THE CRADLE OF CAREER ACADEMIES: THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF PHILADELPHIA ACADEMIES FROM 1968-1972

By

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DISSERTATION

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The purpose of this study was to understand the reason, idea, development, and implementation of the first career academy in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s in inner city Philadelphia high schools. Charles Bowser, Deputy Mayor of Philadelphia, was the innovative thinker who realized that rising crime and poverty rates among young black men in the city was an issue that needed to be addressed. Bowser believed a career academy model was the solution. He had three goals: increase attendance, increase graduation rates, and increase employment rates. With no template to follow or design to emulate, he sought out other innovative thinkers to implement the first career academy at Edison High School in Philadelphia.

The first career academy team was a diverse cross-section of educators and community business leaders. With a team in place, the first career academy began in 1968 and accepted 25 boys who were considered the lowest academically, the most likely to drop out, and who were considered destined to “fail.”

With the implementation of an initiative that had no precedence, the key stakeholders gathered qualitative and quantitative data throughout the process, remaining aligned to Bowser’s three goals as the barometer for success. Five themes emerged that
guided evaluation of the success of career academies: Faculty Ownership, Planning and Design, Career and Community, Professional Development, and Academic Vigor. These themes served as a cornerstone for evaluation of effectiveness of schools that later relied on the career academy model.

The results established that early educators and business partners possessed ownership of the initiative and maintained tenacity to overcome obstacles along the way. At the end of the first year of implementation of the career academy in Philadelphia, the 25 students were thriving, coming to school, participating, and learning a trade. Attendance rate was 95%. Due to the success of the career academy model at Edison High School, academies flourished in Philadelphia, in the United States, and are being established overseas.
Acknowledgements

As with any dissertation, this is the result of contributions made by numerous people, a few of whom I must mention here. Many thanks to Al Bashaw, a Pasco County principal, and his assistant principal, the late Carolyn Fabal, who took me as a new teacher under their wing; the interviewees who have become such an inspiration to me; Ms. Diane Varano for her assistance conducting these interviews and modeling daily what a school leader should be; my adopted dad, Dr. Jack Levy of the University of South Florida (USF), whose enthusiasm for the teaching profession is curiously contagious; my adopted sister, Dr. Debra Touchton of Stetson University for her warm friendship, consistent encouragement, and acting as my “unofficial advisor.”

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Dedicated to the first doctor in our family

John S. Church, D.D.S.
University of Louisville
Class of 1919

I hope you’re proud of me, Grandpa.
I miss you.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Career academies are found in high schools in almost every state. They are widespread, funded by federal and state governments, and more are created every year. The first career academy was started in the fall of 1969. In the industry of education, a school reform initiative that lasts over three decades and continues to grow is worthy of study.

Career academies have their origin in the city of Philadelphia. Career academies were designed and created by individuals outside of the field of education. These early academies were partnered with such influential community entities as the Philadelphia Urban Coalition, the Philadelphia Electric Co., Bell Telephone of Pennsylvania, and various others.

In the early 1980s, "the model was exported to California and became the basis for the peninsula academies in the Sequoia Union High School district south of San Francisco." Career academies have thrived in California, and have proliferated nationwide throughout the remainder of the 20th-century.

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1 Career academies. Communities of support for students and teachers: Emerging findings from a 10-site evaluation, Research. (New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corp. 1997.)
5 Partnerships for learning: School completion and employment preparation in the high school academies, Research. (New York: Academy for Educational Development, Inc. 1989.)
6 Career academies. Communities of support for students and teachers: Emerging findings from a 10-site evaluation, Research. (New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corp. 1997.)
Context of the Problem

Factors that generated the career academies as a school reform initiative throughout the United States have remained unexplored. The career academy initiative has outlasted the careers of many who founded and shaped it, has altered the way secondary instruction is delivered, and is now touching the lives of a third generation of students.

The academies were born of community activism in response to crisis. "The little project," as its creators called it, was planned as a five-year experiment. Having long outlived its five years, we seek to know the secrets of its longevity so others may replicate their success in school reform. While many of today's initiatives are begun with much fanfare by professional consultants who sell books and go on speaking tours, the creators of career academies have remained largely anonymous to most in the field of education.

Research Questions

The purpose of this research was to shed light on the origin and development of career academies in the city of Philadelphia from 1968 to 1972. The following research questions were addressed:

1. Who were the key players who invented, implemented and sustained this concept?
2. What was the context for the creation of the first career academy?
3. Why did career academies multiply in Philadelphia?
4. What were some of the obstacles faced in career academies implementation?
5. What behavioral characteristics do the key players possess?

6. What are some explanations for the initiative’s longevity?

**Definitions**

Three definitions are essential for understanding the context of this study.

*Career academy*—refers to a well-defined program model, based on three defining structures within high-school: (a) a school-within-a-school; (b) a college prep curriculum with a career theme; and (c) partnerships with employers, community, and higher education.⁷

The career academy teacher team includes instructors of core academic subjects, as well as career and technical electives. Teachers integrate curricula so to create common themes that have a career focus. This process creates the community environment that scholars and practitioners refer to as a school-within-a-school.⁸ (Kemple & Rock, 1996; Archer, et al., 1989; Dayton, 1995; Kerka, 2000; Burnett, 1992).

*Context*—the surrounding geographic area, physical facilities, and precipitating events for academies. For academies, this will be defined by data and statistics, as well as recollections by key players.⁹

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Key player—an individual who was instrumental in the design, development, implementation, or improvement of the career academies. Some key players are immediately identifiable, while others will be identified through investigation and dialog with this study’s population.\(^9\) Key players have pieces of the story to tell. Aside from arbitrary judgment, the researcher must determine the players that carry enough significance for inclusion in the study and those that can be excluded.\(^9\)

**Delimitations**

This study of the origins and development of career academies and Philadelphia focused on the events that occurred from 1968 to 1972. This time period is deemed prudent for two reasons. First, reporting the results of research on career academies from their inception to the present is too large a scope for a single work. Second, the four-year period identified as the scope of this study included (a) the genesis of career academies as a concept, (b) the efforts to marshal support for the concept, and (c) initial implementation. The latter event serves as a historical milestone that transitions the career academies from their early developmental years to the more established years that carried the movement through the conclusion of the 20th century and to the present.

**Limitations**

A personal bias may have arisen because of my experience teaching in a career academy and working on their implementation in school districts in several states and overseas. I remained aware of this bias and approached the study with (a) strict historical research methods, (b) the use of historical criticism, (c) seeing the events through the

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perspectives of those who lived them, and (d) the use of triangulation between interviewees and primary historical documentation.\textsuperscript{12}

The results of this study may be suspect because of the reliance on the memories of key players, their prejudices, biases, and perspectives. Every effort was made to validate the statements of these key players by the use of primary documentation from the timeframe as well as statements from other key players. The specific focus of this study was on the creation, design and implementation of this school reform movement. Achievement, test scores, job placement, reactions from at the community or educational establishment are not within the scope of this study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The body of literature related to career academies has grown from a small core of information generated in the 1970s to ever increasing amounts written and published at century’s end. A preliminary analysis of the literature revealed that the majority of data comes from the state of California, related to their academy initiative. The Career Academy Support Network, housed at the University of California-Berkeley, and their affiliates, have been instrumental in measuring and publishing data. There is very limited material published data dealing specifically with the focus of this dissertation: the career academies in Philadelphia.

The Career Academy Model

A career academy is most frequently referred to as a school-within-a-school.13 Although career academies have been implemented in almost every state, in inner-city, suburban, and rural settings, and tailored to meet the needs of each individual constituency group, the academies share certain components in common.14 Multiple descriptions of these components in the literature are consistent.

- The career academies are "schools-within-schools" in which groups of students (usually the 30 to 60 per grade in grades 9 through 12 or 10 through

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12) take several classes together each year with the same group of teachers. The academies focus on a career theme, such as health, business and finance, or electronics, which is usually determined by local employment opportunities and evidence of growing demands for such expertise in the marketplace.

- The three key structural elements of the Academy model: a school within a school, a curriculum that integrates academic and vocational courses around a career theme, and partnerships with employers.

- Since most career academies around the country were modeled upon the Philadelphia and peninsula efforts, they share a number of attributes. In general, they are organized as schools within schools, with a small community of students and a small, self-contained set of five to ten counselors and teachers, one of whom acts as the program's "lead teacher," . . . focus on the broadly defined career themes . . . integrate academic and vocational curricula.

- The term Career Academy refers to a well-defined program model, based on three defining structures within high-school: 1) a school-within-a-school; 2) a college prep curriculum with a career theme; and 3) partnerships with employers, community, and higher education.

- Programs developed under this rubric have at their core, curricula that integrate academic and vocational courses to provide the labor market context for learning.

- These features that define the model and ensure success are . . . team teaching . . . work experience components . . . an integrated academic-technical curriculum . . . strong private sector support . . . a strong career planning component.

- Academies operate as schools within schools. . . . Designed to ensure that the program graduates are academically and technically proficient, have

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18 *Career academies: Education urban students for career success*, Research. (New York: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Educationm 1992),


marketable job skills, and are academically prepared to enroll in post-secondary education.\textsuperscript{22}

- Academy students are enrolled in a core academic program consisting of key disciplines: usually English, mathematics, social studies and vocational training. The curriculum of the core academic courses and the vocational courses are integrated and taught in a school-within-a-school format.\textsuperscript{23}

The varied descriptions indicate that career academies (a) create smaller groups of students organized into communities, (b) organize teachers into interdisciplinary teams, and (c) expect teachers to work to integrate subject matter that is focused on a broad career field. Based upon these definitions, career academies are small learning communities with a career focus. Perhaps the structure is similar to the university model, in that there is one large institution and within it, several smaller colleges that focus on a profession.\textsuperscript{24}

Career academies have their origin in the city of Philadelphia.\textsuperscript{25} These early academies were partnered with such influential community entities as the Philadelphia Urban Coalition, the Philadelphia Electric Co., Bell Telephone of Pennsylvania, and various others.\textsuperscript{26} In the early 1980s, "the model was exported to California and became the basis for the peninsula academies in the Sequoia Union High School district south of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22}Equity Issues, Vol. 4, No. 2, Career pathways and gender equity: Providing opportunities for all students. Equity Issues. (Ohio State University, 1998) [ p. 8.
\item \textsuperscript{23}The California partnership academies, Research. (Redwood City, CA: Sequoia Union High School District, 1990).
\item \textsuperscript{25}Career academies. Early implementation lessons from a 10-site evaluation, Research. (New York: Manpower Research Demonstration Corp., 1996).
\item \textsuperscript{26}Partnerships for learning: School completion and employment preparation in the high school academies. Research. (New York: Academy for Educational Development, Inc., 1989).
San Francisco." Career academies thrived in California and proliferated throughout the remainder of the 20th-century.

Career academies were designed to address perennial problems at the secondary level of education. These include (a) lackluster student performance levels, (b) the need for remediation of basic skills employers require of graduates, (c) an alarmingly high dropout rate, and (d) a high unemployment among graduates. Kemple and Rock (1996) stated that students at large high schools reported feeling anonymous and alone. The small community setting provided them an opportunity to form closer relationships and to take academic and personal risks.

The problems that academy systems attempt to address are:

- General track education lacks focus and leads the participating students to neither post-secondary education, or to work.
- Perceived irrelevance of curriculum leads to increased dropout rates for high-school age young people.
- An increasing number of high-school graduates are unemployable due to a distinct lack of marketable skills.
- It is popularly accepted that these accurately describe the state of many educational institutions in America and that this situation is an acute societal problem.

Career academies are considered successful in addressing the problem of dropout rates because of the smaller, more personalized environment to provide to students.

Their career focus, combined with strong business partnerships, alleviate the problem of

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employability skills after graduation. Certainly, students can only enroll for post-
secondary studies if they manage to complete high school first.33

Research and evaluation have indicated career academies are enjoying success
with these goals.34 Career academies have been documented to motivate
students who were previously disengaged from schooling. The students often
took a new interest in school after entering the program. We also observe the enthusiasm the
teachers have for the program, how patiently they work through daily challenges,
and how much pride they showed as they relate stories about the students.35

Career Academies and Students

Critics of America's education system contend people are leaving high schools
without the preparation they need for good jobs: ones that pay well, provide
benefits, and offer opportunity for advancement. . . . Today's labor market places
a premium on such abilities as hands-on problem solving, technical knowledge,
and effective teamwork. . .36

Ostensibly, the student is the reason for the effort placed in any school reform
initiative. Researchers and evaluators have found career academies to be effective for
assisting students with transition from high school to work, and high-school to post-
secondary institutions. Without career academies, local school districts estimated
dropout rates at 27% nationwide and as high as 50% in some urban areas on average.37

33 Kemple, Poglinco, and Snipes, Career academies: Building career awareness and work-based learning
activities through employer partnerships, Research. (New York: Manpower Demonstration Research
Corp., 1995).
34 Office of Vocational Education, Career Academies, Research. (Washington, DC: United States
Department of Education, 1997).
35 High school career academies: A pathway to educational reform in urban school district? Research.
(Kalamazoo: Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2000).
36 Career academies. Early implementation lessons from a 10-site evaluation. Research. (New York:
37 Partnerships for learning: School completion and employment preparation in the high school
Career academies have created a sort of "school membership," generating a supportive environment that holds students in school.\(^{38}\)

Many students considered to be underachievers in a traditional school environment are selected for participation in an academy. Nevertheless, most academies try to create a heterogeneous grouping of ability levels among their students to give them successful examples, make them feel special and a part of a successful group, rather than being stigmatized as being academically at risk.\(^{39}\)

Attendance rates, a precursor of dropout rates, are also shown to improve.

In Philadelphia . . . [a]cademy students have an average daily attendance (ADA) rate of 90% compared to 67 percent throughout the system... The academy program is intended to serve students who are working below their potential and are therefore at risk of dropping out – at least in part because they are unable to connect their experience in school with any realistic post-graduation employment. The goal of the academies is to capture the interest of the students before it is too late – to rekindle their enthusiasm for education by offering them a supportive school environment and reachable employment goals. Above all, an academy seeks to help students experience the connection between skills learned in school and the use of those skills in the workplace.\(^{40}\)

The school-within-a-school model helps to strengthen the classroom environment, thereby increasing the level of student engagement. This leads to an increase in graduation rates and the number of graduates possessing the necessary credentials and skills to enter the work place or post-secondary education.\(^{41}\) “One good reason why growing numbers of states, districts, and schools have decided to start career academies is

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that they have been found them to be effective in improving student performance.\footnote{42}

Included in student performance, research shows improvement with such indicators as grades, attendance, credits earned, and graduation rates.\footnote{43}

\ldots [F]indings also indicate academy students are more likely than non-academy students to report that they attend school primarily because they like it and are interested in what they are learning – rather than attending school only to avoid the potential negative consequences of not attending. Furthermore, academy students are more likely to see a connection between what they are learning in school and their futures.\footnote{44}

Reynolds (1984) reported academy students achieved higher pass rates on district proficiency tests in areas including reading, math, and writing. In addition to higher scores, academy dropout rates were lower than their non-academy counterparts.

Although most high school students do not focus on a specific career, career academies allow them to work through some possibilities before graduation. Average workers will have six to seven different careers in their lifetimes; typically these jobs stay within the same career cluster. This is an important reason why career academies focus on a broad field such as health or business, instead of training for one particular job.\footnote{45}

\footnote{42} Issues in schoolwide implementation of career academies, Research Career Academy Support Network Berkeley University of California Berkeley 2000, p. 7
\footnote{43} Internship handbook for career academies, Guide - Non-classroom Career Academy Support Network Berkeley University of California Berkeley 2001
\footnote{44} Career academies. Communities of support for students and teachers: Emerging findings from a 10-site evaluation, Research New York Manpower Demonstration Research Corp 1997, p. 38
Career academies, through the years, have met the highly varied post-graduation desires of their constituency. Although career academies prepare students for the world of work as well as for college, and despite the post-secondary education performance benefits, career academies have been viewed historically as vocational training grounds, rather than college preparatory programs. This is evidenced by the fact that students in advanced placement courses were less likely to participate in career academies.\textsuperscript{46}

Academy graduates have advised current academy students to enroll in more academic core courses than are required for graduation to increase the rigor of their programs and their prospects of advancement.\textsuperscript{47} Academic rigor in the academy has been shown to have both "a direct and indirect influence on a student’s entrance into, route through, and exit from the university."\textsuperscript{48} Specifically, evidence suggests that career academy graduates enjoy higher academic achievement upon leaving high school, require less remediation at the university, and enjoy higher rates of graduation from the university than students who do not go through the career academies in high school.\textsuperscript{49} Data also shows that years after graduation, academy graduates are more likely to be living independently and making more money than non-academy graduates.\textsuperscript{50}


\textsuperscript{47} \textit{High school career academies: A pathway to educational reform in urban school district?}, Research. (Kalamazoo: Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2000.)


Career Academies and Teachers

Integrating curricula from multiple disciplines into common themes and meeting diverse needs of a student population places difficult demands upon teachers. At the same time, career academy implementation also provides many benefits to which non-academy teachers do not have access. 51

The increased demand on teachers’ time and the effort made to integrate curricula in a way that makes instruction meaningful to students does not diminish the already existing demands on teachers to provide rigorous and demanding academic program for students. One academy lead teacher, “Our major task is to convince the students that they can make it.” 52

To achieve this goal, all academies provide students with an extensive range of supports to help them excel academically, perform successfully in the workplace, and make a successful transition to post-secondary employment or education . . . Curriculum is often individualized and there is much one-on-one teaching. 53

In order to deliver such a potent curriculum, the classroom teacher links academic content with vocational skills in ways that meet the varied learning needs of the students. This requires moving away from traditional teaching practices. 54 Maxwell and Rubin (2000) describe this traditional teaching as,

. . . a teacher-centered pedagogy dominates the learning environment. The teacher is the "sage on the stage" that provides relevant material to students. Teachers in view themselves, and are viewed by students, as curriculum area experts who

54 Designing thematic curriculum: An all aspects approach, Research. (Berkeley: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1997.)
transmit information to students predominately by lecturing and otherwise supporting facts and guidance. (p.10)

Academy participation relies on voluntary participation of the teachers.55

Demanding expectations of students, coupled with the deviation from traditional teaching practices, can put a strain on teachers.

. . . Integration is hard to do. Integration that is rigorous, authentic, and is sustained is much more difficult than most of its advocates imagine. Integration activity must accomplish important, well-defined educational objectives. Integration is not an end in itself, no matter how engaging the activity may be. . . . If the teacher succeeds in keeping integration sharply focused on clear, well-defined educational objectives and in finding legitimate applications that really excites students, doing this day after day, week after week in a fashion that builds systemically on previous activities is challenging . . . integration is engaging and fun, but it is also hard work. Even in its simplest forms it requires teachers to depart from familiar instructional methods.56

The concept of integrating curriculum is founded on the premise that the high school experience should be a "rigorous effort in subjects that advance students' personal, educational, and occupational goals."57 This requires school administrators to facilitate the development process by shifting the decision-making powers from administrators to the classroom teachers. It also requires reconfiguring schools into smaller groups of learning communities, using flexible scheduling, and creating opportunities for large amounts of collaboration among teachers.58 "All this takes a substantial amount of teachers’ time to plan, arrange, monitor, and evaluate."59

55 Career academies: Education urban students for career success, Research. (New York: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, 1992.)
56 Integrating academic and vocational curriculum - why is theory so hard to practice?, Research. (Berkeley: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1999.)
The incentive to teachers to undergo this type of investment is the knowledge that “all students learn better and retain more when they learn in context . . . meaningful learning takes place when instruction provides a real-life context.”  A high degree of effort from teachers is required to accomplish learning in context. Teachers need not integrate everything all of the time. Further, because academic and vocational teachers tend to work in joint integration teams, they have more opportunities to develop content delivery strategies to help students.

In addition to meaningful classroom instruction, content is augmented by student internships and professional mentors. Internships put students in the workplace, addressing the ubiquitous question, "Why do I have to learn this?" The workplace provides a context for the content learned in the classroom to be applied this, reinforcing what the teacher has taught. Portfolios and student journals increase student retention of the curriculum and its applications.

The caring classroom instruction to the work place outside of the school may be an intimidating task for the career teacher, meaning the teacher who entered work in the classroom immediately after college. This is because the teacher may have limited knowledge of the non-school workplace. To assist teachers in creating a relevant, workplace context for their curriculum, Philadelphia Academies, Inc. created

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61 Integrating academic and vocational curriculum - why is theory so hard to practice? Research. (Berkeley: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1999.)

opportunities for teams of teachers and administrators to work closely with business and industry through job shadowing experiences.  

Educators receive additional benefits from academy participation. Many teachers report that their academy team is a tightly knit faculty team. The academy environment allows them to get to know students better and on a deeper level than would normally be the case in a high school. They also develop better relationships with other faculty members and encourage each other to higher standards of professional practice.  

Compared to their colleagues who do not teach academy classes, career academy teachers report having more opportunities to collaborate with each other, are more likely to see their environment as a learning community, and are likely to develop more personalized relationships with their students. There is considerable evidence that these changes contribute to the quality of teaching and learning within high schools.  

The community, or family-like atmosphere, created in this team setting is a significant factor contributing to the career academies’ success. Teachers report working with their teams on high-quality, project-based learning allows a greater degree of teacher interaction, collegiality, improved instruction and higher student achievement. In this environment teachers get to work with students who are encouraged to become active learners. "Many academy staffers speak of the transformation experience of teaching in the academy and of the opportunity provided to renew themselves as professionals.”

63 Designing thematic curriculum: An all aspects approach, Research. (Berkeley: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1997.)  
64 Career academies: Education urban students for career success, Research. (New York: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, 1992.)  
65 Career academies. Communities of support for students and teachers: Emerging findings from a 10-site evaluation, Research. (New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corp., 1997.)  
By using interactive and interdisciplinary approaches, teaching can engage students in activities that include a broad range of functions, issues, concerns, and technological knowledge and skills. The learning environment can foster connections between knowing and doing, active participation and application of knowledge, skills, and values in real-world problem-solving settings.69

**Career Academies and the Business Community**

Businesses join with schools administrators, parents, government leaders, and others to pool resources and support the school reform initiative.70 When the National Commission on Excellence in Education issued its report, *A Nation at Risk*, they included this statement: "We applaud the consortium of educators and scientific, industrial, and scholarly societies that cooperate to improve the school curriculum,"71 thus emphasizing the importance of business and community involvement in education reform.

This integration of the academic and vocational is achieved by the active involvement of industry in curriculum design, development and revision... In most academies, curriculum development is a continuous process of adaptation and revision, undertaken by academy teachers in collaboration with industry representatives.72

The most common use of business partners is in the form of advisory committees that provide direction and consultation to the academy.73 More than just advisors, however, local businesses play important roles in the development of a curriculum that is enhanced and integrated. This is done by providing real-life examples of how concepts

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taught in the classroom are applied in the workplace. "Industry must be involved in every aspect of the academy: the design, implementation and daily operations." Burnett (1992) wrote:

[F]rom the beginning, academies have benefited from a high level of business involvement . . . businesses take a hands-on approach, providing not only summer and after-school jobs, but also volunteering speakers, mentors, and even teachers. In fact, because the success of an academy depends upon its links with the business community, extensive collaboration between the schools and local businesses is built into the model from the early planning stages. (p. 2)

The school-business alliance creates opportunities for students see how skills taught in the classroom are applied in the workplace, thus making a direct connection between education and earning power. "The opportunities for linkages and partnerships are almost limitless." Opportunities for students expand beyond job shadowing or observing business practices in action. They include real work experience and interaction with workers in the academies career field. This partnership requires a substantial commitment by both educators and business partners.

Internships provide students an opportunity to observe how the workplace functions, and their concurrent opportunities in it. Further, it gives them the opportunity

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76 *Career academies. Communities of support for students and teachers: Emerging findings from a 10-site evalutaion*, Research. (New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corp., 1997.)


to be paid while earning school credit. Teachers can use these internships as leverage to improve student cooperation, engagement, and performance.\textsuperscript{79}

As with any other component of a major initiative, the quality of a business-school partnership can have a wide variance.

The first concern is whether the initiatives have sufficient educational or programmatic substance or are simply an avenue for public relations. Our reconnaissance disclosed a number of programs that exist in name only, the bulk of whose budget is dedicated to the production of glossy brochures and videotapes. We also identified collaborations in which a business appears to be primarily concerned with developing good community and public relations. Because of such programs, there is a tendency to dismiss all collaboration's and question the motives of all principal actors. To do so would unjustly discount the commitment of many of the business people involved and ignore the impact and potential that many programs have shown.\textsuperscript{80}

Deeply rooted cooperation between the business community and the educational establishment can include mentorship activities. "Mentoring may be defined as an organized, work-related relationship between an experienced worker and a learner, in which the worker assigns and monitors the learners work activities and offers support and guidance."\textsuperscript{81} A successful mentor program (a) generates enthusiasm among students, teachers, and industry volunteers, (b) gives the student a professional role model and (c) provides a "friend in the industry" with whom they can consult for guidance about their career path.\textsuperscript{82} Other research shows that collaborations and partnerships are substantial interventions, and educational reform.\textsuperscript{83}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\item \textit{Partnerships for learning: School completion and employment preparation in the high school academies}, Research New York: Academy for Educational Development, Inc., 1989.\textsuperscript{79}
\item \textit{Allies in education: Schools and businesses working together for at-risk youth}, Research. (Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures1987), p. 6.\textsuperscript{80}
\item \textit{Designing thematic curriculum: An all aspects approach}, Research. (Berkeley: National Center for Research in Vocational Education1997) p. 41.\textsuperscript{81}
\item \textit{The mentor handbook}, Research. (Berkeley, CA: University of California-Berkeley,1999.)\textsuperscript{82}
\item \textit{Allies in education: Schools and businesses working together for at-risk youth}. Research. (Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures1987.); \textit{Partnerships for learning: School completion and employment}\textsuperscript{83}
\end{thebibliography}
Job shadowing and mentoring are among the most powerful work based learning experiences available to students. Job shadowing places less responsibility on the Adult worker and more on the student.\textsuperscript{84}

Typical activities for mentors are as follows:

- Touring the students’ school and learning about the academy.
- Touring the mentor’s company, introducing the student to co-workers, shadowing him/her typical work areas and jobs, inviting the student to special company activities (such as presentations, picnics, sports activities).
- Engaging in a community service project together.
- Researching postsecondary education opportunities.
- Discussing potential careers.
- Working on a project together (science experiments, research, etc.).
- Visiting another site of interest, such as another company, a jobs’ fair, a technical show, or a local college.
- Working on a subject area in which the student is having difficulty.
- Discussing basic features of work, such as punctuality, reliability, dress, speech, attitude, getting along with co-workers and supervisors.
- Preparing students for interviews for summer jobs, and maintaining contacts to discuss problems that may arise on the job.\textsuperscript{85}

Business partners provide a key component of the academy experience by advising students, helping them to apply for jobs, developing resumes, and practicing interviewing skills. Sometimes a mentor may accompany a student on their first job interview to help them adapt to their surroundings and coach them on their interviewing skills.\textsuperscript{86}

A concern of introducing business partners into the classroom was the possibility of teachers feeling their professional standing would somehow be diminished by receiving outside assistance. In reality, the opposite has been true.

According to comments made by administrators and teachers during site observations, business involvement has had exactly the opposite effect . . . Far

\textsuperscript{84} Designing thematic curriculum: An all aspects approach, Research. (Berkeley: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1997) p. 41.
from demeaning the professional standing of teachers, collaborations often seem to affirm and strengthen it. Our findings indicate that morale has improved as a result of many partnerships, largely because teachers have an opportunity to meet and discuss common problems and issues with other professionals and the community.87

Benefits for this type of involvement are many. "Increasing the skills of the new labor market entrants poses less of a challenge than retraining older workers (and earns a higher return on investment!)"88 Businesses have historically complained about the need to mediate new workers in basic skills and literacy. These partnerships enable businesses to contribute to directly to the solution of that problem.89

Having the students in the workplace gives the student an opportunity to be part of the workplace and learn skills, but also allows businesses to opportunity to have entry-level workers with the real experience and job skills. Industry representatives frequently indicated an eager willingness to hire academy graduates after internships.90

Companies become involved in an academy for a variety of reasons. Chief among these is the need to train workers for employment in entry-level jobs and concern for their communities . . . to maintain the active involvement of industry, practitioners emphasize the importance of keeping industry personnel and as much direct contact with the students and staff as possible.91

Career Academies and Educational Leadership

Schools did not function in isolation from the other systems throughout society and need to explicitly address connections with those other systems in order to be ultimately successful.92

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90 Partnerships for learning: School completion and employment preparation in the high school academies, Research. (New York: Academy for Educational Development, Inc.1989.)
This is not the first or only Commission on Education, and some of our findings are surely not new, but old business that now at last must be done. For no one can doubt that the United States is under challenge from many quarters.  

It is increasingly accepted that school systems should put learning in a real-life context to assist all students in entry to postsecondary education or the work force. For this to happen, schools must stop dividing students into college prep and vocational tracks.

Career academies are expanding in use throughout the United States as a means of bringing down the wall that separates vocational and academic instruction. They provide a context for an education students will see as valid. Since 1969, many of the academy efforts have met success in several arenas. Academies have provided education to students of varied success levels, and provided a compelling reason for them to remain in school.

Different from traditional vocational programs, career academies do not train for a specific job upon graduation. They provide exposure to a broad career field. The number of career academies has been expanding rapidly, in part because academies have been found to be effective, and in part because they embody ideas promoted by several major high school reform movements.

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Not for the faint of heart, the creation of a career academy requires a fundamental alteration of the high school framework. This means there must be change in how teaching and learning occur in the classroom, introduction of business partnerships in curriculum design, and modifying the school’s curriculum.98

High schools are being called upon to return to "the little red schoolhouse with a few students that the teacher gets to know well."99 "One response being offered by the educational community is to breakdown the century-old idea of program differentiation between academics and vocations and to build more active the student-centered learning."100

Academies are different from magnet programs in that students are not drawn from throughout the district. "In Philadelphia, where the academy program lasts four years, beginning in the ninth grade, academy students come from the normal feeder junior high schools . . ." (Archer et al., 1989, pp.8-9). In order to redesign high schools business collaborations are important, but collaborations will not affect a school reform of their own accord. "Such a change must be grounded in the educational system itself--in its teachers, administrators, and the leaders in the political community, and parental advocacy for education" (McMullen & Snyder, 1987, p.8).

School leaders must see business/education partnerships as a two-way street. Both the educational establishment and the business community expect to benefit. For

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schools to entice involvement from industry leaders, they must first ask themselves what
benefit there is to the business partners (Finch et al., 1997).

To establish such collaborations, it is important for the school leader to recognize
that such cooperation is a two-way street. Both educators and industry representatives
expect to benefit from the venture, and schools should consider what specific benefits are
available to cooperating businesses (Finch et al., 1997, p. 40).

One of the most challenging design shifts must occur with scheduling.

It is important that academy students be scheduled together in several classes each
day . . . while a majority of high schools still operate on a traditional six or seven
period schedule many alternative schedules are now in use. These are usually
called "blocked" schedules . . . What they generally have in common is providing
longer periods, allowing teachers more opportunities to team teach, integrate
curriculum, and structure learning around student projects. Thus alternative
schedules usually dovetail well with Academies attempts to integrate curriculum
and instruction (Dayton, 1995, p. 3-4).

Teachers will require a considerable amount of additional support from
administration. School staff is being called upon to create thematic curriculum that must
be invented before it is implemented. These changes may include portfolios and senior
projects to link student work and school with the workplace. This invention and
implementation is not a one-time occurrence. Curriculum can quickly become obsolete
and it demands constant revision to remain on the cutting edge.\footnote{Designing thematic curriculum: An all aspects approach, Research. (Berkeley: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1997.)}

Teachers can accomplish this, but there must be considerable investment in a
targeted staff development program. Such training should include cooperative learning
strategies, raising expectations of students, curriculum integration, teaming skills and
other support of the non-traditional role teachers are being called upon to fill.
Additionally, administrators may find it advantageous to help provide time for common planning of academy team members.\textsuperscript{102}

School leaders will be called upon to deal with changes in staff dynamics. They may find themselves called upon to address issues of academy rivalry with other academies, or the school itself in issues of identity. Academy activities will also compete with music, drama, and athletics for students’ attention and time.\textsuperscript{103}

To expect educational reform efforts to cure all ills . . . [is] unrealistic. Marginal improvements must be made and the career academies have improved outcomes from high school and post-secondary education.\textsuperscript{104}

\textsuperscript{102} Partnerships for learning: School completion and employment preparation in the high school academies\textsuperscript{Research}. (New York: Academy for Educational Development, Inc., 1989).

\textsuperscript{103} Issues in schoolwide implementation of career academies, Research, Career Academy Support Network. (Berkeley: University of California-Berkeley, 2000) p. 8.

\textsuperscript{104} Step to College. Moving from the High School Career Academy through the Four-Year University, Research. (Berkeley: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1999), p. 23.
Chapter 3

Methodology

Design

This is a historical study that examined how career academies were designed, implemented and developed in the city of Philadelphia. The purpose of this research was to shed light on the origin and development of career academies in the city of Philadelphia from 1968 to 1972. This investigation follows events from the academies' conception in 1968, through their 1972 expansion.

Initiatives labeled “educational reform movements” are a common occurrence. One that lasts over 40 years and spreads to almost every state in America is not nearly as common. This work records the first 20 years of this achievement; specifically, who did it and how. Brundage (2002) said, “In this vein history deals with the past, but it conceptualizes the past in constant dialog with an ever-advancing present . . .” (p. 2) Looking at events as they transpired, hearing the stories from the people themselves, and viewing their experience in our 21st century context, will allow us the opportunity to reinterpret school reform efforts today, making the educational experience a relevant and fruitful one for students.

This section identifies who was studied and how the information was obtained.105 Interviewing and textual analysis are two of the methods of data gathering used by qualitative researchers.106 These methods were approved by the Institutional Review

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Board at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (See Appendix A) and employed to collect the necessary data. Addressing qualitative research, McMillan (2002) wrote, the

“…focus is on understanding and meaning is based on verbal narratives and observations rather than numbers. Qualitative research usually takes place in naturally occurring situations, as contrasted with quantitative research, in which behaviors and settings are controlled and manipulated. (p. 9)

“Qualitative researchers approaches situation with the assumption that nothing is trivial or unimportant. Every detail that is recorded is thought to contribute a better understanding of behavior. The descriptions are in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers… (p.253)

“Qualitative researchers did not formulate hypotheses and gather data to prove or disprove them (deduction). Rather, the data are gathered first and then synthesized and actively to generate generalizations.” (p.254)

When initiating a qualitative research undertaking, certain dynamics of qualitative research must be understood. "Quantitative and qualitative research are different paradigms; that is, they start with different assumptions about the nature of the world, truth, and the functions of research.” Qualitative research is a process of studying and assessing the stories many people have to tell, and finding their common truths. Historical research has rules of its own. Since the event being researched cannot be observed, the researcher must rely on historical documentation and oral history. Historical research does not allow for the manipulation of the event. It can only be

recorded and interpreted through the perceptions of those who witnessed it or played a part in it.\textsuperscript{110}

Because research projects are frequently topics of personal interest to the researcher, it is important for the investigator, particularly in qualitative research, to be on guard for personal biases.\textsuperscript{111} This is particularly important because of the proximity of the investigator to those being studied. This proximity allows the qualitative researcher to understand the different social realities in which the participants operate.\textsuperscript{112}

Safeguards are important in this type of research because of its inherently dynamic nature. As Van Maanen (1998) stated, "What makes qualitative research particularly difficult to pin down is its flexibility and emergent character. Qualitative research is most often designed as it is being done. It is anything but standardized . . ." (1998, p. xi)

McMillan characterized qualitative researchers this way:

They do not know enough to begin the study with the precise research design. As they learn about this setting, people, and other sources of information, to discover what needs to be done to fully describe and understand the phenomena being studied. Thus, a qualitative researcher will begin the study with some idea about what data will be collected and the procedures that will be employed, but a full account of the methods is given retrospectively, after all of the data have been collected. The design is emergent in that it evolves during the study. (2000, p.255)

While qualitative research carries with it a great degree of flexibility, all qualitative research carries three basic dimensions. According to Glesne & Peshkin (1992), these dimensions are " . . . reading, reflecting, and doing research. There is no correct order for their performance; ideally they should be done simultaneously so that


the outcomes of each continually interact” (1992, p. xiii). As a result, design, data
collection, and analysis were an ongoing process throughout the course of this
investigation.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this research was to shed light on the origin and development of
career academies in the city of Philadelphia from 1968 to 1988. The selection of the
unique school reform effort in Philadelphia is in keeping with the advice offered by
George Kitson Clark, "to make a valuable addition to knowledge on a subject which you
believe to be, for some reason, important” (pp.1-2).\(^{113}\)

**Research Questions**

The following six research questions guided the inquiry in the origin and
development of career academies from 1968 to 1972.

1. Who were the key players who invented, implemented and sustained this
   concept?
2. What was the context for the creation of the first career academy?
3. Why did career academies multiply in Philadelphia?
4. What were some of the obstacles faced in career academies implementation?
5. What behavioral characteristics do the key players possess?
6. What are some explanations for the initiative’s longevity?

\(^{113}\) George Kitson Clark, *Guide for research students working on historical subjects* (London: Cambridge
Ultimately the purpose of any research effort in this field is to gain insights that will help “explore and refine educational practice.”¹¹⁴ This study does so by creating "historical situated tales that include . . . highly focused portraits of what identifiable people in particular places at certain times are doing . . .”¹¹⁵ Whether subsequent readers of this research have background in the secondary education, post-secondary education, or any other educational arena, the data contained herein has something of importance to offer.

While this topic is of personal interest to the principal investigator, I believe there will be much to interest other educators wanting to improve the experience and performance of students. Glesne & Peshkin (1992) stated it this way:

You tap into your subjectivity, of which passion is a part, to find topics of personal interest. The topic, however, should not be so personal that it is of little interest to anyone else; nor as Douglas (1976) warns, should it be an area where we have major emotional problems . . . Distinguishing the difference between a topic for research and one for psychoanalysis is not always easy. (p.14)

**Population and Sample**

Qualitative researchers want to obtain information directly from the source. They do this by spending a considerable amount of time in direct interaction with the settings, participants, and the documents they are studying.”¹¹⁶

Since historical study resides in the field of qualitative research, specific types of probability samplings, such as random and systematic samplings, would not be appropriate. The results of this study tell a story, so my participant population was

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necessarily those who had parts of the story to tell. McMillan (2000) referred to this as a purposive sampling, also labeling it "judgmental." That term is applicable because a careful judgment accompanies the selection of participants.

Aside from arbitrary judgment, the researcher must determine what pieces carry enough significance for inclusion in the study, and which can be ruled out. "The researchers themselves are the primary ‘measuring instruments,’ relying heavily on personal observation, intuition, judgment, and other psychological processes . . .”

The question then arises how many interviewees are necessary to get a complete picture of events surrounding the career academy initiative in our 20-year target range? McMillan (2000) addresses this issue as follows:

In purposive sampling the researcher selects particular individuals or cases because they will be particularly informative about the topic. Based on the researcher’s knowledge of the population, a judgment is made to include those cases that will be information-rich. These few cases are studied in depth. (p. 110)

With purposeful sampling, the major criterion for using an adequate number of cases is the information provided. Since the purpose of the sampling is to provide in-depth information, sampling is considered complete when no new information is forthcoming from additional cases. (p. 114)

Travers (2001) echoed McMillan, “There is no hard and fast rule for how many people we need to interview . . . Some of the best life-history studies and based on a series of interviews with one respondent” (p.3).

The research population is limited to 16 individuals, referred to as "key players.” A key player is someone who is identified as having played an indispensable role in the

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creation implementation and/or maintenance of the career academies in Philadelphia. Specifically, if the existence of career academies would have been altered in some dramatic way because of an individual's absence, that individual is considered to be of primary importance to this investigation.

Certain key players were obvious. Charles Bowser and Lee Everett are examples because it was collaboration between these two individuals that resulted in what they called, "the little project." Henk Koning, being the first on-site corporate support of the academies in Philadelphia, was easily identified as a key player.

Other key players were through investigation of primary documentation of the time, conversations with interviewees, and discussions with contemporary career academy leaders nationally. In some cases, individuals were selected because of their knowledge of a particular person in the project rather than knowledge of the project itself. I started with pre-determined key players and used “snowball” sampling. The total number of interviewees was five. Some were eliminated because were not identified as key players by other interviewees, they were deceased, or they were not able to be located.

Each participant selected has a perspective that is unique from the others because of that individual's responsibilities, interactions and experiences. To achieve the most complete picture of our topic possible, individuals were chosen from various a vantage points of the project. These included individuals that made practical application of those ideas (thereby bring them to reality), those who supported the effort by their professional contributions, those who delivered the reality in the classroom to the students, and those who took the helm to guide the academies through or 20-year period of investigation.
**Instrument**

In historical research, the researcher is the instrument. Face-to-face interactions are the predominant distinctive feature and also the basis for its most common problems. Through the researcher’s involvement with the people studied, lives become entwined, with all the accompanying hazards, challenges, and opportunities that such closeness springs. The prominence of face-to-face interactions necessitates the discussion of rapport, subjectivity, and certain ethical issues. The significance of the relationship between the researcher and of research done even affects how we refer to those who want to learn from and about.\(^{120}\)

Two methods were used for the collection of data from individuals for this study. The first, an interview protocol, was the basis for interviews with key players.

"Researchers often conduct interviews of field participants . . . usually the questions are open-ended the, meaning that residents can answer freely in their own terms rather than selecting from a fixed set of responses.\(^{121}\) The questions for this study were designed to uncover specific types of required data. The questions generated conversation on the part of the interviewee to uncover possible new areas where further investigation would be advantageous. "An interview question is a stimulus that is aimed at creating or generating a response from the person being interviewed. The way question is worded is one of the most important elements determining how the interviewee will respond . . . For

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purposes of qualitative measurement, questions should, at a minimum, be open-ended, neutral, singular, and clear."^{122}

The structure, sequencing, and delivery of questions were done deliberately with a goal in mind of eliciting as much information from the interviewee as possible.\(^\text{123}\) The researcher desired each question to be simple to answer and to be answered as completely as possible.\(^\text{124}\) "The methods of qualitative research, as critics gleefully point out, remain loose and unspecified. Any given study has to be methodologically promiscuous. Even singular methods escape formalization. Interviews, for instance, carry situational properties that will not go away, and most experienced interviewers recognize that a ‘typical’ qualitative interview is, at best, a construct known only in the ideal."\(^\text{125}\)

The second method was a written interrogatory to interviewees, used as needed for follow-up, clarification, or investigation into new data. These interrogatories were delivered either through U.S. Postal Service mail, or e-mail.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Data were collected by the following process:

**Step 1.** Each participant was contacted through regular mail, e-mail, and telephone to inform them of this research study, with appropriate Internal Review Board (IRB) documents, and invite their participation. From this, dates were solicited to

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conduct interviews. Once a date was agreed upon, each participant was provided with a list of questions to be asked in the interview.\textsuperscript{126}

**Step 2.** The only individuals involved in the interview were the principal investigator and the participant. All interviewees were asked the same, predetermined questions, with the addition of germane probing questions unique to the individual for clarification and further inquiry. Questions the researcher deemed to materially alter the study or the type of data being uncovered were posed to all previous and subsequent participants.

**Step 3.** Each of the sessions was recorded in its entirety by audiotape. Based on the results of these interviews, written interrogatories were forwarded to participants on an as-needed basis for follow up investigation into new data.\textsuperscript{127}

During the course of interaction between the investigator and the participant, the investigator recorded and chronicled field notes for historical record, subjective thoughts, and data analysis.\textsuperscript{128} “The purpose . . . is to understand the setting for social action from the perspective of the participants. Reports usually contain either rich narratives that are grounded in the data of the participants' own words or descriptions taken directly from field observations.”\textsuperscript{129} In addition to what is sent by the participants, field notes indicated body language, tonality, and other visual cues that I deemed pertinent.\textsuperscript{130}


\textsuperscript{130}Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative research and case study applications and education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998).
Interviewees were asked a series of predetermined questions as well as additional probing questions as necessary. These questions fell into the following basic categories:

**Experience/Behavior Questions**

These are questions about what a person does or has done. These questions are aimed at the eliciting descriptions of experiences, behaviors, actions, and activities that would have been observable had the observer been present.

**Opinion/value questions.** These are questions aimed at understanding the cognitive and interpretive processes of people. Answers to these questions tell what people think about the world or about a specific program. They tell us about people's goals, intentions, desires, and values.

**Feeling questions.** These are questions aimed at understanding the emotional responses people have to their experiences and thoughts.

**Knowledge questions.** Knowledge questions are asked to find out what factual information the respondent has. The assumption here is that certain things are considered to be known -- these things are not opinions, they are not feelings; rather, they are the things that one knows – the facts of the case.

**Sensory questions.** These are questions about what is seen, heard, touched, tasted, and smelled. The purpose of these questions is to allow the interviewer to enter into the sensory apparatus of the respondent.

**Background/demographic questions.** These questions concern the identifying characteristics of the person being interviewed. Answers to these questions help the

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interviewer locate the respondent in relation to other people. Age, education, occupation, residence/mobility questions, and the like are standard background questions. They are distinguishable from knowledge questions primarily because of their routine nature.\textsuperscript{132}

Each audiotape was transcribed by the principal investigator. Copies of transcriptions were furnished to participants to verify their accuracy.

Despite the passage of over three decades since the initial discussions and designs of the project, there is still in existence a sizable amount of primary documents. Patton writes, “document analysis. . . provides a behind-the-scenes look at the program that may not be directly observable and about which the interviewer might not ask appropriate questions without the leads provided through documents” (1980, p.158). These include original memoranda, minutes of meetings, letters, notes in margins and transcripts of speeches.

In addition to written materials, many photographs of early meetings and the academies initial days of operation are still kept by the people involved. Much of this primary documentation is archived at the offices of the Philadelphia Academies, Inc. Others may also be in the private possession of other key players or individuals involved. These may serve as historical evidence themselves, and may also be used as prompts to interviewees.

As these physical documents are the property of someone else, and, due to their impermanent nature, critical pieces have been identified, copied and are in the possession of the principal investigator.\textsuperscript{133} (See Appendix B)

Aside from the recollections of the interviewees, the above-mentioned documents were the only tangible remains of the time period being investigated. These fell into two major categories: manuscript sources and published sources. Manuscripts were defined as hand-written or typewritten communication not intended for public dissemination.\textsuperscript{134} “Qualitative researchers have always known that one can learn a lot about the world by looking at documents . . . It is also worth noting, however, that texts of all kinds form an important part of everyday life: one can learn a great deal about organizations simply by studying the messages pinned on notice boards.”\textsuperscript{135}

The above-mentioned documentation, together with audiotapes, interview transcripts, and results of written interrogatories were archived at my residence. These will be maintained for a period of three years from the completion date of this research project.

I generated field notes and maintained them throughout the project. These contain both objective and subjective data.\textsuperscript{136} These field notes assisted in the organizing the data gathered for interpretation.\textsuperscript{137}

Because of the aforementioned potential pitfalls of qualitative investigation, triangulation was crucial to ensure the validity of the data being supplied. Triangulation was accomplished by comparing statements of interviewees against statements of all

\textsuperscript{134} Anthony Brundage, \textit{Going to the sources: A guide to historical research and writing, 3rd edition} (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc, 2002).
\textsuperscript{135} Max Travers, \textit{Qualitative research through case studies} (London: SAGE Publications, 2001), p. 5.
\textsuperscript{136} Corrine Glesne and Alan Peshkin, \textit{Becoming qualitative researchers: an introduction} (London: Longman Publishing Group, 1992).
other interviewees, as well as the written record.\textsuperscript{138} "One of the most common analytical techniques to enhance the credibility of a qualitative study is triangulation, the use of different methods of gathering data -- or collecting data with different samples, at different times, or in different places--to compare different approaches to the same thing . . . If the results of several methods of collecting data agree, the finding is judged to be credible."\textsuperscript{139}

**Data Analysis**

"Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data."\textsuperscript{140} Care was taken to see the events through the eyes of the participants, reconstructing events through their recollections, verified through triangulation.\textsuperscript{141}

"It is typical for collection and analysis of data to take place concurrently, with preliminary insights and new questions being used to inform and guide subsequent data collection."\textsuperscript{142}

The process of analyzing the data will be assisted by the use of coding. The coding of data will occur throughout the course of the investigation. Coding is a progressive process of sorting and defining and defining and sorting and those scraps of collected data (i.e., observation notes, interview transcripts, memos, documents, and notes from relevant literature) that are applicable to our research purpose. By putting the like-minded pieces together into data clumps, we create an organizational framework.\textsuperscript{143}


\textsuperscript{141} Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative research and case study applications and education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998).


Responses of participants from interviews and written interrogatories were juxtaposed with data collected from primary and secondary documents, and field notes created during investigation. These data were coded into strands and woven into one narrative. Wherever necessary, data were assigned numerical value and displayed in charts or tables.

Merriam (1998) summarized the process of investigation and data analysis in this way:

The researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Data are mediated through this human instrument, the researcher, rather than through some inventory, questionnaire, or computer. Certain characteristics differentiate the human researcher from other data collection instruments: the researcher is responsive to the context; he or she can adapt techniques to the circumstances; the total context can be considered; what is known about the situation can be expanded with sensitivity to nonverbal aspects; the researcher can process data immediately, clarify and summarize as the study evolves, and can export anomalous responses. (p. 7)
Chapter 4

Findings

The purpose of this research was to shed light on the origin and development of career academies in the city of Philadelphia from 1968 to 1972. In so doing, the following research questions are addressed:

1. Who were the key players who invented, implemented and sustained this concept?
2. What was the context for the creation of the first career academy?
3. Why did career academies multiply in Philadelphia?
4. What were some of the obstacles faced in career academies implementation?
5. What behavioral characteristics do the key players possess?
6. What are some explanations for the initiative’s longevity?

Key Players

A preliminary list of ten individuals was developed of suspected “key players” through documents of the time period. If a person’s name appeared on multiple meeting agendas or on handwritten notes in margins of documents, they were placed on the list. These individuals’ status as key players was confirmed through (a) the triangulation of minutes of meetings from 1968-1972, (b) knowledge of people who work with Philadelphia Academies today, and (c) the interviewees themselves. Investigation showed that each had a particular role to play in the process.
Of these ten, five were interviewed at length. The preliminary list of key players, their positions at the time of the start of academies, and their disposition as it related to this study are displayed in Table 1. Each is then described by position, roles played in Table 1

_Preliminary List of Key Players in the Development of Academies_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position at Start of Academies</th>
<th>Disposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles W. Bowser</td>
<td>Creator of the career academy concept</td>
<td>Located but died during the conduct of this investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al Deckert</td>
<td>First career academy teacher</td>
<td>Located but not interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee Everett</td>
<td>CEO of Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)</td>
<td>Interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al Glassman</td>
<td>Principal of Edison High School</td>
<td>Interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Heldring</td>
<td>CEO of Bell Telephone</td>
<td>Located but not interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henk Koening</td>
<td>Liaison between PECO and Edison High School</td>
<td>Consented to interview, but died before questioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Joseph Phillips</td>
<td>First academy English teacher</td>
<td>Interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Mark Shedd</td>
<td>Superintendent of Philadelphia Schools</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald Porter</td>
<td>First academy math teacher</td>
<td>Interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Thompson</td>
<td>First academy lead teacher</td>
<td>Interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellington “Duke” Yaple</td>
<td>General Personnel Manager of Bell Telephone</td>
<td>Not located</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the development of academies, and personal references by others in the academy development.

**Charles W. Bowser.** Charles W. Bowser was clearly identified as the creator of the career academy concept and the initiative to develop them. Bowser was an
attorney who had served on the City Council, was head of the city’s Urban League, had been a mayoral candidate, and at the time of the academies’ conception, was Philadelphia’s Deputy Mayor. Al Glassman, the first academy principal, displayed supreme confidence in Mr. Bowser’s abilities, stating bluntly, “There wasn’t much Charlie couldn’t do.” Career academies were his response to threats to the community from the civil unrest of the late 1960s, and leveled the playing field for young black males exiting high school and looking for work.

Lee Everett. The Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO) was approached by Mr. Bowser to be the community business partner for the Electrical Academy. Initially, PECO refused the offer, but persistence from Bowser caused them to acquiesce, albeit not until the first academy had already opened its doors. This brought Lee Everett, who was PECO’s Chief Executive Officer, into the mix. Everett marshaled a substantial body of business support from Philadelphia and led the coalition to get academies going and moving forward. Everett also donated a PECO executive electrical engineer full time to work at the high school with the teaching team. His name was Henk Koening. As valuable as the interviewees found Koening’s contributions to

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146 Glassman, Al, interview by Mark A. Thompson. *First Career Academy School Principal* (October 18, 2008).
147 Glassman, Al, interview by Mark A. Thompson. *First Career Academy School Principal* (October 18, 2008).
152 Glassman, Al, interview by Mark A. Thompson. *First Career Academy School Principal* (October 18, 2008).
be, principal Al Glassman recognized Koening would not have been there without the support of Lee Everett.\textsuperscript{153} John Thompson said Lee Everett “was a big factor. He was one of the biggest movers and shakers of the whole damn thing.”\textsuperscript{154}

**Dr. Mark Shedd.** Dr. Mark Shedd was superintendent of the Philadelphia school system. Very little was said of him. Principal Al Glassman said, “Mark Shedd was superintendent of schools in those days . . . he was a very forward thinker. He encouraged all of us to rethink schools and how we might serve the needs of youngsters better than we were.”\textsuperscript{155}

To get academies off the ground, Charles Bowser would have needed Dr. Shedd’s acceptance of the idea. It would make sense that Bowser would have approached Shedd on the school side about the same time he approached Lee Everett on the business side. Because both Bowser and Shedd are now deceased, what conversations they had and the substance thereof is lost. It is clear from the fact that the initiative moved forward, however, that Mark Shedd was on board. His contribution to the work was unique in that it seemed to be his non-interference that helped the project to develop.

**Al Glassman.** At the school level, Al Glassman served as the principal. Both Lee Everett\textsuperscript{156} and English teacher Dr. Joseph Phillips\textsuperscript{157} stated that Glassman played an important role. Math teacher Gerald Porter said, “He told us, ‘Do whatever you need to

\textsuperscript{153} Glassman, Al, interview by Mark A. Thompson. *First Career Academy School Principal* (October 18, 2008).

\textsuperscript{154} Thompson, John, interview by Mark A. Thompson. *First Career Academy Lead Teacher* (November 3, 2008).

\textsuperscript{155} Glassman, Al, interview by Mark A. Thompson. *First Career Academy School Principal* (October 18, 2008).

\textsuperscript{156} Everett, Lee, interview by Mark A. Thompson. *CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)* (January 22, 2010).

\textsuperscript{157} Phillips, Dr. Joseph, interview by Mark A. Thompson. *First Career Academy English Teacher* (May 16, 2009).
do,’ and gave us a good deal of latitude.” Glassman was in the pivotal role (shared only by Henk Koening) of seeing the whole picture. He was interacting on a regular basis with all three major stakeholders: the creator of the academies (Bowser), the supporters of the academies (businesses), and the implementers of the academies (teachers).

Henk Koening. I perceived Henk Koening to be a major player because each of the five interviewees smiled slightly when asked about him. Phillips said Koening “was the one who got the juices flowing.”\footnote{Phillips, Dr. Joseph, interview by Mark A. Thompson. \textit{First Career Academy English Teacher} (May 16, 2009).} He was a Dutch national, an Anglican minister, an engineer, and a WWII submarine commander decorated four times.\footnote{Everett, Lee, interview by Mark A. Thompson. \textit{CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)} (January 22, 2010).} Any one of these would have made Henk unique, but the combination of all four would make him a curiosity. When you add to that his reported charisma, he has all the characteristics of a major catalyst. Glassman said, “Henk Koening was a dynamite guy. Such an enthusiastic supporter on the ground – working with us in the schools . . . academies were the greatest thing since cream cheese as far as he was concerned.”\footnote{Glassman, Al, interview by Mark A. Thompson. \textit{First Career Academy School Principal} (October 18, 2008).} He was honored for his work with high school academies by President Jimmy Carter.\footnote{Unknown, \textit{The Revd Kenk Koenig}, November 2, 2006, \url{http://www.churchtimes.co.uk/89953} (accessed June 12, 2014).}

John Thompson. John Thompson is often thought of as the first academy teacher, but he clarified that misconception. “At the time when they started, Mr. Al Deckert was the teacher and he’s still around,” Thompson said. “Al Deckert was the instructor.”\footnote{Thompson, John, interview by Mark A. Thompson. \textit{First Career Academy Lead Teacher} (November 3, 2008).}
Thompson himself was identified by several others as being a key player and this was supported by documentation of the time period.\footnote{Albert I. Glassman, "Memorandum," Memorandum of decisions reached at meeting regarding Edison High School Academy of Applied Electrical Sciences (Philadelphia: Unpublished, November 11, 1971).} Dr. Joseph Phillips, the English teacher and James Joyce scholar\footnote{Thompson, John, interview by Mark A. Thompson. First Career Academy Lead Teacher (November 3, 2008).}, said, “I think that John Thompson was seminal. His commitment was necessary.”\footnote{Phillips, Dr. Joseph, interview by Mark A. Thompson. First Career Academy English Teacher (May 16, 2009).} Gerald Porter identified Thompson as the person who recruited academy teachers and cemented them into a team. “They chose John Thompson, and John invited me and pulled everybody together. He sat down and talked to me for a while and said he’d like to see me doing it.”\footnote{Porter, Gerald, interview by Mark A. Thompson. First Career Academy Math Teacher (October 17, 2009).} The principal of the time, Al Glassman, used the most adjectives to describe Thompson, referring to him as a nice guy, confident, and conscientious; a “mild-mannered and a very sweet man who possessed the right kind of temperament.”\footnote{Glassman, Al, interview by Mark A. Thompson. First Career Academy School Principal (October 18, 2008).}

The most emphatic in describing Thompson was Lee Everett of PECO. When reflecting on all four academies that developed during the scope of this study, Mr. Everett said, “The lead teacher was the most important person: John Thompson with the first academy.”\footnote{Everett, Lee, interview by Mark A. Thompson. CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO) (January 22, 2010).}

\textbf{Al Deckert.} Al Deckert was identified by John Thompson as the first career academy teacher, and this was supported by documentation of the time period.\footnote{Bell Telephone, "Businessmen See Vocational Work at Edison," Bell Telephone Bulletin (Philadelphia: Bell Telephone, October 10, 1969).} He was
going it alone when Thompson was named lead teacher and subsequently served as part of the team Thompson later assembled.\textsuperscript{170}

**Duke Yaple.** Wellington “Duke” Yaple was the representative of Bell Telephone, was the first academy project coordinator, and was the initial driving force promoting the academy concept to Philadelphia corporations.\textsuperscript{171} Thompson mentioned Yaple by name,\textsuperscript{172} whereas Lee Everett identified him by name only after being prompting.\textsuperscript{173} This may have occurred due to the fact that Yaple was not directly active with the academies for a long time period; he moved up the corporate ladder and was replaced in the academy endeavor by someone else.\textsuperscript{174} Nevertheless, Glassman\textsuperscript{175} cited the importance of Bell Telephone’s involvement, which is the company Yaple represented.

**Fred Heldring.** Fred Heldring was identified as a key player from Philadelphia National Bank (PNB). Heldring had a corporate persona. In other words, PNB was a major sponsor of academies although Heldring was not hands-on at the schools. Al Glassman identified him by name; Glassman and Heldring had been friends for many years.\textsuperscript{176} Everett, however, a fount of names out of local companies and the Chamber of

\textsuperscript{170} John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy Lead Teacher*, (November 3, 2008).


\textsuperscript{172} John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy Lead Teacher*, (November 3, 2008).

\textsuperscript{173} Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)*, (January 22, 2010).

\textsuperscript{174} Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)*, (January 22, 2010).

\textsuperscript{175} Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy School Principal*, (October 18, 2008).

\textsuperscript{176} Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy School Principal*, (October 18, 2008).
Commerce, did not name Heldring specifically at all, although he did cite the Business Academy that Heldring assisted more than once.\textsuperscript{177}

There are two possibilities for this conflict in key player status. First, it could be that like Yaple, Heldring was a more behind-the-scenes presence. Second, it is possible that Everett related more to Yaple, since they came from the city’s two massive utility companies, PECO and Bell respectively, whereas Heldring represented the banking sector. In either event, Heldring or PNB were considered contributors to the effort.

**Dr. Joseph Phillips.** Dr. Joseph Phillips was the first academic content teacher to join a career academy team. He was the department head for English\textsuperscript{178} and had the distinction of being a James Joyce Scholar. Both John Thompson and Gerald Porter identified him as being an important part of the process.\textsuperscript{179}

**Gerald Porter.** Mr. Porter was the math teacher who joined the Electrical Academy team.\textsuperscript{180} Both Thompson and Phillips identified him as a critical part of the process.

These are the individuals that were validated as “key players.” The data compiled from those that were interviewed were combined with other primary sources from the time period, such as meeting agendas and minutes, personal notes, and newspaper and magazine articles. From this, five major themes emerged in the origin and development

\textsuperscript{177} Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)*, (January 22, 2010).
\textsuperscript{178} John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy Lead Teacher*, (November 3, 2008).
\textsuperscript{179} John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy Lead Teacher*, (November 3, 2008).
\textsuperscript{180} Gerald Porter, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy Math Teacher*, (October 17, 2009).
of the first career academies. Before outlining those, it is important to establish the context in which this happened.

Context for Creation

The times. It was the late 1960’s. “The world was filled with anger and the schools were filled with graffiti,” as Dr. Phillips described it.\(^{181}\) He and others in Philadelphia had cause for alarm because of the violence in cities across America.

In California, a police shooting of a stolen car suspect touched off a riot in Hunter’s Point, a neighborhood of San Francisco. Personal visits by the city’s mayor, the NAACP and the California governor failed to restore peace. It was quelled only when the National Guard was called in to restore order.\(^{182}\)

Several states closer to home, violence broke out in Chicago. Millions of Americans sat in front of their televisions, incredulous, witnessing the melee outside the Democrats’ national convention. The Chicago Tribune reported, “At the height of a stormy year, Chicago streets become nightly battle zones.”\(^{183}\)

Just down the road in neighboring Baltimore, bedlam erupted as a highly destructive riot flared up in several parts of the city simultaneously, resulting in 800 fires over a three day period. Six Baltimore residents were killed and 700 were injured. More than 1,000 small businesses were looted and burned, and 5,800 people were jailed.\(^{184}\)

\(^{181}\) Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy English Teacher*, (May 16, 2009).
Philadelphia was contending with unrest, demonstrations and vandalism, but had thus far been untouched by that level of violence. Even so, city leaders knew they were on borrowed time. Teacher John Thompson described the setting as “Turmoil. A subtle turmoil. And it was trying to make corrections . . . Back at that time Philadelphia was very shaky.”

“In Philadelphia they were afraid of race riots,” Everett said. “They had them in Chicago and other places.” He described 1960s Philadelphia as an “old city that was having growing pains because of an aging infrastructure . . .” Dr. Phillips was more succinct. “It was always a powder keg.”

The problem was complex because there was not a single cause. Race, economics, war and politics intermingled to feed the disruption. “There were all kinds of issues related to race,” Gerald Porter said. “At the same time we were losing a lot of jobs to factories.”

Glassman gave a comprehensive description of the setting. “In that time, our society as a whole was very unsettled. You had a protracted conflict in Vietnam. You had demonstrations against the war in most major cities throughout the United States. You

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185 John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy Lead Teacher*, (November 3, 2008).
186 John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy Lead Teacher*, (November 3, 2008).
187 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)*, (January 22, 2010).
189 Gerald Porter, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy Math Teacher*, (October 17, 2009).
had high profile assassinations people were still trying to get over. It’s difficult today to convey how deeply impacted everyone was by all of this, you know?"190

Poverty and the subsequent lack of economic opportunity was an issue. Throughout the major cities in the mid-west and along the Atlantic seaboard, there were “big swaths of poverty.”191 This was exacerbated by the large-scale departure of employed or self-employed people from the inner cities to the suburbs.192 “So, we were living in a city,” Everett said, “that, if it wasn’t dying, it was certainly sick.”193

The unrest within cities based on economic hardship and race were sometimes made worse by heavy-handed police action, as was the case in San Francisco and Chicago. Philadelphia did not catch a break here. The city had an outspoken and brash police chief named Frank Rizzo. It became public that Chief Rizzo had been collecting intelligence on groups and individuals whose patriotism was suspect in “counter-subversive files.” The team that carried this out was officially called the Civil Defense Squad,194 but around the city residents called them “Rizzo’s Raiders.”195

Hubert Williams, president of the Police Foundation, a nonprofit research organization based in Washington, D.C., reflected on the Rizzo era a number of years later. “Philadelphia used to be looked at as a Police Department out of control," he said.

190 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy School Principal, (October 18, 2008).
191 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy School Principal, (October 18, 2008).
192 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO), (January 22, 2010).
193 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO), (January 22, 2010).
"It was sometimes seen as insulting to the minority community. Excessive use of force was fairly common."\textsuperscript{196} Sgt. Ronald Munday is a black police office that served under Rizzo. He told the Los Angeles Times, "Those were some of the darkest days in our history. We had some bad policies back then and the community lost faith in us."\textsuperscript{197}

As America convulsed on the inside, it was also beset with violence on the outside. In the late 60’s the Vietnam War was approaching its zenith. This fed more protests and civil unrest in U.S. cities, but it also crept into schools that possessed no immunity to the violence. John Thompson had just returned to the U.S. after serving in Vietnam and went right into the classroom at Edison High School in Philadelphia.\textsuperscript{198} Edison High School would be hard hit and, as it turned out, the hardest hit of any high school in America, earning the unwanted distinction of having the most graduates killed in Vietnam.\textsuperscript{199}

Edison students at the school wanted to honor their fallen friends with a plaque containing all the names of students who lost their lives. Principal Al Glassman felt this was a good part of the healing process and a moving way for students to honor fellow students. Mr. Glassman describes part of the occasion this way:

I remember the most poignant thing occurred when they came to me one day and said “Mr. Glassman, how many metal tags do you think we should order? Twenty-five? Thirty?” I said that sounds like reasonable number. So they ordered this big plaque with little metal plates that would have been inscribed with the names of the students. By the time we installed that plaque we had over fifty names to put on it. Once the process

\textsuperscript{198} John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{First Career Academy Lead Teacher}, (November 3, 2008).
\textsuperscript{199} Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{First Career Academy School Principal}, (October 18, 2008).
began of trying to identify former Edison students that had been killed in Vietnam, people came forth. Parents of students identified their sons as having been killed in Vietnam that we didn’t even know about, and here we ended up with fifty-five names.  

In most respects, Edison High School was a microcosm of the inner-city community that surrounded it, and had been for some time. “Back in the late ‘50s when I first started at Edison High School,” Glassman said. “We were down-on-our-luck in the city.” Prospects did not change over the next decade as 1 in 3 residents of the inner part of Philadelphia lived on welfare. While the overwhelming majority of Edison’s enrollment in the late 1960s was black, with a nominal percentage of Latinos and whites, the entire student body was characterized more by economics than by race. “We were all in the same box,” Thompson said. “White, black, blue, purple: we were all in the same box. We were going to have to be successful to climb out of this box and it made no difference who you were.”

“That was a big serious problem,” Lee Everett said. “One out of three people who lived in Philadelphia was on welfare in those days.” Education is usually the road out of poverty; unfortunately public schools in inner-city Philadelphia were not making the grade. “It was obvious the need was not being served and provided for,” Dr. Phillips observed. “There’s so many things that you have to do to get a kid through those

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200 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy School Principal, (October 18, 2008).
201 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy School Principal, (October 18, 2008).
202 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO), (January 22, 2010).
203 John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy Lead Teacher, (November 3, 2008).
204 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO), (January 22, 2010).
neighborhoods and into school . . . we needed a lot of help there because there wasn’t any.”

Things got progressively worse as the bottom dropped out of the real estate market. “We had the flight to the suburbs,” Lee Everett noted, “and we had all these areas and West and South Philadelphia that were practically derelict because the people with money left. The properties were just left to be rented as cheaply as they can be.”

Because of the massive departure to the suburbs by whites and people of means, the inner-city schools became “schools for the poor.” “That was the problem,” Everett said, “the collection of the poor and indigent within the city and the exodus of the wage earners to the suburbs.”

In 1968, Al Glassman was named the new principal at Edison High School and he knew what he was getting into. Glassman described the neighborhood around Edison High as “the most problematic, the most downtrodden piece of school territory in the entire city of Philadelphia.”

The inside of the school reflected the troubled realities of life outside of it.

“Letting things slide, letting things slip away, was endemic in the ’60s,” Dr. Phillips remarked. “It was a bad, bad time for kids in schools . . . They were hard times in the

206 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)*, (January 22, 2010).
207 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy School Principal*, (October 18, 2008).
208 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)*, (January 22, 2010).
209 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy School Principal*, (October 18, 2008).
schools. A lot of graffiti, a lot of negativity, and fighting and so on.”\textsuperscript{210} Edison’s new principal agreed. “This was a period of time when you didn’t normally have assembly programs in our high schools in Philadelphia,” Glassman said. “You never wanted to bring 1,000 kids together in an assembly hall because it was too dangerous. It really was. It was too risky because of the unrest that characterized schools in those days.”\textsuperscript{211}

While community leaders were anxious to help schools, they were not sure of the best way to go about it. Their desire for involvement was part altruistic and part self-interest, as Dr. Phillips remembered, “. . . the president of one company said, ‘You either do this, or you get a stone thrown through your windows.’ He was very practical. He didn’t want anybody throwing stones through his windows.”\textsuperscript{212}

The Cradle of Liberty was in crisis. With the slaughter of her sons overseas, the disintegration of law and order in her sister cities, racial inequality and rage within her own city limits, a swaggering and heavy-handed police chief antagonizing the public, and failing schools limiting the prospects for escape, Philadelphia had all the ingredients for a descent into the violence and destruction to which other metropolises of the time fell victim.

On the other hand, no one wanted Philadelphians in the condition in which they found themselves. Schools wanted to improve, businesses wanted to help, and people wanted opportunities and options. While it is true Philadelphia had all of the ingredients

\textsuperscript{210} Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{First Career Academy English Teacher}, (May 16, 2009).
\textsuperscript{211} Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{First Career Academy English Teacher}, (May 16, 2009).
\textsuperscript{212} Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{First Career Academy English Teacher}, (May 16, 2009).
for disaster, it also had all of the pieces required for a renaissance; they just needed a way to connect them.

Thus, in 1968, Philadelphia found itself at a high-stakes crossroads. The city needed someone to take the lead and bring the pieces together; someone who could connect with the different population segments, marshal resources, communicate a clear vision, and bring it to reality through force of will.

**Charles W. Bowser.** “Charles Bowser was deputy to the mayor of the city of Philadelphia and he had been assigned by the mayor to organize youth-serving agencies in the city,” Al Glassman recalled, “to stem the violent behavior and uproar and the upset . . .” Charles W. Bowser was a native of Philadelphia who grew up in a poor neighborhood on the North end of town. He was well educated, having graduated from a local high school and earning bachelors and law degrees from Temple University. He was in a unique social position in the community. Having a history of being an outspoken advocate of civil rights made him part of a counter-culture, but his work for the city government made him simultaneously part of “the establishment.”

When he was named the first black Deputy Mayor in Philadelphia’s history, many black residents believed that they finally had a voice in city hall with someone who would listen to them. One could argue that his best training for the circumstances of 1968 Philadelphia came not from his law degree nor his civil rights background, but from his service in the U.S. Army during the Korean conflict defusing bombs and clearing

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213 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy School Principal*, (October 18, 2008).
minefields.\textsuperscript{216} The coolness under pressure required for such work was seen as a useful character trait in defusing the “powder keg”\textsuperscript{217} of Philadelphia.

Not only did Charles W. Bowser possess a much-needed calmness for antsy Philadelphia; fortunately for the city, he also possessed an idea.\textsuperscript{218} Like a surgeon, he chose to go to the very heart of the illness. He recognized the overlap of the festering problems of racial inequality, the dearth of economic opportunity\textsuperscript{219}, and failing schools. When the first domino falls, so do the rest, and the first domino in 1968 Philadelphia was young black males. They needed jobs, and they could not get jobs unless they graduated high school, and they could not graduate high school if they continued dropping out. This was the recipe for continued lack of opportunity and subsequent anger.\textsuperscript{220} In Bowser’s mind, the solution to the community’s problems lay in rethinking high schools, how they worked, and how they met the needs of their constituency.\textsuperscript{221}

Two things would determine the success or failure of how they redesigned the functioning of high school. First, how many of the students stayed in school and graduated. Second, how many of the students were able to find employment after leaving school because they were well prepared.\textsuperscript{222} “If you don’t finish school,” Glassman said, “you’re going to have a hard time finding gainful employment and being able to support

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\textsuperscript{217} Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{First Career Academy English Teacher}, (May 16, 2009).
\textsuperscript{218} Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{First Career Academy School Principal}, (October 18, 2008).
\textsuperscript{219} Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{First Career Academy School Principal}, (October 18, 2008).
\textsuperscript{220} Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{First Career Academy English Teacher}, (May 16, 2009).
\textsuperscript{221} Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)}, (January 22, 2010).
\textsuperscript{222} John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, \textit{First Career Academy Lead Teacher}, (November 3, 2008).
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your own family structure.” This could result in community status for the students as young men who could support themselves and their families and create a social security. Everet reported that Bowser “. . . wanted the high schools to teach kids how to work, how to hold a job.” Teacher Gerald Porter echoed this mindset when he said the developers of the academy wanted “to get them entry-level positions, and a way of moving forward. We wanted to get their foot in the door with certain companies around Philadelphia.”

Bowser’s idea became known as the “high school academy.” [In the 1990s, the term “career academy” was coined by Charlie Dayton of the University of California-Berkeley and has replaced “high school academy” in popular usage in the United States. In this particular writing, the two terms are interchangeable.] It was to be a school-within-a-school where more personalized attention could be paid to the needs of each student. The needs were indeed high, and Bowser’s idea was planted in the very epicenter of social unrest and disenfranchisement: Thomas Edison High School.

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223 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy School Principal*, (October 18, 2008).
224 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)*, (January 22, 2010).
225 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO)*, (January 22, 2010).
226 Gerald Porter, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy Math Teacher*, (October 17, 2009).
227 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy School Principal*, (October 18, 2008).
The student population. The Philadelphia Urban Coalition became Charlie Bowser’s voice in 1968. They put out the challenge to local industry in a memorandum that stated,

The Urban Coalition is interested in establishing a system of High School Academies (particularly at low prestige schools which no one wants to attend and does so only because he or she must) to motivate students to want to attend that school and, in the process, to assist the school in turning out a more employable graduate.

The second step was to identify the “low prestige school” in which to launch the concept. Edison High School was a microcosm of the community that surrounded it. “It was the most ‘inner city’ of inner-city schools,” Glassman said. “Edison in many ways epitomized the problems of the day.” Lee Everett was blunt in his description of Edison. “It was the worst high school academically in Philadelphia,” he said. “It had the lowest attendance record and the greatest dropout records.” With a 40% dropout rate for sophomores alone, it’s little wonder that Principal Al Glassman pushed for quick development of the Edison academy.

People in the neighborhood were unemployed and disenfranchised and so too were the Edison students. “All those things that came into play in a student’s life were

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229 Henk Koening, "Email," Philadelphia High School Academies: A Personal Reflection by the Former Director (Philadelphia: Unpublished, June 1, 2000).
231 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy School Principal, (October 18, 2008).
232 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO), (January 22, 2010).
brought into the classroom,” Thompson said. “They were hard,” Dr. Phillips added, “because the kids couldn’t escape the reality of what was there.” A large portion of the population around Edison High School was living in poverty. The dropout rate was severe. Lee Everett remembered the dropout rate being around 65%, and attendance being just as bad for the kids who remained enrolled. These students had no expectation of being employed. “This created a large underclass population that, overall, was disenfranchised from the opportunities so many others had,” Glassman said. “Specifically, young African-American boys—they were the ones we were losing the most.”

It logically follows if the Edison students lacked the skills needed to complete high school, they certainly lacked any skill for the life that followed high school. With regard to career readiness and employability skills, again Dr. Phillips was frank. “They just didn’t have it. It wasn’t there,” he said. Gerald Porter said, “... these kids lacked the basic skills to be able to leave school and do something.” Dr. Phillips gave a basic sketch of the typical student with whom they dealt.

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236 John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy Lead Teacher, (November 3, 2008).
237 Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy English Teacher, (May 16, 2009).
238 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy School Principal, (October 18, 2008).
239 Lee Everett, interview by Mark A. Thompson, CEO, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO), (January 22, 2010).
240 Gerald Porter, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy Math Teacher, (October 17, 2009).
241 Al Glassman, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy School Principal, (October 18, 2008).
242 Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy English Teacher, (May 16, 2009).
243 Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy English Teacher, (May 16, 2009).
244 Gerald Porter, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy Math Teacher, (October 17, 2009).
They came to the school with so much baggage—nothing new there. Nothing I could add to what other people have said except that this group that we decided to work with were [sic] really very difficult. It was not the high end; pretty much, what a lot of what people would label as “losers.”

We took kids that other people wouldn’t take. You take a kid coming into the ninth grade—I don’t like to use the term “grade level” when we’re talking about reading, but we’re stuck with it—but, we had kids at the fourth and fifth grade reading levels using that convention.245

Their culture was one of poverty and violence, some who had family members murdered in their homes,246 some who were surrounded by urban decay,247 and some who were completely ignorant of employability skills and work habits.248 “In the mid-60s there just aren’t as many jobs,” Porter said. “To add to the problem, most of these kids didn’t have anybody in their family who had a good job—that was an electrician, or a plumber. I’m not talking about college-bound. Just a good paying job...”249

When it came to high academic standards, there was no support for the students coming from their homes.250 This, combined with the other factors created a great deal of anger within the students that mirrored the anger in the community.251 With so few ways to express themselves, students turned to destruction of property and vandalism. As Dr. Phillips told it,

245 Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy English Teacher, (May 16, 2009).
246 Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy English Teacher, (May 16, 2009).
247 John Thompson, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy Lead Teacher, (November 3, 2008).
248 Gerald Porter, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy Math Teacher, (October 17, 2009).
249 Gerald Porter, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy Math Teacher, (October 17, 2009).
250 Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy English Teacher, (May 16, 2009).
251 Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, First Career Academy English Teacher, (May 16, 2009).
I was walking down the hallway one day, and a kid was standing there with a brush painting his signature. What was it? It was ‘DC Skinny.’ That’s what it was. [Chuckles] I tried to get him, but he scurried off. That kind of thing that was not unusual. It was tough to deal with in the school, when society was like that . . . So, they were not “nice” kids. \(^{252}\)

It was in this context that the concept of the high school academy was deployed. It was this student population, the “losers that other people wouldn’t take,” who would determine the success or failure of it.

**What are some explanations for the initiative’s longevity?**

In the process of answering this research question, five emerging themes arose. Themes are displayed in Table 2. These themes provided answers to the research questions, and relevant data from the themes are introduced in the process of answering the research questions.

**Emerging theme 1 – Faculty ownership.** Bowser’s initial angle of attack illuminates the first emerging theme. As early as 1968, \(^{253}\) he involved a diverse group of people and gave them ownership of the idea. He quickly built a coalition of city leaders to make his concept of “high school academies” fly. Bowser approached “Duke” Yaple, General Personnel Supervisor of Bell Telephone, \(^{254}\) and Lee Everett, CEO of the Philadelphia Electric Company, because it was determined by Bowser that the first academy would be based on the electrical trades.

Rationale for selection of electrical trades was never explained, however, it could because Bowser’s father was an electrician. When Charles Bowser was a boy, he would

\(^{252}\) Dr. Joseph Phillips, interview by Mark A. Thompson, *First Career Academy English Teacher*, (May 16, 2009).
