

# Fostering Teacher Professionalism in Schools

## The Role of Leadership Orientation and Trust

Megan Tschannen-Moran

**Purpose:** Schools necessarily employ elements of a bureaucratic structure to organize the complex task of educating large and diverse groups of students—elements such as a hierarchy of authority, a division of labor, policies, rules, and regulations. Although such a structure is useful, there is a danger that school leaders will overemphasize these elements and so adopt a bureaucratic orientation at the expense of cultivating professionalism in schools. The hypothesis that guided this study was that the degree of teacher professionalism in a school would be related to (a) the professional orientation of principals in their exercise of administrative authority—especially, the extending of adaptive discretion to teachers in the conduct of their work—and (b) the trust evident among various actors in the school community. **Research Methods:** Data on the five variables under study were gathered via surveys completed by teachers in 80 middle schools in a mid-Atlantic state. Teacher professionalism was assessed using a subscale of the School Climate Index. Four dependent variables were included: the professional orientation of principals and the trust of faculty—namely, in their principals, their colleagues, and their clients (parents and students). The professional orientation of principals was assessed using the Enabling Structure Scale, a scale of teachers' perceptions of how administrative authority is exercised by school leaders; faculty trust was assessed using the Faculty Trust Scales. **Findings:** The evidence supports the hypothesis positing that degree of teacher professionalism is related not only to the professional orientation of school leaders but also to faculty trust. Faculty perceptions of their colleagues' professionalism were found to be strongly related to a professional orientation in the exercise of authority by administrators, as well as to faculty trust in the principal. In a multiple regression analysis, a professional orientation by the principal and

---

**Author's Note:** Address correspondence to Megan Tschannen-Moran, The College of William and Mary, School of Education, PO Box 8795, Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795; e-mail: [mxtsch@wm.edu](mailto:mxtsch@wm.edu).

faculty trust in colleagues were each found to make an independent contribution to explaining teacher professionalism, whereas faculty trust in the principal and faculty trust in students and parents were found to play a moderating role. **Implications for Research and Practice:** For schools to foster greater teacher professionalism, school leaders would do well to resist adopting a bureaucratic orientation, with its implicit distrust. They would be better served by exercising their administrative authority with a professional orientation, extending adaptive discretion to teachers in the conduct of their work, and adopting practices that lead to strong trust among school leaders, teachers, students, and parents.

**Keywords:** *trust; teacher professionalism; bureaucratic leadership; enabling structure*

Schools today face intense pressure from rapidly changing external environments and the needs of an ever-evolving global economy. These pressures are creating new demands on schools to produce graduates with the skills to compete. The challenging task of educating young human beings in a digital world requires structures that give teachers and school leaders the opportunity to rapidly adapt to changing conditions (Lieberman, 1988, 2005; Seashore Louis & Kruse, 1995). To that end, schools necessarily employ a variety of structures, bureaucratic and professional. Bureaucratic structures—such as hierarchy of authority, division of labor with specialization, and written rules and policies—assist schools to deal with the magnitude and complexity of their resources and tasks. Overreliance on these structures by leaders may, however, interfere with organizational dexterity and therefore be counterproductive to the goals that schools strive to achieve. As such, professional structures—such as opportunities for collective inquiry, scrutiny, reflection, and decision making—may need to be more fully integrated into school bureaucracies to promote teacher professionalism and school success. These practices are more likely to evolve when school leaders demonstrate a professional leadership orientation grounded in trust. The hypothesis that guided this study was as follows: Teachers will demonstrate greater professionalism in their behavior where (a) leaders demonstrate a more professional orientation in their management of work processes and (b) greater trust is evident throughout the organization.

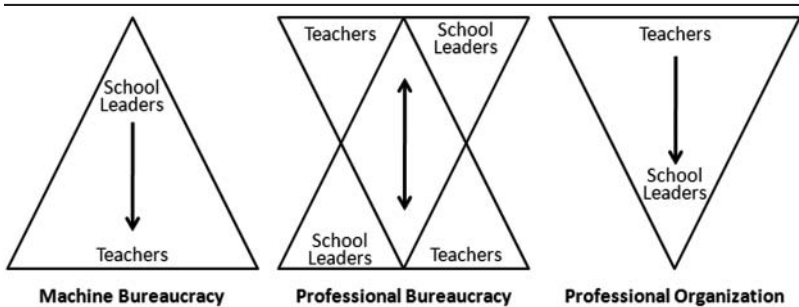
## The Structure of Schools

As schools seek to structure the joint work of large numbers of people around a shared goal, they face a perennial challenge of adopting the most productive levels of formalization, centralization, and standardization. As such, there is a danger—namely, that school leaders who overemphasize these structural elements and adopt the highly rigid structure of a “machine bureaucracy” will do so at the expense of cultivating greater professionalism in schools. School leaders who heavily rely on a hierarchy of authority, on policies and regulations, and on coercive mechanisms for coordination and control risk encumbering the costs associated with overstandardization of work processes—costs such as reductions in worker satisfaction, motivation, commitment, and creativity (Cloe & Goldsmith, 2002). These highly bureaucratic structures are also likely to inhibit the adaptations necessary in a changing external environment. There is a growing recognition that traditional command-and-control leadership styles do not well serve “organizations embedded in high velocity environments in which rapid change [necessitates] swift assessment and action” (Kramer & Cook, 2004, p. 2). Schools currently find themselves in just such high-velocity environments.

Symbolically, a machine bureaucracy can be represented as an organizational chart in the traditional pyramid shape, with power and authority concentrated at the hands of the organizational leaders at the peak of the pyramid and with both forces flowing downward to the workers—in this case, to the teachers. In contrast, a professional organization—such as a small group of doctors or lawyers in private practice—can be represented by an inverted pyramid, with the core professionals across the top of the diagram. Power and authority flow downward to administrators and personnel who serve in supporting roles, and work is organized around the expertise of the professionals as they exercise discretion in responding to the needs of their clients. Owing to the mission, size, complexity, and funding structures of public schools, it is unlikely that they could ever function strictly as professional organizations. Nevertheless, they could function as a hybrid of these two models—namely, in a professional bureaucracy—as represented by the overlapping pyramids in Figure 1. In this way, they can avoid the more detrimental outcomes inherent in a machine bureaucracy and so enjoy the greater commitment and joint deliberative action inherent in a professional organization.

In a professional bureaucracy, the prime coordinating mechanism is the standardization of skills that the professionals have acquired in their training

**Figure 1**  
**Schools as Professional Bureaucracies**



rather than the centralization and formalization inherent in a machine bureaucracy (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Drawing an analogy to equipment and software design orientations, Adler and Borys (1996) contrasted organizational design processes as embodying one of two possible rationales: one of “fool-proofing and deskilling” or one of “usability and upgrading.” They illustrated these views in describing early photocopier designs (which required a technician to resolve routine breakdowns) with later designs (which put many routine troubleshooting mechanisms in the hands of users). “According to one rationale,” they noted, “the user is a source of problems to be eliminated; according to the other, the user is a source of skill and intelligence to be supported” (p. 68). These two rationales are evident in reform efforts in schools: on one hand, in moves toward greater standardization of work processes, such as “teacher-proofing” the curriculum; on the other, in the move toward professional development and coaching as coordinating mechanisms.

This study refers to these two contrasting orientations as (a) a bureaucratic orientation, in which control is centralized and work processes are highly standardized, and (b) a professional orientation, in which rules are applied flexibly, control is shared, and work processes are open to joint deliberation (Hirschhorn, 1997). Hoy and Sweetland (2000, 2001) refer to these contrasting orientations as a hindering structure and an enabling structure. Embedded in these two rationales are divergent assumptions about the capacity of workers—assumptions that lead to divergent orientations toward control of those workers. A bureaucratic orientation embodies an implicit distrust of teachers and the contributions they have to offer,

whereas a professional orientation is grounded in trust—specifically, that teachers have the knowledge and ethical orientations to be granted greater autonomy and discretion in the conduct of their work. I now explore these two orientations in greater depth.

## **Bureaucratic Orientation In Schools**

School leaders who adopt a bureaucratic orientation overemphasize the bureaucratic elements of the organization by enforcing a high degree of centralization and formalization in their schools (Hirschhorn, 1997; Hoy & Sweetland, 2000, 2001). This command-and-control leadership style demonstrates low regard for the capability of teachers. In these schools, positional power is concentrated in the office of administrators, who use their authority to discipline teachers by enforcing compliance with organizational directives. There is a rigid adherence to rules and policies such that little discretion is granted to teachers in the conduct of their work. Processes are designed to closely monitor teachers, and coercive means are used to ensure that potentially recalcitrant and irresponsible teachers do what the organization prescribes. In these schools, the behavior of the principal serves to reinforce an implicit distrust, based on the following assumption—that without close supervision, teachers are likely to withhold the proper execution of their duties, as well as cut corners to reduce their effort, because they are motivated, not by the mission of the organization, but by their paychecks (Miller, 2004). Taken to the extreme, a bureaucratic orientation leads to an authoritarian culture of control with constrained communication, micromanagement, a proliferation of rules, and a rigid response to external threats (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). These are in turn likely to hamper necessary communication, to lower motivation and morale, and to stifle the very effectiveness and efficiency that administrators had hoped to achieve (Cloe & Goldsmith, 2002).

### **Constrained Communication**

Schools need open communication to be effective, yet a bureaucratic hierarchy can have a deleterious effect on the flow of communication. Because so much information in the organizational chart has to flow upward—that is, from the workers (at the wide base) to the decision makers (at the narrow top)—communication is often summarized and condensed—so much so that consequential decisions are being made with incomplete

information. Information flowing downward is likewise often distorted, namely, because such messages get carried by middle managers, who are not part of the decision-making process (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2002). In addition, differential levels of trust can affect patterns of communication between levels of a hierarchy. When one is interacting with a distrusted person within an organizational hierarchy—especially if that person holds more power—the goal of communication often becomes the protection of one’s interest and the reduction of one’s anxiety rather than the accurate transmission of ideas. In an organizational culture of distrust, subordinates demonstrate a great tendency to be evasive, to withhold information, and to distort attitudes or information in upward communication (Roberts & O’Reilly, 1974). Similarly, teachers in low-trust schools have described communication as being hampered by suspicion. Specifically, teachers have described being guarded in what they said—that they often blocked or distorted communication to avoid confrontation with colleagues and administrators. In addition, teachers avoided making contact with the principal, thus making it difficult to gain the information needed to be proactive in problem solving (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

### **Micromanaging**

One way that distrust plays out in leadership practice lies in the micro-management of subordinates—that is, by closely supervising workers, by overspecifying job requirements (i.e., telling capable people how to do their jobs), and by redoing work that has been done by a subordinate (i.e., to meet perfectionist standards). All of which shows disrespect and a lack of trust in the individual. Subordinates sense this and are likely to become resentful and withdrawn, withholding not only ideas but effort (Miller, 2004; Solomon & Flores, 2001). This withholding has a detrimental effect on schools, where ambitious collective goals can be reached only when teachers have the motivation, knowledge, and discretion necessary to be responsive to the diverse needs of students. Teachers tend to resent lock-step, one-size-fits-all curricula designed to “teacher-proof” the work of schools; namely, they view them as assaults on their professional status and as impediments to achieving the goals of fostering student achievement and growth (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008).

One of the deleterious effects of the coercive overspecification of job elements is that it keeps teachers in a perpetual state of dependency. A culture of compliance interferes with teachers’ developmental needs for learning and growth; as such, it may lead them to behave in immature ways

(Cloke & Goldsmith, 2002). One strategy has been recommended to ameliorate the negativity that is likely to accompany the deprivation of these developmental needs—namely, the selection of workers who “manifest low growth needs” (Adler & Borys, 1996, p. 66). This strategy, however, is unlikely to give schools the capacity needed to adapt to changing environmental conditions. Indeed, a serious concern for the profession is that of keeping the most capable, intelligent, and creative teachers from exiting the field (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007). School leaders who hope to cultivate greater maturity among their faculties would do well to support the learning and autonomy needs of teachers.

### **Proliferation of Rules**

Rules are a necessary part of organizational life. Schools adopt rules, procedures, and other formal mechanisms to guide the behavior of organizational participants. School districts must find ways to balance (a) the extension of trust to employees at various levels of the organization with (b) the creation of safeguards against self-serving, dishonest, and abusive behavior. When trust is broken, a likely organizational response is the creation of new rules to serve as a substitute for trust (Shapiro, 1987; Sitkin & Stickel, 1996; Zucker, 1986). The proliferation of rules, however, is likely to impair organizational effectiveness. Coercive bureaucratic rules are based on the premise that workers wish to evade responsibilities and withhold full and proper performance of obligations. Excessive elaboration of rules and a lack of flexibility in their application communicate distrust to those whom such rules are directed (Fox, 1974). Teachers, as well as students, may respond to a heavily rule-bound school environment with feelings of alienation, disloyalty, and lack of commitment, which can ironically make dishonesty and cheating more prevalent (Govier, 1992; Kramer & Cook, 2004). A cycle of distrust can ensue as more rules are put into place in response to increasing instances of broken trust (Lewicki, McAllister, & Bies, 1998).

### **Rigidity**

It is not uncommon for organizations to respond to a perceived external threat by exercising increased control over workers and so enforcing rigid adherence to standard operating procedures (Daly, in press; Staw, Sandelands, & Dutton, 1981). These tactics can in turn hinder the effective operation of the organization and so impair its adaptive response to the threat, as communication becomes constrained, resources are hoarded, and

workers become increasingly fearful and risk averse. As such, schools are currently experiencing a perceived threat to their legitimacy, with the accountability movement and the enforcement of No Child Left Behind legislation. Becoming rigid will likely be counterproductive, however. In the face of changing environmental forces, schools need to become flexible, innovative, and adaptive to respond to changing external circumstances; these processes become likely in an atmosphere of high trust (Mishra, 1996).

### **The Control Paradox**

Formal controls can interfere with the achievement of the very goals they were meant to facilitate (Miller, 2004). Instead of promoting organizational learning, coercive procedures and excessive control, as imposed by school leaders, lead to resentment and resistance, both of which can obstruct innovation and motivation (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2002; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). Standardized controls and rigid procedures lead to a breakdown in efficiency and effectiveness in situations where workers need to exercise a certain amount of discretion to do their jobs effectively (Fox, 1974; Miller, 2004). In a study of a professional organization, a system of bureaucratic rules had been introduced, from which conflict and hurt feelings resulted, namely, from the use of standardized procedures that threatened workers' sense of professionalism; that is, employees perceived a mismatch between the tasks they performed and the management control systems they had to accommodate (Sitkin & Stickel, 1996). Rigid rules and regulations are likely to be effective only when the requirements of a task are inherently routine and well enough understood to be specified clearly and concisely. As systems charged with fostering the development and education of a diverse set of young human beings, schools do not fit this mold (Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

Student needs are complex and they are constantly changing, thereby necessitating a perennial adaptation of strategies. Principals' attempts to improve performance outcomes by instituting standardized, one-size-fits-all procedures often backfire because they strip teachers of the discretion necessary to be responsive to diverse student needs. In schools with a bureaucratic orientation, principals turn to the imposition of rules to assert their authority and try to bring faculty into compliance with their desires for the school (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000, 2001). Teachers resent these tactics; they see them as an assault on their professional status. As such, they become less willing, not more willing, to cooperate with the school leader



on a common agenda. Although teachers may outwardly comply with the rules, many utilize their creativity to find ways to surreptitiously sabotage and thwart a leader's efforts (Solomon & Flores, 2001). The resulting power struggle is counterproductive to the development of a professional school community focused on responsiveness to student needs (Miller, 2004; Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

## Professional Orientation

Calls to transform schools into professional learning communities suggest that such a shift is necessary if schools are to adapt to the changing demands of the 21st century (Lieberman, 2005; Seashore Louis & Kruse, 1995). A profession is characterized by members who possess specialized expert knowledge and who pledge their first and primary responsibility to the welfare of those whom they serve. In addition, members are socialized into standards of practice and professional ethics, which are monitored by the profession (Darling-Hammond, 1988; Sykes, 1999). There are elements of professionalization that go beyond the schoolhouse, such as the rigorous training and selection of teachers, so that all individuals who are permitted to practice are adequately prepared to do so responsibly (Darling-Hammond, 1988). However, the leadership orientation of the principal and the conditions of work in a school have a bearing on the degree to which teachers' work can be characterized as falling in line with professional ideals.

Professional communities are organizations bound by a code of conduct and a set of ethics that guide decision making in the service of the needs of clients. For instance, the medical profession is undergirded by an oath, one sworn by all practitioners, to uphold the well-being of patients, "independent of local priorities, external mandates, and other extraneous considerations" (Cooper, 1988, p. 49). The professional community of schools has been characterized as a collective focus on student learning (Seashore Louis, Kruse, & Marks, 1996). As teachers are socialized into the norms of the profession, their beliefs, attitudes, and actions are expected to evidence a strong sense of accountability to the shared mission of service to students and their families. This shared sense of purpose, which enlivens the professional work of teachers, does not rely on a chain of command to enforce the investment of effort (Seashore Louis & Kruse, 1995). Instead, the teaching profession itself monitors these norms.

A hallmark of professional practice is the ability to apply professional judgment in nonroutine circumstances, taking relevant considerations into

account. Where certainty about practice does not exist, practitioners will, individually and collectively, continually seek to discover the most responsible course of action (Darling-Hammond, 1988, pp. 65-66). In drawing on lessons from the medical profession, Cooper (1988) noted the respect for the shared knowledge base within the profession, as well as the independent exercise of choice in selecting from an array of acceptable options in response to clients' needs. The medical community accepts the public nature of the practice, combined with authentic collegiality based on the need to consider multiple inputs and treatment options to achieve the desired outcomes. For their part, clients expect not only thorough assessment, an array of treatment strategies tailored to patients, and decisions based on evidence but also reliability, consistency, and evenhanded treatment (pp. 48-49).

In applying these professional standards to schools, professional learning communities have been characterized as evidencing productive collaboration, de-privatized teaching practice, and reflective dialogue (Seashore Louis et al., 1996). Participants continually research best practices to better serve clients. Ongoing rigorous professional inquiry supports joint deliberation as participants pursue data to bolster decision making (Elmore, Peterson, & McCarthy, 1996; Fullan, 2003). Darling-Hammond (1988) noted the need for ongoing inquiry to be embedded into the standards for professional practice:

Norms of inquiry and ethical conduct are extremely important. But because knowledge is constantly expanding, problems of practice are complex, and ethical dilemmas result from conflict between legitimate goals, these requirements cannot be satisfied by codification of knowledge, prescriptions for practice, and unchanging rules of conduct. . . . These norms must be accomplished by socialization to a professional standard that incorporates continual learning, reflection, and concern with the multiple effects of one's actions on others as fundamental aspects of the professional role. (p. 67)

Teachers make complex decisions; as such, structures and time that allow for collective deliberation enhance the quality of those decisions. Such an environment values the differences among perspectives and the open discussion and resolution of problems (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000, 2001). These processes in turn create the conditions that support student learning. As such, teacher professionalism has been found to be positively correlated with student achievement (Tschannen-Moran, Parish, & DiPaola, 2006).

In schools that operate as professional learning communities, the teachers themselves ensure that poor practice is not allowed to persist. Indeed, Darling-Hammond (1988) has described the hallmark of professional

organizations—namely that standards of practice are articulated, transmitted, and enforced by the profession through peer review (p. 73). Such collegiality is not the contrived collegiality that has sustained the norms of isolation, autonomy, and equal status within teachers' practice (Little, 1990). It rather stems from education and socialization processes that demand that entrants to the profession (a) demonstrate that they possess knowledge of the principles, theories, and procedures that undergird appropriate decision making and (b) continually seek to enhance such knowledge through professional development. Such professional standards of practice, however, do not translate into the uniform treatment of all students (Darling-Hammond, 1988). On the contrary, they make possible the rapid adaptation of instructional strategies based on assessments and professional judgment to meet the needs of individual students.

School leaders play a significant role in establishing the norms and structures that allow for schools to develop and operate as professional learning communities. Whereas some elements in a school structure can be thought of as school properties, the manner in which these elements are enacted has to do with the leadership style and behavior of the principal. Principals who have a professional orientation not only structure work processes but cultivate norms that enable teachers to productively engage in collective inquiry and constructively contribute to student needs (Collins, 2002). Their leadership orientation affects the quality and vitality of the entire professional community in a school, as evidenced by supportive administrative practices, high-quality interpersonal relationships, and adaptive implementation of school policies. Structural elements, such as the arrangement of time to allow for collaborative planning, as well as the infrastructure for shared decision making, have been found to influence the level of professional community (Seashore Louis & Kruse, 1995; Seashore Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996).

In contrast to those who demonstrate a command-and-control leadership style, school leaders with a professional orientation adopt a more flexible orientation toward the structure of the organization, one akin to the usability-and-upgrading rationale described by Adler and Borys (1996), thereby resulting in less centralization and formalization. As compared to their more bureaucratically oriented counterparts, these leaders hold in higher regard the professional expertise of teachers and so evidence greater faith in their capability; as such, they give teachers greater autonomy and discretion to exercise professional judgment in response to the diverse needs of clients (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2002; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). Although policies and procedures may exist in written form, they are seen as a means

to an end, rather than as ends themselves, and are so regarded as flexible guides to practice, rather than a set of rigid processes to be followed in all circumstances without question (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000, 2001). As such, a greater professional orientation is likely to result in increased motivation and a stronger commitment to shared goals (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2002). With a greater sense of confidence that teachers are working hard and going beyond the minimum contractual commitments, leaders with a professional orientation demonstrate a greater willingness to trust teachers to make adaptive judgments that temper or even substitute for existing rules and procedures (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000, 2001).

### **Trust and Professional Orientation**

Behind these two contrasting orientations toward school leadership lie differing levels of trust in teachers. A leader with a professional orientation deemphasizes bureaucratic mechanisms for control because such a leader trusts teachers to exercise good judgment in responding to the needs of students. A bureaucratically oriented leader is likely to argue that such trust is unwarranted and that teachers must be closely supervised to ensure that they do their duty to students. Darling-Hammond (1988) made this trust differential clear in discussing the various rationales offered in defense of maintaining a bureaucratic orientation in schools:

The rationales for legislative and management controls—public voice, uniformity, and efficiency—ultimately lessen the involvement of teachers in a broad spectrum of important teaching decisions. The basic reason, though, for these top down and increasingly prescriptive approaches is that policy makers do not trust teachers to make responsible, educationally-appropriate judgments. They do not view teachers as uniformly capable, and they are suspicious about the adequacy of teacher preparation and supervision. (pp. 63-64)

For schools to become more professional in their orientation, conditions need to be cultivated to foster greater trust between teachers and school leaders.

The relinquishing of bureaucratic control can be construed as negligence unless teachers demonstrate that they have the necessary competence to accurately assess student needs, make thoughtful instructional decisions in response to those assessments, and hold one another accountable. Teachers must also demonstrate that they have adopted a strong commitment to serving the needs of students and can be relied on to act on that commitment and

not simply to pursue what is easier or more expedient. In addition, teachers must be willing to openly disclose difficulties as they arise, and they must engage in an honest assessment of what contributed to those difficulties (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). McLaughlin and Yee (1988) contrast problem-solving and problem-hiding environments in schools, noting that a problem-solving environment holds forth an assumption of constant change, revision, and professional growth, whereas in a problem-hiding environment, teachers attempt to conceal their less-than-successful outcomes and portray success to reap the individual incentives that come with the perception of success. In schools with a professional orientation, mistakes are viewed as opportunities for learning and refinement rather than for blame and castigation, thereby resulting in greater openness and honesty in the face of disappointing results (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). This openness then allows collective problem finding and problem solving to characterize the professional dialogue in a school.

The open communication that high-trust environments makes possible confers a competitive advantage to the organization in times of flux and change (Mishra, 1996). Schools that have high levels of trust can avoid rigidity, as well as a "hunkering down" mentality in the midst of crisis (Daly, in press); in such schools, communication flows more easily and resources are shared, rather than hoarded, so that they can be allocated in ways that will have the greatest benefit for the survival and flourishing of the organization. People in high-trust environments have been found to be more likely to disclose accurate, relevant, and complete data about problems, as well as share their thoughts, feelings, and ideas for possible solutions (Wrightsman, 1974; Zand, 1971). When high trust allows for candor and the open exchange of information, problems can be disclosed, diagnosed, and corrected before they are compounded. Principals can also foster the flow of information coming to them, by being open with the communication that is flowing from them (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Where subordinates reported a high level of trust in their leader, they were more likely to have higher levels of confidence in the accuracy of information coming from the leader, a greater desire for interaction with the leader, and a greater satisfaction with communication with the leader (Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974).

To foster trust, school policies must demonstrate an expectation of trustworthy behavior on the part of teachers and other staff, thereby creating decision-making structures and granting discretion in instructional decisions that rely on teachers' expertise and commitment to students (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). These policies must also provide administrators with the

means to be responsive to breaches of trust, with appropriate consequences for those who violate trust—that is, to constrain employee behavior within acceptable bounds (Fox, 1974; Sitkin & Stickel, 1996). Trust is supported by credible but relatively unused threats and sanctions (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Lindsfold & Bennett, 1973). School leaders with a professional orientation do not abuse their power to enforce these policies through manipulation or overreliance on coercive punishments, but neither do they abdicate their responsibility for leadership. They engage in coaching and collaboration to bring underperforming teachers into alignment with professional standards, and they provide resources to continually extend the professional knowledge of all their teachers (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

A small but growing body of research supports the connection between greater faculty trust and elements of a leader's professional orientation. Specifically, this literature links trust in leaders to higher levels of organizational citizenship and the willingness to voluntarily go beyond minimum contractual obligations (Dirks & Skarlicki, 2004; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990; Tschannen-Moran, 2003). In contrasting the professional culture of two urban high schools, Scribner, Hager, and Warne (2002) described two principals who evidenced not only a different orientation toward rules and policies but also differing levels of trust in the faculty. In one school, where rigid adherence to rules and policies communicated a lack of trust and respect for the professionalism of the teachers, there was little sense of a professional community. Meanwhile, in the other school (within the same district), where the leadership style of the principal communicated greater trust, there was a much stronger sense of a professional community. Faculty trust has also been found to be related to organizational mindfulness—that is, a “continuous scrutiny and refinement of expectations based on new experiences, appreciation of the subtleties of context, and identification of novel aspects of context that can improve foresight and functioning” (Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006, p. 238). Thus defined, mindfulness can be considered an element of a professional orientation in schools when it evidences a steadfast focus on fostering student learning (Hoy, 2003).

A professional orientation extends beyond the leader's behavior toward teachers to an orientation toward students as well. Creating school disciplinary procedures that communicate the expectation of trustworthy behavior (rather than the opposite) sends a potent message to students, parents, and teachers alike. Cultivating productive relationships with parents and the community, through open dialogue and a focus on the shared goal of student success, can support a culture of professionalism in schools (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). The trust of parents is also a

vital element in building and maintaining the family–school relationship. An enabling structure has been found to be related to parent–school trust, parent–principal trust, and parent collaboration, even when controlling for the influence of school level, school size, and school socioeconomic status (Adams & Forsyth, 2006). Parental trust of the school and principal were in turn found to be directly related to parental involvement (Barnes, Mitchell, Forsyth, & Adams, 2005). A professional orientation in schools may then be related to greater trust within the school and between the school and its external environment.

These studies suggest that trust is required for professionalism to characterize a school. Principals must trust that teachers will act with the best interests of students in mind, and teachers must trust in the leadership of their schools. In turn, it seems likely that a school leader’s professional orientation plays a significant role in supporting and sustaining trustworthy behavior. The norms in a professional community can facilitate trust by encouraging cooperation among teachers, rather than competition (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Trust is extended to teachers to foster the kinds of support that they need for risk taking and professional growth (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Teachers are encouraged, not to blindly adhere to rules and regulations, but to reflect on innovative ways to respond to novel situations (Cloe & Goldsmith, 2002; Lieberman, 1988; Seashore Louis & Kruse, 1995). Empirical evidence to bolster those claims is scant, however. The purpose of this study was to add to that body of evidence.

## Method

This quantitative study was undertaken to empirically explore the relationship between teacher professionalism in a school and (a) faculty perceptions of the school leaders’ professional orientation and (b) the level of faculty trust in three important constituencies: the principal, teacher colleagues, and clients. It contributes to the small but growing body of research examining professionalism in schools.

## Participants

Respondents for this study were 2,355 teachers within 80 middle schools in a mid-Atlantic state. Schools from diverse contexts were invited to participate in the study. Schools were selected on the basis of their willingness to allow time for teachers to complete surveys during a faculty meeting.

Participating schools were diverse in size, racial composition, and setting (urban, suburban, and rural). The proportion of students participating in subsidized meals varied from 2% to 94%, with a mean of 36%; for the state's middle schools that did not participate in the study, the mean was 33%, with a range of 1% and 86%.

## Measures

The school was the unit of analysis for this study; thus, the survey items directed the participants to share their perceptions of (a) the professionalism of teacher colleagues within the school, (b) the professional orientation of their administrators, and (c) the conditions of trust in the building. The expectation was that teachers within a school building would share similar perceptions of their work environment because of their shared tasks and frequent interaction, as well as the long-standing membership of most members of the faculty (George, 1990), and that these perceptions would shape the behavior and attitudes of teachers within that building.

*Teacher professionalism.* Teachers' perceptions of their colleagues' behavior were assessed using the Teacher Professionalism subscale of the School Climate Index (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2006). *Teacher professionalism* refers to teachers' perceptions that their colleagues take their work seriously, demonstrate a high level of commitment, and go beyond minimum expectations to meet the needs of students. In schools with a high degree of teacher professionalism, teachers respect their colleagues' competence and expertise. Teachers work cooperatively with one another, are clearly engaged in the teaching process, and are enthusiastic about their work. Each of the eight items requires respondents to assess, on a 5-point Likert-type scale, how frequently the statement is true of his or her school (1 = *never*, 5 = *very frequently*). In the current sample, the alpha coefficient of reliability for teacher professionalism was .94. Sample items include the following: "Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues" and "The interactions between faculty members are cooperative."

*Professional orientation of principals.* The professional orientation of administrators was captured using the Enabling Structure Scale, which measures teachers' perceptions of how administrative authority is exercised by school leaders, specifically assessing the lower levels of centralization, formalization, and standardization considered to be essential elements of a



professional orientation (Hoy & Sweetland, 2000, 2001). This 12-item measure asked respondents to assess on a 5-point Likert-type scale how frequently each statement is true of his or her school (1 = *never*, 5 = *very frequently*). Half the items were negatively worded and the scores subsequently reverse-scored. In the current sample, the alpha coefficient of reliability for this measure was .96. Sample items include the following: “Administrators in this school use their authority to enable teachers to do their job” and “Administrative rules in this school are substitutes for professional judgments” (reverse-scored).

*Faculty trust.* The measure of trust used in this study was developed on the basis of the following definition: a party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). The Faculty Trust Scales capture teachers’ trust in four important consistencies within the school: the principal, colleagues, students, and parents. Statistical analysis, however, demonstrated that teachers’ perceptions of trust in students were statistically indistinguishable from their perceptions of trust in parents, and so these two subscales were collapsed into one—namely, Faculty Trust in Clients (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). The response set was a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 6 = *strongly agree*). The Faculty Trust Scales consist of 26 items divided among three subscales. The first, Faculty Trust in the Principal, includes 8 items. Three of the items were negatively worded and subsequently reverse-coded. In the current sample, the alpha coefficient of reliability for this subscale was .98. Sample items include the following: “The principal of this school typically acts with the best interest of the teachers in mind” and “Teachers in this school can rely on the principal.” The second subscale, Faculty Trust in Colleagues, includes 8 items. In the current sample, the alpha coefficient of reliability for this subscale was .87. Sample items include the following: “Teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of their colleagues,” and “Even in difficult situations, teachers in this school can depend on each other.” The third subscale, Faculty Trust in Clients (students and parents), includes 10 items. In the current sample, the alpha coefficient of reliability for this subscale was .97 (after the removal of one item, as explained below). Sample items include the following: “Teachers in this school are suspicious of students” (reverse-scored) and “Teachers can count on parental support.”

## Data Collection and Analysis

With the permission of the central office and the principal, researchers administered the surveys during a regularly scheduled faculty meeting at each school. The purposes of the research were explained; confidentiality was ensured; and participants were given the option to skip any items that they did not wish to answer. Two surveys were randomly administered to members of the faculty, to reduce common response bias. Halpin (1959) demonstrated that the mean scores for group-level variables, as computed on the basis of five to seven randomly selected respondents, yield relatively stable scores, close to the overall mean for the group. Schools with fewer than 15 faculty members were excluded from the study. No attempt was made to include the responses of teachers who were absent from the meeting. Hierarchical linear modeling was used to test the conceptual argument that trust and professionalism vary by school membership, as evidenced by the proportion of variance accounted for between schools. SPSS (version 15) was used for exploratory factor analyses and Pearson's  $r$ , for correlational analysis and multiple regression analysis.

## Results

The initial analyses were performed to check (a) the viability of considering the measures to be school-level variables and (b) the validity of the instruments in use. The subsequent analyses examined whether the presence of a professional orientation among administrators and faculty trust were related to the degree to which teachers perceived professionalism on the part of colleagues within their schools.

## Unit of Analysis

To test the use of the school mean as an indicator of the school-level variables, the proportion of between-group variance was examined using hierarchical linear modeling (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Between-school variance ranged from 14% to 29%, and the between-school variance parameter estimate was statistically significant in all five cases (all chi-square statistics yielded significance at the  $p < .0001$  level). See Table 1 for the results. These ranges match or exceed the degree of between-school variance found in student achievement in nationally representative data sets, as well as in those reported for other social processes in schools (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Thus, the school-level analyses were considered to be justified.

**Table 1**  
**Between-School Variance for the Variables Under Study**

Variable	Teachers ( <i>n</i> )	Variance Component		Variance Between Schools (%)
		Within School	Between School	
Teacher professionalism	1,178	.24395	.03907	13.80
Professional orientation of principals	1,178	.36548	.08950	19.67
Trust in the principal	1,177	.99690	.37804	27.50
Trust in colleagues	1,177	.44794	.11195	19.99
Trust in clients	1,177	.39240	.16028	29.00

Note: *n* = 80 schools.

### Exploratory Factor Analysis

A factor analysis was conducted using maximum likelihood extraction with varimax rotation of all the items in the five subscales used in this study. One negatively worded item in the published version of the Faculty Trust Scales—specifically, in the Faculty Trust in Clients subscale (“Students here are secretive”)—did not load as expected and was thus removed from further analysis. All remaining items loaded in the expected direction and with the items of the same subscale. The factor analysis revealed five factors with eigenvalues higher than 1 that explained 80% of the variance. The factor coefficients for Teacher Professionalism ranged from .60 to .79, and the coefficients for Professional Orientation of Principals ranged from .68 to .85. The coefficients for the three trust subscales ranged similarly—from .66 to .84 for Faculty Trust in the Principal, .60 to .87 for Faculty Trust in Colleagues, and .73 to .91 for Faculty Trust in Clients. This provided evidence of construct validity, thereby indicating that each variable under study was distinct and not simply the same construct called by a different label.

Because the three subscales of the Faculty Trust Scales were administered to one group of respondents and might thus be subject to common response bias, a second factor analysis was conducted, and it included only the 25 items of the Faculty Trust Scales. A similar extraction, using only the items in the trust scales, revealed three strong factors with eigenvalues

higher than 1 that explained 83% of the variance. All items loaded as expected, with items from Faculty Trust in Clients forming the first factor (with factor coefficients ranging from .77 to .90); Faculty Trust in the Principal, the second (.82–.92); and Faculty Trust in Colleagues, the third (.61–.90). See Table 2 for the factor coefficients of each item. These results confirmed that respondents discerned differences in the referents of the trust items, despite being on the same form.

*Correlational analysis.* The bivariate correlations, calculated using Pearson's  $r$ , provided evidence in support of the hypothesis that teacher perceptions regarding the professionalism of their colleagues' behavior were related to a professional orientation among principals in schools and to faculty trust (see Table 3). The results revealed that teacher professionalism was strongly related to the professional orientation of principals; likewise, teacher professionalism was strongly related to faculty trust in colleagues. Faculty perceptions of their colleagues' professionalism were moderately related to faculty trust in the principal, as well as to faculty trust in clients. Faculty trust in the principal was more strongly related to faculty trust in colleagues than to faculty trust in clients, and faculty trust in colleagues was strongly related to faculty trust in clients. Evidence also emerged that teachers' perceptions of their principals' professional orientation were related to the level of trust in the school. Professional orientation of principals was strongly related faculty trust in the principal. Professional orientation of principals was also moderately related to faculty trust in colleagues and to faculty trust in clients.

*Regression analysis.* Although bivariate correlations provided evidence that professional orientation of principals and faculty trust were related to faculty perceptions of teacher professionalism, multiple regression was employed to examine their combined effects. Table 4 displays the results of a regression analysis in which professional orientation of principals and the three dimensions of faculty trust were used as predictors of teacher professionalism. The combined contribution of these four variables explained 57% of the variance in teacher professionalism. Furthermore, professional orientation of principals and faculty trust in colleagues each made a significant independent contribution in explaining teacher professionalism, thereby suggesting that each contributed uniquely, as well as in combination with the others, to explaining variance in teacher professionalism.

**Table 2**  
**Exploratory Factor Analysis for Trust Scales**

Subscale: Statement	Factor		
	1	2	3
<b>Faculty Trust in Clients</b>			
Teachers in this school trust the parents.	.902	.114	.147
Parents in this school are reliable in their commitments	.897	.060	.203
Teachers think that most of the parents do a good job.	.878	.092	.246
Teachers can count on parental support.	.845	.091	.289
Students in this school can be counted on to do their work.	.802	.070	.212
Teachers in this school can believe what parents tell them.	.800	.034	.327
Students in this school care about each other.	.792	.080	.328
Teachers here believe students are competent learners.	.788	.151	.328
Teachers in this school trust their students.	.766	.119	.325
<b>Faculty Trust in the Principal</b>			
The principal in this school typically acts with the best interests of the teachers in mind.	.101	.923	.230
Teachers in this school trust the principal.	.091	.922	.286
Teachers in this school can rely on their principal.	.172	.911	.266
The teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of the principal.	.185	.898	.302
The principal in this school is competent in doing his or her job.	.098	.889	.229
The principal doesn't tell teachers what is really going on. <sup>a</sup>	-.035	.837	.093
The principal of this school does not show concern for teachers. <sup>a</sup>	.077	.836	.189
The teachers in this school are suspicious of most of the principal's actions. <sup>a</sup>	.076	.822	.093
<b>Faculty Trust in Colleagues</b>			
Teachers in this school trust each other.	.332	.223	.895
Teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of their colleagues.	.365	.218	.863
Teachers in this school are open with each other.	.260	.262	.845
Teachers in this school typically look out for each other.	.275	.178	.802
Even in difficult situations, teachers in this school can depend on each other.	.347	.238	.787
When teachers in this school tell you something you can believe it	.337	.289	.740
Teachers in this school do their jobs well.	.370	.256	.740
Teachers in this school are suspicious of each other. <sup>a</sup>	.261	.353	.608
Eigenvalue	13.24	5.22	2.21
Proportion of variance explained	53.00	73.84	82.68

Note:  $n = 80$  schools.

a. Indicates reverse-scored item.

**Table 3**  
**Correlations Between Teacher Professionalism,  
 Professional Orientation of Principals, and Faculty Trust**

Variable	2	3	4	5
1. Teacher professionalism	.56**	.44**	.62**	.45**
2. Professional orientation of principals		.54**	.26*	.30**
3. Faculty trust in the principal			.52**	.27*
4. Faculty trust in colleagues				.62**
5. Faculty trust in clients				—

Note:  $n = 80$  schools.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 4**  
**Regression Analysis of Teacher Professionalism—With Principal  
 Professional Orientation and Faculty Trust as Predictors**

Variable	$\beta$	$t$	$p$
Professional orientation of principals	.48	5.12	.000
Faculty trust in the principal	-.11	-1.05	.299
Faculty trust in colleagues	.57	-5.09	.000
Faculty trust in clients	-.02	-0.16	.875
$R$	.57		
Adjusted $R^2$	.54		
$SE$	.166		

Note: Standardized beta.  $n = 80$  schools.

The nonsignificant beta weights of faculty trust in the principal and faculty trust in clients invited further investigation given the moderate-to-strong relationships in the bivariate correlations. When faculty trust in the principal was entered alone, it made a significant positive contribution to explaining teacher professionalism ( $\beta = .44, p < .01$ ), explaining 19% of the variance. When professional orientation of principals was added as a predictor, 34% of the variance in teacher professionalism was explained, and the standardized beta weight for faculty trust in the principal became nonsignificant. When faculty trust in colleagues was added as a predictor, the standardized beta weight became negative, which suggests that faculty trust in the principal played a moderating role in the relationship between professional orientation of principals and teacher professionalism. A similar result occurred with faculty trust in clients. When entered alone, 20% of the variance in teacher professionalism was explained, and it made a significant positive contribution ( $\beta = .45, p < .01$ ). When faculty trust in colleagues

was added as the second predictor, 39% of variance in teacher professionalism was explained, and faculty trust in clients became nonsignificant. This finding suggests that faculty trust in clients played a moderating role in the relationship between faculty trust in colleagues and teacher professionalism. It was not until all four variables were entered that the standardized beta weight for faculty trust in clients became negative.

## Discussion

These results provide support for the hypotheses that guided this study—namely, that teachers demonstrate greater professionalism where leaders demonstrate a professional orientation and where greater trust is evident throughout the organization.

### Professionalism in Schools

The evidence suggests that for schools to meet the calls to function as professional learning communities, attention needs to be paid to the ways that schools are managed. In schools that were managed with a professional orientation, as evidenced by a less bureaucratic and authoritarian leadership style on the part of principals, teachers reported greater professionalism in the behavior of their colleagues. Faculty's perceptions of a flexible administrative orientation that facilitated, rather than hampered, their efforts correlated strongly with their perceptions that teachers were more likely to take their work seriously, demonstrate a high level of commitment, and go beyond minimum expectations to meet the needs of students. In these schools, teachers respected their colleagues' competence and expertise and reported that they were clearly engaged in the teaching process. Teachers worked cooperatively with one another and were enthusiastic about their work. Conversely, in schools with a bureaucratic, rule-bound orientation, teachers were less likely to conduct themselves as professionals and to go beyond minimum expectations with students.

The professional orientation of school leaders was also related in important ways to the culture of trust in schools. As predicted, when the faculty perceived that the administrators treated them as professionals, with flexibility and a less rigid stance toward rules, they were likely to express greater trust in the principal. Despite the proposal that rules can substitute for trust where distrust has taken hold (Shapiro, 1987; Sitkin & Stickel, 1996; Zucker, 1986), these results suggest that where trust was high, trust

functioned as a substitute for the rigid enforcement of rules. Conversely, schools with a bureaucratic culture were more likely to be characterized by distrust between school leaders and teachers. It seems that teachers perceived the implicit distrust embedded in highly bureaucratic and controlling environments and so responded with reduced trust in their leaders.

## Faculty Trust

The relationships of faculty trust across levels of the hierarchy were instructive. The correlation of faculty trust in the principal with faculty trust in colleagues suggests that the principal may set the tone for the quality of relationships among the adults in the building. Where faculty trust in the principal was high, faculty trust in colleagues tended to be higher. Interestingly, teachers' trust in the principal was more strongly related to their trust in colleagues than to their trust in clients, which suggests that the principals' role is somewhat more limited in influencing teachers' relationships with students.

Teachers' trust in their colleagues was related to the central mission of the school in important ways. Where trust was higher among teachers, teachers perceived greater professionalism on the part of their colleagues. Teachers were apparently more willing to extend trust to colleagues whom they saw as being competent, exercising professional judgment, and demonstrating a strong commitment to students. Faculty trust in colleagues was also related to higher trust in students and their parents. It seems that when a culture of trust prevails within the faculty at a school, students may benefit as the recipients of this trust. And in a triangle of reciprocal relationships where teachers trusted students and parents, teachers were more likely to perceive greater professionalism on the part of their colleagues.

Faculty trust and a professional orientation on the part of school leaders functioned together in interesting ways. The multiple regression analysis revealed that the professional orientation of principals and faculty trust explained a substantial proportion of the variance in teacher professionalism, each making an independent contribution to explaining the variance in perceptions of teacher behavior. Faculty trust in the principal apparently played a moderating role in the relationship between the professional orientation of the principal and teacher professionalism. Thus, where trust in the principal was low, teachers might perceive a flexible orientation toward rules and yet still not behave in a professional manner. Similarly, the faculty's trust in clients played a moderating role in the relationship between their perceptions of their colleagues' professionalism and their trust in their colleagues. Perhaps where trust in clients was low, teachers were willing to



extend trust in their colleagues even when they perceived a lack of commitment or professional judgment in relation to students. This pattern has been noted in qualitative studies of trust in urban schools (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

## **Conclusion**

There are increasingly urgent calls being made to transform schools into professional learning communities so that they can adapt to changing external demands and the diverse needs of students. The results of this study suggest that for teachers to live up to these higher expectations of professionalism, attention needs to be paid to issues of the leadership orientation of principals and to the relationships of trust in schools. These findings have practical implications, as well as implications for future research.

## **Practical Implications**

The results of this study have significant implications for principals as they conduct the day-to-day operations of schools. Specifically, the findings suggest that principals who want to cultivate greater professionalism in the behavior of their teachers would do well to evidence a professional orientation in their leadership style and to actively cultivate greater trust at all levels of the school. By creating the organizational conditions where teachers can exercise greater discretion in using their professional judgment to respond to the needs of students, principals can foster among teachers stronger professional norms, greater energy and enthusiasm for one's work, and greater trust in their relationships with students and colleagues. To do so, principals must attend to the professional norms of the schools, inspiring teachers to strengthen their commitment to students so that they can be relied on to act from that commitment and not simply pursue what is easier or more expedient (Darling-Hammond, 1988). Principals must not only support but challenge teachers to develop the necessary competencies to accurately assess student needs and to make thoughtful instructional decisions in response to those assessments. A useful course of action in this regard involves the development of structures and the cultivation of skills for teachers to engage in joint planning of instruction—for instance, by arranging the schedule to allow time for collaboration, communication, and peer coaching (Cosner, in press).

If we want our schools to function as professional learning communities, then school leaders would do well to resist adopting a bureaucratic orientation, with its implicit distrust, even if these practices would seem to be more efficient in the short run. This may seem counterintuitive to a principal who assumes leadership of a school where commitment to students is low, where teachers work in isolation, and where professional curiosity regarding effective practice is lacking. Although conventional wisdom suggests that in such a situation, a command-and-control leadership style may be necessary to move recalcitrant teachers to do their duty to students, the results of this study suggest otherwise. As we have seen, a highly bureaucratic leadership style tends to keep teachers in a low developmental level (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2002). Although such a leader can enforce compliance with contractual specifications, students will not be well served if teachers do only what they are contractually obligated to. The work of schools is too complex to be clearly delineated in a written contract. For schools to fulfill their duty to students, a context must be cultivated that is responsive to student needs. This necessitates treating teachers as professionals, granting them discretion, and fostering trusting relationships throughout the school.

Adopting a professional orientation is not the same thing as taking a *laissez-faire*, "anything goes" stance where teachers are not held accountable in their responsibilities to students. Competence in school leadership requires not only inspiring teachers in their commitment to students but challenging and supporting teachers who fall short in their duty to improve their instructional practice (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). In schools where the level of professionalism in teachers is low, the process of granting teachers more discretion may be a gradual transition as norms and commitments are strengthened. Principals who are to lead their schools into becoming professional learning communities would do well to treat teachers as professionals; to deal swiftly, skillfully, and sensitively to instances of a lack of professionalism on the part of teachers; and to gradually extend greater trust to teachers as the norms that guide teacher behavior become stronger.

For principals who are interested in building a professional orientation in their schools, a productive strategy would include intentionally cultivating trust in their relationships with teachers. Principals must be trustworthy in their actions; they must demonstrate an unflinching ethic of care, as well as an integrity of the highest degree, in all their dealings (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Principals who wish to receive trust would do well to extend trust by being open with information, by including teachers in decisions that affect them, and by sharing power via delegation without micromanagement (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Principals with greater

confidence in the expertise of teachers are more likely to include teachers in decisions that affect their work with students (Hoy & Tarter, 2007). Teachers, students, and parents will likely look to the school leader for competence in skillfully navigating conflict; in turn, principals will support greater shared work by providing teachers with professional development to assist them in resolving the inevitable conflicts inherent in joint work (Cosner, *in press*; Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

The principal must create sufficient trust that teachers will feel comfortable in disclosing difficulties as they arise and that they will engage in an honest assessment of what has contributed to those difficulties (McLaughlin & Yee, 1988). Principals would also do well to address, in a proactive but respectful manner, instances of unprofessional or untrustworthy behavior on the part of teachers, to foster strong collegial relationships between teachers. Coaching teachers through new expectations and being available to mediate conflicts will assist teachers in fostering the strong relationships that undergird a professional orientation in schools. Creating conditions that strengthen faculty trust in colleagues within the school may in turn allow greater faculty trust in students and parents to emerge.

## Research Implications

A number of directions for future research emerge from this study. One series of research questions revolves around the conditions that are necessary to facilitate the emergence of greater teacher professionalism in schools:

- To what extent is greater professionalism related to the motivation of teachers and their self-efficacy beliefs?
- How are patterns of interpersonal communication and structures for shared decision making related to teacher professionalism?
- What environmental constraints enhance or impair the development of a professional orientation among school leaders?
- To what extent do recent efforts to make schools more accountable to the public impede or facilitate the development of such an orientation?
- How are the internal and external politics of a school related to the flexibility or rigidity with which rules are applied in schools?
- To what extent are the mechanisms and norms surrounding how conflict is handled in a school related to the level of teacher professionalism and the professional orientation of school leaders?

As schools seek to transform themselves into professional learning communities, research into the conditions that foster greater professionalism would be helpful.

Clearly, trust is a salient aspect of school life. Like teacher professionalism, it is an important end in and of itself, but it is also likely related to other important organizational outcomes—for example,

- To what extent is faculty trust in clients reciprocated by students and their parents, and how is it related to communication, collaboration, and cooperation with parents?
- To what extent is faculty trust in the principal and colleagues related to teachers' propensity to innovate and take risks?
- To what extent is faculty trust in the principal related to teacher self-efficacy and the collective teacher efficacy beliefs of a school faculty?

Schools are likely to benefit from a greater understanding of the dynamics and consequences of trust in schools.

It is unlikely that schools can live up to the aspirations that we have for them unless they come to function as professional learning communities. Overrelying on bureaucratic structures to organize the complex work of schools diminishes schools' ability to be adaptive and responsive to the needs of their students. Principals who manage their schools with a command-and-control leadership style will likely pay a price in effectiveness. The results of this study reveal that in schools with a bureaucratic orientation, teachers demonstrate less commitment to students and are less likely to extend themselves beyond their minimum contractual obligations. In these environments, faculty trust in important constituencies tends to be low. As school leaders adopt a professional orientation, teachers will likely evidence greater professionalism, including a stronger commitment to their students, greater cooperation with colleagues, more engagement with the teaching task, and the demonstration of greater expertise. With greater professionalism and greater trust, these schools are likely to flourish.

## References

- Adams, C. M., & Forsyth, P. B. (2006, April). *Promoting a culture of parental collaboration and trust*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.
- Adler, P. S., & Borys, B. (1996). Two types of bureaucracy: Enabling and coercive. *Administrative Quarterly*, 41, 61-89.
- Barnes, L. L. B., Mitchell, R. M., Forsyth, P. B., & Adams, C. M. (2005, April). *The effects of parental trust on perceived collective influence and school involvement*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Québec, Canada.

- Bryk, A. S., & Schneider, B. (2002). *Trust in schools: A resource of school improvement*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Cloke, K., & Goldsmith, J. (2002). *The end of management and the rise of organizational democracy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Collins, J. (2002). *Good to great: Why some companies make the leap . . . and others don't*. New York: HarperBusiness.
- Cooper, M. (1988). Whose culture is it, anyway? In A. Lieberman (Ed.), *Building a professional culture in schools* (pp. 45-54). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Cosner, S. (in press). Building organizational capacity through trust. *Educational Administration Quarterly*.
- Daly, A. (in press). Rigid response in an age of accountability: The potential of leadership and trust. *Educational Administration Quarterly*.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (1988). Policy and professionalism. In A. Lieberman (Ed.), *Building a professional culture in schools* (pp. 55-77) New York: Teachers College Press.
- DiPaola, M. F., & Hoy, W. K. (2008). *Principals improving instruction: Supervision, evaluation, and professional development*. Boston: Pearson.
- Dirks, K. T., & Skarlicki, D. P. (2004). Trust in leaders: Existing research and emerging issues. In R. M. Kramer & K. S. Cook (Eds.), *Trust and distrust in organizations* (pp. 21-40). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Elmore, R. F., Peterson, P. L., & McCarthey, S. J. (1996). *Restructuring the classroom: Teaching, learning, and school organization*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Fox, A. (1974). *Beyond contract: Work, power and trust relations*. London: Farber & Farber.
- Fullan, M. (2003). *The moral imperative of school leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- George, J. M. (1990). Personality, affect, and behavior in groups. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75, 107-116.
- Govier, T. (1992). Distrust as a practical problem. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 23, 52-63.
- Halpin, A. W. (1959). *The leader behavior of school superintendents*. Chicago: Midwest Administrative Center.
- Hirschhorn, L. (1997). *Reworking authority: Leading and following in a post-modern organization*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Hoy, W. K. (2003). An analysis of enabling and mindful school structures: Some theoretical, research, and practical consideration. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 41, 87-108.
- Hoy, W. K., Gage, C. Q., & Tarter, C. J. (2006). School mindfulness and faculty trust: Necessary conditions for each other? *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 42, 236-255.
- Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2008). *Educational administration: Theory, research, and practice* (8th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Hoy, W. K., & Sweetland, S. R. (2000). Bureaucracies that work: Enabling not coercive. *Journal of School Leadership*, 10, 525-541.
- Hoy, W. K., & Sweetland, S. R. (2001). Designing better schools: The meaning and nature of enabling school structure. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 37, 296-321.
- Hoy, W. K., & Tarter, C. J. (2007). *Administrators solving the problems of practice: Decision-making, concepts, cases and consequences* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Hoy, W. K., & Tschannen-Moran, M. (2003). The conceptualization and measurement of faculty trust in schools: The Omnibus T-Scale. In W. K. Hoy & C. G. Miskel (Eds.), *Studies in leading and organizing schools* (pp. 181-208). Greenwich, CT: Information Age. (Trust scales available at [http://mxtsch.people.wm.edu/research\\_tools.php](http://mxtsch.people.wm.edu/research_tools.php))

- Kramer, R. M., & Cook, K. S. (2004). *Trust and distrust in organizations*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Lewicki, R. J., McAllister, D. J., & Bies, R. J. (1998). Trust and distrust: New relationships and realities. *Academy of Management Review*, 23, 438-458.
- Lieberman, A. (1988). *Building a professional culture in schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Lieberman, A. (2005). *The roots of educational change: International handbook of educational change*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
- Lindskold, S., & Bennett, R. (1973). Attributing trust and conciliatory intent from coercive power capability. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 28, 180-186.
- Little, J. W. (1990). The persistence of privacy: Autonomy and initiative in teachers' professional relations. *Teachers College Record*, 91, 509-536.
- McLaughlin, M. W., & Yee, S. M. (1988). School as a place to have a career. In A. Lieberman (Ed.), *Building a professional culture in schools* (pp. 23-44) New York: Teachers College Press.
- Miller, G. J. (2004). Monitoring, rules, and the control paradox: Can the good soldier Svejk be trusted? In R. M. Kramer & K. S. Cook (Eds.), *Trust and distrust in organizations* (pp. 99-126). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Mishra, A. K. (1996). Organizational responses to crisis: The centrality of trust. In R. Kramer & T. Tyler (Eds.), *Trust in organizations* (pp. 261-287). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- National Center for Educational Statistics. (2007). *Teacher attrition and mobility: Results from the teacher follow-up survey, 2004-05*. Retrieved December 31, 2008, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007307.pdf>
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Moorman, R. H., & Fetter, R. (1990). Transformational leader behaviors and their effects on followers' trust in leader, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Leadership Quarterly* 1, 107-142.
- Raudenbush, S. W., & Bryk, A. S. (2002). *Hierarchical linear models: Applications and data analysis methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Roberts, K. H., & O'Reilly, C. O. (1974). Failure in upward communication in organizations: Three possible culprits. *Academy of Management Review*, 17, 205-215.
- Scribner, J. P., Hager, D. R., & Warne, T. R. (2002). The paradox of professional community: Tales from two high schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 38, 45-76.
- Seashore Louis, K., & Kruse, S. (1995). *Professionalism and community: Perspectives on reforming urban schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Seashore Louis, K., Kruse, S., & Marks, H. M. (1996). School-wide professional community: Teachers' work, intellectual quality, and commitment. In F. W. Newman & Associates (Eds.), *Authentic achievement: Restructuring schools for intellectual quality* (pp. 179 -203). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Seashore Louis, K., Marks, H. M., & Kruse, S. (1996). Teacher professional community in restructuring schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 33, 757-798.
- Shapiro, S. P. (1987). The social control of impersonal trust. *American Journal of Sociology*, 93, 623-658.
- Sitkin, S. B., & Stickel, D. (1996). The road to hell: The dynamics of distrust in an era of quality. In R. Kramer & T. Tyler (Eds.), *Trust in organizations* (pp. 196-215). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Solomon, R. C., & Flores, F. (2001). *Building trust in business, politics, relationships, and life*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Staw, B. M., Sandelands, L. E., & Dutton, J. E. (1981). Threat-rigidity effects in organizational behavior: A multilevel analysis. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 26, 501-524.

- Sykes, G. (1999). The "new professionalism" in education: An appraisal. In J. Murphy & K. Seashore Louis (Eds.), *Handbook of research in educational administration* (2nd ed., pp. 227-250). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Tschannen-Moran, M. (2003). Fostering organizational citizenship: Transformational leadership and trust. In W. K. Hoy & C. G. Miskel (Eds.), *Studies in leading and organizing schools* (pp. 157-179). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.
- Tschannen-Moran, M. (2004). *Trust matters: Leadership for successful schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, W. K. (2000). A multidisciplinary analysis of the nature, meaning, and measurement of trust. *Review of Educational Research, 71*, 547-593.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., Parish, J., & DiPaola, M. F. (2006). School climate and state standards: How interpersonal relationships influence student achievement. *Journal of School Leadership, 16*, 386-415.
- Wrightsmann, L. S. (1974). *Assumptions about human nature: A social psychological approach*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Zand, D. E. (1971). Trust and managerial problem solving. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 17*, 229-239.
- Zucker, L. G. (1986). The production of trust: Institutional sources of economic structure, 1840-1920. In B. M. Staw & L. L. Cummings (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Vol. 8, pp. 55-111). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

**Megan Tschannen-Moran** is the Wakefield Distinguished Associate Professor of Educational Leadership at the College of William and Mary. Her research interests focus on the social psychology of schools, examining the quality of interpersonal relationships, and how these impact the outcomes a school can achieve. In this regard, she has studied the constructs of trust, school climate, organizational citizenship, collaboration, and conflict. Another line of inquiry focuses on the self-efficacy beliefs of teachers and principals as well as the collective beliefs of a school faculty that they have the capability to foster the learning of all the school's students. She earned her PhD in Educational Leadership at The Ohio State University and her BSE at Northwestern University.