An historical analysis of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School at the University of Pittsburgh

Scott Meyer-Kukan

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An Historical Analysis of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School at the University of Pittsburgh

by

Scott Meyer-Kukan

Dissertation
Submitted to the Department of Leadership and Counseling
Eastern Michigan University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Leadership and Counseling

Dissertation Committee:
Professor David Anderson, Ed.D., Chair
Professor James Berry, Ed.D.
Professor Patrice Bounds, Ph.D.
Professor Wendy Burke, Ph.D.

March 1, 2022
Ypsilanti, Michigan
Dedication

This work is dedicated to my husband, Robert Meyer-Kukan, who continued to support me through my doctoral journey. His encouragement and admiration for my passion of public education has helped make this work possible. Additionally, I would like to dedicate this work to Janet Ackerman-Foy, Eleanor Brandow, and Tonia Millstein. These three educators fostered my love of learning in elementary and high school. Without their wisdom and guidance, my interest in the field of education might not have been nurtured.
Acknowledgments

Throughout the planning and writing of this dissertation I have received support from a variety of individuals.

I would first like to thank my dissertation chair, Dr. David Anderson, Ed.D., for his continued guidance and encouragement throughout my doctoral journey. Your knowledge and wisdom in the field of educational leadership has allowed me to approach experiences differently and to seek answers and truth.

I would also like to acknowledge my dissertation committee members, Dr. James Berry, Ed.D., Dr. Patrice Bounds, Ph.D., and Dr. Wendy Burke, Ph.D. Your feedback and push to explore new ideas and concepts have helped make this work stronger. I thank you for your participation and guidance.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone affiliated with the Falk Laboratory School and the University of Pittsburgh that provided information for this study. Your participation by providing archival data and engaging in interviews provided the necessary information to make this dissertation strong. I would also like to thank the Archives & Special Collections within the University of Pittsburgh Library System for the lengthy digitization of historical documents that contributed to this work.
Abstract

Laboratory schools in the United States have been in existence in some form since the establishment of normal schools in 1839. Heavily criticized in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, many laboratory schools would close their doors for a variety of reasons. One laboratory school in particular, the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School, was established under a unique charter agreement between the Falk family and the University of Pittsburgh. The school opened its doors in the fall of 1931 and is still in operation today. The primary purpose of this qualitative historical analysis was to understand the functions and purposes of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School and to understand why this laboratory school has been in continual existence without break. The results of this study indicated that the primary purposes and functions of the Falk School to provide opportunities for clinical teaching and student teaching opportunities. The unique charter agreement between the Falk family and the University of Pittsburgh is also cited as a primary reason for the continued existence of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School. Further exploration of these findings and implications for practice, theory, and for future research are discussed.

Keywords: laboratory schools, clinical teaching, student teaching
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Approximately 3.1 million full-time educators worked in the 98,300 public and charter schools and 33,600 private schools in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). These 3.1 million full-time educators had varying collegiate degrees and participated in a variety of pre-service clinical experiences including alternative routes to educator certification. According to the 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, educator certification requirements are reserved for the individual states, and each state certified educators based upon their individual standards and requirements (U.S. Const. amend. X). Beginning in the late 1980s, programs such as Teach for America, Troops to Teachers, and the New York City Teaching Fellows amongst other alternative routes to educator certification surfaced (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The way educators are prepared again received attention in 2010 when the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) was formed (CAEP, 2015a).

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was founded in 1954 as a non-profit organization that solely provided accreditation to the United States’ colleges and universities (NCATE, 2014). The Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) was formulated in 1997 as a non-profit organization whose primary focus was on the continual improvement of the vast educator preparation programs throughout the nation (TEAC, 2014). Seeing the need to “create a model unified accreditation system,” the Boards of Directors for NCATE and TEAC developed a design team comprised of an equal number of members from each organization. These 14 members first met in 2009 and within the same year the CAEP accrediting body had been created. Four years later, the CAEP Board of Directors approved a set
of new accreditation standards. The CAEP standards were officially implemented in 2016 when the NCATE and TEAC standards were retired.

The CAEP standards involved the understanding of the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards (as incorporated within CAEP Standard 1: Content and Pedagogical Knowledge) and their impact on student learning (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2011). The InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards consisted of 10 standards broken into four categories. These categories include: (a) The Learner and Learning; (b) Content Knowledge; (c) Instructional Practice; and (d) Professional Responsibility. The InTASC standards were created to provide administrators and educators with an “outline what teachers should know and be able to do to ensure every K-12 student reaches the goal of being ready to enter college or the workforce in today’s world” (p. 3). The InTASC standards were embedded within the CAEP standards to provide an in-depth understanding of the content and pedagogical knowledge educators must maintain prior to entering the classroom.

In preparation for active service, educators throughout the United States participated in a variety of pre-service clinical experiences. These experiences varied based upon individual state, college, and university requirements and were shaped by the former NCATE and TEAC standards and then the CAEP standards. Pre-service clinical experiences included observation and evaluation of veteran educators; mentor and mentee relationships; development of individual lessons and assessments; reflective practices through journaling, blogging, and discussion; individual, small, and whole group instruction; and, evaluations conducted by peers, cooperating educators, and university supervisors and faculty.

Laboratory schools have been strong centers for pre-service clinical preparation beginning as common or normal schools in the late 1830s (Harper, 1939; Williams, 1942).
Several states began passing legislation instituting these types of training facilities spawning the growth of the laboratory school movement and by 1939 there were “150 teachers colleges and normal schools belonging to the American Association of Teachers Colleges in the United States” (Harper, 1939, p. 152). In 1926, the American Association of Teachers Colleges (AATC) adopted a set of standards for accrediting teachers’ colleges. Of these 15 standards, Standard VII.A. mandated:

Each teacher’s college shall maintain a training school under its own control as part of its organization, as a laboratory school, for purposes of observation, demonstration, and supervised teaching on the part of students. The use of an urban or rural school system, under sufficient control and supervision of the college to permit carrying out the educational policy of the college to a sufficient degree for the conduct of effective student teaching, will satisfy this requirement. (AATC, p. 11)

In 1948, the AATC merged with the National Association of Colleges and Departments of Education and the National Association of Teacher Education Institutions in Metropolitan Districts to become the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) (Ducharme & Ducharme, 1998, p. 13). The laboratory school continued to be an integral component in the preparation of prospective educators (AACTE, 1948). The laboratory school also maintained its role in the preparation of educator candidates throughout the creation of NCATE in 1954, TEAC in 1997, and CAEP in 2010.

**Statement of the Problem**

The concept of the laboratory school began in 1839 when the first public normal school opened in Lexington, Massachusetts. It was at this time that the laboratory school model was created “for the purpose of scientific investigation and research into the problems concerned with
psychology and sociology of education” (Perrodin, 1955, p. 8). A primary purpose of the laboratory school was to act as a “model school” “where future teachers could observe expert teaching techniques, work with latest equipment, and hone their own skills” (Cucchiara, 2010, p. 97). While the laboratory school was created “to make discoveries about the education of a child by putting theory into practice in an experimental setting and modifying theory by what is learned” (Tanner, 1997, p. 19), many of these schools began to close in the 1960s and 1970s. The problem addressed in this study investigated the need for a greater understanding of the factors that led to the decline of the laboratory school model through the analyzation of the continuation of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh.

The concept of a model school affiliated with the University of Pittsburgh did not begin with the establishment of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School in 1930. The University of Pittsburgh opened their first childhood school for kindergarteners on Monday, October 13, 1913. The school was unique for the time as the start of the day involved “children will go individually to pursue some plan of their own. The play-leader will supervise the work of each child and keep a record of each child’s progress and development along various lines” (“University to Have School of Childhood,” 1913, p.3). The School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh would oversee what became known as the Childhood School or the School of Childhood. The Childhood School became quite popular and expanded its program to attract children in grades kindergarten through sixth grade by 1921 (Childhood School to Move This Week,” 1921, p. 7). Unfortunately, financial constraints became an issue and discussions of closing the Childhood School surfaced when the school closed for the academic year in June of 1921. Thus, the school was reorganized and became known as the University of Pittsburgh Demonstration School (“Pitt Childhood School to Reopen,” 1921, p.8) and included two departments: (a) the Childhood
School for students below grade three, and (b) the elementary school for students in third through sixth grades (“Pitt Expects 6,200 or More Will Enroll,” 1921, p. 45). Due to financial constraints, the Demonstration School closed at the end of the 1921-1922 academic school year.

Supporters of the Childhood School quickly sprang into action and organized what became known as the Community School. The Community School opened in the fall of 1922 and welcomed children in kindergarten through second grade. Although the Community School was not directly affiliated with the University of Pittsburgh, it was under the leadership of two University of Pittsburgh graduates, Helen Ann Maxwell, and Ethelyn Brown (“To Open School of Childhood,” 1922, p. 13). By the time the Community School opened in its fourth year, the school had grown to retain students in kindergarten through sixth grade (“School to begin its fourth year”, 1927, p. 9). The Community School would be absorbed by the creation of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School that would open in the fall of 1931.

Fanny Edel was born August 16, 1879, in Lynchburg, Virginia, to Jacob and Elfrida Edel. On November 20, 1900, Fanny married Leon Falk in Norfolk, Virginia. The two would have two children, Leon Falk, Jr. in 1901 and Marjorie Falk in 1904. Leon Falk was a prominent steel manufacturer in the City of Pittsburgh, PA, and at the time of his death in 1928 he bequeathed $4,000,000.00 in trust to his family, the Rodef Shalom Reform Jewish congregation in Pittsburgh, PA, and the remainder being distributed to charity (“Leaves $4,00,000,” 1928, p.1). The Fanny E. Falk Memorial School Fund of the University of Pittsburgh was the idea of Leon Falk, Jr. and Marjorie Falk Levy and initially comprised $300,000. An additional $25,000 had been transferred to the Memorial Fund when a proposed gymnasium at the Rodef Shalom Reform Jewish congregation was cancelled (“Falk Memorial Fund is Increased,” 1930, p. 29).

The establishment of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School would “take over the work
now being done by the Community School” for “teachers in training at the university will observe methods used in the modern classrooms” (“Falks Endow Model School,” 1930, p. 4).

The Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School formally opened in the fall of 1931 with classes first being held in the Stephens House located on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh. Although the cornerstone had been laid on June 24, 1931, the school building was not ready for students until October 1, 1931, when “the school will strike a new note in modern educational methods” (“Begin Building of New School,” 1931, p. 3; “Fanny Falk School to be Ready Oct. 1”, 1931, p. 44). The Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School has continued to thrive under the mission established in the 1930 charter “to be a progressive, experimental, and demonstration elementary school” (Falk Laboratory School, 2020a).

The *Falk School Charter Agreement*, included as Appendix A of this study, became effective on July 22, 1930, and stipulated the unique governance structure of the school. The Falk School Board maintained 11 members that included the following: (a) Chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh; (b) Dean of the School of Education; (c) Mr. Leon Falk, Jr., or family designee; (d) Mrs. Marjorie Falk Levy, or family designee; (e) Principal of the Falk School; (f) head of the Department of Elementary Education; (g) one additional member of the Department of Elementary Education, chosen by the Dean; and (h) four members voted upon by the Parent’s Association of the Falk School. The governance structure of the Falk School was unique in that the school board “shall have the power of approval of the general purposes and activities of this school,” but were “subject to the final decision of the Board of Trustees of the University of Pittsburgh” (Falk School Charter Agreement, 1930, para. 17). Furthermore, the principal of the school was nominated by the dean of education to the Falk School board and, if approved, was then recommended to the chancellor. The principal only received this appointment if the
chancellor and University of Pittsburgh approved the recommendation.

The principal and teaching staff of the Falk School were initially required to be a “regularly appointed member of the faculty of the School of Education” (Falk School Charter Agreement, 1930, para. 22). The Falk School Charter Agreement had been amended only once and this occurred on February 7, 1946, while Mr. Leon Falk, Jr., and Mrs. Marjorie Levy Falk were still living. This amendment altered this initial requirement for the teaching staff of the school allowing “all staff teachers in the school in the school shall be accorded faculty recognition by the School of Education in such rank as the School of Education designates” (Falk School Charter Amendatory Agreement, 1946, para. 5). The principal, however, continued to be a faculty member in the School of Education.

The Falk Laboratory school had approximately 430-students enrolled for the 2020-2021 academic year. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit the United States in March of 2020, the Falk School board began to discuss options to bring back students face-to-face while adhering to social distancing guidelines. Interestingly, the Rodef Shalom Reform Jewish congregation building had become available, and Falk had transitioned their middle school students to this building (Vellucci, 2020). This second building allowed approximately 140 students, an assistant school director, and several teachers the opportunity to return to school while adhering to the Centers for Disease Control recommendations. Although students were now housed separate locations, the mission and vision of the school had not changed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model and to understand how this laboratory school continued through the 1960s and 1970s when many of these schools were closing their doors. A qualitative historical analysis was conducted where
primary and secondary sources along with eyewitness accounts were be utilized. According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), “Historical analysis is particularly useful in obtaining knowledge about unexamined areas and in reexamining questions for which answers are not as definite as desired” (p. 187). Primary and secondary sources of archival data along with interviews comprised the data collection methods to gain a greater understanding regarding the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model and its continuation through the 1960s and 1970s when many laboratory schools were closing their doors.

**Significance of the Study**

This study addressed the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model and its continuation throughout history and into the present. The study was unique in that it drew upon historical data analysis to bring forth the effective strategies associated with educator preparation, professional learning, research, and curriculum development. Insight gained from this type of study would provide educational reformers with the valuable understandings and practicality of laboratory schools to not only improve educator preparation, but also as a venue to enhance student academic and social-emotional achievement. In the past, there have been many reports on the history and purposes of the laboratory school. In addition, there is a wealth of literature criticizing laboratory schools, many of which that supported the closing of these schools in the 1960s and 1970s.

**Research Questions**

The questions that guided this research study sought to identify the establishment of the school, the former and present functions and purposes, and to describe how the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School has been a continuing laboratory school in the United States. These questions included the following:
1. RQ1-Qualitative: What were the initial purposes and functions of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model?

1. RQ2-Qualitative: What are the current purposes and functions of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model?

2. RQ3-Qualitative: What factors led to the continuation of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School when many others were closing their doors?

**Definitions**

Listed below are a set of key terms and their definitions that will assist the reader in understanding the study.

- *Alternative Route* to teacher certification includes any teacher training experiences outside a public or private four- or five-year university program. These include Teach for America, Troops to Teachers, or the New York City Teaching Fellows.

- *Boundary Spanning* relates to the dependence and interdependence that the Falk Laboratory School has upon the other entities that make up the University of Pittsburgh, such as the School of Education and University of Pittsburgh as the whole organization (Scott, 2007).

- *Centrality* and *Marginality* refer to how closely the functions and purposes of the Falk Laboratory School technical core of the School of Education and the University of Pittsburgh as the overarching organization (Hackman, 1985). For this study, eight indicators devised by Clark (1968) and expanded upon by Robledo (1978) will be utilized to compare the Falk Laboratory School to the other entities.

- *Laboratory School* is a public or private school that is attached to or affiliated with a public or private university for the purposes of teacher training, research, observation,
professional development, and the education of students in kindergarten through high school.

- *Loosely Coupled Systems* are those entities of an organization that are related in some way but continue to maintain an individual identity and some type of uniqueness (Weick, 1976). For this study, the organizational entities will consist of the Falk Laboratory School, the School of Education, and the University of Pittsburgh.

- *Model School* was a public or private school that had been attached to or affiliated with a normal school that provided opportunities for practice teaching and observation of students in kindergarten through high school.

- *Normal School* was a public or private school or college that had been created for the primary purpose of training teachers in the primary and secondary grade schools.

- *Pre-service Clinical Experiences* consist of observation and internship experiences of teacher candidates prior to full-time student teaching experiences.

- *State Normal School* was a public school or college that had been created for the primary purpose of training teachers in the primary and secondary grade schools.

- *Traditional Route* to teacher certification includes a traditional four- or five-year teacher training program at a public or private university.

**Summary and Organization of the Study**

The preparation of educators has varied since the first normal school was established at Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1839. Several organizations, such as the AATC, AACTE, NCATE, TEAC, and CAEP had been created to establish standards and minimum criteria for the training of teachers. In addition, these standards and criteria have helped lead to the reform of education preparation providers. However, many of the original functions of the normal schools and
laboratory schools persisted in some form and although many laboratory schools had closed in the 1960s and 1970s, the Falk Laboratory School persevered through these difficult years.

Chapter 2 of this study will consist of a literature review starting with the establishment of the first normal school in the United States. This review of literature will also highlight many of the important events that transpired thereafter that led to the establishment of normal schools across America. A discussion of the transition from normal schools, teachers’ colleges, and state colleges and universities would support the literature pertaining to laboratory schools. Furthermore, the functions and purposes of the laboratory school model are discussed in detail along with the criticisms that led to the demise of many laboratory schools in the 1960s and 1970s. Chapter 2 closes with a presentation of the conceptual framework for the study.

In chapter 3, the rationale for a qualitative historical analysis is presented. Furthermore, the Falk Laboratory School at the University of Pittsburgh as the research setting and context is identified and a discussion of the data sources and data collection methods that were utilized to gain an understanding of the continuation of the Falk Laboratory School are presented. Chapter 3 closes with a discussion of the data analysis methods, issues of trustworthiness, and the limitations and delimitations of the study.

Chapter 4 of this study will present the findings organized chronologically in four historical eras. Furthermore, the findings will be discussed through a detailed thematic analysis that will consist of three key areas.

Chapter 5 is the final chapter of this study and will provide a detailed interpretation of the findings as outlined in chapter 4. In addition, a set of recommendations and implications for practice, theory, and future research will be provided.

Several appendices and a comprehensive list of references are attached.
Chapter 2: Review of Literature

A great deal of literature pertaining to laboratory schools was reviewed. For the purposes of this study, the literature is classified into four categories: history, functions, criticisms, and future. Although each of these four categories are explained in the following sections, it was important to start with a discussion of the various types of laboratory schools and the terminology that has been used to describe them in the past.

Models and Terminology

It can be difficult to delineate between the various types of laboratory schools that have existed in the United States as numerous names have been given to them to meet different functions and purposes over time. As Thurber (1955) stated, a laboratory school is defined as

A school largely or entirely under the control of the college, located on or near the college campus, organized for the specific purpose of preparing teachers, with staff and facilities designed to serve this purpose. (This definition would include schools, sometimes titled “campus school,” “demonstration school,” or “training school”) (p. 21)

This definition of laboratory schools, that also included the campus, demonstration, or training schools, is important because it highlights the interchangeable terminology that has been used to describe this type of educational institution. Furthermore, various names had been used throughout history and have changed based upon location and expanding roles.

Kelley (1970) noted that there were five different types of laboratory schools that had existed throughout history and consisted of: (a) the practice school, (b) the model school, (c) the training school, (d) the demonstration school, and (e) the experimental or child study school.
Beginning with the practice school in the 1850s, this type of school’s primary emphasis was on the rote teaching methods and to provide teachers with the skills and strategies to keep control of the classroom or school. The model school added to the methods being taught in the practice school. Student teaching became an integral component of the model school, and an understanding of theory and teaching methods were included. The training school began after 1860 and became an integral component to the growth of normal schools throughout the United States. These training schools included effective methods of teacher training and educating children. The demonstration school was established between 1885 and 1890 and emphasized the importance of instruction and teaching. Student teachers would observe highly effective teachers and then were expected to duplicate this type of teaching and instruction. Finally, the experimental or child study school was the most criticized laboratory school model as “professors of education might experiment with the curriculum and methods of teaching as professors of science experiment in the laboratory” (p. 27). Although criticized and sometimes controversial, the experimentation and child study continued to be a function and purpose of many laboratory schools.

Engle and Sharpe (1955) defined and identified the functions of a cooperating school. Therefore, a cooperating school was a type of school that contributed to the education and training of teachers but was not under the control of a college or university. Cooperating schools shared some of the primary functions and purposes of a laboratory, particularly in the areas of observation, participation, and student teaching and tended to be public elementary or secondary schools in communities nearby to a college campus. Engle and Sharpe also noted that three types of cooperating schools had existed. The first was known as a contractual cooperating center where prospective teachers were placed when a college had no campus laboratory school. These
schools tended to be local schools near to the college. The second cooperating school was known as a cooperating center that comprised an entire school system or district. A relationship between the college and school system was established and the two worked together to provide educational opportunities for student learning and staff development. The final type of cooperating school was the occasional cooperating school. Colleges may have sent students to different schools to supplement campus laboratory experiences or to provide varying opportunities.

Williams (1942) described the campus and off-campus laboratory school models. The campus laboratory school was under the jurisdiction of and located on the grounds of a public or private college or university whereas the off-campus laboratory school would have been located off-campus and may or may not have been controlled by the cooperating college or university. Both schools would have provided opportunities for observation, demonstration, participation, and student teaching. The campus laboratory school was the most prevalent type of laboratory school. However, as many laboratory schools began to close in the 1960s and 1970s, public schools in local communities began to take over the role of the campus and off-campus laboratory schools.

Thurber (1955) expanded Williams’s campus and off-campus laboratory school definitions and noted,

Although laboratory schools differ widely in size, scope, and relationship to the college in which they serve, they may be classified in two categories: (a) those which are part of the local public school system but for which the college maintains a specified measure of responsibility, and (b) those owned and operated by the college. (p. 21)

Although like Williams’s definition of campus and off-campus laboratory schools, Thurber
differentiates the local public system as maintaining a collegial relationship with the college whereas Williams emphasized that the off-campus laboratory school may or may not have been affiliated with the college.

**History**

Although there is evidence that functions of the laboratory school concept existed prior to the establishment of state aided normal schools, official records begin in Massachusetts on April 19, 1838, when the General Court resolved that the State would financially support the Board of Education with an equal sum of $10,000 to “qualify teachers for the common schools” (Mass. Gen. Stat. § 38-70, 1838). Thus, on July 3, 1839, the first normal school opened in Lexington, Massachusetts, and the laboratory school began during the second term on October 3, 1839 (Williams, 1942). Although the school would first move to West Newton on September 4, 1844, and then Framingham on December 15, 1853, the laboratory school model would continue with an exception during the years of the Civil War and then would restart again in 1866 (Perrodin, 1955). Massachusetts would go on to establish two other state aided normal schools, one at Barre on September 4, 1839, and the second at Bridgewater on September 9, 1840. It is also important to note that up until March 20, 1845 these normal schools were not part of the public school system in Massachusetts because on this date

> the Legislature resolved, “That the schools heretofore known as Normal Schools, shall be hereafter known as *State* Normal Schools,”—thus formally adopting them into the school system of the State, and by implication, becoming responsible for their generous support and conduct. (Alumnae Association, 1914)

The establishment of the Lexington Normal School would launch the start of other normal schools in the United States shortly thereafter.
The concept of the laboratory school was also born in the State of Connecticut simultaneously and can be traced to May 31, 1838, when the General Assembly passed a law establishing a Board of Commissioners of Common Schools (Board of Commissioners of Common Schools, 1838, p. 5). In the first annual report of the Board, Secretary Henry Barnard proposed a “seminary for teachers” … As there are some who still regard it as an experiment, it can be at first for the training of female teachers for the common schools” (Board of Commissioners of Common Schools, 1839, p. 174). Barnard would correspond with Cyrus Peirce, the Principal of the Lexington Normal School, when he had inquired about “the most exciting experiment now making on this side of the Atlantic” (Board of Commissioners of Common Schools, 1841, p. 141). In Peirce’s letter, dated January 1, 1841, he noted the following components of the Lexington Normal School:

Twice every day the Principal of the Normal School goes into the model school for general observation and direction, spending from one-half hour each visit. In these visits I either sit and watch the general operations of the school, or listen attentively to the particular teacher and her class, or take a class myself, and let the teacher be listener and observer. After the exercises have closed, I comment upon what I deem good, and what faulty, either in their doctrine or their practice, their theory or their manner. Once or twice each term, I take the whole Normal School with me into the model school room, and teach the model school myself, in the presence of the pupils of the Normal School, they being listeners and observers. In these several ways, I attempt to combine, as well as I can, theory and practice, precept and example. (p. 142)

Although the Board of Commissioners of the Common Schools envisioned the idea of a state normal school, the first school of this type would not open until May 15, 1850, at New Britain,
Connecticut, shortly after the legislature authorized state normal schools on June 22, 1849 “for the training of teachers in the art of instructing and governing common schools of this state” (Conn. Gen. Stat., 1849).

The events in Massachusetts and Connecticut paved the way for the start of state normal schools throughout the United States. According to Harper (1939), there were 12 normal schools that had been established by the year 1860, and these schools are depicted in Appendix B of this study. On March 2, 1867, the 39th Congress established the United States Department of Education “for the purpose of collecting such statistics and facts as shall show the condition and progress of education in the several States and Territories” (Act of March 2, 1867). Selected data collected from the Reports of the United States Commissioner of Education pertaining to normal schools and model schools receiving state appropriations is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of State normal schools</th>
<th>Number of normal schools with model schools</th>
<th>Percentage of model schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884-1885</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889-1890</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Data shown in this table only included public normal schools that received state funding. Other public and private normal schools did exist at these times and are not represented in this table.
On September 12, 1887, the Horace Mann model school opened along with Teachers College at Columbia University in New York City. The Horace Mann School had been the inspiration of Nicholas Murray Butler. According to Russell (1902), this model school “was needed in which the college professors of education might experiment in curricular and methods of teaching, as professors of science experiment in a laboratory” (p. 1). The Horace Mann model school was unique in that an emphasis had been placed on research and curriculum development.

The University of Chicago had been founded on July 8, 1890, and it would not be long before the school embarked upon a journey that would transform education and the training of teachers. In 1894, John Dewey began corresponding with University of Chicago president, William Harper, and “in his letter, Dewey presented Harper an alluring possibility: Chicago might well take the lead in educational research” (Harms & DePencier, 1996). Although Dewey was brought to the University of Chicago as a professor of philosophy, his interest in the field of education would lead to the creation of the University Elementary School on January 13, 1896.

Dewey had become frustrated with the normal and training schools across the nation and felt “there must be some schools whose main task is to train the rank and file of teachers-schools whose function is to supply the great army of teachers with the weapons of their calling and direct them as to their use” (University Record, 1896, p. 353). The school would later be named “Laboratory School” in 1901 when the University of Chicago absorbed another “University Elementary School” from the Chicago Institute while also creating the School of Education at Chicago. The creation of the School of Education would only enhance the work that Dewey had been doing in the field of pedagogy that existed under the Department of Philosophy.

The purpose of this doctoral study was to explore the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model and to understand how this laboratory school continued through the 1960s and 1970s
when many of these schools were closing their doors. Therefore, it was important to discuss the state normal school and laboratory school movement in Pennsylvania. On April 9, 1857, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enacted a law establishing state normal schools in each county of the State (798 Pa. Code § 1-13, 1857). Furthermore, the law stated the following:

Each school shall have attached to it one or more schools for practice or model schools with not less than one hundred pupils from the children of the vicinity and so arranged that the students of the normal school shall therein acquire a practical knowledge of the art of teaching under the instruction of their proper professors. (p. 4)

The Lancaster County Normal Institute had opened on April 17, 1855, and had already established a model school with approximately 200 students. However, this Normal Institute would be absorbed by the creation of the first state normal school in Pennsylvania on December 2, 1859, as Millersville State Normal School.

The laboratory school movement continued to boom as normal schools, model schools, teachers’ colleges, and universities began to enhance the field of education and by 1939 there were “150 teachers colleges and normal schools belonging to the American Association of Teachers Colleges in the United States (Harper, 1939, p. 152). In 1926, the American Association of Teachers Colleges (AATC) adopted a set of standards for accrediting teachers’ colleges. Of these 15 standards, Standard VII.A. mandated:

each teacher’s college shall maintain a training school under its own control as part of its organization, as a laboratory school, for purposes of observation, demonstration, and supervised teaching on the part of students. The use of an urban or rural school system, under sufficient control and supervision of the college to permit carrying out the educational policy of the college to a sufficient degree for the conduct of effective student
teaching, will satisfy this requirement. (AATC, p. 11).

In 1948, the AATC merged with the National Association of Colleges and Departments of Education and the National Association of Teacher Education Institutions in Metropolitan Districts to become the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) (Ducharme & Ducharme, 1998, p. 13). The laboratory school continued to be an integral component in the preparation of prospective educators (AACTE, 1948). The laboratory school also maintained its role in the preparation of educator candidates throughout the creation of NCATE in 1954, TEAC in 1997, and CAEP in 2010.

John Dewey can be attributed as the father of the laboratory school movement in the United States after the first school of this type had been born at the University of Chicago. Colleges and universities throughout the United States would begin to design and open their own laboratory schools and a study published by Evan Hugh Kelley in 1967 indicated that 212 college-controlled laboratory schools existed in the United States at this time. Unfortunately, the 1960s and 1970s would be a tumultuous time for laboratory schools and many would begin to disappear.

Functions

Although individual laboratory schools were unique in their design and specialized in different functions and purposes, the most common and basic functions are described in the following eight sections. These functions and purposes were identified by the National Association of Laboratory Schools (1991) as part of an educational resource for their member schools.

Clinical Teaching Experiences

Clinical teaching experiences have been a primary component of model schools as far
Clinical teaching experiences involved observation and internship experiences and primarily came before a teacher candidate participated in student teaching. These clinical teaching experiences consisted of pre-student teaching opportunities for university level students to work alongside seasoned, veteran educators. Research has shown that the clinical teaching experiences was one of the regular functions of the laboratory school (Buck, 1971; Tanruther, 1950; Williams, 1942).

**Observation**

Research on laboratory schools has shown that observation is a component of laboratory Schools (Blackmon, 1970; Cardinelli, 1978; Jackson, 1967). According to Jaggers (1946), “One function of the laboratory school that is usually thought to be of great value is the provision for teachers in training to observe the specialist or expert teacher in classroom procedure” (p. 277). Although Jaggers emphasized the importance of observation coupled with theory and practice, some of the earliest requirements in a teacher preparation program is the observation of veteran educators, student engagement, and reflection of these practices.

**Demonstration**

According to Buck et al. (1991), “Demonstration is usually an arranged presentation of a lesson or educational practice” (p. 25). The practice of demonstration could be linked to professional development where prospective or veteran educators observe instructional methods that may be unfamiliar or introduce new technologies. Research has shown that this has been and continues to be a primary function of the laboratory school to provide alternative or additional educational experiences for pre-service teachers to observe planned lessons and activities (Carrington, 1941; Hughes, 1967; Kelley, 1964).
Student Teaching

Educator preparation programs typically culminated with some type of intensive student teaching experience. Although researchers have debated whether the student teaching experience should take place in a public or private cooperating school versus an on-campus or off-campus university affiliated laboratory school, student teaching has been a core component of the laboratory school model throughout history and into the present (Cappa, 1972; Lang, 1959; McGeogh, 1971).

Research

Wiles (1958) indicated that “no laboratory school fulfills its role completely unless provision is made for research” and “a laboratory school should have a research program” (pp. 19-20). Each laboratory school had some type of research program spanning from personal reflection and teacher data collection of student abilities and achievement to long-range research studies that lasted several years, were published, and disseminated. The function and purpose of research and dissemination in the laboratory school has been heavily discussed and criticized by many researchers (Blackmon, 1964; Hunter, 1970; King, 2000). The research component of laboratory schools became a catalyst for change beginning in the 1960s and 1970s.

Curriculum Development

Carrington (1941) noted, “A campus laboratory school should accept the functions of demonstrating a well worked out curriculum in action and the methods of curriculum development” (p. 70). Several laboratory schools have participated in curriculum development throughout their existence (Braddock, 1966; Cadellichio, 1997; Hopkins, 1936). Beginning in the mid-1980s, the University of Chicago responded to a national crisis of improving mathematics instructions amongst students in the United States that spawned years of research on
mathematics instruction. Out of this research grew the *Everyday Mathematics* program that is now in its fourth edition.

**Professional Development**

Research has shown that teachers needed continual and effective professional development activities after graduating with a degree in education (Cardellichio, 1997; Lumpkins & Parker, 1986; Tanruther, 1950). Wagenhorst (1946) noted, “The function of the laboratory school is not limited to the pre-service education of teachers. It must also show concern for the success of the graduates of the college after they have entered upon their in-service career of teaching” (p. 272). Research has also shown that laboratory schools have provided professional development opportunities historically. Beginning in the 1990s, professional development schools have ascended and have similar functions to the practice of professional development.

Professional development schools (PDSs) began to surface in 1990s (Hausfather, 2000; Kennedy, 1990; MacNaughton & Johns, 1993). The PDSs were the idea of the Holmes Group and was first brought about in 1990 and refined in 1995. The Holmes Group devised six principles of a PDSs, including

- Principle #4: Teach adults as well as children.
- Principle #5: Make reflection and inquiry the central feature of the school.
- Principle #6: Invent a new organization.

Although PDSs did not maintain the same characteristics of the traditional laboratory school, they shared many of the same principles and concepts. Furthermore, some schools that maintain the laboratory school setting (i.e., affiliated with a university for the purpose of teacher training and improving education) began to rise around the country as PDSs.
Experimentation

Laboratory schools were known for experimenting with instructional strategies, programs, and curricular choices. For example

The University School of Ohio State University maintained that the school:

must be an “experimental” school in the sense that intelligent hypotheses for improving education should be tried out carefully, should be studied critically, and the program restructured in the light of evidence secured. (Koopman, 1944, p. 7)

Although some researchers and critics of the laboratory school model cited experimentation as a reason for abandoning the laboratory school model, it served as a primary component and has been noted by several scholars (Rabinowitz, 1966; Gogo, 1969; Koopman, 1944).

Student Achievement

M. Frances and William Klein (1980) reflected upon their children that attended an elementary laboratory school located on the campus of a large university in Southern California. Regarding student achievement, Klein and Klein noted, “Our children were allowed time to grow when they needed it. The program was adjusted to the student, not the student to the program” (p. 35). These two parents went on to discuss their son and the difficulties he experienced when learning how to read. They cited the amount of time their son was given, that he was never pressured or labeled by teachers or other students and was able to grow as a competent and successful reader. Comparing this laboratory school to neighboring public schools, these two parents felt that their child had received the best education to be successful.

Although student achievement rates had not been identified as a primary function or purpose of the laboratory school, it can be perceived that students performed at higher rates in laboratory schools if the laboratory school is meeting its goals. John Goodlad, the former director
of the University Elementary School located on the campus of the UCLA in the 1960s and 1970s began to focus “educators’ attention on the non-graded, team-taught school structure operating at the school. At the same time, Madeline Hunter, as principal, encouraged teachers to use her principles of effective instruction in the classroom” (National Association of Laboratory Schools, 1991, p. 56). Research has shown that the link between effective instruction and student achievement has been strong (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Stronge et al., 2008) and this research is also applicable to the teaching and learning in laboratory schools.

**Criticisms**

Laboratory schools began to be highly criticized in the 1960s, and many of these schools in the United States began to explore alternative missions, wind down, or close completely. Howd and Browne (1970) stated, “During 1968 and 1969 the number of laboratory schools started or reorganized has increased, but the total number reported closed exceeds the number of new schools organized since 1964” (p. 2). In the following section of this study, the criticisms brought against laboratory schools will be discussed in further detail. These include student demographics, lack of research being conducted, the number of functions and purposes being emphasized, and financial constraints.

**Student Demographics**

The demographics of the laboratory school student body helped lead to the decline. Van Til (1969) notes, “But, given a student body skewed to upper income…given what appeared to many visitors from the public schools to be easy access to materials and resources…the laboratory school was not perceived as ‘the most real’” (p. 11). Research indicated that as the demographics and climate of public school changes, the laboratory school maintained a segregated student body (Blackmon, 1975; Cucchiara, 2010; Hausfather, 2000). Thus,
Laboratory schools were not presented with the same challenges that public schools were facing in the late 1950s and 1960s.

In 1954, the United States Supreme Court’s ruling in *Brown vs. the Topeka Board of Education* led to the integration of public schools. The demographics of the public school system would inherently be changed. For the most part, the clientele of the laboratory school did not change and the laboratory school had been criticized for the lack of preparation of pre-student and student teachers in the challenges that are faced in the public school arena.

Critics of laboratory schools have also noted that the student body is comprised of children of university faculty members. Hausfather (2000) emphasized, “Trends in enrollment reinforce the perception that laboratory school students do not represent the norm” and have “become favored institutions for the education of faculty children” (p. 33). Therefore, in alignment with the research of Van Til, Hausfather also strengthened the argument that the student body of laboratory schools does not match that of the public school environment. Thus, pre-student and student teachers would not gain an understanding into the realities of public education.

**Lack of Research**

Research in the field of education and child psychology was an integral component of the laboratory school. However, researchers criticizing laboratory schools cited a lack of research being conducted in the laboratory schools as an argument against their existence (McGeogh, 1971; Ohles, 1967; Page & Page, 1983). In 1971, Dorothy McGeogh at The State University College in Potsdam, New York, presented a paper of the on present roles of the laboratory school. McGeogh’s research presents a compelling argument in the lack of research being conducted by laboratory school faculty. McGeogh (1971) claims:
Campus school teachers have been selected for teaching performance and ability to work with pre-service students rather than for skill in research. Faculty members of the college or university have not used the campus school as a basis for research projects to any great extent nor have they worked cooperatively to set up campus school initiated projects. (p. 18)

Arguing that other entities outside of laboratory schools had taken over the role research, McGeogh articulated that the lack of time and support staff have led to the declining role of research within the laboratory school. A further study conducted by Fred M. and Jane A. Page at Georgia Southern College in 1983 indicated that laboratory schools were still providing “a range of purposes,” but research was still lacking amongst the primary functions (p. 373).

**Functions and Purpose**

Since the concept of laboratory schools first began, their functions and purposes have been revised and heavily criticized (Brickell, 1961; Jackson, 1986; Van Til, 1969). In 1961, John F. Ohles, Assistant Professor of Education at the State University College of Education in Cortland, New York, posed an interesting debate surrounding the multitude of purposes and functions of laboratory schools. Ohles (1961) argued, “It is inevitable that laboratory school teachers should be ‘generally trying to perform more functions than they can perform at high quality’” (p. 391). Given the lack of faculty, Ohles argued that it was impossible to be the absolute “best” in each of the functions and purposes of a laboratory school. Since laboratory schools were to provide clinical teaching experiences, curriculum development, observation, demonstration, research, professional development, experimentation, and student teaching experiences, Ohles believed that laboratory schools were spread too thin and were unable to achieve these roles effectively.
Financial Difficulties

One of the most compelling arguments leading to the closing of laboratory schools is financing (Brickell, 1961; Ohles, 1967; Olwell, 2006). In 2006, Russell B. Olwell identified financing as one of the most compelling reasons for the demise of laboratory schools. Olwell (2006) emphasized, “The cost of maintaining operations of laboratory schools is becoming prohibitive due to lack of return on investment, the ability to conduct the mission in the public sector, and a lack of results that are generalizable to other school settings” (p. 2). Olwell argued that the costs of higher education have risen dramatically, thus allocating funds from the laboratory school. In addition, his research is in line with Van Til and Hausfather in that the demographics of the laboratory school environment had led to the “lack of results generalizable to other school settings” and “the mission in the public sector.” Furthermore, the lack of research presented by McGeogh and Page and Page was evident in Olwell’s research in that laboratory schools are unable to “conduct the mission in the public sector”.

Future

Hendrick (1980) stated, “If laboratory schools are to continue, it is plain that they will need to demonstrate their unique value to society, avoid an isolated existence, and build a base of support from educators and members of the public” (p. 59). These recommendations, in addition to establishing new roles, aided laboratory schools that had navigated choppy waters throughout the 1960s and 1970s in addition to those schools that sought to open. The idea of competition was not new in the field of education as some have indicated that if competition existed between public, charter, and private schools, education would have quickly improved. Raspberry (1997) proposed a similar a concept but between the public and laboratory schools as he noted, “If laboratory schools showed that some of the innovations worked that they were successful in
educating the kids better than the other public schools the school system would be stimulated to go all-out to catch up” (p. 10). Furthermore, the laboratory school could have better served the functions of curriculum change and professional development as opposed to the public schools because the “conditions make school change difficult to bring about” (Cardellichio, 1997, p. 785). It was imperative that laboratory schools altered their functions and purposes to meet present community needs, and as Tracy (2005) indicated, “The success of new variations on this old theme offers a compelling rationale for the development of many more affiliate schools in the coming years” (p. 80).

**Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this paper was based upon Talcott Parsons’s (1960) and James D. Thompson’s (1967) three levels of hierarchical structure of an organization and John Child’s (1972) theory of strategic choice. Parsons’ organizational levels include (a) technical, (b) managerial, and (c) institutional (pp. 60-65). Building on Parsons’s work, Thompson added to these levels by defining the functions that exist at each level and that “each of the three perspectives is suitable to a different level of organization: the rational system perspective to the technical level, the natural to the managerial, and the open to the institutional level” (p. 109). Table 2 highlights the organization levels, structure, and functions for the laboratory school model.
Table 2

Organization, Function, and Structure of the Laboratory School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Level</th>
<th>Function &amp; Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>Part of the organization that relates the organization to its wider environment, determines its domain, establishes its boundaries, and secures its legitimacy (e.g., school board, cooperating university).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Part of the organization responsible for designing and controlling the production system, for procuring inputs, and disposing of outputs, and for securing and allocating personnel to units and functions (e.g., human resources, administration).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>Part of the organization carrying on the production functions that transport inputs into outputs (e.g., laboratory school classrooms, teachers).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Definitions from Scott and Davis (2007).

The theory of strategic choice emphasized the influence and decision-making that leaders or leadership groups (i.e., board of trustees, board of education) have on an organization in a political climate. Childs (1972) noted the following:

We shall argue that this ‘strategic choice’ extends to the context within which the organization is operating, to the standards of performance against which the pressure of economic constraints has to be evaluated, and to the design of the organization’s structure itself. (p. 2)

Child found that his theory was superior to other organizational theories because of their inadequacy on the involvement of those who held power over an organization and the decisions that these leaders made to move the organization forward or backward.

Although Childs’s early work laid the groundwork on his theory of strategic choice, he revised his theory 25-years later to include and discuss the following: (a) the role of agency and
choice in organizational analysis, (b) the nature of organizational environment, and (c) the relationship between organizational agents and the environment (Childs, 1997, p. 43). The role of agency and choice in organizational analysis was discussed in terms of cultural values, institutional norms, and action determinism. Although internal and external constraints existed in all organizations, Childs contended that “cultural values and institutional norms can become internalized so that they act to constrain choice primarily through the social actor’s own interpretive mechanisms rather than through constraints which are ostensibly imposed from the outside” (p. 49).

According to Childs (1997), leaders and leadership groups identified choices and made decisions within the nature of the organizational environment based upon the threats and opportunities that the organization maintained. However, these organizational threats and opportunities sustained limitations and circumstances that were unique to the organizational environment. Furthermore, the leaders and leadership groups understood the organizational environment, and “they enjoy an autonomy of choice between alternatives” (p. 53). As organizations have continued to evolve, leaders and leadership groups have begun to look outside their microenvironment and have observed other organizations and established networking relationships with other organizations. These outside relationships eliminated the concept of boundary relationships and have led to the establishment of arranged and organized networks.

In terms of organizational agents and the environment, Miles and Snow (1978) noted the following:

The strategic-choice approach essentially argues that the effectiveness of organizational adaptation hinges on the dominant coalition’s perceptions of environmental conditions
and the decisions it makes concerning how the organization will cope with these conditions. (p. 21)

Furthermore, Childs (1997) noted a shift from the decisions leaders and leadership groups made within the organizational environment to the relationships that these leaders now maintained with outside stakeholders and other organizations. These relationships, although outside the organization, helped establish choice opportunities.

The work of Parsons and Thompson at the institutional, managerial, and technical levels will be intermixed with the work of Childs’s theory of strategic choice. As Childs (1997) noted, “Strategic choice, when considered as a process, points to the possibility of a continuing adaptive learning cycle, but within a theoretical framework that locates ‘organizational learning’ within the context of organizations as socio-political systems” (p. 44). These organizational theories were also be grounded in the work of Karl Weick (1976) in relation to loosely coupled systems as the Falk Laboratory School continued to maintain and preserve its own independent identity and separation, but also maintained a connection to the School of Education and the University of Pittsburgh is maintained.

Centrality and marginality also played an integral role in this study. According to Clark (1962) and Robledo (1978), eight indicators can be utilized to identify centrality and marginality of the entities that comprise an organization. These eight indicators include the following:

1. Strength of policy
2. Number and type of employees dedicated to its tasks
   a. administration
   b. faculty
   c. students
3. Kinds of dedicated facilities
4. Source and degree of funding
5. Location of program within the organization
   a. time
   b. place
6. Output
7. Prestige
8. Legitimacy

To determine the centrality and marginality of the Falk Laboratory School, the indicators of the school were be compared to those of the School of Education and the whole University of Pittsburgh organization.

**Summary of the Chapter**

The functions and purposes of the laboratory school have played a critical role in the normal and model schools, the transition to teachers’ colleges, and the establishment of the schools of education under the auspices of colleges and universities. Since the creation of the School of Childhood at the University of Pittsburgh in 1913, the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School has played a vital role in the education and training of prospective teachers in addition to the dissemination of research that has contributed to the breadth and depth of the field of education. The functions and purposes attributed to the laboratory school model continue to comprise the experiences that teacher candidates participate in during their formal training. Finally, the theory of strategic choice framed the study to investigate how and why the Falk Laboratory School has continued to exist as a traditional laboratory school.

Little research existed on the continuation of laboratory schools in the United States. The
bulk of the literature reviewed for this study primarily consisted of the history, functions, purposes, and programs within laboratory schools. A great deal of literature also identified the issues and problems associated with laboratory schools that led to their closing. Some studies presented alternative options that these laboratory schools should have taken to avoid closure. Only two of the dissertations reviewed primarily focused on the sustainability of laboratory schools in the 20th and 21st centuries. No published research existed on the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School that synthesized and analyzed the continuation of this traditional laboratory school in the United States. This study would help to close the gap in this research and provide further research to support the increase in clinical teaching experiences, as identified in the CAEP standards.

Chapter 3 of the study will present the methodology. This qualitative historical analysis investigated the continuation of the Falk Laboratory School through primary and second sources of archival data. A careful process of data collection and analysis along with issues of trustworthiness and the potential limitations and delimitations moved the study forward in an ethical manner.
Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of the study was to gain a greater understanding of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School and its continuation throughout history and into the present. A qualitative historical analysis of primary and secondary sources of archival data along with interviews of past and present stakeholders of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School comprised the data collection methods to investigate the how and why the Falk Laboratory Schools has been in consistent operation for the past 90 years, particularly during the tumultuous time of the 1960s and 1970s when many of these schools closed their doors to the field of education.

This chapter will include a description of the process I followed when carrying out the research. In addition, I will state my research questions, provide a summary and rationale for the research design, and describe my role as the researcher. Furthermore, I provide a detailed description of the methodology including the research setting and context, participation and data collection and the data analysis plan. Finally, I will discuss any issues of trustworthiness and ethical procedures and described how these factors were addressed when the study was carried out.

Reflexivity and Research Positionality

I first learned of laboratory schools as an undergraduate student in the School of Education at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. The School of Education continued to be housed in the former University High and University Elementary School buildings located at 610 East University Avenue in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Outside of the field of education, I also had an interest in history and architecture and the design of the school building led me on my journey to
understand the history of this unique building. Therefore, as a student in the School of Education and as a requirement for a course I took on the history of the University of Michigan, I began to learn about the school’s history dating back to 1924.

Coupled with my knowledge of the laboratory school model at the University of Michigan, I began to think more about this type of educational institution and the potential for supporting pre-service and student teachers and professional educators and administrators. Furthermore, I began to delve deeper into the laboratory school model when the CAEP Board of Directors approved a new set of standards for accrediting education preparation providers. Of these five standards, Standard 2 emphasized the importance of clinical teaching experiences and I began to reflect upon my past experiences as a pre-student and student teacher. I concluded that I did not engage in enough clinical teaching experiences, and this led me to believe that there was a disconnect between how pre-service educators were prepared and what actually occurs the field of education.

Although my clinical student teaching experience was positive and contributed to my knowledge and understanding, I spent a short time in the classroom environment practicing the strategies and skills that are necessary to educator survival in the classroom. My clinical student teaching experience began on Monday, January 5, 2003, and closed on Friday, April 23, 2004. Given that students had Martin Luther King, Jr., Day off in January, two extra days off in February for mid-winter break, and a full week off in April for spring break, this short time was expected to prepare me as a professional educator that would lead me to entering my first classroom teaching assignment in the fall of 2004. Given my student teaching experience, I became concerned about the effectiveness of the traditional student teaching model. My belief is that a laboratory school model is superior in area of clinical teaching and student teaching
Rationale for Research Approach

The nature of this study was qualitative. A qualitative historical analysis was consistent with the need for a greater understanding of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model and its continuation throughout history and into the present. According to Lune and Berg (2017), “Historical research is the study of relationships among issues that have influenced the past, continue to influence the present, and will certainly affect the future” (p. 149). Primary and secondary sources along with interviews comprised the data collection methods to gain a greater understanding of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model and its continuation throughout history and into the present.

An historical analysis was the most appropriate research design for this study. Salevouris and Furay (2015) noted:

As historians James Davidson and Mark Lytle put it, “History is not ‘what happened in the past’; rather, it is the act of selecting, analyzing, and writing about the past. It is something that is done, that is constructed, rather than an inert body of data that lies scattered through the archives.” “History,” then, is both the past and the study of the past. (p. 14)

Through the analysis of primary and secondary archival sources of data, a historical analysis of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School was conducted. Salevouris and Furay expand upon this concept and describe the meaning of “historiography” where “literally the word means ‘the writing of history’” (p. 255). The study of history and the process of “historiography” helped to guide this study along with the conceptual framework and research questions.

The following research questions were used to investigate and guide this study in order
to gain an understanding of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model:

1. RQ1-Qualitative: What were the initial purposes and functions of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model?

2. RQ2-Qualitative: What are the current purposes and functions of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model?

2. RQ3-Qualitative: What factors led to the continuation of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School when many others were closing their doors?

**Research Setting and Context**

The Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School was identified as the research setting for this study and a letter of support from the school is shown in Appendix C. The Falk Laboratory School is located at 4060 Allequippa Street, Pittsburgh, PA, 15261. The school remains affiliated with the University of Pittsburgh and serves students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade. Situated on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh, the Falk Laboratory School is a coeducational, tuition-based school that is governed by the Falk Laboratory School Board and the University of Pittsburgh Board of Trustees. The school continues to operate under the primary functions of the laboratory school model. According to the school website, the school engages the following:

Each year, our 54 faculty & staff members work with more than 15 intern teachers, 4 student teachers, and varied numbers of practicum students, researchers and visitors to perform and support the major functions ascribed to laboratory schools: the development of new and innovative practices in education; research; inquiry; the development of theory; the preparation of new teachers; and most importantly, the education of the children enrolled according to the best-established principles of education and our
philosophy of educating the whole child. (Falk Laboratory School, 2020b)

**Data Sources**

Data sources used to investigate and gain an understanding of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model included the following and are further described in the following section of the study:

1. Interviews of former board members and school leaders.
2. Interviews of current Falk Laboratory School board members and school leaders.
3. Primary sources of archival data (i.e., letters, meeting minutes, school policies and procedures, photographs, school newsletters, speeches, interviews, and memoirs).
4. Secondary sources of archival data (i.e., newspapers, handbooks).

**Participants**

Purposeful sampling was utilized to investigate and guide this study to gain an understanding of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model. Creswell (2012) noted, “We identify our participants and sites on purposeful sampling, based on places and people that can best help us understand our central phenomenon” (p. 205). Purposeful sampling was the most effective sampling method as opposed to others because of the design of the study and focus on the continuation of the Falk Laboratory School as one site. Using board membership lists and school directories, I identified 15 individuals in which to invite to structured, in-depth interviews. The participant recruitment letter is depicted in Appendix D and the informed consent form is provided in Appendix E. Only a few individuals were identified because “the overall ability of a researcher to provide an in-depth picture diminishes with the addition of each new individual” (p. 209). The interview questions are listed in Appendixes F and G of this study.

A total of 10 participants agreed to participate in an interview. Of these participants, five
identified as cisgender male, six as cisgender female, and all were white. All participants were affiliated with the Falk Laboratory School and were former or current board members, directors, educators, or faculty members in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh.

**Data Collection Methods**

Primary and secondary sources of archival data comprised the remainder of the data collection for the study. Documents were located on site at the Falk Laboratory School, the University Library System of the University of Pittsburgh (including the Archives and Special Collections), the School of Education of the University of Pittsburgh, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, and the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania and comprised the primary sources of archival data. Secondary sources of archival data were also gathered from the above repositories in addition to online sources such as newspapers.com and archive.org. In every case, permission from the author or owner was acquired before any source is used in this study.

**Data Analysis Methods**

The collection of data was first organized into a matrix so that sources could be organized by type, participant, and date. This matrix was used as a guide to the following data analysis methods. Primary and secondary sources of archival data were first organized chronologically and then by source type according to the data analysis matrix.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed into text documents shortly thereafter and were analyzed using Dedoose technology. Given that only a few interviews were conducted during the study, analyzing them through Dedoose allowed me to be “close to the data and have a hands-on feel for it” (p. 240). This process also helped me to begin thinking about the development of themes, which will come later in the data analysis phase of the research study.

The process of coding was used to further analyze the data and to develop themes that
emerged from the interviews and primary and secondary sources of archival data. All the information collected was read initially and then divided into manageable segments of text and was then coded. The first round of coding yielded an unreasonable number of codes and therefore I needed to reduce this number to ensure that there was no overlap. From this final reduction, I identified three themes that emerged from the collected data.

**Issues of Trustworthiness**

The researcher of this qualitative historical analysis strived for an accurate and true account of the individuals and events that have led to the continuation of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School. To ensure that this study had validity, the use of triangulation, or “the use of multiple sources of data” were utilized (Merriam, 2009, p. 215). The study would also be reliable, or consistent, in that the data was carefully analyzed, coded, and repeated codes produced consistent themes across multiple sources of data.

External and internal criticism was also considered throughout the study, particularly during the data collection and data analysis phases of the study. To ensure that external criticism was addressed, the following questions were asked to evaluate primary and secondary sources of archival data: (a) Is the document genuine? (b) Is this an original source or copy? (c) Who is the author of the source? (d) Where, when and under what conditions was this source written? Furthermore, internal criticism was also utilized during the data collection and analysis stages of the study to evaluate the accuracy and worth of the statements in each of the sources and interviews. This strategy was also conducted during the coding and development of themes.

**Limitations and Delimitations**

This qualitative historical analysis did have limitations. The first limitation is that individuals connected to the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School were only those that were
interviewed. A focus only on the Falk Laboratory School limited this study to be generalized to other laboratory school and educational settings throughout the United States. According to Fusch and Ness (2015), “Failure to reach data saturation has a negative impact on the validity on one’s study results; however, there is no one-size-fits-all method to reach data saturation; moreover, more is not necessarily better than less and vice versa” (p. 1413). Given that the participants of this study were limited to a specified group, saturation was difficult to reach. However, the authors noted that interviews are a way saturation is reached as the researcher “takes what he can get” (p. 1408).

Another limitation to this study involved the study of past events in which the researcher was not present. Salverouis and Furay (2015) stated:

All historical accounts are reconstructions that contain some degree of subjectivity. Whether written or spoken, every piece of history is an individualized view of a segment of past reality—a particular vision, a personalized version based on incomplete and imperfect evidence. Writing history is an act of creation, or more accurately, an act of re-creation in which the mind of the historian is the catalyst. (p. 15)

Although care had been taken to analyze the events in the context of the time period, the study is limited because of the researchers age and not having been physically present and involved with the Fanny Edel Falk School over time.

This qualitative historical analysis was delimited by participant selection. Purposeful sampling was utilized to select participants. According to Ritchie et al. (2014), “The sample units are chosen because they have particular features or characteristics which will enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and questions which the researcher wishes to study” (p. 113). To gain a greater understanding of the continuation of the Falk Laboratory
School, it was necessary to employ purposive sampling because of the nature of the study.

The study was also delimited by the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School. The site of the Falk Laboratory School correlated to the research questions and allowed this qualitative research study to not become too large and out of scope. Transferability to other laboratory schools within the State of Pennsylvania or in other states may be challenging.

**Summary of the Chapter**

A qualitative historical analysis was the best research method to investigate the continuation of the Falk Laboratory School, particularly during the period of the 1960s and 1970s when many laboratory schools were closing. The study was designed to ensure that the data being collected would be valid and reliable. Internal and external criticisms were considered and addressed appropriately to ensure that the sources reviewed are original and true. However, the study does have limitations and delimitations, and these were presented in this chapter.

Chapter 4 of the study will present the historical findings from the archival data in addition to the themes that emerged from the interviews. The historical findings will be presented in four historical eras followed by a thematic analysis. The findings and themes are also linked to the conceptual framework that has been presented in this chapter of the study.
Chapter 4: Findings

This qualitative historical analysis addressed the following three research questions:

1. RQ1-Qualitative: What were the initial purposes and functions of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model?

2. RQ2-Qualitative: What are the current purposes and functions of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model?

3. RQ3-Qualitative: What factors led to the continuation of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School when many others were closing their doors?

The analysis of these three research questions is discussed in this chapter of the study and are broken down into four historical eras and three overarching themes that emerged from the 10 interviews. The historical eras emphasize a unique turning point in the changing purposes and functions of the Falk Laboratory School. Evidence of these turning points has been gathered from the primary and secondary sources that were reviewed. Quotes from direct interviews will be used to highlight the three overarching themes. Participants are referenced as respondents in place of actual names to ensure confidentiality and quotes have also been edited for the removal of unnecessary words and grammar.

Historical Eras

The following four sections include a discussion of the findings from the first two research questions of the research study. The historical eras include: (a) Emergence of Modern America, 1890-1930; (b) Great Depression and World War II, 1930-1945; (c) Postwar United States, 1945-1968; and (d) Contemporary United States, 1968-present.
Emergence of Modern America, 1890-1930

The Falk Laboratory School is the product of an idea that came about at end of this first historical era, and it is important to note that the Falk School was not the first model school affiliated with the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. Described in greater detail in chapter 1 of this study, the University of Pittsburgh oversaw a school for students in kindergarten that first opened in 1913. The school became known as the Childhood School or School of Childhood and maintained a unique instructional program. Children were encouraged to develop their own activities and observers were required to record individual growth and development (“University to Have School of Childhood,” 1913, p. 3). The Childhood School continued to attract parents and students and by 1921 the school had expanded to include grades kindergarten through six. (“Childhood School to Move This Week,” 1921, p. 7). Due to financial constraints, the school closed in June of 1921.

Due to its popularity in the area, the Childhood School was reorganized as the University of Pittsburgh Demonstration School (“Pitt Childhood School to reopen”, 1921, p. 8). The design of this new Demonstration School was twofold and included two departments: (a) the Childhood School for students below grade three; and (b) the elementary school for students in third through sixth grades (“Pitt Expects 6,200 or More Will Enroll,” 1921, p. 45). As with the fate of the Childhood School, the Demonstration School was closed for financial reasons after its first year in operation.

A Community School was organized by proponents of the Childhood School and Demonstration School. Opened in the fall of 1922, this Community School was developed for children in kindergarten through the second grade. Unlike its predecessor schools, the Community School did not have any type of formal arrangement or affiliation with the School of
Education at the University of Pittsburgh. However, the leadership of the Community School was conducted under two University of Pittsburgh graduates, Helen Ann Maxwell, and Ethelyn Brown (“To Open School of Childhood,” 1922, p. 13). The Community School grew and prospered and when it opened in its fourth year, the school was now providing education to students in kindergarten through sixth grade (“School to Begin its Fourth Year,” 1927, p. 9). The Community School would later be integrated into the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School that opened in the fall of 1931.

The Falk Laboratory School was named for Fanny Edel Falk, a prominent Jewish woman and wife of Leon Falk, a steel manufacturer in the City of Pittsburgh. Fanny Edel and Leon Falk married in 1900 and had two children, Leon Falk, Jr. in 1901 and Marjorie Falk in 1904. Fanny Edel Falk died at the young age of 30 in 1910. Fanny’s husband, Leon Falk, died only 18 years later. At the time of Mr. Falk’s death in 1928, he bequeathed $4,000,000.00 in trust to his family, the Rodef Shalom Reform Jewish congregation in Pittsburgh, PA, and the remainder being distributed to charity (“Leaves $4,000,000,” 1928, p. 1). Fanny and Leon Falk’s children, Leon Falk, Jr. and Marjorie Falk Levy established a Fanny E. Falk Memorial School Fund of the University of Pittsburgh that initially included $300,000. An additional $25,000 was later transferred to the Memorial Fund when plans for a gymnasium at the Rodef Shalom Reform Jewish congregation fell through (“Falk Memorial Fund is Increased,” 1930, p. 29).

The Community School was included in the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School when it opened and became a model teaching school for “teachers in training at the university will observe methods used in the modern classrooms” (“Falks Endow Model School,” 1930, p. 4). The Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School formally opened to the public in 1931 and classes were first held offsite in the Stephens House located on the university campus. Although the
cornerstone had been laid on June 24, 1931, the school building was not officially ready for students until October 1, 1931 (“Begin Building of New School,” 1931, p. 3; “Fanny Falk School to be Ready Oct. 1,” 1931, p. 44).

The *Falk School Charter Agreement* became effective on July 22, 1930, and stipulated that the University of Pittsburgh would “organize and conduct the proposed school as a progressive experimental elementary school and to maintain the school as a demonstration and experimental school only” (*Falk School Charter Agreement*, 1930, para. 16). Furthermore, the original charter agreement stated:

It is agreed that the proposed school shall be conducted as an integral part of the University and that the administration of details of the operation of the school shall be through the regular administrative channels of the University, and in no case shall any person be permitted to teach in this school who is not a regularly appointed member of the faculty of the School of Education. (*Falk School Charter Agreement*, 1930, para. 22)

It was noted from the start that the Falk Laboratory School would maintain a close relationship to School of Education and play a role in the preparation of teachers through demonstration and experimentation.

**Great Depression and World War II, 1930-1945**

The Falk Laboratory School opened in the fall of 1931 and initially included a nursery, kindergarten, and first through sixth grades. It was decided to add a seventh grade in the fall of 1936 with an eighth grade being added the following year. The seventh and eighth grades were discontinued starting in the fall of 1943 due to a decline in enrollment. The seventh grade returned at the start of the 1947-48 school year with eighth grade returning the following year.

Early records of the school are readily available through the Archives and Special
Collections of the University of Pittsburgh Library System. The school was under the direction of three principals during the first 14 years (a full listing of administrators is shown in Appendix H), and the overarching issues cited by each included student enrollment, staffing, and finances. Several reasons for a lack of student enrollment are noted, and these include cost of tuition, lack of parent understanding of the progressiveness of the school, and the transient nature of the community during the second World War. Discussions of establishing a scholarship fund and an executive committee to tackle enrollment issues is evident. Staffing and finances are interrelated and is regularly stated that the salaries of the teaching force needed an increase in addition to the general financial status of the school.

The biennial report of the chancellor for the years 1932-34 indicated the original intention of the Falk Laboratory School. In his report, Chancellor John G. Bowman noted the following:

> It is the University’s demonstration school, where all who are interested in the improvement of elementary education have an opportunity to observe and to discuss the most approved methods of procedure. The primary purpose of the school is the well-rounded development of children. The school also aims to contribute to educational practice by discovering in what ways and to what extent children grow at various ages and to organize interesting lessons that will encourage maximum growth. (Bowman, 1934)

Initially, the Falk Laboratory School was that it would be more central and tightly coupled to the School of Education and the larger University of Pittsburgh. This centrality and tight coupling would continue in the early years of the Falk Laboratory School. The first principal of the school, Martin P. Chworowsky, noted in his 1934-35 annual report,
This year there has been shown a greater interest in the school by students at the University. They have frequently come to the school to observe; they have written reports on the school’s activities. Students from Pennsylvania College for Women and Mt. Mercy College have also visited the school. Many teachers in service have spent their visiting days here. (Chworowsky, 1935)

It is also evident that Talcott Parsons’ and James D. Thompson’s three levels of hierarchical structure were prevalent during the 1930s and 1940s. At the institutional level, the University of Pittsburgh Board of Trustees and the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School Board have fulfilled the role of establishing the boundaries, domain, and legitimacy of the school. The administration of the Falk Laboratory School and the School of Education were responsible for the managerial tasks, particularly for dealing with personnel matters and school policies, while the faculty and staff of the Falk Laboratory School carried out the technical, or production functions, of the school.

The concept of strategic choice was also prevalent during Dr. Chworowsky’s tenure. In his 1938-39 annual report, he further emphasized the strategic choice of the school leadership in relation to experimental function and progressive nature of the Falk Laboratory School. Dr. Chworowsky stated:

There has been an encouraging emphasis on taking children on excursions to observe activities directly, rather than merely to read about them. The handcraft work in the school has improved. Through the year various hobby clubs have been functioning.

An interesting development in the school this year was the beginning of the plan of having the children in the upper grades write their own “report cards” for their parents. The teachers in every case added critical or other comments before the children’s letters
were sent to the parents. (Chworowsky, 1939)

These outside of school excursions and having students write their own report cards was highly progressive at a time when most schools fostered rote learning through textbooks and other independent activities.

Dr. Chchorowsky retired at the close of the 1939-40 school year, and during the 1941-42 school year, the principal, Cyril W. Woolcock, identified several changes that were made to the educational program. Although these changes continue to outside of school excursions started under the tenure of Dr. Chchorowsky, there was a significant increase relative to the purposes and functions of the Falk Laboratory School being a progressive demonstration and experimental school. These changes are cited in Mr. Woolcock’s annual report to the school board and are stated as follows:

The practice of following set activity of unit themes in the same grade each year has been almost entirely eliminated. Instead, the pupils and the teacher (or teachers) cooperate and work together in determining areas of living which the class or groups in the class desire or feel the need to explore. (Woolcock, 1942, p. 3)

More pertinent direct learning experiences outside the school (school trips or excursions). The total number of trips taken this year was 65 per cent more than the number taken last year. (Woolcock, 1942, p. 5)

The changes made to the educational program of the Falk Laboratory School continued to strengthen the role that strategic choice played in the decision-making of the school leadership and staff.

Mr. Woolcock remained at the Falk Laboratory School for only two years and was replaced by Esther B. Starks in the fall of 1942. Miss Starks would remain at the helm until
1947, and during her tenure, nothing is stated about the relationship between the Falk Laboratory School and the School of Education. However, it is noted in Miss Starks first annual report to the Chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh in relation to differentiating instruction and the progressive nature of the school. Miss Starks noted, “The staff recognizes the importance of guiding the development of each child so that he may think and judge critically for himself while advancing academically at his own level of ability” (Starks, 1943, p. 2). This progressiveness continued to define the Falk Laboratory School as a unique elementary school aside from the neighboring public schools.

Although much is not stated in the early reports of the Falk Laboratory School on the relationship between the School of Education, the Falk Laboratory School website noted:

Despite the growth in facilities, faculty, and student population, few instructional innovations were attempted during the 1940s and 50s, this period being more occupied with efforts to evaluate and redefine the school’s purpose. (Falk Laboratory School, 2021)

Dr. Samuel Franklin, Dean of the School of Education, discussed the lack of participation of practice teaching at the Falk Laboratory School. Franklin noted in his 1944-45 annual report, “The underlying philosophy and program is too progressive and informal” (Franklin, 1945, p. 10). Furthermore, he wrote:

These limitations do not have reference to program as such as Falk, but it is too unlike that of the public school in the respects mentioned to serve the purpose of training teachers for the public schools. However, our students should profit considerably from observation of teaching at Falk in the interest of becoming informed of more progressive methods some of which might well be used in many public school situations. (p. 10)
Although the Falk Laboratory School was not identified as a site for the training of teachers, it is noted in the Dean Franklin’s annual report for 1942-43 that a limited number of student teachers were placed at Falk because of available space (Franklin, 1943, p. 3).

In the next historical era of the Falk Laboratory School, an increase in observation as a primary function and purpose of the school is evident. However, the school will continue to embark on a journey to identify its unique purpose and identity that helped to strengthen its core mission and position on a university campus.

Postwar United States, 1945-1968

Regular reports detailing the work of the Falk Laboratory School are available until the late 1950s. Unfortunately, reports after 1959 are scarce and could not be ascertained for the purpose of this study. In this case, information from the Falk Laboratory School website have been gathered to fill the gap between 1960 and 1968.

A major change came to the Falk Laboratory School on February 7, 1946, when paragraph nine and eleven of the original charter agreement were amended. These changes are stated below:

1. The first sentence of paragraph Ninth of the said agreement dated July 22, 1930 now reads as follows:

NINTH: The University agrees to organize and conduct the proposed school as a progressive experimental elementary school and to maintain the school as a demonstration and experimental school only.

*is hereby amended to read as follows:*

NINTH: The University agrees to organize and conduct the proposed school as a progressive experimental elementary school and to maintain the school as a
demonstration, experimental, and practice teaching school.

2. Paragraph Eleventh of the said agreement dated July 22, 1930, which now reads as follows:

ELEVENTH: It is agreed that the proposed school shall be conducted as an integral part of the University and that the administration of details of the operation of the school shall be through the regular administrative channels of the University; and in no case shall any person be permitted to teach in this school who is not a regularly appointed member of the faculty of the School of Education.

is hereby amended to read as follows:

ELEVENTH: It is agreed that the proposed school shall be conducted as an integral part of the University and that the administration of details of the operation of the school shall be through the regular administrative channels of the University; and that all staff teachers in the school shall be accorded faculty recognition by the School of Education in such rank as the School of Education designates.

These two amendments allowed the Falk Laboratory School, the School of Education, and other entities outside the University to begin conversations on how the school will begin fulfilling the function and purpose of a “practice teaching school.” This was the only time that the original charter agreement had been amended and the agreement continues to be in full force today. This change also created a sense of tight coupling between the School of Education while the relationship between the larger University of Pittsburgh was moving in the direction of becoming more loosely coupled.

Miss Esther B. Starks would continue as principal of the Falk Laboratory until the start of the 1947-48 school year. During these few years, Miss Starks noted an increase in observations.
as a primary purpose and function of the Falk Laboratory School. In her annual report to the chancellor for the year 1946-47, Miss Starks stated, “The teachers have been stimulated by the increased number of observers and have given unsparingly of their time to enable these students to understand the significant points in the school program” (Starks, 1947, p. 1). In that same year, Dean Franklin, of the School of Education, discussed the position of practice teaching. In his annual report to the chancellor he noted:

Our elementary teachers have been accommodated at Frick Elementary School. Dr. Dimmick has been approached on the possibility of greatly expanding our program at Frick and is favorable to the idea. A faculty committee will meet soon with a Board of Education committee to consider this question. Pittsburgh and community schools outside Pittsburgh are interested in having a part in the teacher education program, due in part to the great teacher shortage. Now is the time to establish this closer relationship between the University and the public schools of this area. (Franklin, 1947, p. 4)

Although Leon Falk, Jr., Marjorie Levy Falk (formerly Marjorie Falk Levy), and the Board of Trustees at the University of Pittsburgh agreed to amending the original charter to include practice teaching, the School of Education was looking to build a closer relationship with the public schools in the Pittsburgh area.

The Falk Laboratory School also faced a serious problem in relation to outside perceptions of the school. Principal Starks noted this problem in a regular report to the Falk School Board and wrote, “This new catalogue is designed to help answer some of the many questions about the new ideas of education as they function at Falk School and to counteract the idea of the school as a place for ‘problem children’” (Starks, 1947, p. 4). This publication, as stated in the introduction, “aims to show, mostly in pictures, how and what boys and girls learn
at Falk School” (Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School, 1947). As the Falk Laboratory School continued to struggle with its identity and purpose, this publication helped to educate others on the progressive, rigorous, and experimental roles.

It is evident in the reports of the principals for the academic years between 1946 and 1948 that the amendments made to the charter agreement increased observation and practice teaching as a function and purpose of the Falk Laboratory School. At a Falk Laboratory School board meeting, it was noted, “The report was concerned solely with the teacher-training possibilities; the small groups of children within the school plus the inaccessibility from the University were seen as definite limitations in this program” (Falk School Board, 1947). Unfortunately, the physical report being referred to in the minutes was not available; however, the limitations presented strengthen the struggle the school had working with the School of Education. During her last year as principal, Miss Starks reported to the board:

There have been many more observers this year from the University classes, education classes from other local institutions, nurses from Children’s Hospital, as well as visiting teachers from local and outlying schools. These visitors for the most part have provided a challenge to our teachers. (Starks, 1947, p. 5)

The Falk Laboratory School was not only supporting students within the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh, but that other observers from the greater community were coming to the Falk School to observe what was happening within.

Mr. Stuart R. Ikeler assumed the role as principal in the fall of 1947, and in his first report to the Board of Trustees of the Falk Laboratory School, the present relationship between the Falk School and the University of Pittsburgh is described. Mr. Ikeler stated:

Dr. Aaron D. Lazovik was appointed school psychologist this year and is conducting
individual and group tests with children in grades one through six. As in the past, Dr. Florence M. Teagarden is in charge of pre-school testing. Both of these programs offer clinical materials for student teachers from the University.

To date, 237 observers have visited the school since the September opening. Most of these observers have been students from the University’s School of Education. Several groups from Carnegie Tech have visited in a professional capacity along with graduate students from both institutions. A thorough attempt has been made to brief all of these visitors in the organization, philosophy, and program of the school. While such an attempt to direct and focus an observation consumes considerable administrative time, it has been found profitable in terms of explaining the school’s methods and techniques. It has likewise served to point up differences in curriculum and procedures and sharpen the critical sense of the observer. Judging from the interest shown through questions and post-observation discussions, this kind of purposeful briefing has increased the value of the school visiting to most observers and has eliminated a considerable amount of aimless wandering on the part of student observers.

For the first time in three years, students from the School of Education are doing their practice teaching at Falk in the primary grades. It is hoped that this program may be an expanding one, when the number of pupils in each grade increases to the maximum of twenty as recommended in the recent survey. (Ikeler, 1947, p. 2)

A closer partnership between the Falk Laboratory School and the School of Education continued to expand under the leadership of Mr. Ikeler. It is also evident that the faculty and staff at the Falk Laboratory School continued to market the school through the sharing of teaching methods and instructional techniques.
The Falk Laboratory School continued to expand its purposes and functions of a laboratory school through observation and dissemination of instructional methods during an intensive summer workshop in 1948. In a regular report to the board of trustees, Mr. Ikeler (1948) reported:

Through the medium of the summer workshop, Falk School has moved a step nearer its original dual purpose of contributing some very real and tangible ideas to modern elementary education. Hence, the school not only furnished a summer program for children but likewise supplied a highly stimulating laboratory for teacher-education.

(p. 3)

Through our summer workshop and the more than 900 observers who passed through the Falk School during 1947-48, it can be justly claimed that our relations with public school educators have vastly improved and that there is a general acceptance of the idea that our school should really become the representative laboratory for elementary education in this area. Whenever and wherever possible the Falk School staff has striven to create the idea of service to both public and private elementary schools. (p. 8)

Under the tenure of Mr. Ikeler, the Falk Laboratory School would continue to expand its program and would continue to disseminate its purposes and functions to the larger community. Mr. Ikeler resigned from his position as principal in November 1952 and returned to classroom at the university level. Mr. James C. Craig would be appointed as interim Principal until the end of the school year.

Mr. James F. Gray assumed the position of principal in the fall of 1953 and remained in the role until 1957. During his tenure, a document titled Principles and Policies Regarding the Operation of the Falk School was published in 1953. In this report, the relationship between the
Falk Laboratory School, the School of Education, and the University was clarified. It is noted, “Under the present University organization, the school is administered by a principal under the general supervision of the Dean of the School of Education who is responsible to the Vice Chancellor and ultimately to the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees of the University” (Falk School, 1953, p. 1). This relationship continues to support the loose coupling of the Falk Laboratory School to the two other affiliated organizations that provide legitimacy and management. Also recommended in this report is that a goal existed to “Further the operation of the school as an integral part of the University through the institution of a child development program and through closer relations with the Department of Elementary Education” (p. 2).

As the Falk Laboratory School continued to search for its identity and purpose, discussions amongst the Falk School Board began in 1954 around a reorganization of the school. Included in these discussions were the “type of school Falk should be” and to either reorganize the seventh and eighth grades into a program of its own or discontinue them altogether (Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School, 1954). These discussions continued into 1955 when the board began authorizing various evaluations of the school and its programs. As part of this evaluative process, it was noted in the minutes of the Falk School Board of Trustees from December 12, 1956, “It was recommended that they do some research at the school since none was being done” and that there was not enough equipment in the way of one-way visual screens and demonstration rooms and that the school was not big enough or well-located enough for a laboratory school” (p. 2).

Dr. J. Allen Figurel began as Principal of the Falk Laboratory School in September 1957, and in a report to the Falk School Board, he stated, “New ways must be devised to make Falk School a more integral part of the School of Education. This could be done through directed
observations, clinical observations and extensive training of student teachers” (Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School Board, 1957, p. 2). It was also decided to eliminate the seventh and eighth grades with the agreement that the seventh grade students would be allowed to finish through eighth grade. Plans were presented “for closer cooperation between the School of Education and the Falk staff and the role the Falk School will play in regard to its use by the School of Education and its contribution to the community” (Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School Board, 1958, p. 3).

In 1958, the Association for Student Teaching published a bulletin titled The Purposes, Functions, Uniqueness of the College-Controlled Laboratory School. This bulletin prompted the Falk School to conduct further review and study at that time. From these studies, it was noted in “A Year of Review and Study” from the 1957-58 school year that an expansion for experimental and demonstration purposes was needed in addition to the establishment of cooperative relationships with the teacher education program at the University of Pittsburgh. It was also noted that there was a need for research and experimentation to be conducted at the Falk School, particularly with master’s and doctoral level research projects. This type of research would then be published and disseminated to a larger audience outside the local community.

Although board meeting minutes and annual reports could not be ascertained after 1959, the Falk Laboratory School website stated that Dr. Harry Sartain took over the role as director from 1960 to 1972. During Dr. Sartain’s tenure, a plan titled The Personalized Progress Plan was put in place in 1966. This plan included three main features: (a) multi-age grouping, (b) team teaching, and (c) non-graded system of student achievement. It is also noted that Dr. Sartain “reinforced the notion that Falk School was to serve as a laboratory and demonstration center for elementary and secondary teaching for the School of Education” and that the Falk Laboratory
School would serve as a “research site for the University of Pittsburgh” (Falk Laboratory School, 2021).

The Falk Laboratory School would strive to achieve its place on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh as a center for clinical teaching and student teaching experiences in the final historical era.

**Contemporary United States, 1968-present**

Dr. Sartain would continue to lead the Falk Laboratory School through the challenging days that City of Pittsburgh first experienced on April 5, 1968, after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., and during the years when U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War was at its peak. Although primary source meeting minutes are not readily available during Dr. Sartain’s tenure, the Falk Laboratory School (2021) website indicated, “that stability and consistency returned to the leadership at Falk.” Furthermore, this was a time when diversity of the student body when “an aggressive recruitment of black students was begun.” Dr. Sartain retired at the end of the 1971-72 school year.

Dr. Roy Creek became the next director at the Falk Laboratory School and served in this capacity as the longest school leader until 1994. According to the Falk Laboratory School (2021) website, “Falk teachers became more involved in teaching university classes, presenting at conferences, and in outreach to area public schools.” Dissemination of information from the Falk Laboratory School occurred under Dr. Creek’s tenure. During the time that Dr. Creek served as director, the dean of the School Education formed a committee to “provide an examination of Falk School, its quality, its curriculum, its role in the School of Education and the University and the future direction it should take” (University of Pittsburgh, 1985, p. i). The final report was published and disseminated in May 1985.
The first component of this report focused on teacher preparation in the undergraduate and graduate programs. It was noted that undergraduate students are placed within the Falk Laboratory School for single observations, practicum experiences for students enrolled in methods or independent study courses, and for student teaching. The Falk Laboratory School (1985) was also highlighted in the report because they [students] have opportunities to have first hand experiences with children under the close supervision of teachers who are knowledgeable about the teacher education program. This type of supervision in a University Lab School provides a natural linkage between theory and practice in the preparation of teachers. (p. 3)

Although the Falk Laboratory School was commended for this relationship, it was noted that approximately 10 students are placed at the Falk School at any given time with 15-20 other students working in schools in neighboring communities. An area of concern that was discussed was the number of adults working in each classroom at the Falk Laboratory School at any given time.

In the graduate program at the time, 15 student interns were placed at the Falk Laboratory School enrolled in the Master of Arts in Teaching program. It was also cited in the report that the Falk Laboratory School paid the tuition for 13 of these students while the School of Education covered the other two. The relationship between the School and Education and the Falk Laboratory School was also commended as it was cited in the report:

1. The MAT program provides an opportunity for these graduate students to work with excellent demonstration teachers and to observe and model effective teaching in a supervised setting. Furthermore, the MAT program provides the impetus for increased Falk faculty and School of Education faculty interaction.
2. Availability of interns provides flexible for the demonstration teacher who can become more involved with teaching and research activities on the lower campus. (p. 9)

It is apparent that the Falk Laboratory School was fulfilling the purposes and functions of providing opportunities for observation, demonstration, clinical and student teaching experiences.

Other areas discussed in the research report related to research and student demographics of the Falk Laboratory School. A portion of the data collected for this report came from a self-study completed by the faculty of the Falk School and it was noted:

This document generally provides little indication of institutional or mission-oriented research as we have described it. This absence of a central research missions seems to hold true, whether the expected source of such a mission is Falk or the School of Education. Falk’s “school philosophy” does contain a mandate for the faculty to” …experiment with practices which hold promise of more effective teaching and learning.” However, no further mention is made of a systematic program of research to meet this goal. (p. 14).

The School of Education made the recommendation at the time that a strong research program would be beneficial to both the Falk Laboratory School and to the School of Education.

A criticism of laboratory schools in the past has been student demographics. Unlike other laboratory schools that maintained an affluent or children of faculty and staff student body, the Falk Laboratory School was commended for its dedication to diversity. However, it is indicated in the report that

in spite of the school’s sensitivity to the need for diversity the nature of the school as a
tuition-charging, University-related institution places limitations of its ability to achieve true diversity in its urban setting. Although there is variation in the ability level of Falk students, the variability is concentrated at the high end of the ability spectrum and is not distributed across the whole spectrum. School officials indicate I.Q. is not a factor in admissions, yet an I.Q. test is required of applicants. According to school officials, the I.Q. score helps Falk to determine which potential new students might enable the school to increase its diversity related to ability. (p. 22)

The Falk Laboratory School worked within the constraints of the school model to diversify the student population to allow for individual differences.

Little is known about the relationship of the Falk Laboratory School and the School of Education during the tenure of Dr. Bill McDonald from 1995 to 2004. However, Dr. McDonald is noted for implementing a strategic planning process and for exploring the expansion and renovation of the Falk Laboratory School facility. For a brief period in 2004, Mr. Greg Wittig served as the interim director of the Falk School (Falk Laboratory School, 2021a).

Dr. Wendell McConnaha was selected as the 12th director of the Falk Laboratory School in 2005 and completed his tenure in 2014. Having been a member of the National Association of Laboratory Schools and published several papers and reports relating to laboratory schools, Dr. McConnaha was well versed in the purposes and functions that laboratory schools were expected to fulfill. According to the Falk Laboratory School (2021a) website, Dr. McConnaha “brought a needed strength for building relationships between university departments in addition to the ability to step in and push forward Falk’s new building project.” When asked about the relationship between the School of Education and the Falk Laboratory School during an interview, one respondent noted the following:
Both Wendell and Jeff have worked very hard to improve the relationship between the Falk School and the School of Education. This collaboration has been about relationships between key stakeholders and continues to get stronger. The School of Education has classes at the Falk School and there have been times to collaborate with conference work and with other laboratory schools.

Outside of the relationship between the Falk School and the School of Education, Dr. McConnaha is most known for expanding the Falk School by adding areas for art, music, physical education, and additional classrooms and ensuring that the entire school was handicap accessible. This addition also increased the number of students that could attend the Falk School from 275 to 440. The project received praise from environmentalists because “Sustainable features include a green roof, an air exchange system, low-flow toilets, solar dependent lighting, and the use of recycle materials” (PJTC Holdings, Inc. & The Lindy Group, 2021). This expansion of the Falk School increased student enrollment and allowed the Falk School to diversity its student body to a larger population.

Dr. Jeff Suzik became the 13th director of the Falk Laboratory School in 2014 and resigned from his position at the end of the 2020-2021 school year. Under Dr. Suzik’s leadership, the relationship between the Falk Laboratory School was strengthened. Several participants noted that Dr. Suzik and current School of Education dean, Dr. Valerie Kinloch, have continued to work together to make this type of relationship possible. One respondent stated:

It’s an interesting relationship. It’s at a place right now where it is mutually reinforcing and supportive. I don’t know that it has always been that. It certainly has been in different ways under the three iterations of Deans that I have worked with. The current Dean…has been super supportive of Falk and understands the value-addedness of
not only our School of Education, but our University having an old school progressively
focused lab school on its campus that is vibrant, and robust and healthy. There just aren’t
that many places that have them and certainly not ones that have the kind of archetypical
focus of Falk, one that really is dedicated to being progressive and what that means with
a capital “P.” The relationship is strong, but like many parts of major institutions, the
School of Education has been siloed over time for all kinds of practical and philosophical
reasons and part of what the Dean has worked on a lot in the School itself has been to
breakdown those silos and create a new organizational structure…and she has created
incentives for people to think more deeply about working with auxiliary units, Falk being
one of those. We’re connected in many ways, mostly through teacher education, less
through actual research and inquiry…Research should start here first because we are an
environment that is incredibly conducive to doing no holds barred, crazy research and we
can take risks here that are not as possible as they might be in a big public district and
leadership models are more stable here than they are in a lot of schools…I think there is a
strong relationship.

Data collected from the interviews has indicated that the tightly coupled relationship between the
Falk Laboratory School and the School of Education is strong. However, continued work is
needed to expand this relationship, particularly around the purpose and function of research.

In keeping with the progressiveness of the Falk Laboratory School and under the tenure
of Dr. Suzik, a maker education space known as the “Wonder Lab” opened in 2016. According
to Roop (2020), “The Wonder Lab is a connective hub for all K-8 students, their teachers, and
the broader Falk community. Students frequently use the lab throughout the school year. Their
creations connect back to other academic subjects and build a sense of community” (p. 10). This
creative space has allowed students to explore and create. Financed by a generous grant from the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh and an additional $50,000 from donors and families, this space “embraced a progressive, child-centered constructivist approach to learning and teaching” (p. 10).

During the end of the 2020-2021 school year, Dr. Suzik announced that he would be resigning as the director of the Falk Laboratory School. The Falk School appointed its two assistant directors to lead the school during the 2021-2022 school year as it makes plans for the possible search of a new director. A new chapter in the history of the Falk Laboratory School will begin.

**Thematic Analysis**

The following three sections include a discussion of the themes that emerged from the 10 interviews that were conducted. These three themes include: (a) the Falk School as a “laboratory” school, (b) breaking through the decline of laboratory schools, and (c) resistance to diversity.

**Falk School as a “Laboratory” School**

Laboratory schools throughout the United States served many purposes and functions throughout history. These functions and purposes include: (a) clinical teaching experiences, (b) observation, (c) demonstration, (d) student teaching, (e) research, (f) curriculum development, (g) professional development, (h) experimentation, and (i) increased student achievement. Some laboratory schools focused on only one or two of these purposes and functions while others emphasized that all were part of their mission. Each of these nine purposes and functions is explained in greater detail in Chapter 2 of this study.

It could be argued that the mission of the Falk Laboratory School included each of these
nine purposes and functions; an overarching theme was that the Falk School emphasized clinical teaching and student teaching experiences in addition to experimentation the most. It is also important to note that observation, demonstration, and mini research projects were prevalent as part of the clinical teaching and student teaching experiences. One respondent noted:

I can speak to what I see prevalent at Falk in comparison to some of the other lab schools that I am familiar with. At Falk what I see as prevalent is really a focus on the student teaching. When you look to lab schools, and you know of all their different missions with regard to research, publications, and student teaching, where we are strong is student teaching…Here you walk in you see students of education all over and teachers are expected to work with student teachers in all areas.

Another respondent discussed the relationship of clinical and student teaching interns to the progressiveness of the Falk Laboratory School and how these interns interact with students and their families:

I do think that it provides a very important location for the study of what the relationship between the teacher and student should be…it’s important for our teacher interns to see that, practice it, and see how the kids respond to that…Anytime we have a parent-teacher conference an intern is present and it’s very clear that we are very used to having clinical instructors working with our kids. We are never concerned about that.

Another respondent emphasized the relationship of graduate students in the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program to the Falk Laboratory School:

The biggest thing is the student teaching. There are tons of student teachers. Basically, every classroom has a student teacher. At the middle school level, you will have student teachers and MAT candidates take over a fairly big chunk of the school year. I think that
is the biggest thing. The Director has really been working to strengthen the connections to the School of Education and to really make a little more structured idea of let’s research what we are doing and let’s see what actually works.

The 1946 amendatory agreement to the original Falk School Charter Agreement stipulated that the Falk School would exist as a “demonstration, experimental and practice teaching school.” As evidenced in the historical data after the establishment of the amendatory agreement in 1946 and during each of the interviews, the primary mission of the Falk School cited by the respondents is to provide clinical and student teaching experiences to prospective educators.

Breaking Through the Decline of Laboratory Schools

Laboratory schools throughout the United States began to be highly criticized beginning the 1960s, and many would explore alternative missions or close completely. The challenges that many laboratory schools faced include: (a) student demographics, (b) lack of research, (c) a focus on too many purposes and functions, and (d) financial constraints. Each of these four criticisms is explained in further detail in Chapter 2 of this study.

Although the Falk Laboratory School has struggled with diversifying its student body due to being a tuition-based school and given the limited role of research and dissemination coming from the Falk School, the creation of the 1930 charter agreement between the Falk Family and the University of Pittsburgh has been cited as an overarching reason for the continuation of the school since its inception. One respondent noted:

In the case of Falk that has a legal charter that says the University has to support us, we’ve always existed. But I have a feeling that had the University at some point in its history been able to get rid of us they would have. I am not claiming that about the
current Dean, the current Provost, the current Chancellor, the current Board of Trustees of the University, but I think sometime in the 50s, 60s, 70s or 80s we might have been toast.

Another respondent noted the following relationship between the Falk Laboratory School and the University of Pittsburgh in the following words:

The labor it would take and the risk it would take for Falk to renegotiate the gift agreement just points out the limitations of founding a school on a gift agreement. That kind of relationship with the University enables the school to continue to flourish. It would have been more aggravating to Pitt to close Falk than keep it open.

Another respondent cited the continuation of the Falk Laboratory School during the 1970s and 1980s, a time when the City of Pittsburgh was losing its key steel industries, and noted the following:

The fact that the school was established with this charter with the University the way that it was, and it had the facility, and it was in that sense serving Pitt purposes because it was a recruitment tool for people coming into the City, especially at the point when the 70s and 80s during the tremendous downturn of Pittsburgh as a whole the school was seen as a recruitment tool for faculty and staff.

Although the initial Falk School Charter Agreement was signed on July 22, 1930, almost consistently the respondents cited this agreement as the primary rationale for the continuation of the Falk Laboratory School. Even though 71 years have passed, each respondent could cite at least one critical section of the agreement as being prevalent in the Falk School today.

**Resistance to Diversity**

A third and final theme that arose from the review of historical data and interviews was
that the Falk Laboratory School maintained a resistance to diversity of its student body.

Although evidence has shown that the efforts have been made to diversity the student body of the Falk School, a resistance to diversity exists because of the tuition-base and university community in which the Falk School is located. One respondent emphasized the conversations and questions that the Falk School Board has been engaged in:

There has been a lot of movement on the equity and justice front and that was imperative. The question of are we doing everything in our power as a board to think about financial aid, are we doing everything in our power to make sure that we have a diverse student body. Are we making sure families of children of color are well supported? Are we making sure that the place is full of micro-aggressions? They have had to work and push and nudge hard and when you are paying tuition at a school, and you are a college or university faculty member and you are driven, the expectation is that you want your child to be prepared to be a top achiever and an ivy league candidate. Coming to grips and wrestling with that, we’ve had some tough and great conversations. There have been a number of people on the board who have said come on. We have to understand what we are trying to do here and now they have someone who is an assistant director for equity and justice. There has been a real rethinking of a lot of things and clarifying where we have been and who we want to be.

Another respondent provided a discussion of how the Falk Laboratory School has been coming together to address diversity, equity, and inclusion and noted:

I also was noticing that the school, while it was diverse, the enrollment was culturally and racially diverse, certainly not socio-economically diverse, it didn’t really engage in that. A diversity and inclusion parent group was created and it started with discussion events.
The school didn’t have a strategic plan and we really wanted to embed this in the strategic plan.

Another respondent provided a discussion around diversity, equity, and inclusion and how this is prevalent in the current mission of the Falk Laboratory School and stated:

Falk does a really nice job of creating community. However, part of being a progressive school is being engaged in this diversity, equity, and inclusion work and I see so much work to be done there. I think they are willing…and we have white parents complaining about how we are putting too much emphasis on the African American experience and the LGBTQ experience in our social justice curriculum.

**Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter provided the findings for this research study. Included was evidence gathered from primary and secondary sources from the University of Pittsburgh Archives and Special Collections in addition to documents received from the Falk Laboratory School. The findings from these historical artifacts were presented within four historical eras for clarity and understanding. Furthermore, ten interviews were conducted where participants provided data on the present purposes and functions of the Falk Laboratory School in addition to the awareness and prevalence of the Falk School Charter Agreement. The overarching themes that emerged from these interviews were also presented with supporting quotes and information.

Chapter 5 will present an interpretation of these findings and implications for theory, practice, and recommendations for future research related to laboratory schools and educator preparation.
Chapter 5: Discussion, Recommendations, and Implications

Chapter 4 provided the findings of this study. This qualitative historical analysis addressed the following three research questions:

1. RQ1-Qualitative: What were the initial purposes and functions of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model?
2. RQ2-Qualitative: What are the current purposes and functions of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model?
3. RQ3-Qualitative: What factors led to the continuation of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School when many others were closing their doors?

This chapter includes an interpretation of the findings and implications for theory, practice, and recommendations for future research related to laboratory schools and educator preparation.

Interpretation of the Findings

In Chapter 2 of this research study, eight purposes and functions of laboratory schools were identified and discussed in further detail. These purposes and functions included: (a) clinical teaching experiences; (b) observation; (c) demonstration.;(d) student teaching; (e) research; (f) curriculum development; (g) professional development; (h) experimentation; and (i) student achievement. Furthermore, criticisms of laboratory schools were ascertained from the review of literature and included: (a) student demographics; (b) lack of research; (c) excessive functions and purposes; and (d) financial constraints. These purposes, functions, and criticisms will be discussed in relation to the Falk Laboratory School in the sections below. In addition, a
discussion of the Falk School Charter Agreement will also be presented.

**Clinical Teaching Experiences**

Clinical teaching experiences have been identified as one of the primary purposes and functions of the Falk Laboratory School. Beginning with the amendatory agreement in 1946, the Falk Laboratory School was able to begin identifying itself as a “practice teaching school.” This practice has continued with some ups and downs throughout the history of the Falk School, but as one respondent noted, “It is a teaching school…and fulfills its mission on the teacher training side.” It has been noted that every classroom, or almost every classroom, has a pre-student or student teacher during the semester or school year. The only exception that was noted was in art instruction as the School of Education does not currently have an art education program. However, another respondent noted that students in art education programs from other education preparation providers outside the University of Pittsburgh are periodically placed at the Falk Laboratory School for their pre-service training. According to the National Research Council (2010), clinical teaching experiences are one of the three “aspects of teacher preparation that are likely to have the highest potential for effects on outcomes from students” in addition to content knowledge and quality of teacher candidates (p. 180). The Falk School has continued to carry out this purpose and function well.

The purpose and function of clinical teaching experiences was consistent with the theme of the Falk School serving as a laboratory school. Clinical teaching experiences have been, and continue to be, a primary purpose and function of laboratory schools and this is a primary function and purpose of the Falk School. Furthermore, this purpose and function evolved over time as the original mission did not include clinical teaching experiences as a goal. Although the University of Pittsburgh established the legitimacy, domain, and boundaries of the Falk School at
the institutional level, the technical level within the Falk School sought to materialize the school’s identity and this was not evident until the late 1940s. Through strategic choice of the Falk School and School of Education administration, the coupled relationship between the two begin to strengthen. This close bond to support clinical teaching experiences remains tight today.

Observation

Observation has been identified as a primary purpose or function of the Falk Laboratory School. Although not identified as a primary purpose or function in Chapter 4 of this research study, the observation of students, instructional methods, and master teachers in their environment is a component of clinical teaching and student teaching experiences. Therefore, observation is identified in this discussion as it is embedded within clinical teaching and student teaching experiences.

Observation has been and continues to be a primary purpose and function of the Falk Laboratory School as stated in the original mission. Early reports have indicated this was a primary purpose and function of the school, and from data ascertained from interviews, observation continues to be a primary purpose and function. The University of Pittsburgh at the institutional level, the School of Education at the managerial level, and the Falk Laboratory School at the technical level established observation as this primary purpose and function and continued to support and strengthen this close relationship and to support the practice of observation. The strategic choice of the various principals of the Falk School and the deans and faculty of the School of Education also contributed to continue this practice as a primary purpose and function as a component of clinical and student teaching experiences. In addition to clinical teaching experiences, this loosely coupled relationship continues to be prevalent in the Falk School community today.
Demonstration

Demonstration has also been identified as a primary purpose and function of the Falk Laboratory School. Like observation, demonstration of planned activities and methods by faculty and staff are components of clinical teaching and student teaching experiences. The original and current mission of the Falk School included demonstration as an integral component of the school, and this purpose or function is embedded within clinical and student teaching experiences.

The purpose and function of demonstration was, and continues to be, a primary purpose or function of the Falk Laboratory School as stated in the school’s mission statement. As with the purpose and function of observation, the University of Pittsburgh at the institutional level, School of Education at the managerial level, and Falk School at the technical level, demonstration has been at the core within clinical teaching and student teaching experiences. Through strategic choice, the administration and faculty of the Falk School have continued to perpetuate demonstration as a primary purpose and function. As with observation, demonstration has continued to be a component of the loosely coupled relationship between the School of Education and Falk School.

Student Teaching

Student teaching is another primary function and purpose of the Falk Laboratory School outside of clinical teaching experiences that typically occur prior to the culminating student teaching experience. The purpose and function of student teaching also grew out of the 1946 amendatory agreement that included “practice teaching” in the Falk Laboratory School’s mission. One respondent stated, “Every teacher in the building had an intern within their classroom during the course of the year, which allowed Pitt to place those people in close
proximity, but also every teacher they were placing them with was a master teacher.” Evidence has shown that student teaching has been and continues to be a strong and prevalent function of the Falk Laboratory School.

The purpose and function of student teaching was prevalent at the Falk Laboratory School after the addition of “practice teaching” in the 1946 charter amendment and continued to evolve and strengthen thereafter. According to several respondents, the Falk School has become known in part for its cooperation with the School of Education and in the education and preparation of teachers. Although not an initial purpose or function of the Falk School, the strategic choice of the administration to add this component brought the Falk School closer to the School of Education. This closely related relationship maintains a tightly coupled relationship between the two organizations.

Research

There is evidence that shows research and dissemination has been a component of the Falk Laboratory School, but this is not a primary purpose or function of the school. During an interview, one respondent noted, “I know that research studies are done within the classroom, which is an important part of being a laboratory school.” Small research projects have been conducted in the Falk Laboratory School, but evidence has shown that these research studies have been conducted to inform classroom teachers or teaching teams. Another respondent indicated that research has “not evolved or re-evolved at Falk.” In addition, some research is conducted by graduate level students for methods courses, but rarely has this research ever been disseminated and generalized to a population outside of the School of Education or the Falk Laboratory School.

Although the leadership of the Falk School had a vision to incorporate research as a
component of the Falk School, this idea never came to fruition. This lack of research has made the Falk School marginal to the core mission of the University of Pittsburgh as a public research university. It is evident that at the institutional and managerial levels of the University of Pittsburgh and School of Education that research was a primary purpose or function, but this did not translate into practice at the technical level of the Falk School. This may have been a strategic choice of the Falk School administration and faculty to not engage in research and stick with the those identified in the original and revised mission and to not engage in too many purposes or functions.

**Curriculum Development**

Curriculum development has not been a purpose or function of the Falk Laboratory School. The purpose or function of curriculum development is absent from the historical data that had been reviewed and was also missing from the interviews that were conducted. However, one respondent stated, “We haven’t been in the market of publishing curricula or writing textbooks.” Another respondent noted that the Falk School has created its own curricula for internal purposes and courses in the arts and humanities were cited as those where more internal curriculum development has occurred.

The lack of curriculum development may have been a strategic choice of the Falk School administration and faculty. Little to no information on curriculum development was prevalent in the archival sources of data other than the discussion of the administration and faculty not using a prescribed curriculum as the core instructional approach used to teach children at the Falk School. This strategic choice may have also been made to not overwhelm the Falk School administration and faculty in too many purposes or functions.
Professional Development

The designing and delivery of professional development opportunities was not a primary purpose or function of the Falk Laboratory School. However, there is some evidence that the Falk Laboratory School has begun to engage in professional development through a teacher-to-teacher program alongside Pittsburgh Public Schools, and the faculty and staff are working with first year medical students on diversity, equity, and inclusion work. However, as one respondent noted, these are the only “two examples and there are not many more. That [professional development] is on people’s radar here and we are pretty confident that moving forward it will continue to be.” Given that new leadership will be taking place at the Falk School in the next year or two, professional development opportunities may become a focus of the school.

As with research and curriculum development, the lack of professional development opportunities being offered by the Falk School may have been a strategic choice of the administration and faculty of the school. However, I inferred from the archival sources of data and from the interviews that the lack of funding and support from the University of Pittsburgh could have also played a role in this decision.

Student Achievement

Student achievement has not been traditionally identified as a separate purpose or function of the laboratory school model. According to Shadick (1966), “There is reason to believe that the teaching of children is improved by all of the functions assumed by laboratory schools” (p. 204). Therefore, it can be argued the most important purpose or function of the Falk School is the education of children. However, it is important to note that student achievement looks differently at the Falk School where an emphasis on standardized testing is absent. One respondent stated:
One of our functions is to prove that there are alternative models to how we just expect that children are educated…and if we are going to favor collaboration over individual endeavor and achievement, it is going to be noisy because it is going to be conversation and chatter and consulting with one another. We have shown people I think, through our practices, that we don’t need to accept the status quo that schools are these silent morgue like places that are joyless for children because all do is fixate on achievement and it’s not that we don’t care about achievement, but we don’t care about it to the detriment of joy and curiosity and wonder and inquiry and problem solving and just simply living your life and just simply preparing for a future that nobody really achieves. No third grade parent should be worried that their third grader isn’t going to get into the college of their choice.

The students at the Falk Laboratory School are empowered to explore, wonder, and create within the bounds of experiencing things and growing as individual and unique learners.

The purpose and function of student achievement is central to the University of Pittsburgh, School of Education, and the Falk Laboratory School’s mission. Given the nature of the organization as a school, it is evident that the strategic choices being made were always in the best interests of the Falk School students and student interns. The Falk School continues to remain loosely coupled to the greater University but is central to the overall mission under this purpose and function.

**Student Demographics**

The demographics of the student body within laboratory schools has been a criticism of their existence. According to Braddock (1968), “The college or university lab school has always been a window on the world of the classroom…Yet these lab schools, most of them of high
quality, have become almost exclusively a domain for educating white, middle-class children, including many sons and daughters of college faculty members” (p. 3). This criticism has also been a concern at the Falk Laboratory School and is described in greater detail in the resistance to diversity section in Chapter 4 of this study. Although this resistance has existed, the Falk Laboratory School has been engaged in intentional activities to make the school more diverse. According to the Falk School (2021b) website, “Falk’s Diversity, Equity & Inclusion group is comprised of parents, faculty and staff” and the school “ascribes to the ‘welcoming schools’ model that has been developed by the Southern Poverty Law Center’s ‘Teaching Tolerance’ Project.” This intentional work has brought positive social change to the Falk Laboratory School.

The student demographics of the Falk School is central to the racial and ethnic diversity of the University of Pittsburgh. According to College Factual (2021), the University of Pittsburgh scored a 44.79 out of 100 for the racial and ethnic diversity of the study body, about 15 points below the national average. The University also received a 5 out of 5 rating by Campus Pride, a non-profit organization that rates colleges and university as LGBTQ friendly (University of Pittsburgh, 2021). The University, in addition to the Falk School, appear to both be working toward a more diverse and inclusive educational community and this strategic choice is central to both organizations.

**Lack of Research**

According to Rabinowitz (1966), “Though most laboratory schools are committed to the view that research is important, and should somehow be part of their work, it is not one of their high-priority goals. Actually, of course, they engage in very little research” (p. 309). The lack of research and dissemination has been cited as a key criticism of laboratory schools, and in the case of the Falk Laboratory School, one respondent noted, “We’ve not made much progress with
partnering with researchers to write and present things.” This lack of research continues to be a purpose and function that is missing from the Falk School’s model.

Respondents had indicated that a research community at the Falk School is needed and has been discussed. This strategic choice would make the Falk School more central to the University of Pittsburgh and School of Education’s mission and could bring about a more tightly coupled relationship between the School of Education and the Falk School. Although research can be done at every level of higher education, a research component would primarily benefit the graduate school and students in the School of Education.

Functions and Purposes

The Falk Laboratory School has historically focused on clinical teaching and student teaching experiences in addition to being a progressive and experimental elementary school. This focus on a narrow set of purposes and functions has most likely led to their continuation and operation as “it does not seem unfair to suggest, however, that demonstration, observation, and practice teaching will continue to be the principal functions of existing laboratory schools” (Rabinowitz, 1966, p. 309). It is evident from the historical data reviewed and through the interviews that the Falk Laboratory School has not engaged in each of the purposes and functions that a laboratory school has maintained. However, they have existed to serve the primary purpose and function of educating children and pre-service teachers.

As discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, the Falk School has strategically chosen to focus on a small set of purposes and functions as their laboratory school model. The emphasis on clinical and student teaching opportunities in addition to observation and demonstration has allowed the Falk School to become an expert in these areas and to not become overwhelmed with an immense set of tasks. However, this specialized focus has allowed the Falk
School to maintain a more tightly coupled relationship to the School of Education rather than the greater university. This strategic choice meant that the Falk School was, and continues to be, marginal to the greater university and more central to the mission of the School of Education.

**Financial Constraints**

Laboratory schools have been criticized as being costly and unnecessary. According to Van Til (1969), “Since money is by the economists’ definition a scarce commodity, it does not take too much persuasion to convince funding sources that the laboratory school is ‘a fad and a frill,’ nice to have but hardly necessary” (p. 8). Funding has been a key issue for the Falk Laboratory School from its inception. Early reports indicated the low salaries of the teaching force and the need for scholarship funds to be established to support increased student enrollment. These low figures caused high teacher attrition, student absenteeism, and lowered enrollment. Presently, the Falk Laboratory School has established a financial aid office to work with students and their families. There are also options for parents to pay in increments in addition to financial support through FACTS grant and aid assessment and tuition management.

Given that the Falk Laboratory School is marginal to the University of Pittsburgh, it has not received equitable financial support. The Falk School can exist primarily because of the tuition and fees that students and their families pay to attend the school. According to the Falk School (2021c) website

Falk School is solely responsible for raising and managing its annual budget, which currently exceeds $6 million dollars. Revenue is generated from tuition, fees, and donations. Falk does receive custodial support, utilities expenses, IT support, insurance, and legal services from the University of Pittsburgh, but must cover all other expenses, including salaries, financial aid, building improvements and loan repayment for the
expansion.

These financial constraints further emphasize the marginality of the Falk School to the greater University of Pittsburgh and School of Education. Strategic choice is also equally important as the financial status depends upon careful planning and decision-making to keep the school financially sound and in continuous operation.

**Falk School Charter Agreement**

The criticisms that laboratory schools began to receive in the 1960s have been prevalent at the Falk Laboratory School. One might ask why the Falk School continues to be in operation today. Although there is evidence to support that the Falk School provides robust progressive education to its students and according to one respondent, “100% of graduates that have attended the Falk School go on to college,” the primary reason for the continuation of the Falk School is because of the legal charter that was first established between Leon Falk, Jr., Marjorie Falk Levy, and the University of Pittsburgh on July 22, 1930. As stated in greater detail in Chapter 4, the charter agreement has been cited as the overarching reason for the continuation of the Falk Laboratory School. This charter agreement has allowed this unique school the opportunity to discover its identity and evolve into a center as a “demonstration, experimentation, and practice teaching school” that supports teacher candidates in the School of Education and the greater Pittsburgh community.

The Falk Laboratory School is marginal to the University of Pittsburgh and, in some ways, the School of Education because of the legal charter agreement. Given that the school was established by the Falk family and not by the university, there was little buy in and support of the school making it marginal to overall mission of the university. The strategic choices of the Falk School administration and faculty and the loosely coupled relationships between the
administration and faculty in the School of Education has allowed for the school to expand upon its functions and purposes but has little to do with the rationale behind the school being in continued existence. The university does secure the legitimacy and boundary of the Falk School, and it does little to support at the institutional level. Furthermore, human resources, custodial, and IT support are provided at the managerial level. The greatest work of the Falk School is done at the technical level through the strategic choices of the administration and faculty of the Falk School.

Implications for Theory

The results of this study have implications for theory. Weick’s (1976) theory of loosely coupled systems has been evident in this historical analysis of the Falk Laboratory School and its relationship to the School of Education and the greater University of Pittsburgh. Weick noted, “As the concept of coupling is crucial because of its ability to highlight the identity and separateness of elements that are momentarily attached” (p. 4). In the case of the Falk Laboratory School, this organizational entity is both tightly and loosely coupled. For example, the faculty and staff of the Falk Laboratory School are contracted employees of the University of Pittsburgh and exist under the policies and procedures set forth by the administration and Office of Human Resources of the University of Pittsburgh. Salaries and benefits are also under the auspices of the University and come from an auxiliary budget under the School of Education and is funded by student tuition dollars. Under the original charter agreement, the University also continuously maintains the Falk School facilities. These examples highlight the tight coupling between the School of Education and University of Pittsburgh.

The Falk Laboratory School is simultaneously a loosely coupled organization to the School of Education and University of Pittsburgh. The Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School
Board “shall have the power of approval of the general purposes and activities of this school, subject to the final decision of the Board of Trustees of the University of Pittsburgh” (Falk School Charter Agreement, 1930). Although the charter agreement maintains that the chancellor shall serve as the chairman of the Board and that the University Board of Trustees have the final say, this has not been the case in the history of the Falk Laboratory School. The local school board has been able to function, alongside a relationship with the School of Education dean, to operate as a loosely coupled organization within the university system.

The concepts of centrality and marginality played a role in the conceptual framework for this study. According to Hackman (1985), “Centrality, the pivotal concept in this research, is defined as how closely the purposes of a unit match the central mission of its institution” (p. 61). The underlying assumption in this case is that centrality is good, and marginality is bad. That theory does not hold true for the Falk Laboratory School and its distant relationship to the University of Pittsburgh. However, the Falk Laboratory School is more central to the mission of the School of Education rather than the greater University.

Implications for Practice

The results of this study have implications for the Falk Laboratory School and other laboratory schools throughout the United States. According to King (1984), “From this wide circle of programs and services being provided by one or more laboratory schools, or those hypothetically possible not now being provided, each laboratory school must find its niche” (p. 4). To be sustainable, laboratory schools must place an emphasis on one or two principal functions and purposes. The Falk Laboratory School has continued to thrive by providing clinical teaching and student teaching experiences to prospective educators. Although prevalent are the purposes and functions of observation and demonstration, these two other purposes and functions
fall within the clinical teaching and student teaching opportunities. This “niche” has allowed the Falk Laboratory School to create an environment where student interns continuously work under the guidance and support of master teachers and is discussed in further detail in the interpretations section of this chapter.

Implications for Future Research

This qualitative historical analysis provides opportunities for future research on laboratory school models throughout the United States. The conceptual framework of this research study included the work of Talcott Parsons’s (1960) and James D. Thompson’s (1967) three levels of hierarchical structure of an organization and John Childs’s (1972) theory of strategic choice. Also included in the conceptual framework is the work of Clark (1968) and Robledo (1978) on centrality and marginality. The implications for future research include the application of this conceptual framework to other laboratory schools throughout the United States to identify the tight or loose coupling of the school to the education department or larger university and how central or marginal the school is to the university’s mission. It would be worthwhile to apply this conceptual framework to the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, the UCLA Lab School, the Burris Laboratory School, or Southeastern Louisiana University Laboratory School. Various case studies of these laboratory schools could be conducted.

Another implication for future research is the impact that a laboratory school, particularly those like the Falk Laboratory School that place an emphasis on clinical and student teaching experiences, might have on meeting or contributing to the CAEP standards. Standard 2 indicated the provider ensures that effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice are central to preparation so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to demonstrate positive impact on all P-12 students’ learning and
Clinical and student teaching experiences are an integral component of the CAEP standards and a study of the clinical experiences of teacher candidates in a laboratory school may benefit the word of CAEP.

Summary of the Chapter

This final chapter provided the interpretation of findings for this research study. Included was evidence gathered from primary and secondary sources of archival data in conjunction with interviews where participants provided data on the present purposes and functions of the Falk Laboratory School. Additionally, this chapter provided a discussion on the implications for practice, theory, and research.
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Appendix A:

Falk School Charter Agreement

This agreement, made this 22nd day of July A.D., 1930, by and between Mr. Leon Falk, Jr., Marjorie Falk Levy, citizens of the City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the City of Chicago, Illinois, respectively, (hereinafter called the Donors), parties of the first part, and the University of Pittsburgh, a corporation of the City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, (hereinafter called the University), party of the second part.

WHEREAS, Mr. Leon Falk, Jr., and Mrs. Marjorie Falk Levy are interested in the promotion of progressive methods of teaching children of nursery, kindergarten and elementary school grades and, also, in affording the students of the University who expect to follow teaching as a vocation the opportunity to observe these methods of teaching in an elementary school controlled by the University, and

WHEREAS, the University of Pittsburgh wishes to establish and maintain a progressive experimental and demonstration elementary school as part of the activity as an educational institution,

NOW, in consideration of the covenants by each of the parties to be carried out and performed, as hereinafter set out, it is hereby mutually agreed as follows:

FIRST: Mr. Leon Falk, Jr., and Mrs. Marjorie Falk Levy agree to give the University the sum of $125,000 for the erection of an elementary school building and to contribute $10,000 each year to the maintenance of the proposed school until such times as they shall have capitalized this annual gift by a donation of $200,000 for the endowment of the school. These obligations shall be incumbent upon the heirs and legal successors of the donors until they have been fulfilled.

SECOND: The University agrees to erect a suitable building and to establish and maintain a progressive experimental and demonstration school devoted to the teaching of subject matter appropriate for the nursery, kindergarten and elementary grades.

THIRD: The University agrees that the school shall be designated and known as the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School, in memory of the donors’ mother, and the fact that it has been made possible by the gift of the donors shall be indicated by a suitable tablet placed in the building.

FOURTH: The University agrees to set aside for use of the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School and for its development a portion of a certain plot of land acquired from the Schehley Farms Company and described as follows: to wit:

(Here follows a description of the plot of ground)

Beginning at a point on the line of property of the University of Pittsburgh as established in City ordinance No. 296, located on the southeasterly curb line of University Drive (herein referred to as the upper section of the University Drive) two and five tenths (2.5) feet south forty-two degrees forty-nine minutes and sixteen seconds east (54° 49' 16" E) from a point on the center line of Allequippa Street as established in the "Plan of the Pittsburgh District" which point on the center line is two hundred nine and seventy-two hundredths (209.72) feet south forty-seven degrees, ten minutes and forty-four seconds west (87° 08' 44" W) of the City monument on this center line of Allequippa Street; and from the aforesaid point on the curb line of the aforesaid upper section of University Drive thence three hundred twenty-three and twelve hundredths (323.12) feet south forty-two degrees, forty-nine minutes and sixteen seconds east (54° 49' 16" E) to a point on the northwesterly curb of another section of the University Drive (herein referred to as the lower section of University Drive); thence along the northwesterly curb of the aforesaid lower section of University Drive one hundred eighty-eight and fifty-one hundredths (188.51) feet south three degrees, forty-five minutes and forty-four seconds west (5° 45' 44" W) thence continuing along the aforesaid curb eighty-six and ten hundredths (86.10) feet south twenty-five degrees, five minutes and forty-five seconds west (5° 26' 54" W) to another point on the northwesterly curb of the aforesaid lower section of University Drive; thence two hundred sixty-seven and three hundredths (267.53) feet north seventy degrees, thirty-six minutes and fifty-six seconds west (N 70° 36' 56" W) to a point on the southeast corner of the aforesaid upper section of University Drive; thence in a southeasterly direction along the southeast corner of the aforesaid upper section of University Drive to the point of beginning and which enclosure comprises approximately two and fourteen hundredths (2.14) acres.

FIFTH: The University shall try to make arrangements with the Board of Directors of the Community School of the City of Pittsburgh that said school may be absorbed by the proposed Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School in accord with an agreement which shall provide:

(a) that three members of the present Board of Directors of the Community School and chosen by the Board shall be elected members of the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School Board as hereinafter provided for under Article IX.

(b) that as many as practicable of the members of the present teaching staff of the Community School shall be appointed as members of the teaching staff of the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School, subject to the University’s usual rules and regulations affecting appointments to its faculty.

(c) that the Community School agrees to assign and convey to the University all rights and privileges of their charter; also all assets such as it may possess as of property, including all cash, equipment, and supplies; also, all records of accounts which shall show that the University is assuming no obligations in the way of indebtedness incurred by reason of the past operation of the Community School.

SIXTH: The donors and the University will co-operate to the end that the general design and plans of the building shall be mutually satisfactory and shall cost not more than $125,000.

SEVENTH: Upon the acceptance of a design by the donors and the University, the construction of the proposed building
shall be in charge of a building committee consisting of the donors, or proxies designated by them, and three members of the Board of Trustees, including the Chancellor of the University. The Committee shall have full authority to decide all questions of details on the construction of the building and the letting of contracts subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees of the University, provided such decisions do not involve additional obligations to the donors nor change the basic features of the accepted design of the building. The University shall pursue construction operations as rapidly as is consistent with economical construction procedures.

EIGHTH: The Title to said building, as well as to the land on which it is erected, shall be and remain in the University, and the University shall have sole control of said building and shall maintain same, supply heat, light, and janitor service therefore and keep same in repair. The University will keep said building insured in a reasonable amount against loss by fire, and in the event of any loss by fire or other elements will consider itself bound to take such action as shall be fair and reasonable with respect to the repair or replacement of the building to the extent of the application of the amount received from the insurance and the then resources of the University available for the purpose.

NINTH: The University agrees to organize and conduct the proposed school as a progressive experimental elementary school and to maintain the school as a demonstration and experimental school only.

is hereby amended to read as follows:

NINTH: The University agrees to organize and conduct the proposed school as a progressive experimental elementary school and to maintain the school as a demonstration and experimental and practice teaching school.

To this end, a board of eleven members, to be known as the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School Board, shall be established, which board shall have the power of approval of the general purposes and activities of this school, subject to the final decision of the Board of Trustees of the University of Pittsburgh. It is understood that the membership of the proposed school board shall consist of the Chancellor of the University, who shall be Chairman, the Dean of the School of Education, who shall be vice-chairman, Mr. Leon Falk, Jr., or a proxy designated by him, Mrs. Marjorie Falk Levy, or a proxy designated by her, the head of the department of Elementary Education at the University, and one additional member of that department to be chosen by the Dean of the School of Education, the Principal of the Falk School hereafter provided for under Article X, one member of the Board of Trustees of the University, and at the beginning of its functioning three members of the present Board of Directors of the Community School.

It is understood further that Mr. Leon Falk, Jr., and Mrs. Marjorie Falk Levy shall be life members of the Board, with the right in their lifetime or in the event of any of their deaths, as the case may be, to designate his or her successor, and each successor in turn shall have a like right and the privilege of designating his or her successor, preferably, however, from descendants of the Falk family; the purpose and intent of this provision being to perpetuate the interest of the Falk family in the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School and its future operation. In the event that the said donors or the proposed Board during their lifetime, or in their last Wills and Testaments, do not appoint and designate their respective successors on the said Board in accordance with this agreement, then the heirs at law of the donors, together with the surviving representative of the Falk family on the Board shall have power and authority to appoint and designate the successor of said decedent on the School Board.

It is understood, also, that the three members chosen by the present Board of Directors of the Community School, one shall be designated by the Board to serve one year, a second for two years, and a third for three years, with the provision that at the expiration of their respective terms the vacancies thus created on the board shall be filled by vote of the Parents Association which it is expected will be formed soon after the proposed Falk School is in operation. In order that at least two of the members elected by the Parents Association shall carry over from one year to the next, the members of the Parents Association shall be elected for three-year terms.

Except for the aforementioned five positions on the Falk School Board whose term of service and selection is herein provided for, the term of office and succession of all members of the Board shall be controlled by the Board of Trustees of the University.

TENTH: It is agreed that the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School Board shall administer its function through a Principal who shall be known as the Principal of the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School; it being understood that the said Principal and the teaching staff of the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School shall be nominated by the Dean of the School of Education to the proposed school board and on its approval and the approval of the Chancellor shall be recommended by the Chancellor to the Board of Trustees of the University for appointment.

is hereby amended to read as follows:

ELEVENTH: It is agreed that the proposed school shall be conducted as an integral part of the University and that the administration of details of the operation of the school shall be through the regular administrative channels of the University, and in no case shall any person be permitted to teach in this school who is not a regularly appointed member of the faculty of the School of Education.

ELEVENTH: It is agreed that the proposed school shall be conducted as an integral part of the University and that the administration of details of the operation of the school shall be through the regular administrative channels of the University, and that all faculty members in the School of Education shall be accorded faculty recognition by the School of Education in such rank as the School of Education designates.

TWELFTH: In order that a representative student body may be formed for the proposed school, the University agrees to grant to selected students partial tuition assistance to a total valuation of forty full tuitions. It is understood that the applications for these scholarships shall be submitted by the Principal for approval by the Fanny Edel Falk Eleme-
Amendatory Agreement

It is hereby agreed by and between LEON FALK, JR. AND MARJORIE LEVY FALK (formerly known as Marjorie Falk Levy), as parties of the first part, and the UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH, a corporation, as party of the second part, that the establishment of the Fanny Edel Falk Elementary School at the University of Pittsburgh, shall be amended in the following respects:

1. The first sentence of paragraph Ninth of the said agreement dated July 22, 1930, which now reads as follows:

    NINTH: The University agrees to organize and conduct the proposed school as a progressive experimental elementary school and to maintain the school as a demonstration and experimental school only.

is hereby amended to read as follows:

    NINTH: The University agrees to organize and conduct the proposed school as a progressive experimental elementary school and to maintain the school as a demonstration, experimental and practice teaching school.

2. Paragraph Eleventh of the said agreement dated July 22, 1930, which now reads as follows:

    ELEVENTH: It is agreed that the proposed school shall be conducted as an integral part of the University and that the administration of details of the operation of the school shall be through the regular administrative channels of the University; and in no case shall any person be permitted to teach in this school who is not a regularly appointed member of the faculty of the School of Education.

is hereby amended to read as follows:

    ELEVENTH: It is agreed that the proposed school shall be conducted as an integral part of the University and that the administration of details of the operation of the school shall be through the regular administrative channels of the University; and that all staff teachers in the school shall be accorded faculty recognition by the School of Education in such rank as the School of Education designates.

Each of the parties intends to be legally bound hereby.

Dated February 7, 1946.

(s) Lucille Ranney  (s) Leon Falk, Jr. (seal)
(as to Leon Falk, Jr.)
Witness
(s) Katherine Horne  (s) Marjorie Levy Falk (seal)
(as to Marjorie Levy Falk)
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
(s) George H. Clapp
President, Board of Trustees
Attest: (s) John Weber
Secretary
### Appendix B:

**Normal Schools in the United States Prior to 1860**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Legal Establishment</th>
<th>Date Opened</th>
<th>Place Located</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>July 3, 1839</td>
<td>Lexington, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved</td>
<td>September 1844</td>
<td>West Newton, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved</td>
<td>December 15, 1853</td>
<td>Framingham, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>September 4, 1839</td>
<td>Barre, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved</td>
<td>September 4, 1844</td>
<td>Westfield, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>September 9, 1840</td>
<td>Bridgewater, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>December 18, 1844</td>
<td>Albany, New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>May 15, 1850</td>
<td>New Britain, Connecticut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>March 29, 1853</td>
<td>Ypsilanti, Michigan</td>
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<td>1853</td>
<td>September 13, 1854</td>
<td>Salem, Massachusetts</td>
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<td>1854</td>
<td>May 29, 1854</td>
<td>Providence, Rhode Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>October 1, 1855</td>
<td>Trenton, New Jersey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>October 5, 1857</td>
<td>North Bloomington, Illinois (later at Normal, Illinois)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1857  
December 1859  
Millersville, Pennsylvania

1858  
September 3, 1860  
Winona, Minnesota

Appendix C:

Letter of Support from the Falk Laboratory School

December 17, 2020

Dear Mr. Meyer-Kukan,

I am writing to express Falk Laboratory School’s support for your doctoral research project (which you are undertaking at Eastern Michigan University) entitled “An Historical Analysis of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School at the University of Pittsburgh.” You have proposed contacting current Falk administrators/faculty members and School Board members to serve as interviewees for your study, which I grant you permission to do. You will also have full access to any historical materials and resources we have available in Falk’s archival collections, assuming we can facilitate this for you in light of the pandemic and ongoing mitigation practices currently being implemented in our building, which limit access to the facility by visitors. These permissions are pending, of course, a successfully vetted and filed IRB for the project, one that references the participation of current Falk School faculty, administrators, and School Board members in your data collection process. It also should acknowledge that participation in your study for any current members of the Falk community is entirely voluntary, and that you will provide them with forms in which they can express their interest in opting in or opting out.

As you know, Falk’s status as the laboratory school for the University of Pittsburgh makes it a willing and an effective partner for research. As such, we will support your project to the fullest of our capabilities. Moreover, I would personally welcome the opportunity to collaborate in discussing the aims and results of your research in any way that you see fit or that would be helpful to you.

In summary, Falk School is pleased to be part of this proposal and we will commit the time and resources necessary to be a contributing partner. Do let me know if there is anything else I can do to assist your efforts.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Jeff Suzik, Ph.D.
Director
Appendix D:

Participant Recruitment Letter

My name is Scott Meyer-Kukan and I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Leadership and Counseling at Eastern Michigan University. I am conducting a research project called An Historical Analysis of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School at the University of Pittsburgh for my Ph.D. degree under the supervision of Dr. David Anderson. The purpose of the study is to explore the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model.

I am contacting you to invite you to participate in an online interview in which you will be asked to answer 10 open-ended questions, with the possibility of additional follow-up questions. Participation will require 1-2 hours of your time and will be held online via Zoom or Google Meet.

I would like to record the interview for this study. If you are recorded, it will be possible to identify you through your image and voice. If you do not agree to be recorded, you may not be eligible to participate in this study. I will protect your confidentiality by not collecting personally identifiable information.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact me to arrange a meeting time. Participation in this research is voluntary. You do not have to participate, and if you decide to participate, you can stop at any time.

There are no expected physical or psychological risks to participation. The primary risk of participation in this study is a potential loss of confidentiality.

If you have any questions about me or my project, please contact me by email at smeyerku@emich.edu, or by phone at (732) 519-1533. For information about your rights as a participant in research, you can contact the EMU Human Subjects Review Committee at human.subjects@emich.edu or 734-487-3090.

Thank-you in advance for considering my request.

Best,

Scott Meyer-Kukan
Appendix E:

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Project Title: An Historical Analysis of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School at the University of Pittsburgh
Principal Investigator: Scott Meyer-Kukan, Eastern Michigan University
Faculty Advisor: Dr. David Anderson, Ed.D., Eastern Michigan University

Invitation to participate in research

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must have been or are currently a director or school board member of the Falk Laboratory School, age 18 or older. Participation in research is voluntary. Please ask any questions you have about participation in this study.

Important information about this study

- The purpose of the study is to explore the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School model.
- Participation in this study involves participating in a 1-2 hour structured interview.
- Risks of this study include potential loss of confidentiality.
- The investigator will protect your confidentiality by not collecting personally identifiable information.
- Participation in this research is voluntary. You do not have to participate, and if you decide to participate, you can stop at any time.

What will happen if I participate in this study?

Participation in this study involves

- A one- to two-hour structured interview via electronic conferencing (i.e., Zoom, Google Meet).
- Answering 10 open-ended questions, with the possibility of additional follow-up questions.

We would like to record the interview for this study. If you are recorded, it will be possible to identify you through your image and voice. If you do not agree to be recorded, you may not be eligible to participate in this study.

What are the expected risks for participation?

There are no expected physical or psychological risks to participation.

The primary risk of participation in this study is a potential loss of confidentiality.
Are there any benefits to participating?

You will not directly benefit from participating in this research.

Benefits to society include understanding the factors that led to the continuation of the Falk Laboratory School through the 1960s and 1970s.

How will my information be kept confidential?

We will keep your information confidential by not collecting any identifiable information. Your information will be stored in a password-protected computer file and locked filing cabinet.

We plan to publish the results of this study. We will not publish any information that can identify you.

We will make every effort to keep your information confidential, however, we cannot guarantee confidentiality. Other groups may have access to your research information for quality control or safety purposes. These groups include the University Human Subjects Review Committee, the Office of Research Development, the sponsor of the research, or federal and state agencies that oversee the review of research, including the Office for Human Research Protections and the Food and Drug Administration. The University Human Subjects Review Committee reviews research for the safety and protection of people who participate in research studies.

Storing study information for future use

We will not store your information to study in the future. During the study, your information will be labeled with a code and not your name. Your information will be stored in a password-protected computer file or locked file cabinet and will not be after the conclusion of the study.

We will not share your information with other researchers without asking for your permission and the shared information will never contain information that could identify you. We will send your de-identified information by email and only upon request.

What are the alternatives to participation?

The alternative is not to participate.

Are there any costs to participation?

Participation will not cost you anything.
Will I be paid for participation?

You will not be paid to participate in this research study.

Study contact information

If you have any questions about the research, you can contact the Principal Investigator, Scott Meyer-Kukan, at smeyerku@emich.edu or by phone at 734-519-1533. You can also contact Scott Meyer-Kukan's adviser, Dr. David Anderson, Ed.D., at danderson@emich.edu or by phone at 734-487-0255.

For questions about your rights as a research subject, contact the Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee at human.subjects@emich.edu or by phone at 734-487-3090.

Voluntary participation

Participation in this research study is your choice. You may refuse to participate at any time, even after signing this form, without repercussion. You may choose to leave the study at any time without repercussion. If you leave the study, the information you provided will be kept confidential. You may request, in writing, that your identifiable information be destroyed. However, we cannot destroy any information that has already been published.

Statement of Consent

I have read this form. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and am satisfied with the answers I received. I give my consent to participate in this research study.

Signatures

________________________________________
Name of Subject

________________________________________  ______________
Signature of Subject                      Date

I have explained the research to the subject and answered all their questions. I will give a copy of the signed consent form to the subject.

________________________________________
Name of Person Obtaining Consent

________________________________________  ______________
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent      Date
Appendix F:

Interview Protocol I

The following interview questions will be asked of former Falk School board members and school leaders:

1. Please talk a bit about your experiences as a former board member or school leader at the Falk School, including your role and years of service. Can you highlight one specific significant event that you participated in with the Falk School?

2. What were the purposes and functions of the Falk Laboratory School during the years you were involved? Can you give specific examples?

3. Based upon these purposes and functions you have identified, which do you feel were most prevalent in the Falk School during the years you were involved? Can you give specific examples?

4. The mission of the Falk School is specified in the charter agreement between the Falk family and the University of Pittsburgh to be a “progressive, experimental, and demonstration elementary school.” How well did the Falk School carry out this mission during the years you were involved? Can you give specific examples?

5. According to the Falk School website, the school is the laboratory school of the School of Education and is a site for five types of activities that include (a) education, (b) research, (c) clinical teaching experiences, (d) curriculum development and experimentation, and (e) professional development and dissemination. How were these five types of activities prevalent in the Falk School during the years you were
involved? Can you give specific examples?

6. Describe the relationship between the School of Education and the Falk School during the years you were involved. Can you give specific examples?

7. Describe the relationship between the University of Pittsburgh and the Falk School during the years you were involved. Can you give specific examples?

8. What do you consider to be the greatest accomplishment of the Falk School during the years you were involved? Can you give specific examples?

9. Laboratory schools throughout the United States began to close in the 1960s and 1970s. Why do you think the Falk School has been in continuous operation? Can you give specific examples?

10. Please share any additional information or comments that you feel may be beneficial to know about the Falk School.
Appendix G:

Interview Protocol II

The following interview questions will be asked of current Falk School board members and school leaders:

1. Please talk a bit about your experiences as a current board member or school leader at the Falk School, including your role and year you became affiliated with the school. Can you highlight one specific significant event that you participated in with the Falk School?

2. What have been the purposes and functions of the Falk Laboratory School? Can you give specific examples?

3. Based upon these purposes and functions you have identified, which do you feel have been most prevalent in the Falk School? Can you give specific examples?

4. The mission of the Falk School is specified in the charter agreement between the Falk family and the University of Pittsburgh to be a “progressive, experimental, and demonstration elementary school.” How well has the Falk School carried out this mission? Can you give specific examples?

5. According to the Falk School website, the school is the laboratory school of the School of Education and is a site for five types of activities that include (a) education, (b) research, (c) clinical teaching experiences, (d) curriculum development and experimentation, and (e) professional development and dissemination. How have these five types of activities been prevalent in the Falk School? Can you give specific
6. Describe the relationship between the School of Education and the Falk School. Can you give specific examples?

7. Describe the relationship between the University of Pittsburgh and the Falk School. Can you give specific examples?

8. What do you consider to be the greatest accomplishment of the Falk School during the years you have been involved? Can you give specific examples?

9. Laboratory schools throughout the United States began to close in the 1960s and 1970s. Why do you think the Falk School has been in continuous operation? Can you give specific examples?

10. Please share any additional information or comments that you feel may be beneficial to know about the Falk School
Appendix H:

Principals and Directors of the Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martin P. Chworowsky</td>
<td>1931-1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyril W. Woolcock</td>
<td>1940-1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther B. Starks</td>
<td>1942-1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuart R. Ikeler</td>
<td>1947-November 1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James C. Craig (interim)</td>
<td>November 1952-1953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James F. Gray</td>
<td>1953-1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Allen Figurel</td>
<td>1957-1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry W. Sartain</td>
<td>1960-1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy Creek</td>
<td>1972-1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill McDonald</td>
<td>1994-2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Wittig (interim)</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendell McConnaha</td>
<td>2005-2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Suzik</td>
<td>2014-2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. From 1931-1957 the school leader had the title of “Principal.” The school leader of the Falk Laboratory School now has the title of “Director,” and this title change occurred during the tenure of J. Allen Figurel.