as a result of the CAPR experience:

This experience has humanized charter schools. I’m more aware that at all of these schools, there’s an honest desire to meet the kids [needs]. That means a lot of me. I can, with integrity, speak up for the school that I’m in and their intention, which is not what I thought before. I really do feel that the school is trying to do the best they can for the kids.

As evidenced in this quote, this resident did not previously think that charter schools were trying to do “the best they can for kids.” Her previous stereotype, however shaped, was dispelled through decategorization.

Finally, another district resident who had originally been anticharter and remained relatively anticharter, did note some differences in her perspective:

I held some of the stereotype biases—that charter schools just get rid of kids they don’t want - the idea that they don’t accept all kids…. I honestly don’t necessarily see them actively counseling kids out…. I could see why kids leave—with hours of detention and Saturday detention.
This resident made a distinction between intention and impact. She observed firsthand why charter schools have attrition issues, but she no longer considered them intentional as so many traditional charter school critics do. I argue that this is because this resident decategorized the individuals at her school, engaged in collaboration, and thus, her overall stereotype was somewhat diminished (Brewer & Miller, 1984; Pettigrew, 1997).

Internal CA resident perspectives of the district are also impacted by their CAPR program. Many staff members at CA, like this resident, were former district teachers who had become dissatisfied with the system and were seeking a new approach to education. (This is my personal stereotype bias, as noted in the section on researcher identity.) In the exemplar model of stereotypes, the bias is based on personal experience, rather than prototype models constructed through cultural socialization (Operario & Fiske, 2001). This type of stereotype, while linked to personal experience, broadly categorizes all district schools with one’s own personal experience. For this resident, her experiences in CAPR impacted her bias:

I’ve learned that the people in the district … that many of them are really impressive with their skill and vision and commitment. I’ve gained an appreciation for the high level of talent. When I worked in the district, I was not impressed by our principal…. This experience has broadened what I’ve observed from district leadership.

This change in perspective is within the decategorization model. By seeing a range of examples within the out-group, this in-group member has reduced bias about the out-group (Brewer & Miller, 1984).
The CAPR experience impacts more than just the residents involved in the program. One district mentor principal shared her perspective change after being part of the CAPR program. She described her realizations after interacting with CAPR:

I never knew how much I could learn from their systems. I also know that if public districts had some of the systems that charter schools have, there’s some great things we could be doing as well. There’s something to learn.

Notably, the program was designed to primarily impact residents, not mentor principals. However, in positive collaborative environments, there is an opportunity for all sides to learn and break down bias. Even CAPR staff and district partners have grown through the experience. One district leader spoke about the progress being made across the partnership:

Our partnership has gotten so much better, because I think they [AF] are starting to realize, well, they [the district] have got some really smart people over there, and wow, they’ve got some, really, really difficult situations that they are dealing with.

Decategorization is at work at all levels of CAPR. In this case through collaboration, leaders in the broader organizations were also dispelling some of their in-group bias.

**Conditions Impacted Changed Perspectives**

Thus far, I have discussed bias in each of the in-groups in this relationship. Within that discussion, I have made connections to the different approaches to dispelling in-group bias, including contact hypothesis, decategorization, recategorization, and mutual differentiation. I will now describe how each part of the conceptual framework connects with these findings.
**Contact hypothesis.** Allport (1954)’s contact hypothesis cites four conditions required for breaking down in-group bias: (a) common goals, (b) equal status, (c) supportive norms, and (d) opportunities for collaboration. In some areas, CAPR squarely fits within these conditions, and in others, there is room for improvement.

**Common goals.** Both the district and CA have the common goal of educating students in their cities. Both sides want to reduce or eliminate the achievement gap between students from low SES backgrounds and their more affluent peers. Both sides are naturally aligned regarding student achievement desire. One district resident described well this alignment and natural opportunity for collaboration: “The way we’re doing in the district isn’t getting the results, and it’s not really working for CA either. If we could merge the best practices from both, we would have a really successful school.” Specifically within the CAPR program, the goal is to develop leaders for turnaround schools in the district and at CA. This is also an aligned common goal. One district partner called for further alignment in that common goal through increased communication:

> I really do believe that, like bimonthly, the district and the leadership from the district and the leadership from the charter should probably sit down and do assessment. So how are we doing? And where do we need to go next?

This type of collaboration would increase alignment and allow for more discussion about how to collaborate in service of these common goals.

**Supportive norms.** CAPR sets specific supportive norms for their interactions as a cohort. These norms include:

1. We embrace opportunities for conflict as a healthy way to strengthen the team.
2. We assume the best because we know everyone has a shared purpose.

3. We will hold ourselves accountable to developing the skills and mindsets to become effective change agents to transform lives and systems.

4. We go all in with our development by being present, honest and therefore vulnerable. (CAPR Materials)

These norms enable the program director and CAPR staff to push residents to address and discuss their biases. The program director believes this is critical to success, stating, “We named it as one of the goals in the program—the coaching that we’re going to have you explore your bias—and by the way, we’re open to exploring ours.” The cohort’s supportive norms make exploring bias safe for residents. The director further stated:

We intentionally create kind of a container … where we actually encourage people to explore their dissonance essentially. And we say at the beginning, while you’re here, you have to rent it. No one’s going to make you buy anything. It’s up for you to decide. I mean, your district is sending you because you’re the smartest, most passionate, future leaders they’ve got, and so it’s up to you to decide.

Specifically, CAPR staff pushes residents to link their experience to their core values:

What we are pushing them to figure out is, is this something that goes against all my core values that I deeply believe, or is this, do I have a self-limiting belief, and I’m actually going to miss something that’s really worth having, just because I have a reaction that may be connected to something that’s not about the practice, right?

Further, CAPR staff models this type of introspection in their own approach to practice:
We have to model the humility, so I am constantly saying, and the coaches are saying, “Look, we need to know, we need you to help open our eyes,” and we own it, you know, when we hear it, and we either disown it or we push, and we have dialogue around it to make sure, and at the end of the day, we try. We say, “Look, we are trying to be neutral. We’re not trying to tell you what’s right or wrong, but we’re going to push your thinking and respect you to push our thinking.”

Even with these supportive norms, there are breaches. For example, in the residency rotations within schools, there are breaches to these norms by individuals who are not part of the cohort. Specifically, there are mentor principals who have unaddressed biases that impact the resident relationship. First, mentor principals are sometimes hesitant to give residents principal-level work. The program director talked about how he tries to influence this bias through his mentor principal training: “In our principal orientation in the past, we talked about this [bias against the district] and pushing people to try to move past their hesitancy to give their real work to people.”

Beyond the bias that makes mentor principals hesitant to give residents the real work, there are occasional instances in which mentor principals’ bias is evident in communication and interaction with residents. The program director described these types of instances:

The principal will say something that will deeply offend a resident, and you know, there will be times when the resident and the cohort deal with it. There are other times when the residents bring it to the cohort, and the cohort, you know, supports that person, and then the coach has to deal with it, and it’s tough.
In the case of some breaches, CAPR has created a protocol for stepping in to advocate for the resident and the resident’s development. The director described CAPR’s approach in these situations:

We actually have created a kind of aggressive intervention protocol for when things aren’t happening in the way that they should, and you know, we go in and we say, “This is the matter. You need to fix this, or that person needs to leave the school.”

In surveys, the residents who have been in these situations have characterized the residency director’s resolution to the issue as “well above expectations.”

**Opportunity for collaboration.** The opportunity for collaboration in CAPR is absolutely robust. In the fall, district residents work day-in day-out with the out-group to educate students in CA schools. Further, within seminar, there are constant opportunities to work together, including on change projects, entry plans, and leadership dilemmas. At a minimum, district residents are collaboratively working with out-group members 3 hours per week during the spring residency rotation and over 43 hours per week during the fall residency rotation. Internal CA residents are working with out-group members at least 3 hours per week for the entire school year.

**Equal status.** The equal status condition is currently the weakest condition for reducing in-group bias. On the beneficial side of equal status, internal residents sit side by side with district residents as equals in all training and CAPR activities. Further, district residents perform important midlevel and principal-level leadership work within their CA residency rotation. However, the biases highlighted previously in this study indicate that equal status is a primary area for growth. Further, the internal resident discussion is an
important indicator that equal status has not yet been recognized. In the final analysis, without equal status, it is difficult to break down in-group bias to promote positive cooperation (Allport, 1954; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000).

**Decategorization and Collaborative Friendship.** As discussed in the Changed Perspectives section, I argue that many of the changed perspectives are the result of decategorization. Decategorization breaks down in-group bias through contact in which the perceiver begins to view the out-group member as an individual. One CA principal described why she thinks her resident changed perspectives about charters:

I think it’s from observing day in and day out—from letting her in on the leadership team level principal conversation. Here’s this moment I’m struggling with. Here’s both sides. You get to see authentic side of people you assume doesn’t exist.

This breakdown is directly in line with the concept of decategorization. When decategorization is successful, collaboration friendships can flourish (Pettigrew, 1997). In CAPR, collaborative friendships are frequent. One resident described how she maintains a collaborative friendship with her CA mentor principal:

I will often send my stuff, like a PowerPoint or a letter or my staff memo, to [my friend at AF], and she will give me feedback, or she’ll send me like, “Hey, this is what I’m doing with my stuff in case it sparks an idea or something that may help you,” and then I kind of tweak it on my own.... We’re very good friends on a personal level, but I probably call her once every other day to be like, “Am I losing my mind, or is this normal?” And it just grounds you in that emotional security that, “It’s okay, I’ve been there, we’ll get you through it.” Or, “Hey, you
should think of X, Y, Z,” because especially in a new school, you’re the outsider.

You don’t know where to go.

These collaborative friendships are further examples of how collaboration can thrive under equal status. One district leader spoke to this type of collaboration in her city: “CA does set up formal cohorts for people who have gotten in administrator positions after their residency, but there is much more informal happening than I think we realize.”

Other residents, however, were more skeptical of continued collaboration in the future. One internal resident stated:

So I’ve met a bunch of folks who are teaching in public schools, and I know these people. It’s hard to picture how that’s going to play out—where we keep these relationships a year from now or 5 years from now.

One opportunity for CAPR is to highlight these cases of collaboration existing among alumni in order to help current residents see how the relationships they make now could impact their future success.

**Recategorization.** Recategorization also exists in the CAPR program. Recategorization is the process of reassigning group identity to a supergroup. In CAPR, this supergroup is “leader” or “good leader.” By the end of the CAPR program, residents attribute good schools to good leadership much more than the subgroup lines of charter and district. One resident described this concept at play in her own experience:

I’m also not going to advertise and say, “Hey everybody, I got this great idea from College Academies, and because they’re awesome, I’m going to use this.”

And you know, I’m just going to use ideas that I think are good, and then when people question it, when people are uncomfortable, you know, I feel prepared that
I can have those conversations and really turn it around on them, so that they realize, it is essentially that their prejudice or apprehension is unfounded.

The framing of “leaders” is consistent throughout all communication in CAPR. In running an nVivo query across all observation notes, “leader” is the second most frequently used word ( “schools” is first). “Charter” was the 90th most frequently used word, and “district” did not even make the top 100. One example of this framing in action are these two questions posed to the group in an e-mail communication:

How do we as leaders aggregate the energy of our people behind our vision and priorities? How do we as leaders stay true to our values and vision and not get lost in the reality of the challenges and stress of urban school leadership?

These questions unite both in-groups. These questions could easily be discussed through district versus charter lenses. Residents could easily argue about which sector faces more challenges and more stress. Further, residents could easily get side tracked by perceived differences in people on both sides. Instead, these questions set residents up to find the similarities across contexts: How do “leaders” aggregate energy (no matter their context)? How do “leaders” stay true to our values and vision (no matter their context)?

**Mutual intergroup differentiation.** Mutual intergroup differentiation is the process of emphasizing group lines while recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of each unique in-group (Hewstone & Brown, 1986). In this model, group differences are considered normal, and collaborators view each group as unique with individual strengths and areas of growth. Many residents who started with a neutral perspective finished the experience believing there is a place for both district schools and charter schools because they each have unique strengths and weaknesses. This perspective squarely falls within
the mutual intergroup differentiation model. The categorization of transferrable versus nontransferrable practice also aligns with mutual intergroup differentiation. By saying a practice is transferrable, residents are recognizing the strengths of the out-group and adapting their practice to meet their own context while maintaining contextual boundary lines. Additionally, by saying a practice is not transferrable, residents are emphasizing boundary lines and recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of each group.

One strong recommendation of the mutual intergroup differentiation model is division of labor in which each group takes on parts of collaboration that align with their unique strengths. CAPR does not use division of labor method at the resident level because they believe all participants need to learn a set of competencies to prepare them to be leaders in any context. That being said, CAPR does use mutual intergroup differentiation in the selection of leaders for different seminars. For example, an CA staff member leads “Running Effective Meetings,” a clear strength of AF; whereas the district leads “Safety Nets (SPED),” a clear strength of the district.

Other Impacting Factors. Dressage is one opportunity to bring uniformity and sense of community to an in-group. As such, CA has a lot of “swag.” CA computers are engraved with their logo. CA staff receive multiple logo-emblazoned articles of clothing, as well as clipboards, etc., throughout the school year. Because residents are part of the CA community, they receive these items, too. Worschel et al. (1978) found that members with the “distinctive dress” condition in an intergroup collaboration experiment were more likely to blame the out-group for failure. Conversely, members who were in a “similar dress” condition were more likely to blame the task itself for the failure. In line with that research, some district residents were purposefully cautious by covering these
physical identity markers to deemphasize their competing identity when in the district contact:

   And so I paid very close attention to that fact, and even like bringing my laptops into the district school, I ended up covering up one of the stickers, and I just put my name on it so that it wouldn’t be in their face.

Residents who covered these physical identity markers stated that they had to defend their district legitimacy less often than their peers. In line with this research, I recommend the residency creating swag that equally represents all logos of involved districts.

Pronouns are another important part of the development and dispelling of in-group bias. One resident described an incident in her school related to pronouns shaping in-group bias:

   CA leaders tried to prepare teachers to debunk the “myths” of CA and the charter school movement. I was the only public school representative in the room. The atmosphere was very definitely “we” versus “they.”… The teachers I know care just as much about equity and making a difference in children’s lives. There might be 10% of teachers who I worked with who did not feel this way. And I was very uncomfortable with the “we” versus “they” mindset. So why the hostility?

A district leader expressed the same sentiment: “But mostly it’s the rhetoric starts out with ‘us versus them’ rather than the collaborative.” However, the CAPR actively uses “we” just as much as they use the phrase “leader.” For example, in this powerful e-mail communication, the program director uses “we” over and over again to highlight an important commonality across educators involved in the program, including the common experience of working with underresourced schools in the CAPR cities:
We all see that our children are not getting the education that we believe is their right. We have all committed ourselves to do our part to right that wrong, and we in the Residency Program have taken the first steps of an uncharted journey to do so. What I understand better this year is that our legacy work isn’t just about making sure our scholars have the academic skills of their white suburban peers. Our legacy work as change leaders is also about waking up “the Dreamers” who don’t see how they are perpetuating The Problem in our schools. It is also about teaching our scholars about institutional racism so that they can build the tools and “character skills” that they will need to confront it in the world (rather than seeing themselves through the smog of racism), and some day be in the positions of power to battle and end the smog themselves [boldface emphasis added].

In this communication, the program director demonstrated his commitment to the shared mindset of all “leaders,” particularly change agent leaders in turnaround schools.

Notably, the content of his communication is directly related to the noncognitive outcomes and hidden curriculum criticisms discussed earlier in this paper.

**Generalization.** As discussed in the literature review, generalization is a significant challenge when breaking down in-group bias. While in-group bias can be broken down for members involved in collaboration, the same sentiment typically does not apply to the group at large. Effective generalization beyond the individuals impacted through contact is weak to nonexistent (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Stephan & Stephan, 1996).

The “exception to the rule” concept is confirmed in this study. As discussed, decategorization is the primary method evidenced promoting intergroup cooperation in
this study. Therefore, this case is particularly susceptible to “exception to the rule” thinking. One example of this concept is the differentiation between CA and CAPR. District individuals interviewed consistently separated the two bodies. They tended to speak positively about CAPR and negatively about CA. One district partner shared how she viewed the groups differently:

I think the residency program is great…. I think the residency program itself delivers a very different message [from AF] that is about genuine partnership most of the time, and I think CA delivers a different message sometimes publicly and then sometimes is just in the way that people from CA talk about public schools internally and informally.

Clearly, for some participants, while in-group has been broken down among participants, the “exception to the rule” mindset is maintained at the organizational level.

That being said, each of the residents in this study will go on to be a school leader. Leaders’ core values and beliefs frequently are adopted by their staff. While not discussed in school leadership literature, Berson, Oreg, and Dvir (2008) noted how business leaders’ values impact their employees:

In particular, when discussing organizational executives, numerous works suggest that through their personal characteristics leaders help determine what their organizations will ultimately look like (e.g., Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Lewin & Stephens, 1994; Miller & Droge, 1986; Miller, Droge, & Toulouse, 1988). Among these characteristics are personal values, which have been argued to be among the most influential leader characteristics. Top managers aim to pass on
their values to employees as a means of shaping behaviour and directing the firm.

(p. 616)

If leaders’ perceptions about the out-group are changed through the CAPR, I contend that these changed perspectives and personal values of cross-sector collaboration will trickle down to the broader population through their leadership.
V. Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

In summary, CAPR is uniquely positioned to continue to be a force of collaboration between charter schools and traditional public schools. While there are challenges in the collaborative relationship, each side is committed to effectively working together to meet the needs of the students in their shared districts. One resident described this commitment in action despite the challenges involved:

I’ve been impressed both with the district and with CA for just forming this collaboration and committing to it. I think there are a lot of political reasons not to do it. So if you are sticking to the common narrative that CA and charter schools are not humble enough to share the work with other people, or that there’s a [negative] competition, I’m impressed that CA has stuck. With the district, if you find the narrative that CA success is attributable to the fact that they don’t teach the general population, then I’m impressed that the district says that whether or not we agree with the entire model, I think there’s some value in collaborating.

Through this study, I have identified some important considerations for continuing to improve collaboration between the CA and the districts.

Conclusion #1: CAPR Positively Impacts Perceived In-Group Bias at the Individual Level.

Recommendation #1: Continue to use existing structures and supports to build a collaborative environment for residents. To further break down bias, expand intergroup collaboration beyond residents to teachers and leaders. Expansion must replicate the supportive conditions in CAPR.
Generally, impacted participants have reduced perceived bias after completing the CAPR program. Residents, in particular, cite examples of reduction of bias. To a lesser extent, mentor principals and district leaders also report reduced bias. It is not known whether one side of the relationship (charter or district) has a greater reduction of bias than the other. Based on interviews and self-assessment, each side had multiple examples of bias reduction that the participants linked to their CAPR experience. I have identified multiple models of intergroup bias reduction that explain the reduction of bias in this program.

**Decategorization (Brewer & Miller, 1984).** The strongest fit between this study’s findings and theory was decategorization. The CAPR experience gives individuals a broader view of the out-group, which generally results in their seeing the individual by his or her own merits rather than judging the individual based on their view of the broader out-group. In turn, individuals become more empathetic. Notably, decategorization in the experience also results in residents separating intention from impact in their criticisms of the out-group. Further, the experience shifted their stereotype model from prototype model, shaped through cultural socialization, to exemplar model, shaped through personal experience. Other models also explain the reduction of in-group bias in this case.

**Recategorization (Gaertner et al., 1993).** Through curriculum and culture, CAPR recategorizes residents into a supergroup identity of “leader.” Membership in the supergroup helps participants break down boundary lines between in-groups. Specifically, members begin to think of themselves as “we” instead of “us” and “they” (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000).
**Mutual intergroup differentiation** (Hewstone & Brown, 1986). Through experiences in the primary environment of both their in-group and out-group, residents are able to identify strengths and opportunities for growth in both sectors, leading to a more balanced perspective. Also, through seminars led by experts on both sides of the relationship, residents also develop a more nuanced understanding of the strengths of the out-group.

**Contact hypothesis** (Allport, 1954). Extended contact under effective collaboration conditions breaks down in-group bias. CAPR solidly meets three out of four of Allport’s conditions, with the primary area for growth being “equal status.”

**Suggested Adjustments.** Notably, all conditions are not equal. Decategorization has the major disadvantage of setting up a dynamic in which in-group members view the out-group members with whom they interact as “exceptions to the rule.” Recategorization is a more effective method for more broadly impacting bias (Gaertner et al., 1993) Therefore, if CAPR can continue to expand their recategorization efforts, there may be a broader impact on organizational bias reduction. Specifically, this would be a more deliberate approach of building “we” language, both within CAPR, but more importantly, across all organizations in the partnership.

Also, by creating new collaboration opportunities for principals and teachers, CA and the districts have the opportunity to further break down bias and promote positive intergroup collaboration. CAPR provides a strong example of three of the conditions for intergroup collaboration that should be replicated in any future collaboration opportunities: namely, (a) opportunities for collaboration, (b) common goals, and (c) supportive norms. The fourth criterion, equal status, is an area for growth for CAPR and
will also be critical in any future collaboration efforts. To that end, I recommend that future collaboration efforts be framed as McCullough et al. (2015) collaboration type #1: jointly tackle challenges, or collaboration type #3: fair exchange of resource.

**Conclusion #2: CA and the District(s) Have a Different Understanding of CAPR’s Approach to Collaboration, Which Has Shaped Different Expectations for What Collaborative Learning Should Look Like.**

**Recommendation #2:** Publicly define purpose of CAPR as “fair exchange of resources” and send internal residents to a district rotation. Interviewed participants from CA and the district had different understandings of the CAPR collaboration approach. McCullough et al. (2015) found three primary approaches to charter-district collaboration. Specifically:

1. Traditional public school district and charter partners jointly tackle specific challenges, working side by side to solve a problem that neither has a clear advantage in addressing alone.

2. High performers—one sector or specific schools within a sector—share expertise with lower-performing peers on raising student achievement.

3. The traditional public and charter sectors exchange resources or expertise in a fair exchange. (p. 1)

CA participants, with the exception of the CAPR program director, described the collaboration as high performers sharing expertise with lower performers. A previous CAPR job post confirmed this perspective: “College Academies’s long-term strategy is to broaden its impact in education reform through initiatives and partnerships that disseminate College Academies’s knowledge and practices” (College Academies, 2013).


District participants, however, expected the collaboration to be a fair exchange of resources between two equal partners. Participants cited internal residents not doing a rotation in the district schools as being at odds with their understanding of the collaboration. I recommend that CAPR be rebranded as a “fair exchange” and internal residents partake in a district rotation, even if barriers would make their rotation in the district for a shorter period of time than the rotation at CA. In fact, the current structure for internal residents was often cited as evidence of CA’s “arrogance.” Allport’s conditions for contact include “equal status” as an important criterion for successful intergroup collaboration. Elemers and Barretto (2001) observed, “People are likely to resist involvement with a lower status group because this may diminish their possibilities to achieve positive social identity” (p. 327). Additionally, district participants contested CA’s status as a high performer, and many of these criticisms were discussed in the literature review. Finally, there is a missed opportunity to break down stereotypes by sending CA internal residents into district schools, as this would give district school staff an opportunity to address their prototype model stereotypes and develop potentially more favorable exemplar model stereotypes (Operario & Fiske, 2001).

**Conclusion #3: Public Rhetoric Impacts Stereotype Development and Negatively Impacts Collaboration.**

**Recommendation #1:** Reduce public rhetoric and/or increase public image focused on humility and sharing. This conclusion is best described through the eyes of a resident, who stated, “CA will not be able to achieve its vision if it is vilified by public school teachers. The fact that CA is an open platform and willing to share everything is not well known.” For CA, there are multiple paths available to them to have a positive
influence on the broader education systems. CA’s current approach appears to be most in-line with the Hoxby’s (2003, p. 288) “tide that lifts all boats” and other school-choice or competition-based arguments. This approach, however, pits sectors against each other and has thus far been ineffective in actually impacting traditional public schools (Ni & Arsen, 2010).

The public rhetoric in line with this approach shapes stereotypes formed about CA through cultural socialization (Operio & Fiske, 2001). Participants in this study cited a variety of cultural socialization sources that impact their stereotypes about the CA. These sources primarily included media reports, political commercials, rallies, and arguably, inequitable data comparisons. By adjusting the language and/or the structure of these public discussions, CA has an opportunity to take a different approach to impacting the broader education system. If CA position themselves as equal partners with districts, there is an opportunity to break down in-group bias, allowing for a freer flow of collaboration across sectors. Additionally, by publicly highlighting equal status collaborative relationships, such as relationships that form between principals, CA can shift the dynamic from one of controversy to one of collaboration. While outside CA’s locus of control, teacher and administrator union rhetoric also strongly impacts stereotype development. I recommend equally that unions also reduce public rhetoric about charter schools.

Finally, related to recommendation #1, if CA creates a new cross-sector collaboration that falls under McCullough et al. (2015) collaboration type #1, “jointly tackle challenges,” an opportunity exists to use that collaboration to build humility into CA’s public image. By publicly acknowledging strengths and weaknesses on both sides,
CA would portray the humility that is already so deeply ingrained in its staff, which would lead to more positive relationships and improved intergroup cooperation.

**Summary**

Applying this case study to the broader education landscape, I posit that cross-sector collaboration between charter schools and traditional public schools is an essential opportunity for each sector to learn from and apply best practices showcased by their cross-sector peers. Intergroup collaboration is complicated and depends on many contributing factors including supportive norms, equal status, common goals, and collaboration opportunities. From this study, I cautiously generalize that framing collaborators as equal in status is an important contributing factor that, when not present, can negatively impact the reciprocal flow of knowledge. Further, I note that public rhetoric plays a key role in shaping the pre-existing stereotype that individuals from each sector bring into the collaboration. Finally, this case shows that even in situations of unequal status and strong stereotype, there are specific strategies leaders can leverage in collaborative activities to reduce bias and facilitate positive collaboration.

**Future Research Recommendations**

First, in order to better understand in-group bias on a larger scale, I recommend the development of a quantitative instrument to be given at the beginning and the end of the CAPR experience to residents, mentor principals, teachers coached by district residents, and CA and district leaders. This instrument could help determine whether there is a statistically significant change in perception as a result of the program. Further, in longitudinal studies, it would allow for measurement of changes in the broader organizational collaborative environment.
Second, I recommend further qualitative research that includes interviews of teachers on both sides of the partnership. The extent to which changed perspectives impacts the larger community was not explored in this study, and interviewing teachers would likely give broader context to the impact of perceptions at large. Further, residents in this study referred to teachers as strongly biased; therefore, a better understanding of that level of bias would be beneficial.

Third, and finally, I recommend further qualitative research into the role of media and rhetoric in shaping the perceptions of district and charter schools. Specifically, a researcher could acquire and replay commercials specific to charter schools for both charter and district individuals. Then, the researcher could compare perspectives on that commercial. Also, a researcher might wish to undertake an in-depth document analysis of commercials, public statements, and Web sites in order compare the language strength in public versus internal communication.
VI. References


Appendices
Appendix A
CAPR Competency Framework

Seminar Overview

Seminars provide training and practice in key areas of school leadership, including school culture, instruction, staff leadership, and setting direction and vision. Each seminar will support and challenge residents to translate best practices to the school change context. Seminars are aligned to the Residency Program for School Leadership (RPSL) competency framework that will guide the learning and work of Residency Program participants during the residency year. The competency framework includes the habits, mindsets, values and characteristics essential to driving high levels of student achievement.

Competency Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HABITS</th>
<th>MINDSETS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision &amp; Inspiration</strong></td>
<td><strong>Culture Leadership</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set the Direction of the Community with</td>
<td>Set Standards of Excellence</td>
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<tr>
<td>a Sense of Urgency</td>
<td>Create a Tenacious Focus on Scholars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate Effectively</td>
<td>Create and Execute Tight and Detailed Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan and Manage Monumental Change</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Organizational Leadership &amp; Management</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effectively Lead Teams</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop Great Talent</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manage Peak Performance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Delegate Effectively</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Instructional Leadership</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Use Data to Strategically Drive Decisions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop Effective Teacher Practice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Deliberately Plan with the End in Mind</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

VALUES

Characteristics, Mindsets, Traits, & Values - Residents are...

- Resilient
- Optimistic
- Empathetic
- Risk Takers
- Reliable
- Team-oriented
- Humble
- Tenacious
- Self-aware
- Organized and able to self-manage
- Results driven
- Flexible
- Reflective
- Creative Problem Solvers
- Committed to relationships
- Confident
Appendix B
Seminar Catalog

November
Nov. 5  O: Effective Delegation
Nov. 12 O: Building Capacity in a Leadership Team
Nov. 19 School Inter-visitations*

December
Dec. 3  I: Safety Nets (SPED)
Dec. 10 V: Diversity and Inclusiveness II

January
Jan. 7  I: Setting High Expectations: Multiple Perspectives
Jan. 14 C: Scholar Engagement
Jan. 21 C: Coaching in the District Context
Jan. 28 Application Preparation Workshop*

February
Feb. 4  C: Parent/Family/School Partnerships
Feb. 11 School Inter-visitations*
Feb. 18 I: Early Childhood
Feb. 25 O: Collaboration & Shared Practice

March
Mar. 3  O: School Design Seminar II: the SIP*
Mar. 10 O: Leading Team
Mar. 17 School Inter-visitations*
Mar. 24 O: Organizational Management- Manage Building Resources
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 31</td>
<td>O: Building Capacity in a Leadership Team II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>April</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 7</td>
<td>V: EI Coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 28</td>
<td>School Inter-visitation*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>May</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 5</td>
<td>O: Hiring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 12</td>
<td>O: Performance Management*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 19</td>
<td>School Inter-visitation*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 26</td>
<td>V: Create Your Vision and Set the Stage*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Appendix C

Timeline of Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Task Analysis</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Recruited Focus Residents</td>
<td>1. Introduce myself at pre-residency training 2. Recruit current residents with the help of program director Ongoing: Recruit participants through connections made with Program Director</td>
<td>July 2014 – January 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Conducted observations</td>
<td>Year 1: Attended a variety of inter-visitation and seminars Year 2: Attended purposeful seminars and inter-visitation specifically related to district-charter transfer</td>
<td>July 2014 – March 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reviewed and analyzed interviews and observation results</td>
<td>1. Review interview and observation transcripts 2. Develop coding categories for interviews &amp; observations 3. Extract data from transcripts</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Wrote summary of findings</td>
<td></td>
<td>January 2016 – May 2016</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Appendix D
#### Observation Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Objective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of corresponding documents (session plans, handouts, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observational Notes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reflective Notes</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix E

## Sample Interview Question Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District Residents / Alum</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Research Questions 1&amp;2</th>
<th>Research Question 3</th>
<th>Research Question 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why did you join the residency program?</td>
<td>Has your perception of charter schools changed due to your experience with CAPR?</td>
<td>What types of best practices are you seeking to transfer?</td>
<td>What do you think staff at CA thinks about district schools?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you colleagues say when you said you were doing CAPR?</td>
<td>How has it changed?</td>
<td>What challenges have you had with that transfer?</td>
<td>What in your experience makes you think that?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you had any challenging interactions in the district as a result of your affiliation with CAPR?</td>
<td>Why has it changed?</td>
<td>What does your staff say about your affiliation with the residency program?</td>
<td>Do you think the district teachers you have worked with have any different perception of charter schools after working with you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk me through the evolution of your perception of charter schools across your career.</td>
<td>How has your experience at CA impacted your perception of charters?</td>
<td></td>
<td>What do you think CA can learn from district schools?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Residents / Alum</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Research Questions 1&amp;2</th>
<th>Research Question 3</th>
<th>Research Question 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why did you join the residency program?</td>
<td>Talk me through the evolution of your perception of charter schools across your career.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>What do you think staff at CA thinks about district schools?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How has your experience at CA impacted your perception of district schools?</td>
<td>How has your experience at CA impacted your perception of district schools?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Would you want to do a spring residency in a district school?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How has your experience at CA impacted your perception of charters?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What do you think CA can learn from district schools?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Mentor Principals</strong></td>
<td>Talk me through the evolution of your perception of charter schools across your career.</td>
<td>What did you learn from the resident? Has your perception of charters changed at all as a result of your interaction with this resident? Have you seen your staff react positively or negatively or not at all to the resident’s relationship with CAPR?</td>
<td>What can charters learn from district schools? What can district schools learn from charters? Do you think the teachers in your school’s perceptions of charter schools after working with your resident?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CA Mentor Principals</strong></td>
<td>Talk me through the evolution of your perception of charter schools across your career. Now the same, but for district schools. Should internal CA residents do a residency in the district?</td>
<td>Has your perception of district changed at all as a result of your interaction with this resident? What did you learn from your resident? How do you break down bias against charters with your residents?</td>
<td>N/A Do you think the teachers in your school have a different perception of districts after working with your resident? What can charters learn from district schools?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boundary Spanners/Residency Staff</strong></td>
<td>What biases do you see at play with residents on both sides? What biases do you see at play with mentor principals on both sides? Walk me through your perception of charter schools and</td>
<td>How do you explicitly break down bias in the program? How do you think bias is broken down more naturally within the program structure? What do you do when there is a culture breach related to district/charter bias? Have you seen district residents struggle with their affiliation with CAPR? What would you advise them to do?</td>
<td>How have you seen the district/charter relationship shift as a result of this study?</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
how it has changed over your career. Now the same, but for district schools. Should internal CA residents do a residency in the district?

Research Questions Recapped

The central question in this study is “How do in-group and intergroup dynamics in the charter and district contexts impact collaboration efforts?”

1. Does intergroup contact during the Residency experience influence participants’ perceptions of in-group biases and in-group interactions? If so, how?

2. Do the mindsets and skills taught during the Residency program influence participants’ perceptions of in-group biases and in-group interactions? If so, how?

3. From a resident perspective, how does their affiliation with charter districts impact their reception in district schools?

4. How might participation in the Residency program impact all stakeholders’ perception of the “out-group”? (i.e. charter individuals perception of districts, district individuals perception of charters)
Appendix F
Consent Forms

CAPR Evaluative Care Study

1. Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research is to evaluate the CAPR by collecting and analyzing the stakeholder perspective of the program.

2. Procedures to be followed: You will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview. You will be asked to answer questions regarding your experience and perspective. Our interviews with audio recorded with your consent.

3. Discomforts and Risks: There are no risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. Some of the questions are personal and might cause discomfort.

4. Benefits: You might learn more about yourself by participating in this study. You might have a better understanding of what you value as a student or as a principal.

This research might provide CA with a better understanding of the CAPR. This research may inform program design decisions in the future.

5. Duration/Time: It will take about 1 hour to complete each interview three times across your residency.

6. Statement of Confidentiality: Your participation in this research is confidential. Observation notes, audio-recordings and interview transcripts will be stored, managed, and secured at 10 Park Avenue, NY, NY in password-protected computer files. All data will be destroyed 3 years after its collection. The Pennsylvania State University's Office for Research Protections, the Institutional Review Board and the Office for Human Research Protections in the Department of Health and Human Services may review records related to this research study. If the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared.

7. Right to Ask Questions: Please contact Shelby Keeler at (212) 991-8554 with questions, complaints or concerns about this research. You can also call this number if you feel this study has harmed you. If you have any questions, concerns, problems about your rights as a research participant or would like to offer input, please contact The Pennsylvania State University’s Office for Research Protections (ORP) at (814) 865-1775. The ORP cannot answer questions about research procedures. Questions about research procedures can be answered by the research team.

8. Voluntary Participation: Your decision to be in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. Refusal to take part in or withdrawing from this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits you would receive otherwise.

You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to take part in this research study. If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, please sign your name and indicate the date below.

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

Participant Signature Date

Person Obtaining Consent Date

Do you consent to future use of interview recordings such as publications and presentations?

☐ Yes
☐ No
Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research
The Pennsylvania State University

Title of Project: CAPR  
Evaluative Case Study

Principal Investigator:  
Shelby Lee Keefor  
10 Park Avenue, NY, NY 10016  
shelbykeefor@gmail.com  
212-991-8554

Advisor:  
Ed Fuller  
204 D Rackley Building, Penn State University  
eff20@psu.edu  
814-865-2233

1. Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research is to evaluate the CAPR by collecting and analyzing stakeholder perspective of the program.

2. Procedures to be followed: You will be observed in your regular resident responsibilities included school inter-visitations, weeknight seminars and training.

3. Discomforts and Risks: There are no risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life.

4. Benefits: This research might provide CA with a better understanding of the CAPR. This research may inform program design decisions in the future.

5. Duration/Time: You will be observed for approximately 20 hours across your yearlong residency.

6. Statement of Confidentiality: Your participation in this research is confidential. The data will be stored and secured at 10 Park Avenue in a password-protected file. The Pennsylvania State University’s Office for Research Protections, the Institutional Review Board and the Office for Human Research Protections in the Department of Health and Human Services may review records related to this research study. In the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared.

7. Right to Ask Questions: Please contact Shelby Keefor at (212) 991-8554 with questions, complaints or concerns about this research. You can also call this number if you feel this study has harmed you. If you have any questions, concerns, problems about your rights as a research participant or would like to offer input, please contact The Pennsylvania State University’s Office for Research Protections (ORP) at (814) 865-1775. The ORP cannot answer questions about research procedures. Questions about research procedures can be answered by the research team.

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You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to take part in this research study. If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, please sign your name and indicate the date below.

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

Participant Signature  
Date

Person Obtaining Consent  
Date
Appendix G
Recruiting Script

Program Director:

I’d like to introduce you to Shelby Keefer a researcher from Penn State University. [insert brief bio]

Shelby is here to study the great work we are doing at CAPR. She is here to help us become a better program for you and the students and teachers in our districts by providing us with feedback on the program. She will be doing this through observations, interviews, and document analysis. This means that she will be present in many of our trainings and it may feel like she is one of the residents by the end of the year!

Shelby is also looking to interview and shadow 3-4 residents in this year’s program. While we would love for you to participate, we want to clearly state that your participation or nonparticipation in her research will not affect your performance reviews or assessments in any way. Also, please know that Shelby’s interviews are inquisitive not evaluative. In order to participate you must be a resident of this program, which you all are.

Researcher: Thank you all so much for having me. If you would like to participate we can speak 1:1 by generally please know that you can stop any interview at any time, refuse to answer any questions or remove yourself from the study at any time. Also, your answers will be kept confidentially with no identifying information tagged to your responses. If you are interested let’s talk during the break and I will show you a consent form explaining the risks and benefits to you as a participant.
If you have any further questions you can speak with me today or contact me in any other way. (Contact information on the board)

shelbyleekeefer@gmail.com

10 Park Avenue; Apt 8J

New York, NY

212-991-8554
Curriculum Vitae

Education

The Pennsylvania State University 2016, Ph.D. in Educational Leadership, GPA 3.8  
CUNY – Hunter College, Teacher U (Relay GSE) 2010, M.S. in Education, GPA: 3.7  
Georgetown University 2007, B.S. in Business Administration, GPA: 3.4

Professional Experience

Relay Graduate School of Education August 2013 – Present  
Assistant Dean of Students  
Assistant Professor of Practice; Manager, Student Growth & Achievement  
Instructional Fellow  
The Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA August 2012-August 2013  
Graduate Teaching Assistant  
Achievement First Brownsville, Brooklyn, NY August 2010 – June 2012  
Instructional Coach, Grade Level Leader, Classroom Teacher  
The Performance School (P.S. 385), Bronx, NY August 2008 – June 2010  
Teach for America Corps Member and Classroom Teacher

Papers and Presentations


Service

Chair, Relay Graduate School of Education Alumni Council (2013-2015)  
Penn State Education Policy Studies Student Association (EPPSA) Member  
University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Member  
Mercersburg Academy Reunion Programming Committee Member

Teaching Certification

New York State Certified Teacher (Professional Certificate)