Entrepreneurial orientation and its effects in a Jewish day school: A case study of a Jewish high school

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Andrea Rose Cheatham Kasper

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Dr. Hattie Hammonds
Northeastern University

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Abstract

The purpose of this dissertation research was to use case study methodology to explore the nature of entrepreneurial orientation in a Jewish independent school, by interviewing the faculty, administrators and lay leaders about their experiences and perceptions as well as institutional norms, policies and procedures as evidenced in both internal and external documents. To address this, a multi-dimensional construct of entrepreneurial orientation was used: innovativeness, risk taking, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, and autonomy. The case selected was a Jewish high school whose Head of School self-reported entrepreneurial structures in the school. Data in the forms of in-depth, semi-structured interviews, and documents were collected over a two-day site-visit. Ten school employees and two lay leaders participated in this study representing a range of demographics such as different role types, gender, and tenure at the school. Innovativeness, Risk Taking, Proactiveness, Competitive Aggressiveness, Autonomy emerged from the data collection indicating that a significant level of entrepreneurial orientation exists in the school across all constituencies. Implications for educators and funders are discussed.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Orientation, EO, risk taking, innovation, competition, autonomy, competition, education, k-12 education, independent schools, non-profit, social entrepreneurialism

Dedication
I dedicate this dissertation to Zelia Fidanque, my grandmother, who sometimes likes to remind me that I can’t have it all and do everything. She spurs me on as I get to say back – Yes I can!

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There are many people who have supported me on this journey for whom I have the deepest gratitude. This has been a long ride with many ups and downs and I certainly did not do this alone.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

School structures, known as the grammar of schooling, have continued unchanged for decades (Tyack & Cuban, 1995) and are taken for granted as “real school”. Although in the last decade an emphasis on school choice and the charter school movement has increased the hopes
of many to support and encourage innovation, there is little evidence to support this notion (Lubienski, 2003). While scholarship in the field of neo-institutionalism provides insight into legitimacy seeking, as explained by isomorphism, as a potential reason for lack of school innovation (DiMaggio, 1983), there is little understanding of entrepreneurial orientation in non-profit settings in general (Morris, Webb, & Franklin, 2011) and in educational settings in particular. The literature on entrepreneurial education in primary and secondary schools has focused on charter schools, which are not constrained by free market conditions, possibly accounting for a divergence in innovative expectations and reality (Lubienski, 2009). Independent schools have not been studied and provide an example of schooling dealing with the competitive market structures of pricing. There is a call from within Jewish educational organizations such as Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA) and philanthropies for entrepreneurial vision and innovation. While the shift within the Jewish community reflects the call for free market choice in schooling (charter schools, magnet schools, for-profit schools) in the United States with the goal of infusing education with entrepreneurial vision, there is no scholarship on entrepreneurial vision within Jewish education.

**Problem of Practice**

The purpose of my dissertation research is to develop a case study to explore the entrepreneurial climate and the experiences of individuals in a Jewish independent school and the effect of an educational entrepreneur on the institution. The results will be viewed through the multi-dimensional construct of entrepreneurial orientation as perceived by G.T. Lumpkin and Gregory Dess (1996) and reconstructed by Morris et al. (2011) in combination with neo-institutional theory (DiMaggio, 1983; Haveman, 1993).

Whereas the construct of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) has been extensively applied to business firms there are few studies using EO to increase understanding of educational
institutions (Miller, 2011). Neo-institutional theory has been explored within educational settings, most specifically within universities (Kraatz, 1996; Stensaker & Norgård, 2001) and charter schools (Huerta, 2009; Lubienski, 2003), however, no studies have looked at independent schools in particular. An application of EO and neo-institutional theory to Jewish educational entrepreneurs requires both a reconceptualization of EO for non-profit organizations (Morris et al., 2011) and an understanding of religious institutions through an economic lens as competitive organizations (Finke & Stark, 1988). By coupling EO with neo-institutional theory (Miller, 2011; Mohrman, 2012) this study will provide robust insight into entrepreneurial vision and educators within Jewish education.

**Entrepreneurial Orientation**

There remain several unresolved issues around EO and several gaps in both research methodology and the scales currently used to measure the construct (Covin & Lumpkin, 2011; Lyon, 2000; Miller, 2011). The great majority of EO research has used quantitative methodology, employing surveys to capture either the uni-dimensional (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Miller, 1983) or the multi-dimensional construct of EO (Lumpkin, 1996). Miller (2011) also points out that very few in-depth, qualitative studies of EO have been conducted. Lyon, Lumpkin and Dess (2000) provide an in-depth overview of three approaches to operationalizing EO of firms: managerial perceptions, firm behavior, resource allocations. Lyon (2000) discusses extensively the advantages and disadvantages of each approach, suggesting that through triangulating the data the clearest and most reliable assessment of EO can be captured. The review of the literature reveals a need for both qualitative studies, as well as, further application of EO to social entrepreneurs. To this end, applying EO qualitative research to the leadership behavior and the overall climate in an independent Jewish day school will address several gaps in the current scholarship.
Neo-institutional Theory

The field of neo-institutional theory has been largely theoretical in nature. Hannan M. & Freeman, J. (1977) published their theory of population ecology, the genesis of institutional and neo-institutional theory. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) published their seminal work describing their theories on isomorphism. Since the development of these theories several researchers (Baum & Oliver, 1996; Haveman, 1993; Oliver, 1988) have worked to empirically test isomorphic theory with mixed results. These mixed results often point to the longitudinal nature of the findings (Oliver, 1988), again with little clarity provided after a review of the literature. However, when isomorphism became a topic of study within educational settings, more empirical support was collected (Huerta, 2009; Lubienski, 2003; Stensaker & Norgård, 2001). The difference in these findings calls attention to the difference in isomorphic tendencies in different industries. As such, neo-institutional theory, specifically isomorphism will ground the current study of independent Jewish day schools.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this dissertation research is to use case study methodology to explore the entrepreneurial experiences of an educational entrepreneur in a Jewish independent school, the experience of others in the leadership team as well as teachers and finally the effect the entrepreneurial leader has had on institutional norms, policies and procedures. The goal, through document analysis and interviews, is to gain deeper insight into how entrepreneurial orientation is manifested in a school led by an entrepreneurial educator.

The results of the study will be viewed through the multi-dimensional construct of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) as perceived by G.T. Lumpkin and Gregory Dess (1996) and reconstructed by Morris et al. (2011) in combination with neo-institutional theory (DiMaggio, 1983; Haveman, 1993).
This will be a descriptive case study. The site of investigation is an independent Halachik Jewish high school in a suburb of a Midwest city. The interview subjects will represent various constituencies of the school including the Head of School, his leadership team, the President of the Board, and a sample of the faculty. Subjects will be chosen using purposeful sampling with the following criteria: Leadership of the school who can speak to the culture and vision of the school and faculty of different tenure rates. Each interviewee will be a person who has a sense of the overall mission and vision of the school and also lives it every day

**Research Question**

*How is entrepreneurial orientation lived and perceived at a Halachik Jewish high school?*

**Significance of the Study**

There is an increased interest in the Jewish educational and philanthropic world in entrepreneurial vision and educational innovation as evidenced by new schools such as the The Idea School, Online Jewish Academy, The Shefa School, Luria Academy, and philanthropic institutions such as Kohelet Foundation, JEIC, Joshua Venture, Natan, and ROI. However, a dearth of scholarship exists measuring or exploring entrepreneurial concepts within Jewish educational institutions leaving a serious gap in knowledge connecting the desire for entrepreneurial behaviors and outcomes to their actual practice. Historically, Jewish education, in the United States, has aligned itself with traditional models of American schooling (Krasner, 2011), and as a result has undergone little innovation. Frustrated by the challenging goal of engaging more American Jews in Jewish education, leaders in the Jewish community are recognizing the need for entrepreneurial vision and diversification within the market (Lehmann, 2012; Woocher, 2011).
Entrepreneurial scholarship focusing on education has increased, with much of the focus remaining on charter schools (Ellison, 2009; Huerta, 2009; Lubienski, 2003, 2009) and colleges (Almeida, 2008; Kraatz, 1996; Stensaker & Norgård, 2001). However, the construct of entrepreneurial orientation has not been investigated in a primary and secondary school setting and neo-institutional theory has not been explored in independent schools. Both Lubienski (2003; 2009) and Huerta (2009) are careful to understand the existing constraints on decentralization in American charter schools and therefore decentralization’s relationship to innovation. However, this is not the case for independent schools, suggesting an increased likelihood in innovation for these schools. Thoughtful application of the multi-dimensional EO (Lumpkin, Dess, 1996) construct and isomorphic theory to Jewish independent schools will provide insight into the entrepreneurial behaviors in the independent school market. As countries continue to explore the implications of school choice, and voucher systems as a means to provide the best education possible to their citizens, it is essential to gain a deeper understanding of how innovation and entrepreneurial vision actually unfold within various educational settings (Lubienski, 2009). Furthermore, today’s educational marketplace is increasingly global with countries focused on cross-national comparisons of successful school systems. Organizations such as the OECD measure and publish prolifically on international education (http://www.oecd.org/education/). As such, it is essential that independent schools are studied to provide missing data in the field of entrepreneurial education.

**Theoretical Framework**

**Entrepreneurial Orientation**

Entrepreneurial orientation, as originally described by Miller (1983), introduced a uni-dimensional construct made up of three aspects: risk taking, proactiveness and innovation. This construct was further developed to contain competitive aggressiveness and autonomy and was
presented as a multi-dimensional construct with each aspect presenting itself independently of the others (Lumpkin, 1996). While EO has been studied extensively there are several serious gaps in the literature both in methodology and institutional settings. The majority of the research has been quantitative in nature (Covin & Lumpkin, 2011; Miller, 2011); furthermore, it has not been applied broadly to non-profit organizations (Miller, 2011) or to educational settings at all. Conducting a case study exploring EO of one self-identified educational entrepreneur within Jewish education, as well as the effect the entrepreneur has had on the institution will not only provide valuable insight but address several gaps in the scholarship.

**Neo-institutional Theory: Isomorphism**

Institutional theory relates to organizational ecology in that it explores how social structures can be applied to organizational behavior. In the case of entrepreneurial leadership, institutionalism and neo-institutionalism focus on the specific environmental pressures that lead organizations to emerge. Concepts such as isomorphism (DiMaggio, 1983), the tendency for organizations to mimic each other rather than develop diversity within the market, are a focus in this field (Baum & Oliver, 1996; D'Aunno, Succi, & Alexander, 2000; Haveman, 1993; Oliver, 1988; Stensaker & Norgård, 2001). While this theoretical field has emerged in educational scholarship (Huerta, 2009; Lubienski, 2003; Stensaker & Norgård, 2001) and notes legitimizing pressures among schools with the goals of innovation, there is a paucity of educational scholarship that examines neo-institutional theory in the independent school market. Though exploring isomorphic tendencies within the independent school market will fill a gap in the literature, combining neo-institutional theory with the construct of entrepreneurial orientation will offer a stronger contribution to both educational and entrepreneurial scholarship.
Positionality Statement

When this research was conducted, the researcher was a new Head of School at an independent Jewish day school serving students from two years of age through eighth grade. In this position, the researcher was hired with the charge of transforming the school, growing enrollment, professionalizing the school community and bringing a critical lens to the program. Before taking this position, the researcher dreamed about developing a new type of Jewish high school, grounded in the integration of physical and intellectual work (Dewey, 1915; Salomon, 1898). This past work and the current position have led the researcher to question both the history of innovation in Jewish education and the current interest in entrepreneurial vision.

Over the course of this research study, the researcher became a more experienced Head of School. During this time and experience there are several ideas gained from the site visit that the researcher thought about and implemented in various ways in her own school. Specifically, in the area of HR as well as in supporting innovative and self motivated work by both the faculty and the students. Additionally, the position of the researcher increases her empathy for the daily running of a school and the space in which implementation may fall short of the vision and intention.

Limitations/Assumptions

The researcher comes to this work with several assumptions: A) Entrepreneurial Orientation exists on some level within schools; B) Entrepreneurial Orientation is a construct that positively impacts a school and its leadership; C) entrepreneurial vision in schools can be applied in a variety of ways: academic, structural, and financial; D) that the current Jewish day school system, lacks vision and innovation and thereby underserves the Jewish community; and E) that
both innovation and entrepreneurial educators can create diverse schooling structures that will better serve the population.

The limitations of this study are highly structural. As a time bound study the researcher spent two days on the research site interviewing subjects, collecting documents and observing the school in public spaces. As this study involved only one case there is no comparative data or analysis available, and limits the ability of the researcher to make any claims aside from this particular school. During the data collection process the researcher was not able to access all the documents and meetings as anticipated. At the outset, the researcher was planning on observing meetings between faculty, administration and even parents. During the time while on site it became clear that this was not going to happen and that the opportunities would not present themselves. The loss of the ability to observe interactions limits the researcher’s knowledge about the life in the school and how EO may manifest itself. This limited the researcher’s ability to gain an even more accurate picture of the organization and interpersonal interactions. Instead the researcher is left with subject self-reporting and documents to assess the nature of EO in the school.

Conclusion

Current reflections on entrepreneurial orientation research call for combining EO with other theories (D. Miller, 2011; Mohrman, 2012), as such this study will work to combine neo-institutional theory with the construct of EO to gain a deeper understanding of entrepreneurial development in Jewish education. Isomorphism provides a theory that explains the development of Jewish education as uncovered by historian Jonathan Krasner (2011), however literature is lacking concerning how an individual makes decisions and meaning that may or may not reflect isomorphic tendencies. Exploring the construct of EO in the context of Jewish education provides a much needed understanding of current Jewish entrepreneurial educators and their
initiatives. Furthermore, the coupling of EO with neo-institutional theory will offer a lens by which to advance the understanding of EO within this context to question how isomorphism continues to play a role for these innovators. As there is a dearth of EO or neo-institutional research within Jewish education, a case study with document reviews and interviews with key informants shedding light on the transformation of a school through entrepreneurial habits will likely provide new insight to the multi-dimensionality of EO and isomorphic behavior on the institutional level.

Definition of Key Terms:

EO: Abbreviation for Entrepreneurial Orientation

Isomorphism: A theory that states that new institutions copy existing models in an effort to seek legitimacy

Jewish Day School: An independent school with a broad curriculum encompassing secular subjects as well as, but not limited to, Hebrew (modern and ancient), Torah (bible), Rabbinic teachings, Israeli history, Jewish history and culture, and prayer.
Halacha/Halachic: Halacha, is the “way” a Jew is directed to behave in every aspect of life, encompassing civil, criminal and religious law. A Halachic community or school follows traditional Jewish Law.

Tanakh: Old Testament

Standards and Benchmarks: a program of the Jewish Theological Seminary about teaching Tanakh

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature is organized to provide a thorough understanding of the theoretical frameworks underlying the study and a historical context for the current state of Jewish education in the United States. The first section of the literature review will introduce recurring themes in educational innovation by specifically exploring two variables linked to innovation: knowledge and educational markets. Although innovation in the for-profit world is extensively studied, the specific context of both non-profit organizations and specifically educational institutions uncovers a new set of variables affecting innovation and its sustainability. The second section will explore the development of Jewish education within the United States beginning in the turn of the 20th century and the role the public school model played in
legitimizing pressures for Jewish educational leaders at the time. This historical background will provide context for the current state of innovation within Jewish day schools as well as offer insight into the needs of the community to survive. Historical analysis of the development of Jewish education aligns with the neo-institutional theory of isomorphism, wherein new institutions copy existing models in an effort to seek legitimacy. The last two sections of the literature review will layout neo-institutional theory and the construct of entrepreneurial orientation, both necessary to understanding the research question and design of this study.

The following questions guide the literature review: 1. What are the variables that affect sustainable educational innovation? 2. What role has innovation played in the field of Jewish education and how did it happen? 3. What does neo-institutional theory, specifically models of isomorphism, offer to the understanding of innovation within Jewish education? 4. How does the construct of entrepreneurial education provide further insight into innovators, specifically educational innovators?

**Section 1: Understanding Educational Innovation**

**Knowledge and Innovation**

The literature on innovation and the variables that moderate innovation is extensive and its application to education is essential to the understanding of both the success and failure of various school reforms. The scholarship exploring the relationship between knowledge and innovation is particularly poignant when looking to understand the role of leadership and team building among entrepreneurial educators. Subramaniam & Youndt (2005) conducted a quantitative, three-year longitudinal study with the goal of refining and expanding understanding of the relationship of knowledge to innovation. They collected data through questionnaires and secondary sources on which they conducted confirmatory factor analysis on three aspects of intellectual capital and two aspects of innovation. The authors found strong support for their
premise that an organization’s intellectual capital and its interrelationships have a strong influence on innovative capabilities. While they recognize the complexity of the links between intellectual capital and innovative capabilities, their work provides background context for the relationship to organizational learning and creativity on innovation within schools (McCharen, 2011). Their work found that a supportive learning culture strongly impacts organizational knowledge creation. These data suggest that organizational knowledge creation, if understood as at least an aspect of organizational intellectual capital, would have a strong influence on educational innovation within a school setting.

Interestingly, McCharen, Song & Martens (2011) found that there was not strong support for the argument that job autonomy positively impacts knowledge creation or departmental creativity. As educators often work independently within their classrooms, this finding has serious implications for innovation goals within a school. This study also highlights the importance of the level of analysis when exploring a phenomenon. McCharen, Song & Martens’ (2011) work suggests that within a school setting, job autonomy does not affect innovation, while on the organizational level, several studies suggest that decentralization does impact innovation (Ellison, 2009; Lubienski, 2003; 2009). In comparing the US charter school system to the Finnish school system, Ellison (2009) found that in both cases decentralization and support for risk taking had a positive impact on educational innovation. In addition, while Lubienski (2003; 2009) is critical of the success of charter schools to promote sustainable innovation he does find evidence to support this claim. Both Lubienski (2003; 2009) and Huerta (2009) are careful to explain the existing constraints on decentralization and decentralization’s relationship to innovation. In Huerta’s (2009) case study of Amigos Charter School in northern California he uncovered two important limitations. The decentralization of schools as impetus for innovation is undermined by institutionalized rule-based demands. Furthermore, he found that the pressure
of seeking legitimacy within the public school system has led the charter school to adopt traditional rules and structures, displaying the theory of isomorphism within the educational landscape.

The research suggests that leadership, learning culture and organizational intellectual capital support innovation. However, Towndrow, Silver & Albright (2010), using Cohen and Ball’s framework for innovative design and evaluation, found that where instructional innovation is taking place it is rarely adopted on a larger scale and that often classroom innovations simply fade away. This research points to an added level of complexity within schools, where sustainable innovation may be more elusive than in other industries. Yet, they did find that scalability was enhanced by broader sponsorship, connecting to previous research on the importance of leadership. The suggestion that sponsorship plays a decisive role in the scalability of innovation holds important implications for independent schools dependent on philanthropic and private support.

**Educational Markets and Innovation**

Entrepreneurial scholarship focusing on education has increased, with much of the focus remaining on charter schools (Ellison, 2009; Huerta, 2009; Lubienski, 2003, 2009) and colleges (Almeida, 2008; Kraatz, 1996; Stensaker & Norgård, 2001). However, the construct of entrepreneurial orientation has not been investigated in a primary and secondary school setting. While in the last decade an emphasis on school choice and the charter school movement has increased the hopes of many to support and encourage innovation, there is little evidence to support this notion (Lubienski, 2003). The literature on entrepreneurial education in primary and secondary schools has focused on charter schools, which are not constrained by free market conditions, possibly accounting for a divergence in innovative expectations and reality (Lubienski, 2009). Although both Lubienski (2003; 2009) and Huerta (2009) are careful to
explore the existing constraints on decentralization and therefore decentralization’s relationship to innovation, this is not the case for independent schools, suggesting an increased likelihood in innovation for these schools. Independent schools have not been studied and provide an example of schooling dealing with the competitive market structures of pricing.

Educational innovation is a complex phenomenon. The interplay of environmental pressures, as reflected in the charter school movement, policy initiatives and the internal learning culture of the school, provide awareness of the specific issues a school faces and how schools and education differ from other markets. While traditional market pressures determined by price structure do not affect the charter school movement, and are potentially responsible for the lack of innovation seen across the movement - this does not answer similar questions for the independent school market. That said, there are several areas of research that need to be explored. For example, both public and private schools may fall prey to isomorphic pressures in seeking legitimacy as new schools emerge. Understanding the internal organizational conditions that either inhibit or encourage innovation also need to be examined further. Before specific theories of innovation are explored it is important to gain insight into the Jewish educational context.

**Section 2: Development of Jewish Education**

Jewish educators’ focus on both Americanization and Jewish preservation was so pronounced that Jewish schooling, as envisioned by Samson Benderly, founder of the Bureau of Jewish Education in 1910, purposefully aligned with reforms taking place in American public schools to legitimize the education and institutions providing it (Krasner, 2011; Stern, 2006). Researching the influence of progressive education on Jewish education, scholars argue that the main influence on Jewish education came from the administrative progressives (Kronish, 1982). Benderly and his protégé’s incorporated administrative progressives’ management style as they
were focusing on developing a system of Jewish education motivated by the need to preserve Judaism within an American context (Krasner, 2011; Kronish, 1982; Stern, 2006).

Progressive educators have repeatedly left their mark on Jewish education. Jewish educational scholars are both critical of the progressive influence on Jewish education (Kronish, 1982) and understanding of the limitations the Jewish educational context presented to progressive change (Krasner, 2011). Although Kronish (1982) argues that the main influence on Jewish education came from the administrative progressives, in the beginning of the 20th century several leading Jewish educators, Berkson, Dushkin and Gamoran, wrote their dissertations under pedagogic progressive, John Dewey, at Columbia Teachers’ College (Kronish, 1979). While Kronish (1979; 1982) is highly critical of Dewey’s actual influence on Jewish pedagogic methodology, Krasner (2011) argues effectively that both Dushkin and Berkson seriously implemented progressive pedagogy, such as the project and laboratory method, into their institutions. Although these measures failed by and large, there is indication that there is a renewed effort today.

For reasons concerning Jewish survival and administrative structures, Jewish educators of the time did not work toward the development of a Jewish pedagogy nor work to thoughtfully implement a pedagogic model into its schools. Today’s Jewish education has inherited the challenges that come from not having implemented a philosophical and pedagogical vision into the development of Jewish education. The lessons from the past can act as guideposts as contemporary Jewish educators and institutions take the opportunity to rework and reimagine Jewish education from a philosophical, pedagogical, financial and structural perspective in the new, yet repetitive educational climate.

While some contemporary day schools have incorporated various elements from progressive and child-centered education, by and large they have not attempted a radical re-
imagining of educational methodologies. In Planning for Jewish Education in the 21st Century (2011), Jonathan Woocher, Renee Rubin Ross and Meredith Woocher call for a radical rethinking of Jewish education; Daniel Lehmann, President of Hebrew College, recently published an article in which he seeks, “… centers of educational entrepreneurship and innovation that foster creativity. Too much of Jewish education looks alike. We need to move away from the generic and toward the generative” (Lehmann, 2012). Leaders in Jewish education are calling for innovation and new iterations of Jewish educational institutions that will address 21st century needs.

This call has been heeded in the last 5-8 years and several new Jewish day schools have opened (ex. The Shefa School, Luria Academy, The Idea School) and several philanthropic institutes are supporting and promoting innovative approaches to Jewish education. Additionally, Jewish day schools are responding with Innovation labs and MakerSpaces, STEM programs, alternative pedagogical approaches and new educational structures. While there is a wide range of innovations, they are primarily reflecting educational structures and ideas already present in the non-Jewish day school market.

The development of Jewish education in the United States grew out of a necessity to preserve a culture and a tradition. Constrained by the methods of schooling at the time, Jewish schools looking for legitimacy modeled themselves after the American public school. This decision has landed Jewish education in similar modern predicaments that public schooling has found itself, resulting in the current call for educational innovation and entrepreneurship. The following section will explore neo-institutional theory and isomorphism to provide fundamental understanding of the process of legitimacy seeking among businesses.

Section 3: Entrepreneurial Orientation
Danny Miller (1983) published an article credited with describing the uni-dimensional construct of entrepreneurial orientation and identifying its three dependent components: risk, proactiveness, and innovation. Since Miller’s (1983) article, the last 30 years has seen great growth and interest in EO (Lyon, 2000; Miller, 2011). EO is also known as entrepreneurial posture, intensity, style, proclivity and propensity (Covin & Wales, 2012). Adding to the current scholarship Covin and Slevin (1991) developed EO both through a change in analysis level from the individual to studying it as an organizational level phenomenon, as well as understanding EO as a set of behaviors rather than attributes. This second development is supported by other scholars as well (Covin & Lumpkin, 2011; Pearce, Fritz, & Davis, 2010). In an important step, Covin and Slevin (1991) operationalized Miller’s (1983) work and developed the most widely used measurement scale of uni-dimensional EO (Covin & Wales, 2012; Miller, 2011).

Furthermore, they argued that all firms can be plotted along a scale showing entrepreneurial posture (EO), and explained that EO, as a set of behaviors, can be managed. Lumpkin and Dess (1996) recast EO as a multi-dimensional construct and added to it competitive aggressiveness and autonomy. Scale development by Lumpkin and Dess (1997) and Lumpkin (1998) support both theoretically and empirically that the various dimensions of EO function independently. Until recently the disagreement between EO understood as an uni-dimensional or a multi-dimensional construct has divided the field. However, both Miller (2011) and Covin and Wales (2012) have since agreed that it is essential to understand the methodological and measurement implications of each construct, rather than continue the debate over which one is more reflective of reality.

Morris et al. (2011) approach EO for non-profit organizations using Miller (1983) and Covin and Slevin (1991) uni-dimensional construct of EO on three dimensions, innovativeness, risk taking and proactiveness. Criticizing past EO research, which has been applied to various
industries and contexts but not adapted to those contexts, Miller et al. (2011) suggests specifically adapting EO scales to the non-profit context. In their article they explain that non-profit organizations differ fundamentally than for-profit organizations in motivation, processes and outcomes, demanding that the three dimensions be recast appropriately for non-profits (Morris et al., 2011). Furthermore, they create a typology of non-profits based on levels of social and commercial entrepreneurship.

There remain several unresolved issues around EO and several gaps in both research methodology and the scales currently used to measure the construct (Covin & Lumpkin, 2011; Lyon, 2000; Miller, 2011). The great majority of EO research has used quantitative methodology, employing surveys to capture either the uni-dimensional construct of EO (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Miller, 1983) or the multi-dimensional construct of EO (Lumpkin, Dess, 1996). Miller (2011) also points out that very few in-depth, qualitative studies of EO have been conducted. Lyon, Lumpkin and Dess (2000) provide an in-depth overview of three approaches to operationalizing EO of firms: managerial perceptions, firm behavior, and resource allocations. The advantages of measuring managerial perceptions through questionnaires and surveys are the high level of validity it provides; the great disadvantage stems from weaknesses associated with self-reporting. Some other concerns with measuring perceptions are related to functional bias and the difficulty in identifying sources of variation in responses (Lyon, 2000). Measuring firm behavior has several advantages (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Lyon, 2000) primarily because it can be observed. However, Lyon et al. (2000) point out several methodological problems with this approach; separating tactical and strategic actions in a multi-industry sample requires in-depth knowledge of each individual industry, also linking firm actions in one year to performance assumes results in a given time frame. Finally, examining resource allocation has both advantages and disadvantages as well. Lyon et al. (2000) explain that archival measures have
high reliability because the information can often be obtained through several sources; however their weakness lies in issues of construct validity. Budgets often reflect overhead that is not directly attributed to R&D costs; management may alter policies from year to year for tax or operating reasons. As such, Lyon et al. (2000) suggest using a triangulation of methods for valid and reliable EO measurement. The review of the literature reveals a need for both qualitative studies, as well as, further application of EO to social entrepreneurs. To this end, applying EO qualitative research to the leadership behavior of independent Jewish day schools will address several gaps in the current scholarship.

Section 4: Neo-Institutional Theory

Some of the most seminal work in neo-institutional theory has been theoretical in nature. Hannan M. & Freeman, J. (1977) published their theory in “The Population Ecology of Organizations.” In 1983, DiMaggio & Powell laid out their theories on isomorphism in “The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields”. Each of these works is cited in several studies in an effort to test these theories. Oliver (1988) seeks to investigate the competing predictions of three perspectives, organizational ecology, isomorphism and strategic choice in a 12-year longitudinal study. She collected information on voluntary social service organizations in Toronto, through surveys, semi-structured interviews of CEOs and archival data. Using network analysis along with binary adjacency matrix and Ward’s minimum variance method to create clusters, she found more support for strategic choice (an organization’s ability to act and make decisions independently of environmental and social structure pressures) than for either isomorphism or population ecology. This is a significant finding in light of the many researchers investigating the concept of isomorphism.
On the other hand, Haveman (1993), in her ten-year longitudinal study of the savings and loan industry, found support for isomorphic tendencies among firms. To be more precise, she found that firms tend to imitate larger and more successful firms, rather than firms of similar size. Haveman’s (1993) findings call into question Oliver’s (1988) results. Oliver (1988) writes that one of the research limitations was time span and that her findings supporting strategic choice may be a matter of timing, however that no literature exists, suggesting isomorphism is only observable after a set length of time. While Oliver (1988) makes a compelling argument, Haveman’s (1993) research was conducted over a ten year period, two years shorter than Oliver’s (1988). Furthermore, Baum & Oliver’s (1996) work on institutional ecology and organizational founding, a 15-year longitudinal study, found support for ecological processes. Further research to understand the length of time it may take isomorphism to develop in various industries is necessary.

Kraatz and Zajac (1996) conducted a 15-year longitudinal study to test under what circumstances neo-institutional predications of organizational inertia, isomorphism and legitimacy imperative overshadow more traditional sociological theories such as adaptation, variation and global and technical demands. Studying 631 private liberal arts colleges, they found little support for neo-institutional predictions, echoing Oliver’s (1988) findings and addressing the time span issue in her work. Following this study it is interesting to note little continued interest in isomorphism until the shift to education occurs.

Stensaker & Norgård (2001) conducted a case study of the University of TromsØ to develop a better understanding of the relationship of innovation and isomorphism as it relates to organizational change and identity. Since institutions of higher education face tremendous pressures of legitimacy along with pressure to innovate, this is an important addition to the literature on the issues of isomorphism and innovation. Stensaker & Norgård (2001) triangulated
their data with other qualitative studies of the university in the same period and suggest that institutions of higher education deal with the tension between innovation and isomorphism through an ongoing struggle for organizational identity. By translating and re-interpreting institutional identity the institution maintains stability during organizational change. Over the 30 years covered by the study, the researchers found support for neo-institutionalism, as the university moved further in the direction of standardization. These longitudinal findings support Haveman’s (1993) work. Since institutional identity plays such a crucial role in the university’s ability to manage change, it is suggested that institutional identity could support processes that create entrepreneurial culture.

Transitioning to primary and secondary education, Lubienksi (2003), investigated whether the decentralization of school governance has led to more educational innovation and practice by studying the literature on charter school development. His found that, by and large, charter schools did not develop new educational practices and in fact borrowed from existing systems, suggesting support for isomorphic theory. Lubienski’s (2009) review of 20 OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) and non-OECD countries, supports similar findings. Quasi-markets do not necessarily lead to innovation due to external environmental constraints; such as, the consumer is not the traditional cost comparing consumer and that parental ideas of schooling limit educational innovation. The pressure applied by the external environment support Hannan and Freeman (1977). Oliver’s (1988) and Kraatz and Zajac’s (1996) findings, in light of Lubienski’s (2003; 2009) work, calls attention to the possible nature of these different industries. Most notably, Lubienski’s work focuses on quasi-markets where the traditional role of producer and consumer are mediated by public education. Further research regarding isomorphism and neo-institutional theory, as it applies to private primary and secondary schools, which are under traditional market pressures, is called for.
While isomorphism has been extensively explored with conflicting findings, the research within educational institutions more consistently supports isomorphic tendencies. Furthermore, isomorphic research has always looked at organizations and not at individual leaders or entrepreneurs. Additionally, market constraints play a moderating role in isomorphism and therefore the need for specific research within the independent school market is necessary. While looking at isomorphic tendencies is important, this study combines neo-institutional theory with entrepreneurial orientation in an effort to gain deeper awareness of the behaviors of Jewish educational entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

Grounded in the literature on Jewish education, educational innovation, entrepreneurial orientation and neo-institutionalism this research study will explore the nature of entrepreneurial orientation of an independent Jewish high school. While the literature on innovation and entrepreneurship is robust, the literature review makes it clear that setting innovation and entrepreneurship within an educational context uncovers new variables that must be considered. As this study is specifically exploring these concepts within a Jewish day school environment it is essential that the internal culture of the school and the external environmental pressures that exist for educational institutions are clear.

The development of Jewish education points to two important areas of interest. The first is that Jewish educational leaders modeled Jewish education and eventually Jewish day schools after the American public school system. In so doing, these educational leaders innovated in that they created the concept of Jewish schooling in the United States, but they failed to innovate educationally by copying already existing models. This pattern was first described by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) and termed isomorphism. Several empirical studies have since been published both confirming (Haveman, 1993) and refuting (Oliver, 1988) isomorphism within the business
world. Although the research in isomorphic tendency was applied to educational settings both in higher education as well as primary and secondary public school, there is no research yet exploring isomorphism within the independent school market.

The second point of interest is born from the current emphasis on educational innovation both in the general literature and within the Jewish community as evidenced in entrepreneurial initiatives and support from philanthropic institutions. However, there is a paucity of scholarship that either explores or measures any aspect of entrepreneurial behavior within a Jewish educational context, there is a clear need for some base-line understanding of the applicability of EO to this particular field. The dearth of EO scholarship within Jewish education provides an opportunity for researchers to address these issues both within the Jewish educational field as well as those within the greater field of entrepreneurial orientation research. As stated, while EO has been studied widely there is a dearth in qualitative research as well as research focusing on non-profit organizations and education in particular.

As a result, this qualitative case study will explore the nature of EO in a Jewish high school. This study will explore the multi-dimensional construct of EO as described by Lumpkin and Dess (1996) and ground the work in isomorphic theory as described by DiMaggio and Powell (1983).
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Overview of Methodology and Overall Plan

The purpose of this dissertation research was to use case study methodology to explore the nature of entrepreneurial orientation in a Jewish independent school, by interviewing the faculty, administrators and lay leaders about their experiences and perceptions, institutional norms, policies and procedures as evidenced in both internal and external documents, and through onsite observations. The results of the study will be viewed through the multi-dimensional construct of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) as perceived by G.T. Lumpkin and Gregory Dess (1996) and reconstructed by Morris et al. (2011) in combination with neo-institutional theory (DiMaggio, 1983; Haveman, 1993).
As the purpose revolved around developing a clear picture of institutional culture as it was reflected and experienced by the people working in it, a qualitative research method was the most appropriate. Qualitative research explores a problem or phenomenon and seeks to understand its centrality within human experience (Creswell, 2011). Data collection was based on the document reviews, site observations and interviews with key informants. Interviews were conducted with a small group of individuals rather than a large sample in an effort to provide deep insight into the experiences and personal experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2011). Further data was collected from internal institutional documents including, human resource policies and procedures and public marketing materials as well as close observation of the facility.

The central research question for this study was: How is entrepreneurial orientation lived and perceived at a Halachik Jewish high school?

**Rational for a Case Study Research Method**

The complex EO construct and the lack of qualitative research guided the decision to conduct a case study of the school with interviews focusing on the leadership team, and a sample of teachers and lay leaders. Both internal and external documents were reviewed and the facility was carefully observed. While research on entrepreneurial education is developing, little attention has been paid to private school structures and leadership and a paucity of research exists specifically exploring Jewish day schools. The above research question was explored through a qualitative case study methodology. This methodological approach was chosen for several reasons.

The field of entrepreneurial research is lacking in qualitative studies (Miller, 2011; Slevin & Terjesen, 2011). A case study provides new insights, and deepens the understanding of how an
individual’s entrepreneurial vision has affected individuals and the institution. In particular, shifting the field from traits and behaviors (as current EO scholarship reflects) to concepts of meaning making, and shifting from explanation to interpretation is an important contribution to the field. This lens has been provided by Dodge, Ospina & Foldy (2005) in their work on leadership where they made this shift within the field of leadership scholarship. Furthermore their work focuses on the intersection of rigor and relevance – scholarly, yet applicable to greater stakeholders. This approach was appropriate to the scholar practitioners’ dissertation work.

Interpretivist research (such as case study) potentially “illuminates meaning in ways that build, test and elaborate theories of social phenomenon that are not easily captured by positivist research” (Dodge, Ospina & Foldy, 2005). Both entrepreneurial orientation and isomorphism within neo-institutional theory have looked extensively at the organizational level. Using the case study approach to explore and find new meaning for entrepreneurial educators can potentially expand and elaborate on these two existing frameworks.

To this end, this research used document reviews (marketing and admissions materials, HR, interview protocols and teaching standards), careful site observations, and interviews of the head of school, key leadership, and faculty at a Jewish high school in a suburb of a mid-sized city.

Finally, the researcher approached this research through the lens of philosophical hermeneutics (Schwandt, 2000), which holds that the researcher is always embedded in his/her own history and comes with prejudices.

**Sample Design**

Purposeful sampling, specifically critical sampling, was used in the study site, an independent Jewish high school in a suburb of a mid-sized city. The researcher chose to work with the Head of School and his senior team including the Principal, Judaics Principal, and COO. The researcher interviewed three teachers with various tenures at the school (new hire, 3-5 years
at the school and 5+ years at the school). These stakeholders and interview subjects were made up of those who understood the strategic vision of the organization and those that understood the daily and monthly happenings. The researcher did not get the sample she had hoped for (at least three subjects from each tenure category), specifically in the faculty.

The breakdown of the administration, faculty, staff and board members was the following.

Table 3.1: Breakdown of Total Employees by position and portion interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher collected and examined human resource procedures and policies (such as, hiring processes, job descriptions, and professional growth plans), and marketing materials (annual report, view book, open house fliers). This site was chosen because the head of school introduced an entrepreneurial approach to the staffing structure in the school that has had far reaching effects on the institution and its viability.

The researcher interviewed the Head of School, key leadership and teachers. As the field of Jewish education is small there are very few examples of full school entrepreneurial initiatives in the United States. Those participants who require anonymity, were provided with it, with the caveat and understanding that in such a small professional field, with very few innovators, this may be difficult to guarantee. That said, confidentiality around any financial documents and internal memos was strictly upheld. Finally, each participant signed a consent form explaining the research, its goals and methodology and IRB approval was granted before the study began.
Research Site

The research site was a Halachic Jewish high school in a suburb of a mid-sized city. Families and community leaders looking for a non-denominational Jewish high school for their students founded the school. The Head of School, at the time of the study, inherited a large professional development budget, which he took and made a central tenet of the school. He proudly encouraged, promoted and invested in faculty growth and ideas and in supporting and promoting student ideas as well. When a good idea was brought to him he would pull together the appropriate resources and help bring it to fruition. Additionally, he believed in an up or out mentality resulting in the school having a high turn-over rate. This makes the community uncomfortable at times; it also makes them a nimble organization that can respond to poor teaching and/or leadership and make change. Additionally, the Head of School at the time that the study was conducted had implemented, self-described, entrepreneurial structures into the school. Finally, the site is embedded in a context of a neighboring city dominated by a single industry whose HR practices impacted decisions in the school.

Participant Recruitment

The first participant identified was the Head of School after he wrote an article about entrepreneurial structures in the school. By developing rapport and trust (Creswell, 1998) with the Head of School, the researcher gained access to the school.

Participants were purposefully selected by the author, meeting the criteria of a stakeholder in the identified school and site for research. Each interviewee was either a member of the leadership team, professional and lay or a teacher in the school representing different tenure lengths in the school (1-3 years, 5-10 years, 10+ years). All interviewees were over the age of 18, had at least a bachelor’s degree, and while an equal gender split was attempted the final split was eight men and five women.
The leadership, Head of School, Judaics Principal, COO, and President of the Board were pre-selected as interviewees. Additional administrators and an additional lay leader was interviewed on site. A total of four teachers were interviewed, two men and two women representing tenure categories of 1-5 years and 11-20 years. A total of 12 interviews were conducted.

**Interview Method**

Each recipient received a letter from the researcher stating the purpose and process of the research and interview. Once a subject agreed to participate she was given a consent form to sign. Some interviews were conducted on site and others via skype or google hang outs after the visit. Each interview was recorded and the recordings were sent to TranscriptionStar to be transcribed. The transcription was sent to each interviewee in a password protected document for review. None responded with any concerns.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

**Data Analysis Approach**

The research question this dissertation was looking to address is:

*Q: How is entrepreneurial orientation lived and perceived at a Halachik Jewish high school?*

The complex EO construct and the lack of qualitative research in EO guided the decision to conduct a descriptive, case study with the goal of capturing the perception of an entrepreneurial phenomenon in one school. This study reflects one moment in time (interviews were conducted in May 2015), in a particular independent Jewish high school. A descriptive case study approach provided new insights, and deepend the understanding of how an individual’s entrepreneurial vision affected individuals and the institution as a whole. Finally, using a case study approach the researcher reported the findings after triangulating data from three data sources (documents, observations and interviews).
In working to understand the nature of EO in the research site, the researcher aimed to understand through interviews, document analysis and site observation how, if at all, the constructs of EO were reflected in the normal, daily life of the school. Through a series of interview questions, the researcher attempted to gain insight into the organization through a demonstration of how the actors work within it (Miles & Huberman (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, Ch 1&2). By combining the interviews with the documents and observations the researcher was looking to gain a holistic and systemic view of the site. Through the data collection there was an uncovering of both the implicit and explicit culture of the sight.

Covin and Slevin (1991) suggest using a behavioral model rather than attributes, as behavior is observable and measurable. The researcher used a multi-layered model of document analysis, site observations and on-site interviews in an attempt to gain a clear picture EO behaviors and their perceptions within the school. As the research question states, the interviews were used to understand the data from the inside by gathering the perception of the actors, administrators, faculty and lay leadership of various tenure (Miles & Huberman (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, Ch 1&2). Through a series of questions it was revealed how the actors understand and take action in their day-to-day work.

Guided by this model the researcher was the main instrument of measurement. The goal of this data analysis was to carefully assess both the documents and interviews and to compare and contrast the information they presented and hopefully identify patterns therein. This work was deeply human and interpretations were ongoing by the interviewees as well as the researcher.

The researcher worked in two approaches with this data. The first was an analytic approach, using Dedoose software in which codes were affixed to the interviews and the documents that corresponded with the constructs of EO. The data was sifted through numerous
times as the researcher looked for relationships, patterns in language, and understandings of the school. The researcher also approached the data analysis through an interpretivist viewpoint. As such, the researcher re-read the accounts numerous times to try and distill each one to an understanding of its “essence”.

Using an analytic approach, the researcher chose to work with Dedoose software to look at the interviews and documents analytically. The transcripts and documents were uploaded to the Dedoose system, identification was affixed to each document, codes were created and then affixed to the language in the data. This process was reviewed several times and the codes were clarified and further specified throughout the process. Each time a code was clarified or a code was added or removed, each document was reviewed again.

In conjunction with this the researcher approached the data using an interpretivist approach. Each interview was read several times and a summary of the interview was created to condense the main ideas and language into a concise narrative. Then all of those were combined into a single document for further analysis of patterns, identification of themes; concepts and insights that were raised.

The same approach was applied to the documents. First they were uploaded to Dedoose and coded using the same codes as the interviews. Following that, each document was summarized using the similar categories as the interviews: overview, main points, insights, concepts, and themes. Finally, quotes from the documents that provided evidence of the constructs of EO were selected and examples are shared below.

The researcher photographed the site during the site visit and analyzed the photographs at a later date. The photographs revealed the decisions made in the school about displaying student work, reflecting what values are important to the school as well as where resources were invested.
Data Analysis Spiral

The researcher engaged in a data analysis spiral as described by Creswell (1989), in which he explains that data analysis does not happen in a linear fashion. Instead, there are several steps that are iterative and with each iteration the researcher learned by identifying new patterns, gained a deeper understanding of the data, recognized new relationships and drew new connections from the spiraling insight.

After the data collection, all transcripts and documents were organized on the researcher’s computer and uploaded to Dedoose software for coding. During the first round of coding the researcher took notes documenting questions and connected memos to the coded excerpts of text for future reference. After several careful readings of all the texts, three rounds of coding took place. Next, quotes were used to develop a representative data table for each attribute of the multi-dimensional EO construct. Third, each interview was read again and this time each was summarized into another comparative document outlining: overview, main points, concepts, insights, themes. This provided the researcher with yet another opportunity to engage with, think about and find relationships in the data. Each step in this process increased the researcher’s understanding of the data and how it reflected on the nature of EO in the school. This multi-layered and spiraled process led to the findings presented in this chapter.

Document Review

The researcher collected publicly accessible documents: printed marketing material, and admissions material. The researcher requested to review other documents such as, HR policies and procedures, professional growth policies and procedures, and budget. All documents were granted except for the budget. A coding sheet was developed with three columns; l1c listed elements of the EO framework, c2 described the purpose and general features of the document, and c3 matched those features to the EO framework.
The document review process took on a deductive analysis approach in which elements of the EO framework were identified and articulated beforehand. In reviewing the documents, the researcher looked for cues that reflected the vision and values of the school, reviewed organizational structures and identified key stakeholders. After reviewing the documents and getting a sense of the story they tell, the researcher analyzed the documents using the coding sheet to reflect the entrepreneurial orientation framework.

In total, 10 documents were collected, of which seven were for public consumption and three were for internal purposes only. The following table lists the document names and their intended audience.

Table 3.2: Internal and External Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Internal</th>
<th>External</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hiring Protocol</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards of Good Teaching</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision for Growth</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open House Flyer</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewbook</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Report</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Profile</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible Tuition</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ten documents were uploaded to Dedoose and coded using the same prefigured codes and sub-codes as the interviews.

**Document Analysis**

A. Documents were gathered and initially read through. The researcher made notes in the coding document. B. The researcher described the purpose and features of the document in column 2 and began InVivo coding of the documents. InVivo coding used participant/document language for the initial round of coding, in which the researcher chose a quote or phrase from the documents to capture the essence of the communication (Saldana, 2009). The researcher continued InVivo coding and reviewed each document four times. Once the researcher felt satisfied with the first round of coding, she began to consolidate the InVivo quotes. Using the software she created subcodes under InVivo codes that represented larger ideas. D. After revisiting the data several times the researcher created new codes, one for each articulated EO element. E. After consolidating the InVivo coding into the elements worksheet, the researcher applied the data directly to the research questions.

**Observation**

The research intended to collect robust data from observations of the physical environment, meetings and interactions in public spaces. Upon arrival at the research sight it became clear that this would not happen as intended. The researcher was not allowed to attend any meetings. Nonetheless, the researcher conducted careful observations of the facility to gain a
better understanding of decisions made by the school about design and décor. The school leadership did not design the physical building; rather the school moved into an existing building that belongs to another institution. Therefore, the architecture cannot be used as an intentional reflection of the school; the decisions they made, however, about décor, student work, display of values and resource allocation as reflected in different spaces reveal the school’s values and intentions.

**Interviews**

Using a purposeful sample, the researcher interviewed the leadership team in the school, a sample of teachers and other stakeholders identified during the site visit. Each interviewee was a person with a sense of the overall mission and vision of the school and also lived it every day. The findings from the documents provide a context for the experiences of the interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purposeful Sample</th>
<th>Identified before site visit</th>
<th>Unstructured Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of School</td>
<td>• Researcher and interview subjects acquainted through email and initial phone calls.</td>
<td>• After being informed that the conversation will be recorded, the researcher recorded the conversation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Judaic Studies</td>
<td>• Researcher presented overview of the work to be undertaken and provided a description of the rationale for the case study approach. The researcher provided the interviewees with the informed consent form which was returned with a signature.</td>
<td>• The researcher began by asking a few warm-up questions about the interviewee’s current school, previous work experience and the positions held within the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COO</td>
<td>• Demographic information was</td>
<td>• The researcher asked the head of school about the interviewee’s entrepreneurial vision and implementation, focusing on the entry into the school and the strategic decisions made around introducing a new initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President of the board of directors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 teachers with different tenure in the school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other administrators, Heads of departments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the interviews the researcher took brief notes in her research journal about initial thoughts, making notes of assumptions, biases and reactions. After the site visit, the researcher had all the interviews transcribed. Following the recorded interviews the recordings were sent electronically to Transcription Star: Transcription Services. The transcripts were returned in individual files. Each file was saved as a password protected word document and then sent to each interviewee for review. Each locked document was emailed to the correct interviewee and the password was sent in a separate email. The researcher asked the interviewees to review the transcript for overall understanding and to confirm that his or her intent was clearly reflected in the manuscript. Once that was complete the interviews were uploaded to Dedoose for coding and further analysis by the researcher.

Once transcribed, the researcher read through the data several times, reflected thoughts in interview summaries. Using the themes that emerged from the documents, the researcher coded the transcripts as the data reflected those themes. She then re-coded each transcript, coding sections as they applied to each research question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purposeful Sample Stage 2</th>
<th>Identified during observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Possibilities: office staff, member of PTO, parent, board member | • Researcher approached subjects, explained research and requested a 30 minute interview | (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995).  
• Each teacher was asked about his/her experience in the school,  
• Newly identified interviewees were asked for similar demographic information and then questioned about their experiences in the school and their part in it. |
Level of Analysis

In classical economics the small business is seen as an extension of the leadership. As such although specific interviewee/s are the subjects, the level of analysis is at the institutional level. The researcher uncovered the effects on the institutional level by examining internal documents that reflected practice (policies and procedures, and job descriptions) and cultural goals (vision/mission, admissions materials, view book, other marketing materials). Furthermore, Schumpeter (1942) argued that innovation led by the leadership is only possible if the institution is defined as entrepreneurial and devotes resources to the new vision.

A general inductive analysis provides a generic analytic approach to data analysis which uses detailed readings of the data to uncover emerging themes, concepts and models (Thomas, 2006). This case study utilized deductive strategies. This case study sought to understand the participants' experience in a school led by an educational entrepreneurial leader within Jewish education, as well as the institutional reflection of the leadership vision. In light of current research regarding entrepreneurial orientation (EO) this research required a deductive approach (looking at the themes, concepts and models that have emerged and comparing them to existing findings in EO research). As in GIA this study made transparent and defensible links between the research question and the data, as well as suggest a model or theory as it emerges from the raw data (Thomas, 2006).

Data Storage

All recorded data was transcribed and saved both on the researcher’s computer and on a back-up system. The transcriptions were saved both electronically and in hard copy and kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s home office. Documents that must remain confidential were coded as such and are not presented in the appendices. Only the researcher and first and second
reader will have access to the raw data. All recordings will be disposed of once the analysis and publication are complete, and all consent forms will be kept, as required, for three years.

As the purpose revolved around developing a clear picture of institutional change as it was reflected and experienced by the people working in it, a qualitative research method is the most appropriate. Qualitative research explores a problem or phenomenon and seeks to understand its centrality within human experience (Creswell, 2011). Data collection was based on the document reviews, and interviews with key informants. Interviews were conducted with a small group of individuals rather than a large sample in an effort to provide deep insight into the experiences and personal experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2011). Further data was collected from internal institutional documents including, human resource policies and procedures and public marketing materials.

**Trustworthiness**

To assure trustworthiness, the interview data provided rich, thick descriptions. Furthermore, both the transcripts and the developing analysis used member checking (Creswell, 2011). It is understood that the entrepreneurs themselves may seek to show themselves and their institutions in the best possible light and that this may skew the data (Lyon, 2000). It is the hope of the researcher, that through thick, rich description, member checking and the triangulation of data across all data sources that this will be controlled.

Several threats to internal validity will be addressed in this study. The researcher’s interest and own aspirations to affect entrepreneurial organizational change within a Jewish day school are the motivations for undertaking this research. Furthermore, the researcher has a desire to encourage and support further entrepreneurial educational initiatives within Jewish education and hopes that this work will inform the practitioners leading such initiatives. Yin (2009) writes that expert knowledge is an asset in case study research, and, the researcher was sensitive to the
fact that bias, assumptions and preconceived notions about this process have the potential to distort the findings. In an effort to maintain validity, several validation strategies were employed. Researcher biases was clarified and reported prior to conducting the study. In addition, peer debriefing and member checking was used to check the researcher’s understanding and interpretations throughout the study. Thick, rich description (Creswell, 1998) were used to present a case study of entrepreneurial structures and the effect on the institution that will inform the field, but will not seek to generalize the findings.

**Human Participation and Ethics Precautions**

The study complied with the requirements for the protection of human subjects and gained approval from the Northeastern University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Human subjects were and will continue to be protected by protecting their data, maintaining fair outcomes and by receiving a full description of both the risks and benefits associated with the study. IRB approval was sought through the set procedures as outlined by Northeastern University. No contact was made or data collected from participants until written IRB approval was received.

All participants were given, in writing, a full description of the purpose of the study, its process and proposed final outcome. A consent form was provided to each participant explaining that his/her participation in the study is voluntary and that he/she may remove him/herself from the study at any time without further explanation. After each interview, the participants were given the choice to see the transcribed interview at any point. Final copies of the research will be provided to each participant.

The individual interviews were recorded and transcribed for future text analysis. All recorded data was transcribed and saved both on the researcher’s computer and on a back-up system. The transcriptions are saved both electronically and in hard copy and are kept in a
locked cabinet in the researcher’s home office. Documents that must remain confidential were coded as such and will not be presented in the appendices. Access to the raw data will only be given to the advisor and first reader.

The researcher was sensitive to the nature of working within a small educational system. As such, participants were asked to give consent to the use of their name, and the institution’s name. Names are not used in any of the data presentations. The researcher eliminated all identifying names, such as schools and districts to help protect confidentiality. Furthermore, the researcher disclosed, in the confidentiality portion of the consent form, that there is a possibility that the identity of the participant will be unintentionally revealed. Finally, participants were given a consent form regarding the possibility of further publication of the research. In this case, manuscripts will be provided to each participant before publication is sought. If consent is not granted by the participants, then the researcher will guarantee that this research will only be used for the thesis and will not be used for publication outside Northeastern University, guaranteeing that it will not be read by an outsider who can identify the participants.

Several potential benefits resulted from participating in this study. The time to reflect and assess both the organization’s entrepreneurial orientation as well as the climate that has allowed for the initiative to succeed allows leaders within the organization to move forward thoughtfully. Furthermore, the study and report provide participants with insight into the dynamics of entrepreneurial education and innovation within the educational sector. It is not foreseen that any risks are associated with this study.

**Statement of Researcher**

The researcher is a Head of School in a preschool-8th grade Jewish day school in Connecticut, charged with innovating in programming and growing the school. She has a vested interest in learning about various models employed in Jewish day schools that support recruiting
the best teaching talent to schools in non-urban settings. As such, she shares the lens of Head of School and innovator with the Head of School at the research site. The researcher is personally invested in her own success as a Head of School and the success of her school and is aware of how her “self-interest” relate to the proposed research.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The goal of this study was to explore the nature of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) in a Jewish high school. By carefully listening to and analyzing interviews of faculty, administration and lay leadership at the school, the researcher sought to gain a deeper understanding of how entrepreneurial behaviors were exhibited in the school. In addition, the researcher explored how those attributes were reflected in institutional norms, policies, and procedures as well as reflected in both internal and external documents, and by analyzing the physical plant and how it may or may not support EO. The results of the study were viewed through the multi-dimensional construct of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) as perceived by G.T. Lumpkin and Gregory Dess (1996) and reconstructed by Morris et al. (2011) in combination with neo-institutional theory (DiMaggio, 1983; Haveman, 1993).

This chapter will first describe the site and context of the independent Jewish high school, provide an overview of the documents and present profiles of the interview subjects. Themes that emerged from the interviews will be triangulated with data from the observations and documents and will be presented in two categories: primary themes and secondary themes. The chapter will conclude with presentation of the findings for the research question.

Research Question

Q: How is entrepreneurial orientation lived and perceived at a Halachik Jewish high school?

Research Site

The research site was a Jewish high school in the suburbs of a mid-sized city. It was founded in the mid-1990’s in response to a group of parents working together to open a new
Jewish high school for their children to attend. These parents had already sent their children to a local Jewish day school and were looking for a non-Orthodox option for their families.

Once the school was founded it was housed on the grounds of a local Jewish Community Center (JCC) using several modular classrooms while space in the JCC was reconfigured; the architecture and design of the building had already been established. As such, little can be analyzed about the physical structure of the building that would reflect ideas about the school per se.

The school was founded with the goal of providing a rigorous secular as well as Jewish education including courses in Hebrew language, Torah, Rabbinics, Jewish history, Jewish law and ethics. During the school day, students attend all of these classes. The idea behind the curriculum at that school was to ground students in their Jewish identity in an environment that follows Jewish law, is welcoming and helping students develop a strong civic duty.

**Site Description.**

As part of a large building, a visitor would likely drive through the parking lot and around the building to the main entrance of the school. There were tall double doors that one walks through after being buzzed into the building. Immediately, the visitor is facing a stairwell going both up and down. Hanging over the banister was a sign with the emblem and name of the school. Along the stairwell going up were five posters marketing the school. The first one presented a collage of photographs including graduation, athletic events, awards, Jewish occasions, and conference participation. Along with the four pillars of the school listed across the bottom the message read, “Discover how academic challenge inspires your child to excel.” The next four posters were entitled: “Innovating” and showed a picture of a student learning ancient calligraphy using an iPad; “Belonging” which depicted a teacher sitting in a corner of the school with students on a couch; “Exploring” and showed a pencil drawing and a student playing
basketball; and “Achieving” which showed two students engaged in a science experiment. At the top of the stairwell there was another set of locked doors to pass before entering the main part of the school.

Once one walks through the second set of doors, there was a welcome desk to the left. Straight ahead was a sitting area, known as the Student Commons in honor of a donor’s legacy to world Jewery. Israeli flags were hanging from the ceiling and right beyond it was a media center.

To the right of the desk was a walkway that led to the main administrative offices of the school and around to the right were the classrooms. The school was on the second floor and overlooked a center atrium where one can see the floor below.

The floor below was part of the JCC and was an open area with a few tables. Downstairs was the kosher cafe and restaurant used by many of the students and faculty. The school schedule was posted on the wall near the welcome desk. there was also a directory of departments straight ahead and digital signage in the seating area which showed the lunch menu and upcoming events in the school. The sitting area had couches and round tables, a small case displaying ceramics with the American and Israeli flags on each side of the case and a full view of the Media Center through six large windows.

On the walls were student-created art and landscape photography, posters of Israeli leaders, and the history of establishing the State of Israel, projects on the modern state of Israel, and a blessing in Hebrew.

The majority of the displayed work was about Israel, its innovation, cities in Israel, and celebrations of Israel. There was a trophy case displaying various awards as well as school history photographs. Additionally, there was a wall full of the school’s team which include: quiz bowl, basketball, golf, volleyball, and baseball. There was also a photograph of the school’s Shakespeare club on another wall.
Down one hallway was the science suite, named after an honored donor. The classrooms were large squares with tables and chairs and smart boards.

Outside the college guidance counselor's office was a sofa and above the sofa were hanging flags of various universities. All the students have mailboxes in one central place for ease of communication in one place in addition to their lockers.

The decor and layout of the school reveal a traditional approach to setting up and running a school. The learning commons and small meeting places intend to be places for conversation and collaboration. The researcher did not observe those spaces being used regularly and cannot comment on how the school uses those spaces. The Media Center was an innovative space with new technology including 3-D printers. At the time of the visit, there were a few students in the space, and it was unclear how and when faculty used the space with their students. As noted in one of the interviews, while it is a space that students can explore their own ideas and interests it’s not part of the daily or weekly schedule.

The school promotes a strong attachment to Zionism and the State of Israel as evidenced by posters about Israel, student work in Hebrew, displays that celebrate Israel, the land and Israeli innovation. The school also displayed Israeli flags throughout the building.

Student art work was the next prominent display in the school and demonstrated some of the creativity of the students. The student art displayed was examples of photography, some painting and ceramics. The theater club was a Shakespeare club. The decor in the school well reflected a tension between tradition and innovation.

This picture captures the line the school is working to balance on and one which is shared in many Jewish day schools. On the one hand the school’s mission is to anchor students in a Jewish identity grounded in Jewish law, learning, and liturgy while on the other it is the school’s job to prepare students for an innovating world.
Summary and Implications. The school facility reflects a relatively traditional Jewish high school and does not strongly demonstrate a sense of innovation. Since the school moved into an already existing building, the school’s leadership did not have the opportunity to think about how the architecture might better reflect the school’s values and identity. However, there were many aspects of the facility that the leadership and faculty had control over: classroom set-up, content of hallway displays, lockers and mailboxes, office spaces, shared learning and collaboration areas, and furniture. Each one of these reflected a school that looks like most other schools and may demonstrate how legitimizing pressures assert themselves on schools.

Overview of Documents

The researcher collected a series of documents to use in triangulating the data. Ten documents in all were collected which fell into two categories - internal and external documents. External documents were those documents intended for public view; internal documents were intended only for employees of the school. Each document was uploaded to the Dedoose software and coded for language that either demonstrated or did not demonstrate the construct of entrepreneurial orientation. Four internal documents were collected: Hiring protocol, Standards of Good Teaching, Supervision for Growth protocol, and weekly schedule. Six external documents were collected: school viewbook, High School Profile flyer, Teacher recruitment brochure, Open House flyer, Flexible Tuition Program Brochure, and the Annual Report. Looking closely at these two categories uncovers both the aspirational and lived language and stance in the school.

Internal Documents

The four internal documents thoroughly outlined procedures around hiring, supervision, growth and evaluation and the teaching standards the school espoused with the faculty.
**Hiring Protocol.** This protocol described the process of bringing a candidate to the campus, the delineation of duties of the various administrative rolls and steps to take throughout the interview process. The process takes pains to assure that the candidate is explicitly told about the mission, vision and culture at the school. It also stated that during the interview there is a time when the administration meet to conduct a “Mid-visit check-in, to determine if the visit should be shortened.” This is a strategic step that quickly acknowledges if a candidate is not an appropriate fit for the school.

**Standards of Good Teaching (SGT).** The standards document was adopted by the school and comes from the Jewish New Teacher Project; they are based on teaching standards created in the State of California. These standards are used in many Jewish day schools today. Each standard has a set of sub-standards and each of those is explained in a table ranging from beginning to innovating. In addition to the created standards, the faculty came together and, through a process, created a final standard entitled “Student Independence”. This standard has three substandards: Engages students in self-assessment including monitoring their own progress, understanding and goals; Facilitates an environment where the students take initiative in their learning, are able to learn from one another and pursue their own inquiries; Develops challenging learning experiences that foster students’ independence and sense of responsibility; and fosters a classroom environment that emphasizes the value of knowledge and understanding.

**Supervision for Growth Protocol (SFG).** This protocol outlined in detail all the elements of supervision including different types of classroom visits and conversation, who is involved and the calendar for the year. At the core, this process promotes teacher growth more than evaluation and seeks to create a culture where teachers are working with mentors and supervisors to set goals and work on action steps to achieve those goals. These include supervisor feedback and require that the teacher participate in teacher led meetings in which each teacher provides the
artifacts to demonstrate her growth. “The purpose of goal setting is to provide teachers an opportunity to reflect on their own practice and establish their own goals for professional growth by which they will be evaluated.”

**Weekly Schedule.** This document is used primarily for internal purposes, however it is also a document that is shared with the entire school constituency as well as prospective families. It is a basic schedule, presented in a table and classes meet for between 50 and 75 minutes. On Wednesday there is a later start entitled “sleep in,” and at the end of the day there is a PAL period which is used for arts, freshman seminar, Jewish journeys and other ideas and courses as the needs arise.

**External Documents.**

Six external documents were reviewed, and each was created for a particular purpose and audience. These documents were well designed and published by the school for marketing and communication purposes.

**Viewbook.** The viewbook was a 20-page glossy, color publication filled with photographs of the school, the students, and their achievements. The purpose of a viewbook is to market the school to prospective parents and students. It contained curated messages that the school wanted to promote about itself. The viewbook contained sections about the school’s mission, academics, Judaism and continuity, Israel, athletics, art, leadership, social service, student success post-graduation and admissions. It promoted that, “Students receive personal attention from devoted and innovative teachers who help develop their character as well as their skills.” It also proudly stated that teachers at this school, “win awards for their insights, innovations, and their interactions with their students.” The viewbook was a marketing tool used to attract prospective families to the school.
Annual Report. In addition to the fundraising data shared in an annual report, this report shared the ways in which the school’s graduates give back to the community in addition to honoring members of the community who have given to the school. In the head of school’s opening letter he wrote, “A particular source of pride is how disproportionately our students are represented in the revival of [city name]. From start-ups to city planning, culturally, economically, and philanthropically, our graduates are involved in every aspect of the rebuilding of our city.” The report also highlighted several areas of the school including the arts, gaming and technology and the senior trip to Europe and Israel. About gaming, the report shared that the, “exciting new Talmud adventure game, designed to teach students about halacha [Jewish law] concerning the shema [piece of liturgy] through a cutting-edge, inventive medium.” The annual report was a public document and it was primarily read by current stakeholders in the school. The messaging focused on retention, alumni and donor relations.

High School Profile. This two-sided, one-page flyer shared the mission of the school and statistics about the students including GPA distributions, AP courses, universities and gap-year programs attended post-graduation, standardized test scores, course listings, and graduation requirements. This flyer emphasized academic achievement and post-graduation plans seeking to attract parents and students considering the school.

Open House Program Flyer. This two-sided, one-page flyer gave information on the program of events of the open house, a welcome by the head of school, a student speaker and a parent speaker followed by a tour on the front. On the back, was information about how to apply, application requirements and shadow days. Apart from listing the four pillars of the school, there was no marketing language on the flyer. This flyer was intended for those parents and students who have already made the decision to attend the event at the school.
Flexible Tuition Program Brochure. This brochure was intended for parents who are most likely interested in the school and are looking to afford this school’s education. The flyer opened by saying that this education is in reach. Inside there was a parent quote, “We love the educational experience here at [school name] from the superior secular education to the thorough and passionate Jewish studies program.” It also stated, “We are [State’s] premier college preparatory Jewish high school, challenging our students intellectually and inspiring deeper Jewish commitment since we opened our doors in 2000.”

Faculty Recruitment Brochure. This brochure was used at job fairs and other opportunities where the school was looking to recruit top talent to join the faculty. The brochure stated, “Join us on our voyage of innovative education,” and, “Since its founding in 2000, it has provided to students and teachers a chance to reach their highest potential in critical thought, expression, and learning, all the while being supported by their peers and superiors in a positive, friendly environment.” It promoted the students’ success, the small class size and the opportunities for “partnership, fellowship and scholarship.” A faculty member was quoted, “[school’s] students have boundless creativity. And because of the access to advanced technology, they can design and enrich their education in new and unimagined ways. We have two 3D printers, and it is wonderful to see students coming into the Media Center, dreaming of designs and then implementing them.” The brochure also promoted the mentoring and partnership available to faculty and opportunities for growth.

Overview of Interviewees

The researcher interviewed a total of twelve people involved with the school: two lay leaders, four faculty, and six administrators. Four years following the initial interviews and data collection the researcher went back to member check with four of the initial interviewees.
Interviewee Job Descriptions.

Lay Leadership. Two lay leaders agreed to be interviewed for this work. Jamie was a founding Board member of the school, who was involved from its inception, mission development, helped secure its initial funding, and sent his own child to the new school. Sherri was a Trustee of the Board at the time of the interview. She had already spent several years on the Board and was a key person who professionalized the Board. She also sent her son to the school.

Faculty. The faculty interviewed represent two tenure lengths at the school. Two of the faculty were at the school between 1-5 years; Jared who was serving as the Bible Department Chair and Michael who was a member of the Judaics teaching staff focusing on Rabbinics. Two of the faculty were at the school between 11-20 years; Aaron who has been with the school since it was founded and a member of the Judaics Studies department and Mary who has had several positions at the school all of which have been technology related.

Administration. The six administrators that were interviewed included two women, the CFO, Karen and the Director of General Studies, Nancy, and four men: Director of Judaic Studies, Joseph, the transitional Head of School, Greg, the Acting Head of School, Noah, and the Director of Student Services, Liam. Their tenures at the school ranged from six to fourteen years. The Acting Head of School, Noah, had announced he was leaving a few months before the site visit and a transitional Head of School, Greg was put in place. As Greg had been the Director of Judaic Studies, this position was given to Joseph as a promotion.

Profiles of Interview Subjects.

Sherri was a lawyer and Trustee of the Board of Directors. She had been serving in a lay leadership position with the school for four years and served as chair on several committees. Before serving on this Board, she served as the chair of the Board at a local k-8 Jewish Day
School for more than ten years. Her son attended the school and she was passionate about Board development and professionalization, “I am a big advocate for that, I like having a consultant come in and getting boards to the next level.” She served as chair on a committee that changed the structure of the board from a membership model to a directorship more to align with best practices, “It’s not in the best interests of the school, and as with any school, it’s not a popularity contest.”

**Jamie** was a founding Board member of the school. He was motivated to found a school after serving many years on the Executive Committee of the local Jewish day school and he was looking for a Jewish high school for his sons to attend. He began by serving as president of a committee of parents who were, similarly, looking for a Jewish high school for their children. He shared that it took tremendous effort to get the buy-in from the Jewish Federation which felt, according to Jamie, that “there were plenty of choices.” The committee had to find “higher ups at Federation who would go to bat for us in the hall, the boardrooms, places where we couldn’t go.” Excitement and buy-in was generated after meeting with a local professor and putting together a mission for a school. He handed the leadership over when the school opened and returned to help when they were looking for appropriate space for the school. There again he spoke about the work to get the Jewish Federation on board, “we had to convince Federation that the largest physical JCC in north America needed more space.” Jamie spoke about the changes on the Board to a directorship model and the loss of opportunity to be part of the board meetings.

**Jared** is the Head of the Bible Department and was at the school three years at the time of the interview. In a follow-up interview, he shared that he completed six years at the school and had just begun a new job at another high school. Jared expressed great excitement about the professional development he was receiving as well that he was going to go to Israel for the summer to work on a new initiative that he had proposed to the administration. He acknowledged
that he was well liked by the administration and that they were open to his ideas and this may not have been everyone’s experience. He also noted a good deal of excitement in the school about gamifying part of the Judaics curriculum, yet he remained skeptical of whether that would meaningfully impact the students’ education.

Michael was completing his second year teaching in the Rabbinics department, at the time of the data collection. He also coached the quiz bowl and Moot Beit Din (a competition on the Jewish legal system). He saw a need, early on, to offer an honors Rabbinics class, which hadn’t happened at the school for many years. Once the administration was convinced, he was given the chance to develop and teach the course. “I never imagined that even if they listened to it [my idea] that they would actually ask me to teach it.” He took on the necessary grammar learning and taught the class. Michael also noted that this was an environment that encouraged teachers to innovate, “Whenever I’ve been brainstorming ideas with my mentor, if - you know, if I have an idea and I’m not sure if it’ll work, he’ll always encourage me to try it, and you know, he’ll help work with me to make it better than what it started as.” He remained at the school for another year and then moved to another state and another school.

Aaron had been at the school since it was founded and had taught every class they have asked him to teach. He primarily spoke about being asked to teach an ethics course, for which he was given no syllabus and no materials and which he had to develop on his own. He was skeptical about all the technology initiatives at the school and remarked on how it negatively impacted the classroom. “The kids are just surfing the internet in the middle of the class. So it is kind of a now kick back push back reaction to that, I think next year they’ll be quite a few of us that will not have iPads in the classroom. Between telephones and iPads, we’re almost talking to ourselves.” In the member-checking interview, four years later, Aaron remained a teacher in the
school, experienced several Heads of School and had seen the school evolve and change, including a shift away from distracting technology in the classrooms.

**Mary** has been with the school since it began, and her first role was as Director of Technology and Information Management. She was responsible for moving the school forward aggressively in their technology adoption and as a result the school often ranked as a leader in educational technology. She remembers, “It was April, 6 years ago when Steve Jobs introduced the iPad and people thought it was pretty much a joke, but at that point, I had maybe seven textbooks, AP Calculus, AP Biology, English books, whatever. I saw these textbooks and, in my mind, I thought, ‘Wow! The weight of those textbooks put into this tiny little thing, what that could do for our students’ backs, what that could do for the organization.’” She regrets that there was not more time to train the teachers in how to use educational technology. She also envisions education to be more open and flexible and worries that the students and parents only care about college acceptances.

**Liam** is Director of Student Services and held this position for three years at the time of the data collection. He was a congregational Rabbi who began teaching at the school part time and over the years became a full-time teacher. In his three years as Director of Student Services, his responsibilities had grown and he oversaw “…just about everything that’s not in the mainstream classroom,” including art, athletics, support services. Before this role, he was a teacher in the Bible department. He didn’t have formal training as a teacher and credits the Acting Head of School, Noah, with teaching him how to teach, along with his own interest and commitment to teaching and learning.

**Karen** is the COO of the school and was at the school for six years at the time of the data collection. She was excited about the growing school and motivated to always be on top of new legal issues, HR and to constantly seek out the best solutions for health care. She shared that her
work moved the school from a “mom and pop” shop to a professional organization: “I can tell you that we are known for our professionalism. We are known for, you know, bringing everyone of these areas that my office touches, you know, up to a very high standard - that other schools contact us and say, okay. Can I have your menu? Can I have this?... and we share it, you know, I mean they don’t have to recreate the wheel.” She also spoke passionately about the innovative teachers and her work to help them with grant reporting. Specifically, she worked to get the faculty to work under grant deadline pressures. “They have the entrepreneurial spirit, I think out there. What they don’t always have, is the background of writing those grants, of getting the money, of being on a timeline.”

Nancy taught at the school for eight years at the time of the interview. She began as a teacher in the social studies department. After three years she became the Social Studies Department Chair and not long after that she joined the new teacher induction team where she worked as a teacher mentor. She joined the Educational Leadership team, which worked to develop and plan meaningful professional development. A year before the interview she became the Director of General Studies. She is proud of the seventh Standard of Good Teaching, created by the faculty, and how it reflected the school’s emphasis on independence and creativity. She explained, “So I think just in the creation of such a document we are saying that we want to do whatever we can to foster independence and responsibility in our students and that sometimes takes creative thinking.” In her work she was focusing on bringing in the strongest faculty and was eager to share that, “one of the things we did was produce a pamphlet to really describe what it’s like to teach at [name of school]. Because a lot of times people will pass by (in job fairs) and just see [name of school] see that it’s Jewish or they are just confused by it and just won’t come by the table. And the idea is to really emphasize what a great place it is to teach.”
**Joseph** taught at the school for six years at the time of the interview. He began as a Rabbinics teacher, then he became the Rabbinics Department Head, and once the Acting Head of School announced his leaving, Joseph was promoted to the Director of Judaic Studies. Joseph was responsible for securing a large grant in collaboration with a local university to create a Rabbinics video game. The first beta version had been released and he was beginning to work on the second version of the game. Throughout the school there were lots of conversations about this idea and initiative. Additionally, during his first year he was given the opportunity to teach a class, in which he chose to teach *Sefer Hachinuch* (Book of education) which culminated in a night of learning. This program continued to evolve and it presented every year since.

**Greg** was put in place as the transitional Head of School at the time of the interview and had been at the school for nine year. Before this new position he was the Director of Judaic Studies. He feels he was the beneficiary of tremendous professional development and growth at the school where he began as a teacher, became Rabbinics Department Head and the Director of the Educational Leadership Team. He took over the teacher mentor program earlier in his career at the school and has missed being part of it with his promotions. He was excited to share about a teacher with whom he worked and was able to take an idea all the way through to implementation: “You know I sort of helped with the brainstorming, but he really took it and he ran with it and he developed this. And he will be going to Israel this summer and he’ll be working on this project. For what he has done is just incredible because this is something he is passionate about, he cares about is to develop it.” During the member-checking interview, four years later, Greg was serving as the Head of School and was excited to share many stories of people within the school taking the initiative to think of and implement new ideas.

**Noah** was the acting Head of School and had been with the school for fourteen years in which he held many positions: Bible teacher, Bible Department Head and Head of School. He
was particularly excited about the idea that he promoted good ideas, presented by strong faculty and students and moved them into implementation quickly. “We are very, very nimble and I always say the amount of time between conception and execution here can be days or weeks. And that's intentional certainly under my leadership, that I've always felt in most organizations the gap between concept and execution is often so long, so drawn out and so filled with red tape that by the time you get to the end, the original people who had the spark or the idea are either no longer with the organization or are no longer interested in the idea, or have had the air taken the wind taken out of their sails. So very intentionally I tried to keep the process brisk.” He approached the school with a clear mindset of the structures that must be in place to promote growth among the faculty and the students.

Themes

In the following section the themes that emerged in the interviews will be triangulated with the themes that emerged from both the documents and site observation to provide a thick and rich description of how EO is lived and perceived in the school. The themes are divided into two major categories: primary themes and secondary themes. This distinction reflects how strongly the themes emerged from the data.

Primary Themes.

The themes that emerged from the data were viewed through the construct of EO and the five attributes of EO: autonomy, proactiveness, innovativeness, competitive aggressiveness and risk taking. The first three attributes, autonomy, proactiveness and innovativeness emerged strongly from the data. Competitive aggressiveness and risk taking emerged, but to a lesser extent. As themes emerged from the data, they were put into the five EO attributes. This section presents the attributes that were strongly identified in the data: autonomy, proactiveness and innovativeness.
Autonomy. According to the EO literature, autonomy is reflected through independent action of an individual in bringing forth an idea/vision and carrying it through to completion; the ability and will to be self-directed in pursuit of opportunities; actions taken free of organizational constraints; where organizational players remain free to act independently, make decisions and proceed, led through strong leadership autocratic vs. integrative mode. Autonomy is reflected when ideas are generated among players in organization and brought to higher level management.

Professional Growth Opportunities. Professional development and growth come under the category of autonomy due to the nature of this professional growth at this school. The process of professional growth is teacher directed with teacher goals and teacher led meeting. The interviews provided insight into the lived experiences of the faculty and throughout the interviews one can hear the fundamental role each faculty member had in his/her growth. This was a strong theme throughout the interviews and was directly asked about by the interviewer. Within professional development there were several interviewees who talked about the robust new teacher induction program at the school, participating in the Standards and Benchmarks for Tanakh program as well as the opportunity to pursue learning in the field and not only in the pedagogy of the field. This theme was also reflected in several of the documents, both internal and external: SFG, SGT, and the faculty recruitment brochure.

Noah. Noah, was the outgoing head of school, and spoke extensively about his own trajectory and professional growth at the school. He was hired a year after the school was founded to lead the Bible Department. He took this on and added courses throughout his seven years leading the department, however he felt he was never able to grow the department beyond himself. In his seventh year, the school experienced a total and sudden administrative transformation. “In terms of my professional growth just so you’ve an idea, I was approached by
the search committee, and the – then the current president and the incoming president asked if I would be interested in taking the job [head of school], which I was not. But after a series of cajoling, and other things I ended up taking the job and I’ve been in the job for seven years.” He moved into the Head of School position with no previous experience and little professional development. “In terms of my own professional growth I think it was pretty dramatic as I went from a role of department head to the role of head of school with nothing in between, no training in between. I had almost zero professional training in my seven years here. Except there was a Director of Professional Development here who ended up being like my mentor.” Noah acknowledged that working with her improved his instruction. “And when I became head of school, I actually hired her to become the dean of the school which was a wonderful relationship, a little odd since you know she had been my mentor.” The lack of professional development he received is in direct contrast with the investment in professional development made by the school. “So – I guess the only other things to – that are relevant was the school was heavily invested in professional development.” In fact, Noah received significant professional development as a teacher, however this was not the case as he transitioned to head of school.

“There was a very robust professional development budget, well only a few schools that I know of that took seriously the PD recommendations in terms of how much money to set aside for PD. And I inherited a budget that had $60,000 set aside for professional development. I remember I spoke about this at the day school conference, the one in Atlanta, and it was three years ago. And like eyes just popped out, they couldn’t believe that there was that much. And I saw all the things that could be done, so for instance when I was Head of the Bible Department, I continued to participate in academic Biblical scholarship. And I went every year to the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, wherever it was in the country. The school paid my way, and the school was interested in my self-directed professional development as a Bible scholar.
and an educator. And it was one of the things that was very attractive to me in staying at the school, that I was able to develop as a scholar as well as a teacher.

It’s of note that professional development in the school was not only focused on pedagogy but rather allowed faculty to pursue additional growth and learning in their content area, as academic scholars.

When Noah became Head of School, he took his self-directed learning further with a coach and availed himself of the Board of Trustees for his continued professional growth. “So one of the board members, the CEO of a family business here, he taught me all about how hiring and firing is done. I learned all about hiring and firing from him. And another one of my board members operates a national business.. And he taught me all about HR rules. I had no idea what HR was.”

Self-directed and motivated, Noah inherited a large PD budget and a culture of investing in faculty to help them grow professionally. “So I have been on this constant growth path much less, much less formal. I’ve no - I’ve neither degree in education nor a degree in administration. I am totally self-taught in terms of this.”

Joseph. During his six years in the school, at the time of this interview, Joseph moved from classroom Rabbinics and Bible teacher, to Rabbinics Department Chair, to most currently with the announcement of the head of school leaving to Director of Jewish Studies. During his first two years at the school he was mentored through the new teacher induction program and worked as a mentor in the same program to newer teachers. He also received training through the Standards and Benchmarks program for Tanakh (Old Testament). In his second year, the school became a one-to-one iPad school and all the faculty received professional development to integrate the iPads into the classroom. After that, the administration asked him to lead Learning and Teaching in a Technological Environment (LATTE). Right away he realized, “I had to train
myself, be accountable to the staff.” From there he was asked to continue mentoring in technology and present at workshops.

Michael. At the time of the interview Michael was a second year Rabbinics teacher at the school. He was part of the new teacher induction program. Reflecting on his professional development he shared, “The school has provided me with a mentor who, during my first – during my first year, I met with once a week and during my second year, every other week, who you know – who’s gone through my lesson ideas and helped me try and improve them. And the – the school – I would also have a new teacher study group that meets once a month that provides us with some ideas, which again, sometimes has been helpful.”

Jared. Jared was finishing his third year at the time of the interview. He began as a faculty member in Judaic Studies and in his third year was promoted to Bible Department Chair. In addition he taught a senior elective and advised the student government. In thinking about professional development, he said, “Well lots actually, that's one thing that the school has done very well, takes it very, very seriously is professional development. So there are lots of layers of it actually. So the school has a new teacher induction program, which I think is the title of it. That I found it to be actually very, very helpful, and very, very attractive. So I started really the day that I got here, they assigned me a mentor. My first two years I had mentors with whom I worked very, very closely. Really two mentors, one the first year and one second year and they are really there to you know sort of help you out in lots of different ways most directly with my teaching, they would observe my classes on a regular basis, we would meet once every week, meet second year once every other week like that, there is this talk about what was going on in the classes to help me, they’d observe me, we talk about what went on in class, and that was just enormously helpful I couldn’t have made it through my first year without my mentor. Also during the first two years, we had the new teacher study group, so which I think I remember was like once a
month or so, all of the new teachers would come together with one of the senior faculty members, we would work on issues I mean, you know we do different things each month and it’s just kind of working on different issues and challenges that we had.”

Jared also spoke about his many opportunities to attend professional development conferences in New York as well as educator summers in Israel. As the school participated in the Standards and benchmarks in *Tanakh* training, Jared benefited from that as well. That specific work continued throughout the years in the department.

*Liam.* In his third year as the Director of Student Services, Liam began as a part time Bible teacher several years before, while the current head of school was the Bible Department Chair. He had no formal training as a teacher and shared that while he was in Rabbinical school he considered becoming a Jewish educator. “So I worked a lot on my profession, I don’t know how much I have succeeded, but worked on it a lot. Additionally, just working with [Head of School], who was the then chair of the Bible Department, so he taught me how to be a teacher of that – of his program. I have also – I did Bible Standards and Benchmarks which has been great for me. And then, another piece is we had [name of regional independent school organization] conference – we do professional development here all the time, but that was really moving for me because I have never been to a non-specifically non-Jewish education conference.”

**Summary and Implications.** The theme of professional development is a strong theme for the interviewees and something that the administration is proud of. This same sense of pride was heard throughout the interviews as the interviewees either reflected on their own professional development, were met with surprise with colleagues outside of the school, or in the school’s ability to support this high level of teacher support and professional development.

The commitment to professional growth was mirrored in the document review, specifically in the SFG and SGT documents. Both the SFG and the SGT promote a strong sense
of an institution of learning for everyone in the building, students and faculty. The premise of the SFG approach is that all the adults in the school are always engaged in the pursuit of learning and growth as practitioners and as academics. Educators use the document as a tool to help identify where they are as an educator for each of the standards and help them aspire to move their practice toward Innovating. One of the standards in the SGT document is “Developing as a Professional Educator”. One of the sub-standards in this standard is “Establishing professional goals and pursuing opportunities to grow professionally.” In this sub-standard, as the teacher moves toward innovating, she is thinking not only about herself but also her colleagues and the school as a whole. In the Standard for “Student Independence,” it states, that “Lessons and activities provide independent thought, encourage intellectual risk taking and promotes questioning. Teacher engages students in activities which emphasize that intellectual struggle and frustration are part of the learning process.” The goals for faculty and student growth mirror each other. The faculty recruitment brochure which boasts, “On-site professional development with excellent mentorship and resources. Potential for advancement and leadership roles.” Additionally, it stated, “Teaching at [school name] is an ongoing process of innovative thinking, careful planning, thoughtful collaboration, and deep reflection.”

Professional development in the school takes on many forms, some of which are institutionalized such as the new teacher induction program and curricular programs such as the Standards and Benchmarks training. There are yet others such as attending conferences as scholars in the field as well as conferences specific to pedagogy. These opportunities, especially those that allowed faculty to pursue their scholarship were spoken about with extreme positivity. As administration was proud of what they support, the faculty were motivated by their ability to continuously learn and grow.
The Head of School claimed that if you want to see the priorities in the school you can look at the budget. It was clear that he was proud that he inherited such a large PD budget and that he continued to protect that aspect of the budget to continue to promote faculty growth. During a pre-interview, the head of school remarked that he wanted the school to be known as the place to teach right out of school because the school would continue to rigorously invest in developing each educator. The large PD budget and the culture of PD in the school are spoken about as a part of their institutional identity.

Both SFG and SGT documents demonstrated that this commitment to professional growth is a developed practice in the school and the faculty brochure promotes this idea as a recruitment strategy. The interviews made it abundantly clear that these documents reflected a lived reality within the school; that faculty had received a great deal of professional development and were deeply appreciative of the ability to pursue their growth as teachers as well as scholars.

From Idea to Implementation. Every interviewee was asked to reflect on a time when someone was able to take an idea and see it all the way through to implementation. They could speak about something that they had done or something a colleague had done. In March 2015 there were a few stories that repeated themselves including the production of a Yiddish play, the new computer game blending gaming with Rabbinics, and the development of new courses. These examples and others below are examples of members of the school community having an idea, asking for and receiving support from the administration and implementing the idea within the school; or administration coming to a faculty member with an idea, getting buy-in and then letting the faculty member take it on through implementation.

Jared. During his interview Jared spoke about the opportunities to create as the administration requested as well as to take an idea to administration and implement it. In his case these examples were connected.
“So last year I was asked to create a new course. It seems maybe about October of last year, [Head of School name] asked me if I would create a new course for the spring semester of last year, called Jewish Journeys. The idea being to create some sort of class where students would be exposed to a diverse range of different thinkers and beliefs on kind of big picture Jewish topics like God, repentance and things like that. So yeah, actually there was me and another guy who works here who were asked to do this for the course we spent last fall developing this course then we launched it in spring, called Jewish Journeys and yeah, anyway, went really, really well. I guess you can sort of call it theology class, but it’s really it's more about – it's more about helping the students to explore what they believe. We still teach different thinkers but it's not so much for learning what those thinkers says as much as using those as a jumping-off point for talking about what we believe. So we did that last spring and went really, really well, and we continued it this year. So it’s a semester long class, we had two groups of it this year, just went really, really well and really tapped into an unmet need in the curriculum.” Jared developed and taught the course for three semesters.

“And what had occurred to me was I was thinking we have such a structured program here at the school for college counselors. We have jobs which exist to work with the kids [social worker] and you know, she could tell you every step of the way starting the junior year sophomore whatever starts exactly what they are going to be doing to get them to college. Why don’t we have something like that for people's spiritual lives? And we’re a Jewish school – we should be nurturing their Judaism in the same sort of way, but we really don’t and we actually have no idea what the kids actually believe, they can believe or want to believe and stuff like that. So one day, I want to say was maybe early December or so, [the Head of School] had scheduled breakfast with me, with all of his department chairs just to kind of check in with them. So he and I were sitting at a coffee shop having breakfast together and I shared these thoughts
with him and I said, why don’t we have somebody on staff whose job is to be there the spiritual
counselor or do something like this. And so he really liked the idea.”

“And then shortly after that, [assistant head of school] asked me if I want to be nominated
for this Legacy Heritage program, so we started working on the application and we needed a
project. So I shared with [assistant head of school] my idea, you know it would be great to have
some sort of program of spiritual counseling, spiritual mentorship or something. So we started
putting thoughts together and well, we ended up proposing and got accepted. In the application
[we wrote we really wanted to] take this Jewish journeys work that we were doing with seniors
and start doing it with the freshmen. And so the project as it's developed, it’s going to have two
parts to it. One of them is to create kind of a mini version of these Jewish journeys elective like
we do with the seniors but to start doing that with the freshmen. So what we are planning on
doing next year is we are going to have set up what they’ve had in the past with the Jewish
component [during the PALS freshman seminar time], we are going to have 11 sessions of
Jewish Journeys where freshmen are going to be in small groups, just be two teachers teaching it
simultaneously so that we have maybe 9-10 students and we are going to start doing the same
work with them. Start having conversations about what they believe in.”

“The second one is to create a faculty mentorship program where Jewish studies teachers
will be matched up with freshmen and you know each faculty member would be asked to meet
with their mentee on some basis, just once a semester just to check in, get to know them, build
the relationships so that student knows that they have a resource that they could go to, they just
can ask questions or give ideas or just someone to talk to, just so that there is kind of more of a
teacher there– it’s interesting as of kind of developing these ideas.”
During the follow-up member checking interview with Jared he shared how this project went after he attended the program in the summer in Israel. He shared that the administration found money in the budget to support the Jewish mentors.

“The fellowship was really about educational innovation so we went to all sorts of classes on how to institute organizational change and stuff like that. And then spent a lot of hours working on our actual project.”

He shared that the course was developed and was run during the time that was allotted (during freshman seminar that was made up of various components and always had some sort of Jewish component) and that it was impactful for the students.

“It ended up being a 9-session course and the freshman rotated through it in shifts. I had five teachers involved, for the seminar part there were two of us teaching it and for the mentorship part there were five of us that were mentors. And that was always the trickier part to make it work. For the mentorship part we were each assigned about 10 freshman and there were a couple of times blocked out during the year to meet. In the second semester it happened over lunch a few times with pizza. In addition of the mentors checked-in one-on-one with each of their mentees to develop the individual relationship.”

“There was a range of outcomes, the Jewish journeys seminar part was more successful and the easier one to figure out how to do. There were a lot of kids that were really into it and it was great in terms of relationship building. And then the mentorship part went better first semester than it went second semester. Part of that was because in the first semester they had the time carved out during the freshman seminar. Second semester when we didn’t have the seminar block we did it during lunches, but they still felt like lunch is our time and you’re encroaching on our time. It was an interesting learning experience that way.”
“In year two we continued the Jewish journeys seminar and tried re-tooling the Jewish mentorship bit. We had the set meetings only during the first semester when it was blocked out and then the individual meetings the second semester. It was ok, not the most stunning results, it was a good attempt. We didn’t continue it into my sixth year.”

During one of Jared’s senior Jewish journey’s courses some students came to him and said that they loved this class and they really wanted to hear about their teacher’s lives. “I organized a series of Jewish journeys faculty panels with three teachers. Each time we did this there was a different theological question and they would share their open and honest thoughts about the question.”

“It speaks to your larger question, that administration is supportive of trying new things. When I went to them with this idea, they said great, let’s try it.”

Jared continued to share that during his fourth year at the school he began to get frustrated with minyan (morning prayer service). During his first years he ran an egalitarian minyan and also ran a skills workshop with some students. However, he was frustrated because “most kids don’t like to daven (pray).” He was determined to do something more productive with his time and to better engage the students as well as feel like he is contributing more. “I came up with the idea of doing an art and tefilah (prayer) minyan. At that point in my life I had a few artistic skills. I had taken a workshop in NY on micrography and then Jewish paper cutting. I brought the idea to Director of Jewish studies and pitched the idea to him and he said great, give it a shot.”

“It went really really well, the kids loved it. They created really beautiful art. Some of them it sparked an interest in art that they never knew they had. Then there was a whole therapeutic value to it. There was a set of girls that spent the first 10 minutes of everyday in the social worker’s office and after a few weeks after they started the art minyan the social worker
came to me and told me that ever since they began the art minyan the girls no longer go to see her anymore.”

Struck by the amount of ideas and initiatives that Jared had implemented the interviewer asked whether Jared thought that this innovation was due to who he was or some intersection of who he was and the stance in the school. Also, whether there were other people who were constantly generating ideas and supported in this way.

“I think in general they were open to innovation. I think I clicked with the powers that be there in a way that some other people didn’t. I think there were some people there who were brilliant educators, who had great ideas, who actually maybe weren’t given quite as warm a reception to their ideas as I was and I’m not exactly sure what that was about.”

Joseph. In his first year of teaching a colleague fell ill and the administration asked Joseph to teach a course that he felt was too much preparation for him at that point. Instead he countered with another idea.

“So I said, why don’t we do Sefer Hachinuch the name of the book...and the students can choose mitzvat [Jewish commandments] you know the prep wouldn’t be so difficult and so [head of school] said great, it speaks to the Halachik [Jewish law] pillar, you know it’s not fancy, very good fit. So he was happy, so I was teaching it and I said why don’t we at the end of school year, why don’t we do a night of learning? Alright, so the students would choose their own mitzvah [Jewish commandment], whatever they want and they would prepare a source sheet and they would bring in the parents and we’ll just have a nice evening. So the school is very happy, so yes, so we did that. And what happened was that like in the first two years I did it, so I did that last year, it was only 8 students. The next year they said well why don’t you incorporate Sefer Hachinuch into your regular class. And I was like, okay I liked it. So then in the next year, it was
all my classes doing the evening of learning in the back of the *beit midrash* [Jewish library/study house] doing this work like that.”

*Michael.* During his first year at the school Michael noticed that they didn’t offer a Rabbinics Honors course, they offered honors Bible and honors Hebrew, but not Rabbinics. At several department meetings he began to raise this issue and wonder why not. In addition, he had several students who were interested in having an honors course as well.

“And so in every department meeting, I’d get up, like maybe we should consider honors Rabbinics. So finally – finally after bringing it up again and again, we decided like at the very end of last year, why don’t we try this? But we hadn’t had honors Rabbinics for several years, and I was pushing to – to implement it because I saw that several students were interested in it. So sort of at the end of the year, we decided, okay, we’re going to – we’re going to do this. I had – despite not – despite that – the fact that I was the one pushing it, I never imagined that even if they’d listen to it, they’d actually ask me to teach it, because who gives second year teachers the honors class? But – but it was really nice and a really great group of kids.”

*Mary.* Educational technology is an area of pride for many at the school and the school has been on top lists of schools leading in education technology. Mary has been with the school almost from its founding and has been responsible for pushing the school technologically for years. The school was a very early adopted of iPads and one-to-one iPad programs.

“Oh sure, it was in April 6 years ago when Steve Jobs was still alive and I have a visual for you but I saw that iPad and people thought it was pretty much a joke at that time, but at that point, I [the students] had maybe 7 textbooks, AP Calculus, AP Bio, English books whatever, I saw these textbooks and in my mind, I thought, “Wow! The weight of those textbooks being put into this little tiny thing what they could do for students backs, what that could do for organization. And at that time what was happening is kids were coming in with all
these different organizational issues, dysgraphia, we were seeing kids changing in some ways, short attention span. And I remember even with my own staff here I would say, “Oh my god you guys, this iPad.” Oh no, it will never, it’s never going to emerge. I said, “We got to follow it.”

“Fast forward, we let it go for a year, watched it for a year and the second year we were early adopters of it. We put 10, 20 in the summer before staff went home, just to test it. And then the next year we did a full deployment of the students. If I were to do it again, I would probably go slower, but at that time the money came about, we received an incredible grant for technology and curriculum integration to build a game. So all of the pieces collided quite beautifully to make a beautiful implementation, a little bit faster than what I would have hoped, but quite flawless.”

Jamie. As a founding committee member of the school Jamie has been involved with the school from its very beginning. Seeking a place to send his own child to school he worked to create a workgroup to take the idea of a new school into implementation.

“So, one of my desires was to try again to establish sort of a community-based Jewish day school in [city name]. And community is a term that can be used in many different ways and I can go and have definition of that but – because I wanted a place for them to go post middle school. So, I started working in [school name] in about ’96, ’97. There was a group of probably six or eight of us also very interested, [Jewish elementary school name] parents or parents of kids that would be graduating soon from [Jewish elementary school name]. So, I was the president of this formation committee, for lack of any better terminology. So, the long and the short of it, is that we had to work through [the Jewish] Federation, we had to find some key members high up in Federation that would sponsor us that would go to bat for us in the hall, in the meeting rooms in federation where we could not go. Really, a lot of this was kicked off when the head of school of [Jewish elementary school name] and I, went up to visit a professor at the University of [state name] who was the chairman of the Jewish studies department.
Nancy. The science program at the school didn’t have long enough periods to conduct meaningful labs and this was becoming increasingly frustrating to the science teachers, especially those teaching at the AP level. An AP biology teacher came to the administration and asked for the use of the PAL period (extra period at the end of the day often used for arts, performance, etc) as a way to provide extra science lab time.

“AP Biology teacher really felt that she needed extra time to run the labs because we don’t have as many minutes as a lot of other schools. So she was running into a real time crunch, there always has been but even more so. So the implementation of those, the labs I really felt like, were sort of, gave a lot of legitimacy to Science AP Programs.”

The biology teacher first went to discuss this with her colleagues in the science department and then, “it was brought to the previous dean, and then put into the schedule through the people that were doing the scheduling.”

In addition, she shared about the Educational Leadership Team (ELT) working to implement peer coaching throughout the school. “I think the peer coaching was something that came through ELT as a necessary element of Professional Development in the school. We have this observation based Professional Development through mentoring, but we wanted the same kinds of conversations happening between teachers who were not new to the school. So that was something that the ELT created and implemented and had the autonomy to do that.”

Karen. Working as the COO of the school, Karen has the opportunity to work with faculty on their grant writing and reporting. When she was asked to talk about ideas that have been implemented, she said, “Okay, so we do a lot of projects like that. They have the entrepreneurial spirit I think out there. What they don’t always have, is the background of writing those grants, of getting the moneys, of being on a timeline.”
One particular story that stuck out for her was about an alumnus who came back to teach part time at the school.

“Oh, so talk about entrepreneurial right and someone taking the reins, I am of course I am the backside so an alumni, who works here, comes to me and says I got this grant and I go, okay what do we have to do? You know it was a small grant and I need to put on a Yiddish play. And I am thinking we don’t speak Yiddish - you know he has the personality to capture these kids and learn this language, to you know move forward. Then, you know when we can’t get a venue you know he comes, and says I have never been in this theater or I didn’t know it was there, it was really cute and he found the space. He just follows all these steps with these kids and these kids are seniors, they are excited, they are already out of school and they are excited about it. So I go on one of the days, the second day, and the place is full people are standing and sitting on the floor I was running out there early. It was one of those things of picking something up and following it all the way through. I mean I get the contract in Hebrew and I am like, okay you need to translate, I don’t speak Hebrew. That you need to translate for me, but it was every single thing that they did, it was like this little team, it was totally project managed by them and they ran with it, I just you know had to sign contracts and keep it going.”

Noah. Supporting faculty ideas toward implementation is a source of pride for Noah, the Head of School. He also loved to work with students who came to him with ideas and finding ways to make their ideas a reality.

“We had a student who came to us. He was very involved in Bnei Akiva (religious Zionist education organization) and he really was excited about bringing Bnei Akiva to the school. And I’ve always wanted to have Shlichim (Israeli emissaries) in the school. And he was pumped, and he was really excited, and he was a student who was a real doer. And so I knew that he was excited, and I also happen to know that there are people that liked him and were connected to
him who had money. And so I told him, you know let’s go for it. Let's see if we can bring Bnei Akiva to the school and you do whatever work you need with Bnei Akiva, and I'm going to raise the money. And I was able to raise the money very quickly. And he was able to get done what he did, and we went through a very extensive process. I remember we needed to get them an apartment; we needed to get them working papers. We needed to establish a relationship with Bnei Akiva which did not – had never been in a non-Orthodox school before. And it was just a phenomenal success; we pulled the whole thing off. And we pulled it off in a very, very short period of time. And then whenever I spoke about that, I always gave that student credit and I always encourage students. When you have an idea, come to me because you know if we can make that happen we can make that happen. And I could rattle off five other stories right now to of a similar elk.”

Greg. During the follow-up member-checking interview with Greg he was particularly enthused by sharing some stories of student-initiated work. A student approached the administration and asked for some time to meet with them and make a proposal. The “ student approached us interested in increasing school spirit and had a specific enterprise in mind. He prepared a presentation including prototypes of [school name] gear he designed (shirts, sweats, water bottles etc.) and a PowerPoint with his vision for a Shuk [market] and a strategic and financial plan to implement it. This year the Shuk has been successfully implemented by this student. We provided the student with a table (this was the first stage of his proposal - for the next stage he was going to purchase a cart), room to set up the wares and room to store the merchandise. He designed the merchandise, did the purchasing and is working on keeping organized books (this is in process). The profits go to the school. His sweats and the logo/design is very popular (and students wear them all the time) which helped achieve one of his goals of improved school spirit.”
Summary and Implications. The stories running through the school of people having ideas to better the school and to provide more opportunities to the students were some of the most exciting that the interviewees shared. Each interviewee was animated in the telling of the story and proud that the school allowed it to happen and invested resources to make it happen. There was a sense of pride in the telling of the stories. These stories all point to a culture of autonomy in the school as well as a culture where students are given voice.

Many of the ideas came directly from the faculty and students, who were given the freedom and the support, both in human and financial resources to move them into implementation. The administration is particularly proud of supporting faculty and student ideas. The Head of School said, “But we are very, very nimble and I always say the amount of time between conception and execution here can be days or weeks. And that's intentional certainly under my leadership, that I've always felt in most organizations the gap between concept and execution is often so long, so drawn out and so filled with red tape that by the time you get to the end, the original people who had the spark or the idea are either no longer with the organization or are no longer interested in the idea, or have had the air taken – the wind taken out of their sails. So very intentionally I tried to keep the process brisk.”

The administration has built an identity around the ability to take ideas initiated by any stakeholder in the school and move them into implementation quickly. This sense of identity was also found in both the Standards for Good Teaching and the Supervision for Growth documents emphasize the importance of fostering independence in the school. One such way to foster independence is by encouraging both faculty and students to set their own growth goals and to have the opportunity to explore their interests. In the SFG document it states, “The purpose of the self-review is to provide teachers an opportunity to reflect on their practice
and their professional goals along with strategies to move in a positive professional trajectory;”
and in the SGT it states that teachers, “Engage students in self-assessment including monitoring
their own progress, understanding and goals.” Additionally, the SGT states that an innovating
teacher,” creates opportunities for students to express original, controversial and divergent ideas
in a respectful manner.” In much the same way, during the teacher self-review outlined in the
SFG document, it states, “The purpose of the self-review is to provide teachers an opportunity to
reflect on their practice and their professional goals along with strategies to move in a positive
professional trajectory.” These documents reflect a culture that promotes independent thought,
individual goal setting as well as the individual’s interests as a starting point for self-directed
ideas and implementation.

Proactiveness. In the EO literature this is reflected by taking initiative by anticipating
and pursuing new opportunities and participating in emerging markets. Also, when a firm acts in
anticipation of future problems, needs, or changes, has the will and foresight to seize new
opportunities, and meet demands this is proactiveness. Finally, it is observed by taking the
initiative to shape the environment to one’s own advantage and by uncovering the firm’s
tendency to lead rather than follow.

Taking actions that are ahead of the curve. The interviewees were asked to reflect on
any action that was taken in the school over the previous year that showed that the school was
ahead of the curve and was acting proactively. Many interviewees needed some extra cuing to
think about curriculum pedagogy, technology, admissions. The documents also reflected some
aspects of proactiveness when the gaming was marketed.

Joseph. Working with a large grant and in collaboration with a university, Joseph took on
the idea of gaming Judaic studies and worked to create a game using Rabbinic content. Many
resources were invested into the partnership, time to write the grant and then the time to develop
the game. At a time when educational technology was a hot topic both the collaboration and the game itself was a proactive decision by the school.

“Yeah Jewish education and gaming. Right, we got the grant for so it was good for the school to get the grant. It helped boost up you know moral generally. Yes you know so I don’t know if you know what follow through in the coming years will be. But I guess the school has you know the school has the foresight to see it as a niche growing area. So our current game [name of the game] I’ll be able to get you a copy, it was really nothing like it, it was nothing like it. Not that, I mean so our first game was good, it was learning and we learned really what it meant to produce the game and I can see my students working with it. It was good, mostly gaming. But it definitely has strong pedagogic content. But what we produced now is phenomenal and I mean it hooked the students in a way I didn’t even think it would. So it’s sort of walking here students are still playing the game and I gave it to them you know two and a half months ago. You know just to play test, it was like the first draft, it’s a bit – you know it’s sketchy doesn’t always work. But it was like, they are playing it.”

Jared. In thinking about steps taken by the school that are ahead of the curve, Jared also spoke about the gaming aspect of Judaic studies and while he thought it fit into this subject he was skeptical of this type of work.

“Yeah, okay, great. Now so, his big project over the last couple of years has been developing combining gaming, computer gaming with Jewish studies to enhance the teaching and so they actually got some big grants. To work with [local university] to develop a computer game. So and it’s a first in the the nation sort of thing they’ve presented at conferences blah, blah and I think it's a huge thing, I have no idea what it is the school would expect to find. I tend to be sort of old fashion when it comes to technology, and its use in the classroom you know with the iPads and stuff like that but there are people who approach it and really make it
work, that's great, wonderful. So this school is very big on that theme, so they got it approved, I am sure it’s useful.”

He also felt strongly that the professional development offered at the school is ahead of the curve and quite different then what he believed takes place at other schools.

“Something that they've introduced that is ahead of the curve that I really need to – I mean this isn’t something really new, but I mean the whole system of professional development and support that they have here I think actually is not necessarily new, but I think it is ahead of curve for where a lot of schools are, remember last spring or so, when I was at the Pardes conference, I was just sharing kind of my experiences with the mentors, how supportive my administration is and other teachers who were in the room kind of listening and just didn’t know what to make of it, just not so how my school is. This sort of throws me under the bus, the that they get all the time and they were really sort of jealous of the kind of support that I got. So it’s not necessarily new and innovative, but it might be –”

Karen. Working outside of the educational aspect of the school also provides opportunities for the school to work ahead of the curve. Karen shared a story about healthcare.

“So with healthcare coming right, you know and you know it’s not the best example because nobody even knows what’s happening in healthcare. But one of the things that my office does is you know, we are constantly looking out for our employees and you know you have somewhat of a mess coming at you. So you know we've worked with our agent, we do a lot of research on our own. And this has happened for the second year and we have given employees a voice. In the past it has always been you know we research; we make the best decisions and all that kind of stuff. As the landscape changed our whole thing was to keep the cost down but the insurance the same, the cost increases. We have been very successful on that but it meant changing things.”
Nancy. When asked to think about times when the school made a decision that was ahead of the curve, Nancy shared two very different stories. One was about the swiftness with which the school could remove a principal.

“I think removing the principal was a very good decision, I don’t know if that’s proactive educationally, but as far as I think it could have been really damaging to the school for him to remain, and certainly wasn’t an easy decision so I think the school did a really nice job on that.”

The second example was about a new pedagogical conversation developing at the school.

“One of the things that we are working on is implementing a Whole Brain element to the school through one of our Arts teachers. And I think it’s really, could be really exciting, I think it’s something that it hasn’t gotten off the ground, yet. And there are logistics and realities of that are still sort of not so clear, but the idea is that hopefully, eventually each class will have some sort of Whole Brain project or element to it and not in a sense that, one of my issues with projects is often times they are lots of fun and they look great but they really mean nothing educationally. So the idea is that we would ensure that it is something that is not to us sort of an addition to what you do in class but really is part of the learning goals, it’s not taking away from whatever is being covered in U.S. History, it’s really sort of enhancing it. I think it’s going to be something that is difficult and it’s going to be hard to people buy into, but I think it could be really, a calling-card piece for our school and is ahead of the curve in a lot of ways because it’s so hard to implement and it’s so hard to get people on board, but I think it’s great so that’s just yeah another example.”

Mary. In areas of technology, as stated, the school is often ahead of the curve and Mary shared some of those decisions. At the same time, she was critical of the school’s traditional approach to pedagogy and thinks in that area the school was not ahead of the curve.
“Well in my area probably the 3D printers, although there are some new types of 3D printers. At our school, we are very traditional with our curriculum. And it’s traditional, for general studies. A small population, we pride ourselves in our students getting into their first or second college. So if you think about a backward plan or whatever that’s the goal to get these kids into their first, not my goal, but to get the kids into their first or second choice schools. To do that our curriculum had fulfilled that outcome. I personally follow trends and love project based learning, stem, science, education, technology that type of combination and we don’t really have it here. So I am always looking for ways of being able to offer that opportunity to our students. There is always 1, 3, 5 or 7 or 10 kids that are looking, are hungry for that on their own. So whether it be an online programming class that I could do with the kids at the end of the day or these 3D printers. And again, lucky with money, we were able to get a grant to put in 3D printers with the proper software so that students can learn the design aspect. And that would go, coincide with an entrepreneur class that we try to teach. We have been extremely fortunate with a couple of our early graduates that are very generous in giving back. So they were leaders of this entrepreneurial type of spirit, which in the past we have, they have actually taught the class this year. We are working with [local tech school] which is a very close school to us and they are bringing college classes in. So I am hoping we might make a better relationship with them for more offerings to these kids who are really more interested in some of these offerings that we can’t offer through our core curriculum.”

Aaron. Having worked in the school from its founding, Aaron witnessed several heads of school as well as various initiatives. He had a healthy attitude about teaching and learning and also some real frustrations with various decisions the school had made. He was particularly skeptical about educational technology and critical of the gaming initiative.
“– I mean that didn’t work, what did they say the gaming was great success? I think it lasted five minutes. I don’t know any class right now that was built on it, any curriculum that was built on it and my humble opinion but, I’m older so I have to be careful not to be a pigeon hole. All these efforts of gaming and all that are just dumbing things down. Believe me I’ve been hesitant to say this because I know I’m not so attracted to technology but it’s a fact. And then when I read that in colleges they have the same problem, “Oh okay,” so I feel better. Yeah the gaming, show me, show me what happened from that gaming you got; nothing. They made a game I’m told it takes five minutes, and nothing – where’s the curriculum that resulted? Nothing.”

Liam. At the time of the interview the school had just begun a partnership with a local university to bring in entrepreneurial classes to the students. “This is one and it’s not a 100% success yet, we just did it, but I would say in terms of somewhat proactive ahead of the curve. We have partnered with a local college on class on entrepreneurial skills and actually I was involved with that one, both because I supervise the PAL classes as well as the teacher happens to be a member of my synagogue. So we were talking about entrepreneurial area of need, we had an entrepreneurial class and somehow putting – we put this together to actually engage the college to come over here and offer this class. So the idea is good, there is some things we need to work out. I was going to say that we are also in the process again [of another initiative], so we have a lot of kids doing online classes, mostly seniors that we've got some work to do in terms of I think work well, it’s just phenomenal.”

Noah. When asked about action taken by the school that was ahead of the curve and proactive, Noah said he immediately goes to technology and tried specifically not to do so. The next thought was to speak about the Yiddish play, which the researcher had already documented well. Then he asked if the researcher had heard, yet, about the trip to Germany. For context, the
school had been taking a three-week trip to Israel for almost the entire life of the school. Then they added Poland to the trip and joined The March of the Living. Noah explained that, “for various reasons, I had thought to shake up the trip a little bit.”

“And I thought what if instead of going to making this trip about – about Poland and about you know the camps and getting to Israel which I mean it's wonderful. It’s powerful, we all do it. You know three quarters of our school comes from Reform and Conservative backgrounds. And I doubt any of them know what their origins are in Germany, that the origins of liberal Judaism, both Reform and Conservatism are in Germany. I can't imagine there are any of them who know that, who understand that. And I thought wouldn't it be neat if these kids really understood the roots of who they were as liberal Jews in Germany. And I said even for the modern Orthodox, I very much doubt any modern Orthodox Jews understand that modern orthodoxy was born in Germany. And I thought that will also sort of shake them up a bit because generally Orthodox Jews think that they are ones who go all the way back to Sinai. But in fact all three movements had their origins, and I don’t have to tell you in – in 19th century Germany.”

Noah arranged the trip so that the students would spend a day in Germany before going to Poland and then he looked into bringing in a scholar of Reform Judaism. The scholar came and worked with the students and prepared them for their trip. In addition to his excitement about the trip, as the Head of School, Noah was pleased that they pulled this together in just a few months, “But more to your point, again this was all pulled off within months. You know this idea came to me the year it really started.”

He continued to explain, “And I thought it was – in terms of ahead of the curve, I thought this was in terms of what we're seeing in, you know in American Judaism, the people are looking for you know how do we you know connect this generation to Judaism. I thought this was
something, you know we’ve – we tried this idea of connecting them through the Holocaust. But here was another way maybe we can connect them to – to the roots in a different way.”

**Shaping the Environment.** All the internal documents seek to shape the culture and environment in the school by systematizing procedures and embed habits in the working life of the school. The hiring protocol clearly delineated roles among the administration and built in a way to end the interview early if it was determined that the candidate was not a good fit. Additionally, it began by having the candidate think and write about the mission of the school. While much of this may not at first seem to fall into the category of being proactive, these types of systems are in place to shape the culture of the school. The professional development at the school is well systematized and robust and some interviewees mentioned their feeling that it was proactive. These systems were well articulated in the SFG and SFG documents.

**Leadership.** Leadership is promoted throughout the documents in two ways: the school developed student and faculty leaders and that the school itself was a leader in the educational field, specifically in its use of educational technology. The recruitment brochure stated, that there was potential for “advancement and leadership roles.” The annual report highlighted how the school’s graduates disproportionately represented the efforts of revitalizing [nearby city] and that they were involved in every aspect of the city’s rebuilding. With the school’s work in blended learning, early adoption of iPads and 3D printers, and gaming an aspect of their curriculum, the school promoted itself as a technology leader. The recruitment brochure talked about, “ultimate access to top level technology,” and the viewbook talks about how the school is on the “cutting edge of integrated technology skills.”

**Summary and Implications.** Much as with innovativeness, the interviews indicate that across various constituencies in the school there is a culture of thinking about what is next and how to better the position of the school, the curriculum, the student experience, and the parent
experience. There is a clear link between the school’s openness to innovation and its habit of being proactive - both require a culture open to new ideas and specifically to new ideas coming from anywhere within the school. Across the interviews it was easy for the interviewees to think of examples once they were primed. Again, like with innovation, while some of the answers pointed to technology they were not dominated by technology.

Each interviewee seemed to be actively thinking about ways in which to improve his/her aspect of the school whether it was healthcare, a new type of assessment, rethinking an international trip, bringing in one-to-one iPads as an early adopter school or partnering with another institution to best serve the student body. This culture of seeking growth and what is next demonstrates the schools propensity for reflection and looking forward to shape both the internal culture as well as the field of education.

**Innovativeness.** This theme speaks to the school’s tendency to engage and support new ideas, experimentation and new processes that may result in new products, services, technological processes; a willingness to depart from existing technologies, processes, current state. It measures financial commitments to innovation, technology, and policy. It is important to note that innovativeness can be understood in at least two ways that are important for this work. It can reflect ideas that are new to the field, and it can reflect the willingness of the school to take on new ideas and to experiment. The final note on this section is that some aspects in this section may no longer seem innovative and it is important to remain conscious of how quickly technology changes and how quickly technology has changed schools.

**School supports new ideas and approaches.** During each interview the interviewees were asked directly about any clues they saw in the school that indicated the school’s willingness to take on new ideas and approaches and implement them. The interviewees were invited to
speak about stories they have had as well as colleagues and students - anything they felt indicated the school’s willingness to innovate.

Joseph. When asked to think about clues in the school that it encouraged new ideas and approaches, Joseph said, “Well I think it depends on the idea, but you know I think that there is a – there is a culture of supportiveness trying to make ideas happen you know as long as they fit in with – with the school’s – school’s vision. And that can be delicate you know because sometimes there’s history and it’s not positive politics. And you know things can be shot down just because you know it’s not going to work, you know. But you know other times, you know it can be small things.”

Jared. The free rein that Jared believed he had in his classroom in terms of planning and pedagogy stroke Jared as a clue that the school supports new ideas. “Yeah, I mean they gave us pretty free rein on what to do here in class and that, I mean there is like a curriculum there is something covered but like yeah, they encourage us. I mean, I guess they do use language like risk taking that's encouraged. Yeah, I remember my first year here there used to be – in my first two years there was an academic dean, she was like the number two person here, she retired last year, she very much encouraged this.”

As an example, “So the first year here I taught at Bible class, I have never done before. We had a group of very high-level juniors, they didn’t know what else do it with them, so they said here have fun. So I just created a class, and so for my final unit with that class, a unit in minor prophets we learned one of the books of the prophets together, but for this I thought about what to do for an assessments. There was six kids in the class, small class. So we actually made them each learn another book of the prophets on their own, and teach a class on their prophet. So they got to be teacher for a day. And yeah, so when I first came up with the idea, I brought the assignment in yeah she [dean] got that, she said wow, this is difficult, this is very hard, this is
ambitious, do it, go for it. And then she was very supportive and she even agreed to come in for
day and talk about pedagogy and have me think about how to structure a class. And then they
each had to be teacher for a day, they had to teach their prophet in one class period, they had to
do the assessments of the other students. Yeah, it was very challenging for them, but yeah, it was
good. So I think never done anything like that before, but yeah, dean was just very, very
supportive of that. I suppose it could have not gone well, but it went very well.”

_Nancy_. Working in administration and as a member of the ELT, Nancy could see some of
the structural and administrative decisions as clues that the school encouraged new ideas and
approaches. Working with the faculty on the seventh teaching standard was such an example.
“So our seven teaching standards highlight that (innovation) a lot, pretty much every
single one does, focus on creativity. The seventh standard in particular is one that was created by
our teachers. And we call it the Independent standard and it’s one of the things that we really
focused on trying to support our students in becoming more independent thinkers, more
independent learners and embracing sort of academic struggle that this has been, it’s okay to
struggle that it means you are actually really pushing yourself in learning. And the teacher is not
the source of the knowledge, you are part of that that formula there for your own growth. So I
think in just in that the creation of such a document we are saying that we want to do whatever
we can to foster independence and responsibility in our students and that sometimes takes
creative thinking.”

_Sherri_. In thinking about the Board of Trustees, Sherri didn’t have a particular story that
indicated the school’s openness to new ideas, however, as an alumni parent she shared a story
about her son while he was at the school that spoke to the school’s willingness to encourage
innovation.
“Yeah, as a parent I can tell you when my son was here, he now has a Masters of Entrepreneurship and he is a computer engineer, but his first business was here and he got permission from the then head [of school] and he brought this professional coffee machine and somebody supervised him. Every Wednesday he’d come in at the crack of dawn and everybody would buy the specialty coffee and it was his first business that failed because – not because it wasn’t popular, it was very popular, he was exhausted. And then he finally said to me, my time is worth more than this.

It was a really incredible lesson, just how to buy supplies, how to manage your time, how to get you know it had to be locked up for Kashrut [Jewish dietary laws] so it has to be taken out with somebody there and supervised and the whole piece and he is not so fast and you have to make things fast because the more you sell the more your profit is. It was very – I really appreciated the school let him be so innovative, let him take that time and gave him permission to do this and the support to do it, because it was certainly very out of the box, yeah.”

Mary. Heading the technology in the school, Mary was at the forefront of much of the technological innovation in the school. At the same time she could be skeptical of the work the school was doing pedagogically. One area she spoke about was the time she was able to get working with teachers on implementing educational technology into their classes.

“I am always asking you know can we do this [innovative], can we put a little piece of this in the curriculum? Last year and I will do it again, I was gifted to take a staff out of the class room for four hours, we called them visionaries, tech visionaries, where I could work with a group of teachers and of course I want to bring students into this group. To take a piece of a curriculum and study it and see how we could rework it in a manner that might take the benefits of the technology to deliver this differently. So to me that’s a kind of innovation. I think over all teachers are always looking to innovate, I just think that when you are such a small school and
maybe you have three preps, it’s very, very difficult to keep your head above water. We ask our teachers to be part of a you know a professional development study their teaching craft. And in some ways I think that’s innovative in itself.”

*Aaron.* “I wouldn’t say they’re against innovation but again I think teachers have to take initiative.” Aaron was frustrated with the administration several times during the interview as he felt that the teachers had to take all of the initiative. Sometimes he shared the idea would come from the administration and then they would expect the faculty member to do all the work for example, creating the new course that they asked for.

*Liam.* As the Director of Student Services, Liam’s perspective is a broader one across student experiences. When asked whether there were clues in the school that it encouraged innovation, he shared some new and several stories about which had already been spoken. He also noted that innovation was everywhere throughout the school, initiated both by faculty and students and evidenced in technology as well as new programs and new classes.

“We have an entrepreneurial class so that is a big clue, which the students are about 15 students and they are creating a product, it’s called venture creation. We have – our media center is growing. For the entrepreneurial professors who asked – about a 3D printer. Of course I wanted to ask, what’s that, and I went to the media director [name] and she said, we are about to get one. So I think our use of the media [lab], that we are an iPad school, that we are encouraging using technology in class. I think is a sign that we are looking, and that are many of our teachers are putting up and promoting the innovation in their class, again look at this program the *Sefer Chinuch* where they were just kind of on their own. So I think in just about every classroom or hallway we are seeing examples of student work and student creativity that's not from the students per se, but we had one of our staff members created a Yiddish play for the first time that
again there was this, you want to do something new, we encourage you to do it. So I think we see it both from the staff and from the students.”

*Michael.* Working with his mentor, Michael felt a lot of support with brainstorming and thinking through new ideas. His attitude toward ideas not working was casual and indicated a culture in the school that was open to trial and error. It seemed the school is an environment that tolerated failure and ideas that didn’t work or come to fruition.

“I would say – and definitely like you know, whenever I’ve been like brainstorming ideas with my mentor, if – you know, if I have an idea, and I’m not sure if it’ll work, he’ll always encourage me to try it, and you know, he’ll help work with me to make it better than what it starts as. But you know, if you have something new, you think it might work, give it a try. You know, they’re not – not – sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn’t.”

He extended his thinking about innovativeness to student initiative to come forward and ask for the classes they want and the administration’s willingness to listen and make those classes happen.

“But I think that – yeah, and I mean, in terms of the students, also, I think the school does a lot to listen to students’ input in terms of what kind of classes they want, they’d like to take. We haven’t offered AP Psychology in the past, a whole bunch of students came to the school this year and said, we want to take AP Psychology next year. So the school said – I don't know if we’re offering it yet, but they said like, we’ll look and see if we can find someone who can teach it. So they’re receptive to students’ – to student input in that.”

*Noah.* As the Head of School, Noah felt very strongly and passionately about his school’s encouragement of innovation and taking ideas into implementation in a rather quick manner. Anything, except for the schedule, was up for conversation, change and enhancement. He felt that if anyone asked the students they would think it was rather normal to bring ideas forward.
“First of all the number of students who could tell you a story of when they came with an idea, and the idea was executed I think would be the most obviously. That you can actually speak to students, and they would actually tell you, yes I had an idea, and I went to so and so and so and so. And they love the idea we went with, went with the idea. I think the students probably think it's relatively normal.”

Noah compared this tendency and norm at his school both to schools he was in previously and the school to which he was leaving to lead, using the curriculum as a main reflection of this. “This is not the norm that in most places the idea that we've always done it this way is the dominance – the dominant culture. And it's not the dominant culture this way. I think if you take a look at the curriculum, I think you'll see that the – especially the curriculum over the years, I think you’ll see the number of times that the curriculum has changed in any given discipline here.”

Here Noah pointed to the technology and the number of times that they have “revolutionized their delivery of technology” in the school. He acknowledged that while they were a well-funded school they weren’t “fabulously wealthy.” Specifically, he explained that if you want to see the biggest clue that the school encourages innovation one only needs to look at the school’s budget. “You have to take a look at where money is allocated. But one of my philosophical points in terms of leadership is that a budget is the mission of the school in numbers. I don’t know if I shared with you. So if you look for clues, you always look to the budget. And if you look at the money that is allocated to technology in the – and the money that is allocated to professional development, I think you can see right there the clues.”

He then continued to explain further about the school’s system for evaluation and supervision and that those who report to him directly meet with him for four reviews annually, something he feels was unheard of. From here, Noah, spoke about the high level of turnover at
the school, which he saw as innovative and responsive as well as difficult for constituencies in the school outside of the administrative leadership.

“And then the other clue which is jarring and I don’t know if you’ve spoken to board members, but it’s jarring outside of the professional leadership here. There is a fair amount of turnover here, and a fair amount of turnover that administratively we’re very comfortable with. Because as my business manager says or first time that we—I interviewed her, she said my philosophy is employees are always on the ramp. You are either moving up or you are moving down, but nobody—nobody is stagnant. And I appreciate her philosophy, and I’ve adopted it. And you will see people don't last here whereas in many, many schools people can remain stagnant for years and years on end. You don't find that with here, there aren't the sort of longstanding you know B- C+ kind of teachers who are here for a long time. Which the parents and lay leaders often find disturbing, because people take tremendous comfort in knowing that you know Mrs. Smith you know has been at the school for, you know when I went to school Mrs. Smith was there and Mrs. Smith was there for my kids, and Mrs. Smith is there for my grandkids. Our turnover here is much more reflective of modern startup companies than it is of schools and nonprofits, where people stay for a long, long period of time.”

**Tried and True.** The observations presented a somewhat different view about the school’s innovativeness. The physical structure of the school, including the architecture, classroom organization, and decor reflect a tendency toward a traditional school setting. The hallways, lockers, mailboxes and offices were designed in an expected way. The classrooms were large squares with tables and chairs, smartboards and teacher desks. The administrative office suite was on the other side of the space from the classrooms and each office was designed as expected: a square or rectangular space, large desks, and few offices had a table for meeting. The decor included American and Israeli flags in several locations and digital signage about what
was happening in the school that day. Outside the school’s guidance counselor’s office, were a set of university flags of universities past students attended. The wall did not display other options post-graduation.

The school displays fell, primarily, into three categories, Israel, student art and school accomplishments, each of these rather traditional in nature. Many of the displays about the State of Israel were store bought posters about the founding and leadership of the State. Self-made displays about Israel showed a large green map of the country and words from an Israeli song “My Israel is beautiful and blooming.” Student work about Israel showed student Hebrew language writing and apps developed in Israel. It was clear that the school’s value of Zionism and the State of Israel were expressed through a sense of pride in the founding of the State and its innovation. Whether conversations within the classroom take on more nuance or other perspectives of Israel is unknown.

Student photography was hung on the walls, student ceramics (jars, mugs) were displayed in cases and a few paintings were displayed as well. Each of these media represented both basic artistic approaches and subject matter. It is unknown whether students work in other artistic mediums and whether they created more modern or avant garde pieces - if it is the case they were not displayed. Finally, the trophy cases were filled with school awards and athletic trophies as well as photographs of the history of the school.

**Summary and Implications.** In almost every interview the interviewees spoke about several clues that demonstrated the school’s willingness to take on new ideas and to innovate. The stories ranged in ideas coming from students, faculty and administration. At the time of the interviews the Yiddish play, technology and the gaming were fresh for many of the interviewees and the researcher heard about them from several different interviewees. While the school was
very advanced in educational technology, it was not the only example given; rather, interviewees provided examples in course design, new trips, and programs in the school.

The openness to discussing and brainstorming new ideas was apparent throughout the interviews and demonstrates that the school’s culture is one that encourages and supports innovation. In addition, there was a willingness to support new ideas, knowing that they do not all work. This attitude toward trial and error created an environment where people came forward with more ideas and discussions, as demonstrated by the number of ideas shared during the interviews.

As the researcher walked the hallways it was apparent that there was an attempt to create areas for students and faculty to collaborate (something newer at the time). In corners of the school there were comfortable chairs in small groups with small tables. In other areas there were small round tables with four chairs around each table. At the entryway, as noted above, there was a student commons area behind the security desk and in front of the Media Center. Each of these sitting areas represent another approach to student and faculty collaboration.

The Media Center had many Apple workstations and 3-D printers. The lab was surrounded by large windows overlooking the student commons. The room was set up with long work areas with the work stations and an office for the Technology Director. During the visit a few students walked into the space to use it. The 3-D printers were not in use while the researcher was on site.

The physical site and decor promoted the idea of innovation as well. Innovativeness was sometimes indicated explicitly when the words innovation or innovative were used as sampled above (viewbook, recruitment brochure). In some instances, behaviors and attributes of innovation such as the school supporting new ideas and departing from existing norms were indicated. The viewbook states, “[school] combines ancient traditions with the latest technology,” and, that they “expose students to unique opportunities.” The annual report stated
that the school, “is pioneering in the field of blended-learning.” On the other hand the four pillars of the school demonstrate a tried and true aspect of the school, grounded in what’s been done and is known.

Secondary Themes.

Risk Taking. In EO, risk taking can be both on the personal as well as firm level and the risk-taking propensity of an individual versus the school – not necessarily correlated. Personal risk taking reflect social or psychological risk. It can also reflect the degree to which managers are willing to make large and risky resource commitments or incur heavy debt in interest of obtaining better gains.

Resource allocation. One aspect of risk taking is resource allocation. Just as Noah, the Head of School said, one way to measure risk is to look at the budget. The researcher was not allowed access to the budget, however, was told by the Head of School that the budget for professional development and technology were both large. It was clear in the interviews, the site observation and the documents that these were two heavily promoted areas of the school. A large investment was made in technology through the early adoption of one-to-one iPads and was reflected in the Media Center.

Competitive Aggressiveness. This aspect of EO can be witnessed in the firm’s propensity to directly and intensely challenge competitors to achieve market entry or improve position to outperform rivals characterized by responsiveness- going head to head with competitor or reactive’ willingness to be unconventional. One of the more challenging questions for the interviewees was when they were asked to think about the school’s stance on competition within the marketplace.

Getting into college. The theme that was most repeated was the school’s reputation in getting its graduates into college, specifically the local state college and university. In addition,
many of the interviewees bemoaned that fact that the kids didn’t often dream bigger than these local schools. They also indicated that students and parents chose to come to the school because of the school’s reputation with admissions at those two schools specifically.

*Noah.* In thinking about competitive aggressiveness, Noah touched on a few issues, being able to let poor faculty go quickly and highly confidential financial aid process. Then he emphasized college acceptance. “And they are willing to say this publicly, and that's known in the community, and parents know that it's $20,000 a year. But if it's important for you that your kids get that edge, it's worth it. You know it's worth the investment because your kid has a better chance to get into these two schools which are the holy grails here. There's no bizarre thing coming from – not from this city, the holy grail are these two schools. And for the most part say 95% of parents here would rather their kids go to the U of [name of state] than to Harvard University. So that's the real – and that's the real edge”

*Jared.* In addition to speaking about college acceptances for the school’s graduates, Jared also felt that the Halachik pillar of the school is one that reflected a competitive stance. By upholding *Halacha* [Jewish law] the school was taking an intentional stance to attract orthodox and modern orthodox families and students to the school. He reflected, that almost everything that was shared about the school, however, was academic in focus.

“Well, I mean sure that there is all sorts of work that is interesting that you read almost any piece of literature that Rabbi [head of school] puts out, 90% of our students get into the University of [state name] it’s not only Akivah [Orthodox school] that we’re competing with, it’s the other private schools, saying nothing of the public school. But sure, I mean if you ask students why they come here, that [acceptance rate to the University of State] is the most common thing that we will hear.”
Michael. During the conversation with Michael, he spoke about the overall makeup of the school, from where they drew students and the primary reason, he believed, students chose to attend the school.

“The vast majority of the kids from [name of an elementary day school] are coming to our school. And then you have another maybe 25% that are coming to us because for whatever reason, they were dissatisfied with the orthodox school. And another 25% that are coming to us out of public school with limited Jewish affiliation and are really coming here strictly because of our academic reputation. So we have to – we have to, on the one hand, keep up a very high academic reputation. You know, we have a very high acceptance rate into the University of [name of state], which is what all the kids want.”

**Summary and Implications.** Thinking about the school’s competition and its competitive stance was a challenging task for the interviewees and was often the question that engaged the interviewees least. Perhaps as a result different themes didn’t arise, except for the conversation about college acceptances and related, academic reputation. For some faculty this aspect of the school was less than ideal, and they expressed their frustration that the students and parents were only thinking about this and not about other attributes that the school offers. Some felt that it represented a market pressure that kept the school from pursuing less traditional ideas. For others it was simply the reality of the market and one which the school was clearly doing well.

As might be expected, the external documents emphasized how the school competed and were heavily coded for competitive aggressiveness. It was clear from the documents and their emphasis on college acceptances why the faculty would speak to this aspect of the school as much as they did.

The school’s competitive stance was marketed across many of the external documents. As most of these documents were marketing documents the statements were generally explicit in
nature. Many of the statements marketed the school as a place that prepares students for universities of their choice. In the flexible tuition brochure, it stated, “[State’s] premier college preparatory Jewish high school.” In the recruitment brochure it stated, “100% of seniors get into the 1st or 2nd choice colleges.” The viewbook shared, “that many have won prestigious awards at the regional, state and national levels. Graduates have gone on to attend the nation’s top design schools including Rhode Island School of Design and Savannah College of Art and Design.”

The marketing materials strongly promoted academic excellence. The high school profile stated several statistics about the number of exams the students had written, their SAT, ACT and AP scores, as well as, “87% of the graduating class has enrolled in at least 1 AP course, 68% have enrolled in two or more AP classes.” The viewbook added that the school’, “…biology, chemistry and physics labs are equal to any university.” Working to recruit top faculty the recruitment brochure touted that the school, “was designated as one of the top 10 best private high schools in the state,” and that their students, “were named the 5-highest achieving of private schools.”

Another category of competitive statements were about other attributes of the school such as the small class size and faculty education. The recruitment brochure stated, ”Small class sizes, with an average of 14 students, and some as small as 6.” The high school profile explains that “58% of faculty hold master’s degrees, 21% hold PhD or Rabbinic ordination. Combined with true [school name] teacher passion, provides [school name’s] students with a uniquely personal and individualized high school experience that helps to develop a strong foundation for success and bestows life-long benefits.”

The school also marketed its professional development program and their viewbook stated, “[school’s] dedication to professional development has won national recognition.”
Finally, the school promoted how their students continued to give back and contribute to the community. The annual report outlined the many ways graduates of the school contributed to the local community, to Israel and by founding companies of their own.

Findings of the Research Question

Research Question

Q: How is entrepreneurial orientation lived and perceived at a Halachik Jewish high school?

Entrepreneurial orientation as a multi-dimensional construct was both lived and perceived at the research site. The various dimensions of the construct were not found equally across the data collection aligning with the work of Lumpkin and Dess (1996) decoupling the dimensions from one another. The three greater themes of autonomy, innovativeness and proactiveness were well founded across the data sources and emphasized in the interviews. In each of the greater themes the sub-themes that emerged from the data and supported the greater themes were richer and better articulated. The lesser themes each only had one main sub-theme that emerged from the data offering a more sparse and simplistic reflection of risk taking and competitive aggressiveness. The separation between the greater and lesser themes may also reflect the various constituencies in the school, of what each constituency is aware, and the way in which the dimensions of the EO construct are lived within the school.

Conclusion

In chapter four, the results from the three sources of data were presented and the themes that emerged from each were further explored. The three data sources were twelve interviews representing faculty, administration and lay leaders, observations of the physical plant, and ten documents (internal and external) collected from the school. The themes that emerged reflected aspects of entrepreneurial orientation, specifically autonomy, innovativeness and proactiveness.
to a greater extent and risk taking and competitive aggressiveness to a lesser extent. Chapter five will discuss the research findings and their implication for practice and future research specifically framed by the construct of entrepreneurial orientation.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this qualitative study was twofold. First, to explore the entrepreneurial orientation (EO) in a Jewish independent school as it was lived and perceived by stakeholders (faculty, administration and lay leadership), and second, to examine how EO was reflected in school documents and site observations. The goal, through observations, document analysis and interviews, was to gain deeper insight into how entrepreneurial orientation manifested in a school led by an entrepreneurial educator. The results were viewed through the multi-dimensional construct of entrepreneurial orientation as perceived by G.T. Lumpkin and Gregory Dess (1996) and reconstructed by Morris et al. (2011) in combination with neo-institutional theory (DiMaggio, 1983; Haveman, 1993).

Whereas the construct of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) has been extensively applied to business firms, there are few studies using EO to increase understanding of educational institutions (Miller, 2011). Neo-institutional theory has been explored within educational settings, most specifically within universities (Kraatz, 1996; Stensaker & Norgård, 2001) and charter schools (Huerta, 2009; Lubienski, 2003); however, few studies have looked at independent schools. While scholarship in the field of neo-institutionalism provides insight into legitimacy-seeking, as explained by isomorphism, as a potential reason for the lack of school innovation (DiMaggio, 1983), there is little understanding of entrepreneurial orientation in non-profit settings (Morris, Webb, & Franklin, 2011) or educational settings. An application of EO and neo-institutional theory to Jewish educational entrepreneurs requires both a
reconceptualization of EO for non-profit organizations (Morris et al., 2011) and an understanding of religious institutions through an economic lens as competitive organizations (Finke & Stark, 1988). Coupling EO with neo-institutional theory (Miller, 2011; Mohrman, 2012) provided robust insight into an entrepreneurial vision and educator within a Jewish school.

**Interpretation of Research Findings**

**Based on the research question**

*How is entrepreneurial orientation lived and perceived at a Halachic Jewish high school as perceived by the leadership and personnel?*

After compiling and analyzing the three data sources, it is clear that the richest and thickest descriptions came from the interviews; site observations and documents enriched the picture of the organization. Triangulating the data sources provided a more legitimate understanding of the school and the extent to which EO was lived within the school. It was also clear that the focus of the research question on EO and not neo-institutionalism created a situation where there was more learning gained on EO than on neo-institutionalism.

The research question guiding this study provided insight into the entrepreneurial orientation at one Jewish high school. The goal was to document whether the five attributes of the EO construct were observable in the school as well as how they became institutionalized in the culture of the school. The multi-dimensional construct of entrepreneurial orientation as perceived by G.T. Lumpkin and Gregory Dess (1996) allowed the researcher to look at each construct independently and to get a sense of each as it was reflected across the three data sources. While evidence of each attribute (Autonomy, Innovativeness, Proactiveness, Competitive Aggressiveness, and Risk-taking) was found, risk-taking and competitive aggressiveness emerged as secondary themes from the data. Upon reflection, the researcher believes that the interview question about risk did not provide the necessary insight into risk-
taking for the researcher to fully describe and seek to interpret. Additionally, risk-taking was
difficult to observe in the documents and observations. Competitive aggressiveness did emerge
in a narrowly defined way; it mainly reflected that the school prides and markets itself with the
students’ college acceptances. The primary themes that emerged were autonomy, innovativeness,
proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness.

In relation to the problem of practice

Whereas the construct of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) has been extensively applied to
business firms, there are few studies using EO to increase understanding of educational
institutions (Miller, 2011). Neo-institutional theory has been explored within educational
settings, most specifically within universities (Kraatz, 1996; Stensaker & Norgård, 2001) and
charter schools (Huerta, 2009; Lubienski, 2003); however, few studies have looked at
independent schools. Several new studies exploring EO in public schools have emerged in the
last several years (Phelan et al., 2013; Kurniawan et al., 2017; Feit, 2016; Alfirevic et al., 2017)
all of which employed quantitative methodology and none of which looked at independent
schools. Several studies have looked to understand how the leadership in schools impacts
innovation (Judd, 2017); and how EO of principals impacts the school (Alfirevic, 2017; Fiet,
2016). There remains a need to conduct qualitative studies of EO in schools, as well as a need to
include independent schools as a new context for EO studies, both of which are addressed in this
study.

Additionally, EO literature is examined to understand the relationship between EO and a
business’ success. While this research did not connect these two ideas, understanding how EO
functions within an independent school does provide insight into how an EO sensibility and
structure may benefit a school and those who are working within it. To this end, the faculty
interviewed were, by and large, extremely satisfied with their jobs and were excited by their
opportunities for growth, as well as opportunities to see ideas through to implementation. The administration was proud of what it had accomplished, their rate of innovation and their comfort with taking risks both financially and as an institution fighting for market share. The school was able to secure large grants to invest in educational technology and at the time of the interviews the school was aggressively growing enrollment.

While the researcher cannot claim any correlation there was, and continues to be, a funding emphasis in the Jewish educational world on innovation. The energy that comes to a school after a successful grant application can contribute to enrollment growth as well as continued efforts to receive additional grants. By the time the researcher spoke with interviewees in the member-checking, there was a new Head of School in place and participants shared that enrollment had dropped and there was some back-tracking in the use of one-to-one iPads; there was also an increased investment in a Makerspace. Certainly, similar schools may benefit from building the appetite and tolerance among administration and faculty for innovation so that those schools can also gain momentum among funding bodies and potentially enrollment. Independent school enrollment is heavily dependent on word of mouth and reputation and the more a school successfully communicates its willingness to change, evolve, and offer new programs, the more likely it is to attract new families and students.

**In relation to theoretical framework and literature**

The literature review and the theoretical framework were tightly bound, so this section addresses both.

**Theoretical Framework.** This study was guided by the multi-dimensional construct of entrepreneurial orientation, wherein each of the five constructs: autonomy, proactiveness, innovativeness, risk-taking and competitive aggressiveness independently exist within an organization and reflect EO (Lumpkin, 1996). EO was shown to be strongly linked to firm
performance (Covin et al, 2006; Lumpkin and Dess, 2001). These results were confirmed, yet again, by Van Doorn, Jansen, Van den Borsch and Volberga (2013) as well as that senior team heterogeneity and shared vision positively influence firm performance. There is a paucity in the literature connecting the presence of EO and school performance and success. While there are unique and challenging circumstances for schools in measuring performance success there is the added context of the non-profit status of most independent schools.

In a non-profit context, performance success is more nuanced than in businesses. As nonprofits seek to fulfill their mission, their success is not determined by financial measures but by positively impacting the social issues they are working on. As an example, this non-profit school is looking to educate Jewish students by offering a rigorous secular and Jewish education so that students will maintain a strong connection to their Jewish identity and practice, a deep relationship with the State of Israel and impact their communities both through their professional and volunteer work. Therefore, their success is not linked to their budget but to whether later measures in their students’ lives reflect these outcomes. Some studies show that EO in the non-profit context does not result in better revenues, donations, assets, or volunteers (Morris, Coombes, Schindehutte, 2007). Entrepreneurship is better associated with social performance measures. While this study was not looking to link EO with the success in meeting its mission, this remains a question worth investigating in the future within the independent school context.

Most of the scholarship on EO has been conducted in for-profit firms and has been quantitative in nature (J. Covin & Lumpkin, 2011; D. Miller, 2011). By studying this school using case study methodology and collecting data across three data sources, this study provided a richer and more nuanced view into how a school culture of EO is understood by its stakeholders. Specifically, the data from the document analysis and site observation provided both evidence for and against what was understood in the interviews, providing a more robust picture of the
school’s culture. Additionally, as EO has not been applied broadly to non-profit organizations (D. Miller, 2011) or to educational settings, the findings of this research provide new insights. In the case of the study school, leaders were driven by the desire to bring entrepreneurial competencies into the school culture and interviews did not reveal any explicit connections between this approach and school’s mission and success. Jared did make connections to this approach and the number of ideas and initiatives that were developed and implemented in the school. His underlying assumption is that a culture open to new ideas will impact the learning of the students and the faculty. This assumption echoes the call from Lehmann (2012) and Woocher (2011) for the need to innovate and change the face of Jewish education. This study did not seek to test this assumption. In an educational world taken with ideas of innovation, this assumption is likely broadly held and must be studied if schools are to make wise decisions about how to impact their students’ learning and where to invest precious resources. This school’s culture and leadership enrich the scholarship on EO in educational settings by providing a qualitative example of the impact an entrepreneurial leader can have on the entrepreneurial competencies of the faculty and student body.

Analysis of Primary Themes. The findings reveal evidence of the five dimensions of EO in the school, especially for autonomy, proactiveness and innovativeness. It is worth noting that the results of a study on EO in New Jersey public schools also found that these three areas of EO were significantly associated with school performance (Phelan, Johnson, Semrau, 2013). Their findings showed that proactiveness is the single most important behavior for a school to develop. Also, that there exists a covariance among innovativeness, autonomy and proactiveness indicating that these three traits “arise in a cluster or configuration that is independent of risk-taking and competitive aggressiveness” (Phelan, Johnson, Semrau, 2013). This clustering supports and strengthens the findings of this study as almost every story contained all three of
these traits at once and created some level of blurriness in separating which aspects of each story was any one of these and not all of them.

For example, the story about an alumnus working at the school and putting on a Yiddish play reflected a strong sense of autonomy in that he had the idea, brought it to the administration and was given support to pursue it to implementation. It was proactive in that he and the school looked to do something novel in the school as well as within the community. Arguably, this experience and opportunity was unique in the Jewish day school world. Finally, it was innovative in that this was something that had never been done before, it pushed the limits of what was expected as well as the knowledge base of the students. Another example supporting the covariance of autonomy, proactiveness and innovativeness is when a faculty member saw the need to create a Jewish journeys course for Freshman. He took the idea to the administration demonstrating his autonomy and proactiveness, then (through a grant and learning opportunity) developed a new course and approach to helping students speak candidly about their Jewish understandings and questions, as well as, develop a Jewish mentoring program between the faculty and the students.

Autonomy. The literature on autonomy differentiates between the autonomy of the individual and the decentralization of a firm. McCharen, Song & Martens (2011) found that individual autonomy did not positively impact individual knowledge creation nor departmental creativity and innovation. This is in direct contrast to the study cited above (Phelan, Johnson, Semrau, 2013) showing that autonomy and innovativeness covary. This study sought to understand how EO was described by administration, faculty and lay leaders within the school and to provide a rich picture for how EO is perceived and lived as part of the culture of the school. It appears that autonomy and innovativeness were strongly and equally present in the coding of the stories shared by interviewees. For example, in a direct question asking about
taking an idea into implementation, there were instances of autonomy, innovativeness and proactiveness present in each story.

Additionally, Lubienski (2003; 2009) found that decentralization (autonomy) of charter schools showed a positive impact on innovation. In his study of internal corporate venturing (ICV), Burgelman (1983) found that successful ICV efforts were dependent on the autonomous entrepreneurial activity of individuals. School employees described a school where individuals from all levels could act autonomously and create new initiatives. These results would suggest that stakeholders’ ability to act autonomously may impact how common it was in the school to bring new ideas to fruition and to feel comfortable and encouraged to innovate. Across the interviews, every interviewee felt that the school promoted teacher and administrative autonomy and welcomed their ideas.

There were significant levels of autonomy at this school site and this was a source of pride for Noah, the Head of School: “I'll preface it by saying this is one of the best parts of the school and I pride myself on this.” Autonomy was a competency that Noah promoted throughout the school and demonstrated himself as well. The scholarship on leadership and the leader’s impact on EO, suggest that this school’s culture of EO is related to Noah’s EO (Alfirevic, 2017; Feit, 2016; Judd, 2017). The implications for the school moving forward, especially through a leadership change are for the school to deeply consider their new leader’s EO and how he promotes and encourages EO among his faculty and staff. An evident challenge arises when considering the primary themes along with the school’s stance on competition, which reflects the school’s focus on college acceptances. It is interesting to consider how institutional pressure around academics and college acceptances may impact the administration’s willingness to support new ideas. This was not explored during this study; however, there is an inherent tension between these two goals. How much risk can be taken with the idea? Where are the limits to that
risk? Where are the limits to the financial and human resources to be invested in an untested idea? This is a tension the current school, and any school, must contend with as it balances the entrepreneurial desires of various constituencies and the mission of the school.

Autonomy was evident in how professional development was conducted at the school, where teachers were central in setting their own goals and following their own interests and passions. They spoke about sharing their experiences with colleagues in the field and how impressed those colleagues were by their ability to pursue and develop their individual professional development goals. Knowing that this was unusual also impacted the teacher’s appreciation and excitement about their situation. Kurniawan, Suhariadi and Hadi (2017) found that the learning orientation culture has a positive effect on entrepreneurial orientation. They believed this is the case because teachers’ personal values align with a firm’s values on learning and knowledge.

Horng et al (2005) found that hierarchical structures negatively impact teacher creativity and that when barriers between organizational levels are removed ideas are explored in more depth. Of the four faculty that were interviewed, only one spoke negatively with an “us vs. them” attitude between faculty and administration. Interestingly, he was also the only interviewee who had negative feelings about innovation, autonomy and proactiveness. In his interview he complained that while there were instances of innovation at the school, that teachers had to take the initiative and not the administration. He felt that this was a negative aspect of the school. His belief that this was the case emphasized the tension between hierarchical structures in the school. Additionally, this interviewee did not share any examples of his own idea generation and implementation. Conversely, the researcher felt that hierarchical structures in the school were well in place, and none-the-less several faculty members felt comfortable and were encouraged to collaborate with colleagues and supervisors on new ideas. These findings are also supported
by Subramaniam & Youndt (2005) who found that a supportive learning culture strongly impacts organizational knowledge creation which has a strong influence on educational innovation within a school setting.

An additional aspect that emerged from conversations on professional development was that the school encouraged and supported professional development in the educator’s content field and not just teaching methods. When faculty stay current in their field of scholarship, then they build the knowledge base of the school. The Head of School spoke about his motivation to increase his learning by pursuing broad knowledge from experts in various fields. A strong knowledge base, coupled with EO, increased the school’s performance (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2003). The faculty at the school were able to stay current in their fields of scholarship and so were able to generate ideas on behalf of the students and the school that were inspired by staying current in their field. The constant stimuli from continued professional learning helps promote a culture of learning and idea generation within the school.

**Innovativeness.** There is a strong call for innovation across all industries including education. Neo-institutional theory (DiMaggio, 1983) and studies of the charter school movement (Lubienski 2003;2009; Huerta, 2009) provides insight into a dual tension born out of innovation, where a school may differentiate itself by innovating or by imitating others in the field. While Lubienski (2003) and Huerta (2009) studied charter schools and this study examined an independent school, the market pressure as understood by the school’s promise and the parents’ expectation of academic excellence and college acceptances created a similar set of limitations on this school.

This school is both working on legitimizing its educational product using traditional educational methods and measurements of success and at the same time emphasizing the need for educational innovation. This tension was found at the school site intentionally and
unintentionally. As a Jewish school with a mission to connect students to Jewish identity, practice and law, the school was intentionally working on maintaining tradition and what was tried and true. On the other hand, the school wanted to innovate using technology and pedagogy. As a result, they had marketing materials that explicitly held up this tension as an attractive quality of the school. This reflected the work of Stenskar and Norgard (2001) who stated that institutions of higher education deal with the tension between innovation and isomorphism through an ongoing struggle for organizational identity. The marketing materials sought to explicitly navigate this tension. There was clear evidence, however, that this was not always intentional. Mary in her interview remarked several times that true pedagogical innovation such as inquiry and project based learning is not experimented with because there was also pressure from tuition-paying families and their expectations for their children, specifically about academic excellence and college acceptances. This pressure was echoed by Aaron who spoke about the school’s unwillingness to take a stand with students because of tuition-paying parents.

Much of the faculty innovation that was taking place at the school seemed to stay within the classroom. For example, even those initiatives that were invested in heavily by the school such as the gaming remained a project of one teacher in one department. The Yiddish play happened once so no interviewee mentioned it having an impact on other aspects of the school. Work that faculty did to create new courses did not always continue when that person left the school. This supports the findings of Towndrow, Silver & Albright (2010) who posit that instructional innovation is rarely adopted on a larger scale. Although any innovation does not necessarily take hold throughout the school, it may be that a culture of innovation does take hold. This was reflected in an attitude among the faculty that innovation was positive and that the school encouraged change and new approaches. The researcher suggests that this may be the case in the research site; the emphasis is not on scaling an innovation but rather maintaining a
high tolerance for trying out new ideas throughout the school. That insight speaks to how an aspect of EO can become embedded in the culture of the school. This is significant and is a place from where the school can focus and grow. Now that a culture of innovation has taken hold, how might the school capitalize on individual innovations in a way that positively impact the entire school. As the strength of each innovation, at the moment, rests on the faculty member’s implementation, those innovations that are considered important should be explored for scalability so that it can impact a greater number of students. This next step for the school also scales the financial and human resource investment as the learning can potentially be utilized across classrooms and content areas. Creating a culture of innovation is not enough, to make a real impact on the school and the learners the administration should now focus on how to scale successful innovations.

**Proactiveness.** Proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness can seem similar in nature and it is important to understand how they differ. Proactiveness demonstrates how a firm responds to market opportunities, while competitive aggressiveness demonstrates how a firm responds to direct competitive threats (Lumpkin & Dess, 1997). The interviewees were excited and proud when they were asked to share steps the school has taken that demonstrate that the school is ahead of the curve, proactive. Looking at market opportunities, the school was on the forefront of iPad adoptions when they first brought them into the school with the initial intention of eliminating textbooks. Interestingly, following this adoption schools all over the country were adopting one-to-one iPad programs with little evidence that there was a measurable and positive impact to doing so - a function of isomorphic tendencies (Mann, 2019). At the time of the study, two faculty members expressed their skepticism with technology use in the school and four years later one interviewee, who was still in the school, shared that the school had backed away from one-to-one technology. While the school was a head of the curve and received positive attention
for taking this move, they also adopted the technology so early that they weren’t prepared for how to use it effectively. Being proactive as an early adopter of technology has inherent risk involved in it and the outcomes may not always be positive. In hindsight some may observe that the school moved too quickly, however, it is clear that this school demonstrated EO and being proactive and taking risks is part of that profile. Interestingly, several years later the school moved aggressively in creating a high-level makerspace. At this point they were not ahead of a national curve, but they did exhibit moving quickly for the school and again were unprepared for how to best utilize this new space.

Educational entrepreneurs act proactively when they are in the right place at the right time, see an opportunity and take the initiative to pursue it (Schimmel, 2016). Several initiatives demonstrated this attribute and behavior. When a teacher saw a need for a new course, he took the initiative and pursued the idea until it came to fruition. Another teacher saw a lack of Judaic curriculum that integrated art and allowed for students to engage in new ways; he developed and taught two courses. When one interviewee recognized that the school could do more to help students reflect on their Jewish journey, he presented an idea to administration, who then found him a grant and learning opportunity to develop the course. When the Head of School saw a need to broaden the students’ understanding, he added a new aspect to the trip to Israel and prepared the students with a guest educator. This school has a culture that actively seeks out a flexibility that allows faculty and administration to move quickly when they identify a student need. Had the culture been one that does not encourage new ideas and which slowed down the process of implementation, it would not be a school that responded to student needs and learning as it did. A school that is looking to serve its students effectively and efficiently, must also be flexible and responsive to students and faculty. Other schools would do well to follow this model as they look to be a school that serves student learning.
**Analysis of Secondary Themes.** These secondary themes were found in the data, however they were not equally evident as the primary themes.

**Risk-taking.** Gauging risk-taking within the school was challenging, primarily due to a poor research question. Additionally, without access to the budget it was not possible to gauge resource allocation which is often used as a marker for risk-taking. Finally, the interviewees spoke about risk-taking, however not in depth and with a lot of insight. There was some evidence of risk-taking in terms of financial resource allocation, as shared by the Head of School. In its recent history, the school received several large grants to bring in the one-to-one iPad program and later for its partner work on gaming. There was significant human resource allocation to develop the projects and receive the grants. Resource allocation continued in giving significant time to those involved to develop and implement each project in alignment with the grant expectations. In addition, the school invested in the media lab, its equipment and in its director. The school’s ability to invest time and resources into various initiatives, at least, partially speaks to its positive financial position. This may be extremely difficult for similar schools to try and model themselves upon. It also speaks to the teaching schedule most of the faculty have that allows for them to work on new initiatives at least in part during the school day. That said, this should not discourage similar schools from exploring how a culture of risk-taking can take hold within the school and its potential implications for student learning. Risk-taking can be as much a habit of mind and behavior as it is an investment and as risk-taking is an essential habit for deep learning it should be modeled throughout the school. Even with few resources, small risks can be taken and a culture can be developed.

In Schimmel’s (2016) study subthemes in risk-taking emerged: risk of reputation, risk of wasted time, and monetary risk. These themes were not discussed in this research study, however, the researcher suggest that there are undercurrents to the work any teacher who is
innovating is facing. When the alumnus produced the Yiddish play and presented it in a public theater he took tremendous risk to his reputation and to his time. He and the students invested time and energy in performing the play and rather than be successful it could have failed. Additionally, the school invested significant financial resources in the rabbinic gaming, the faculty member risked his reputation and the school and the faculty member invested significant time in creating the game. It seems that the success of that endeavor is questionable; failure is a fundamental potential of risk. That said, Greg, the interim Head of School talked about risk-taking in a different way. He felt that when a faculty member approached with an idea, or when the administration approached a faculty member with an idea, that they had a good sense of the person, the faculty’s record in follow through and quality of work. He wondered if that equated to risk-taking. He continued, that he would like to see the school be less cautious before taking a risk. While the risk at the school may be calculated, even a track record of success does not guarantee it and the possibility of failure, which always exists, presents a risk to reputation, time and resources. As schools look to take on the behaviors associated with EO this is one with which each school must contend. It is the one aspect of EO that is likely the least palatable. It would be important for any school with the goal of innovation to explore its risk-tolerance. Without a healthy tolerance for risk the ability to innovate is greatly limited. As such, it would be counterproductive for leadership in a school to promote and develop a culture of innovation if it does not have a tolerance for risk – one cannot happen without the other.

**Competitive Aggressiveness.** While the research uncovered competitive aggressiveness, primarily in the external documents, it remains curious to the researcher that the faculty couldn’t speak in depth about the school as a competitor in the marketplace. This was specifically curious as the independent school market is a competitive one, with dropping enrollment nationally, and many schools closing, merging or being bought. However, a study of 14 independent schools in
Indonesia provided some potential insight into this issue. The study showed that teacher’s learning orientation had a positive effect on their entrepreneurial orientation and that market orientation did not (Kurniawan, Suhariadi, Hadi, 2017). In their discussion they allude to studies that reveal that teachers do not like direct marketing activities in a competitive environment as it does not align with their personal values and reasons for entering the profession. While the researcher did not hear this from the interviewees, she does wonder whether their lack of engagement in this area is due to their not seeing it as a part of their job, neither to do, nor to be aware of on behalf of the school. As such, there is a need to explore this in greater depth to get a better understanding of whether competitive aggressiveness among faculty relate in any way to other areas of EO. This school demonstrates EO even without the faculty engaging deeply with competitive aggressiveness. It may be that a school can demonstrate EO without the faculty thinking about and demonstrating competitive aggressiveness, and that this attribute is more important for the leadership.

Much of the research on competition states that firms in competing markets will respond in one of two ways, either through innovation or through isomorphic tendencies and copying practices. In the case of this school both things have occurred. The school has pursued isomorphic tendencies as a way to legitimize the education, assure parents that their children will succeed by all traditional measurements of success and that the school is a reasonable option in comparison to other public and private schools in the market. On the other hand, the school has worked to differentiate itself by being proactive in terms of technology, professional development and faculty innovation within the classrooms. This balance is likely present in many schools working on innovation and perhaps is most present in schools with a more traditional constituency, versus a school which is at its core an alternative school.
Neo-Institutional Theory. The literature on neo-institutional theory and isomorphism provide another lens by which to understand innovation at this school. Most of the stories shared with the researcher were innovative within the school and a great majority of them were innovative, at the time, within education at large. Instead of focusing only on innovative programming, this study was also interested in the structure and culture put in place to promote innovation. The Head of School was committed to innovation as indicated by his promoting and encouraging both faculty and students to think of new ideas, bring them to administration and garner financial and leadership support. The researcher contends that many of the practices put in place at the school, such as the approach to professional development, helped to create and institutionalize a culture of learning, which includes new ideas, inquiry, and trial and error. These behaviors map well onto entrepreneurial orientation (new ideas=innovativeness; trial and error=risk-taking) and as such the school successfully developed a school culture that demonstrated EO. There are other aspects of the school, however, that have not been shaped by the forces of EO and have not only changed within the institution, they mimic traditional schooling in the United States (traditional class periods, an emphasis on grades and college acceptances, few systemic changes in pedagogy, classroom set-up, school displays). This finding was consistent with a similar finding by Sweet (2013) of five charter schools in the DC area. He found that central programs of the school were implemented in a competitive, differentiated, and innovative manner, but that instructional practices, policies and personnel guidelines appear to have been impacted by isomorphic tendencies. This offers a challenge to the field of education at large. Even as many schools are looking to innovate, they are innovating only at certain levels of the school and only in certain areas of the school. This raises the question of how to identify innovative schools and what it actually means. Can a school be innovative at the programmatic level and not at the structural level? Can a school differentiate itself by creating a culture of
innovation and that culture remain defined within prescribed barriers? Each school must contend with this for itself, understand where the school is and how it would like to evolve, and how to think about that evolution.

As discussed in the literature review Jewish education, from its inception, mimicked the public school model as it sought legitimacy. It looked to the established and larger systems and copied them (Haveman, 1993). Additionally, as much as Jewish education can be considered a quasi-market, this reality is supported by Lubienski’s (2009) findings that schools in quasi-markets do not necessarily lead to innovation due to external environmental constraints; such as, the consumer is not the traditional cost comparing consumer and that parental ideas of schooling limit educational innovation. This finding was supported by Davies and Quirke (2013) who found that the leadership of private schools can feel restricted by parental demands and yet maintain an open structure and by working with a consumerist understanding of accountability. As a result many aspects of schooling have remained steadfast in general education as well as in Jewish education. This school instituted many forward thinking ideas and was actively working on continuing an innovative culture. At the same time the school was working on innovation within the pressures of a competitive market and a parent constituency which measures school success through college acceptances. This pressure asserted itself on the school and impacted how innovation took place and in what areas of the school. However, the school by the member-checking, was beginning to rethink its schedule and its start time. This conversation has become a national one and the school is moving ahead with it, even though (anecdotally) other schools in its geographic area are not.

**Jewish Education.** The emphasis on innovation embedded in the school culture reflected the call for innovation from within the Jewish world, which continues to assert funding pressure in a tight financial market. A survey conducted in 2011 of Jewish non-profit start-up
organizations wrote, “the Jewish innovation economy might help the broader Jewish community face current and future economic challenges, nurture its most creative leaders, and advance its competitiveness in the global marketplace of ideas and commitments” (Jumpstart, 2011, p. 2). Additionally, innovation has been a source of funding as many of the funders earmark funds specifically for innovative ideas and initiatives. Lehmann’s (2012) observation that too much of Jewish education looks alike remains a reality in 2019. The presence of EO in the research site was clear, however the overall structure of the school and how schooling is being delivered is not dramatically different. That said, the culture of EO, the sense of autonomy among the faculty, their ability to promote ideas to implementation and the school’s willingness to take the risk of being proactive does reflect a different kind of school culture. It remains to be seen how the school may continue to innovate more fundamentally in terms of its education and approach to Jewish learning. As Jewish schools look to innovate and contend with meaningful change to Jewish learning, it is important for school leadership to stay centered on their goals. This school did make a serious attempt to innovate around one aspect of the Jewish learning with the rabbinic gaming initiative. While it may not have worked as imagined, it was a step, a risk, and one that if the school is serious about making meaningful change will move them one step closer to their next attempt. If schools are looking to change how Jewish education is delivered, then they cannot stop at innovating around that aspect of their school.

In relation to research design

As the purpose of this study was to develop a clear picture of institutional culture as it was reflected and experienced by the people working in it, a qualitative research method was the most appropriate. Qualitative research explores a problem or phenomenon and seeks to understand its centrality within human experience (Creswell, 2011). The review and synthesis of EO research conducted by Wales (2015) renews the call for qualitative research. Wales writes
that although many scholars in the field have identified this gap (Covin and Miller, 2014; Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Miller, 2011; Wiklund and Shepherd, 2011) there remains a paucity in the literature. Heeding the call by Lumpkin and Dess (1997) for case study research exploring the connection between EO and culture, the researcher specifically chose to explore how EO is lived and perceived in a single case study. In addition, researchers such as Miller (2011) have raised the need to capture data through structured interviews, participant observations and field notes. The research was guided by these suggestions and helped provide a robust understanding of one independent school by incorporating the lived experiences of administration faculty and lay leaders, and analyzing documents and observations to create a rich picture of the school at a point in time. Finally, as noted by Martens (2016) there is a continual need to understand EO in underrepresented contexts such as non-profit firms. This research provides additional understandings on how non-profit schools are navigating innovation and its customer base (parents) as well as both finding and pushing against that balance. This study provides insights into that tension and how this school and any school may look to define itself within its educational market. This research addressed the gap in qualitative methodology exploring the relationship between EO and culture in a non-profit context.

In relation to the researcher

The researcher began this work with a deep interest and belief in entrepreneurial vision and how it can impact schooling. Specifically, I was interested in changing the course of schools through innovative and non-traditional approaches to education. This particular study looked to understand the structures that are in place to create a culture of learning that expands into a culture of innovation. A school that promotes innovation is a place where everyone involved feels empowered and encouraged to come with new ideas, garner support, and feel motivated to see their idea through to implementation. Throughout the years of this research, as Head of
School herself, I have found a continued interest in creating a culture of EO within my own school and wonder about how to take those personal sensibilities to create a school of people who function with autonomy, innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking.

**Limitations of This Study and Suggestions For Further Studies**

The limitations of this study are highly structural. As a time bound study the researcher spent two days on the research site interviewing subjects, collecting documents and observing the school in public spaces. Four years after the initial data collection the researcher re-interviewed four of the original interviewees: two remained in the school and two had left. The Head of School had changed and it was reported that there was almost a complete turnover of faculty over those four years. This case study reported on a moment in time, when the school was functioning under a particular leader. The researcher has limited insight as to whether the found culture of EO persisted and continued after the Head of School left. As this study involved only one case there is no comparative data or analysis available, and limits the ability of the researcher to make any claims outside of this particular school. Finally, during the data collection process the researcher was not able to access all the documents and meetings as anticipated. At the outset, the researcher was planning on observing meetings between faculty, administration and even parents. While on site the researcher was told that she may not attend any meetings.

This study sought to fill in the gaps in methodology, relationships and types of data collection. There remains a continual need to expand in these areas. There remains a paucity of qualitative EO research, that explores the EO constructs’ relationship to other phenomenon in a firm or school, and non-profit organizations have not yet been studied in a robust manner. It is suggested that further research be conducted in private schools to better understand the role price based market conditions play in EO, as well as, to better understand how parent and community
expectations impact EO within a school. Another area to explore is how EO of faculty impacts the overall culture of the school and whether any patterns are revealed when seeking to understand what factors contribute to faculty innovations taking hold throughout the school. While, there is rich EO literature connecting EO to firm performance, exploring this relationship within a school setting is needed. Finally, research exploring how the leadership develop and encourage EO within a school would provide practitioners with insight and tools to create such cultures within their institutions.

**Significance For the Field**

**Implications for theory**

This research adds to the field of EO by providing a richer description of the relationship between EO and school culture and how that is lived and experienced by various constituencies in the school. It also shed light on and contributes to the understanding of the coupling of the construct, specifically the relationship between autonomy, innovativeness and proactiveness and also the role that risk-taking and competitive aggressiveness play in schools and non-profit organizations.

**Implications for practice**

The pressure on educational institutions to innovate much like the business and technology industry has been heeded by school leadership. Unfortunately, what innovation means and what it looks like remains vague for most school leaders (Sweeney, 2016). The pressure to innovate comes from parents, increased market pressures in schooling and from funders who are enticed by the promise of innovation. For Jewish schools this is particularly true as the Jewish day school world is facing multiple school closings, an uncertain economic environment and a potential enrollment crisis. While the literature connects EO to firm success, this has not been studied in school contexts and this was not the purpose of this research.
However, many educators are aware of the need to change the course of traditional schooling and it is helpful to better understand how one school lives with a culture of EO and to think about strategies for expanding that culture within other schools.

**Heads of school.** The benefit of this research to acting and in-coming heads of school is multi-leveled. First, it will allow a head of school to self-reflect and understand his/her EO behaviors. The information in this research can act as a guide with examples for how to help define the behaviors and identify them in his/herself. Next, it can be used as a reflection tool to better understand the nature of EO within the school, by providing guidance for how to understand the individuals in the school and how they may or may not be demonstrating some or all of the EO construct. The interview with the Head of School will provide insight and strategies for school structures that encourage and support EO behaviors that can be applied to any school context.

Job satisfaction has been linked to autonomy and the faculty interviewed at the school felt very positively about their growth, ability to be creative, the support that they received with their ideas and the knowledge that their ideas would be heard. School climate, which is heavily connected to faculty satisfaction impacts the students, their learning, and the entire school community. This research can help illuminate ways in which the school leadership can foster autonomy and creativity within the faculty and to provide appropriate supports resulting in a happy faculty.

**Faculty.** Better understanding innovation and an EO culture will help individual faculty members understand their own school culture as well as the culture in other schools. To think about school culture through this lens will help faculty determine the best cultural fit for future work. As this potentially reflects a shift in school culture and what school leadership will be seeking, it will be important for faculty to be aware of these behaviors. Finally, this research may
empower faculty to come forward with their ideas and pursue novel and innovative initiatives with the administration.

**Boards of Trustees.** This research is helpful to Boards and hiring committees as Boards of schools look to articulate a vision for the school and to make head of school hiring decisions as there is a high level of correlation of EO at the organizational level and the leadership level (Alfirevic, Vican, Pavicic, and Petkovic, 2017; Feit, K., 2016) A school leader who demonstrates EO behaviors will work to create a culture of learning and innovation in her school and one which extend both to the Board as well as to the faculty. Using the understandings gained from the research will also provide search committees with a framework with which to understand their candidates’ capacities and inclinations. With the research pointing to a positive correlation between EO and firm performance this could act as a marker of potential future success. Additionally, the Board itself may look to cultivate these attributes and behaviors within the Board to shift and develop lay leadership EO capacities.

**Funders.** Many funding bodies looking for innovation have grant opportunities for new ideas, initiatives and programs for which schools may compete. They do not often seek to understand the innovative stance in a school or its leader when making granting decisions. This research could lend itself to granting bodies as a means to better understand the culture of a school and which schools are most likely to continually develop innovative ideas. One may consider that a school that demonstrates EO as a core aspect of its culture is a better investment for funders who are looking to encourage and support innovation, especially if the funders seek a pattern of innovation.

**Conclusion**

In conducting a descriptive case study of an independent Jewish high school to better understand how entrepreneurial orientation is lived and perceived in the school, this study fills in
the gaps in the EO literature by providing additional insights through a qualitative research design that offers a rich description of how EO can function. The findings of this research support previous findings that there is covariance with autonomy, innovativeness and proactiveness. While both risk-taking and competitive aggressiveness were identified they were secondary findings in this study. These were both areas that the faculty could speak to with less detail and clarity. These findings will help illuminate EO for administrators, faculty, Boards of Trustees, and funders, especially those looking to create and fund cultures of innovation in their schools. Several important gaps in the literature remain and this work can help future researchers articulate areas of exploration.
References


Education **84**: 244-261.


APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

School: Northeastern University, Department: College of Professional Studies, Ed.D

INVESTIGATOR: Margaret Kirchoff Gorman (PI) Andrea R. C. Kasper (SI)
TITLE OF RESEARCH: A Culture of Innovation: A Descriptive Case Study of the Nature of Entrepreneurial Orientation in a Jewish High School as Perceived Internally.

The following informed consent is required by Northeastern University for any person involved in a research study conducted by investigators at the University. This study has been approved by the University's Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects.

We are inviting you to take part in a research study. This form will tell you about the study, but the researcher will explain it to you first. You may ask this person any questions that you have. When you are ready to make a decision, you may tell the researcher if you want to participate or not. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, the researcher will ask you to sign this statement and will give you a copy to keep.

You have been asked to participate in this research study because of your role as a member of the school. As a member of the school, you are engaged in practices, behaviors and attitudes related to the school culture, policies and procedures and internal relationships.

The purpose of this research is to develop a descriptive case study which explores the entrepreneurial orientation of a Modern Orthodox Jewish independent high school as perceived by the leadership and personnel. Entrepreneurial Orientation is an idea made up of behaviors that fit into five categories, the existence of these behaviors helps determine the entrepreneurial nature of an organization.
If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in the study in the following stages:

- **One Interview**
  - The interview will focus on you sharing your stories and experiences connected to the entrepreneurial nature of the school (60-90 minutes).

- **Review**
  - Participants will review transcripts in order to make sure everything is accurate. This will take approximately 15 minutes.

The study will take place over the course of two months, leaving time for follow-up after the interview. The initial contact to secure consent, either via email or over the phone or online, will take approximately 5-10 minutes. The interview will be longer, around one hour, via phone or online communication, and if possible in person. Participants will be provided with a digital, password protected, copy of their transcript to review and provide any necessary feedback via email.

There will be no foreseeable physical harm, discomfort or risks as a result of participating in this study. There will be limited inconvenience due to the time taken to participate in the study.

There is no direct benefit for you to take part in the study. However, you may benefit from reflecting on your stories and the overall culture of the school. The information learned from this study may help you better understand how entrepreneurial behaviors impact a school environment.

Your identity as a participant in this study will be kept confidential. That means only the researcher will see the information about you. No reports, transcripts or publications will use information that can identify you in any way. All audio and video recordings will be kept locked.
up, with only the researcher having a key. All the transcripts and reports will use coded pseudonyms and all identifiable information will be removed.

No special arrangements will be made for compensation or for payment for treatment solely because of your participation in this research.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. Even if you begin the study, you may quit at any time. If you do not participate or if you decide to quit, you will not lose any rights, benefits, or services that you would otherwise have as an employee.
If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, you may contact:

Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 960 Renaissance Park,
Northeastern University Boston, MA 02115
tel. 617-373-7570, email: irb@neu.edu.

You may call anonymously if you wish.

You must be at least 18 years old to participate unless your parent or guardian gives written permission.

I agree to take part in this research.

Signature of person who explained the study to the participant above and obtained consent

______________________________

Printed name of person above

____________________________________________

Depending upon the nature of your research, you are required to provide information about one or more of the following if it is applicable:
1. A statement that the particular treatment or procedure may involve risks to the subject (or to the embryo or fetus, if the subject is or may become pregnant) which are currently unforeseeable.
2. Anticipated circumstances under which the subject’s participation may be terminated by the investigator without regard to the subject’s consent.
3. Any additional costs to the subject that may result from participation in the research.
4. The consequences of a subject’s decision to withdraw from the research and procedures for orderly termination of participation by the subject.
5. A statement that significant new finding(s) developed during the course of the research which may be related to the subject’s willingness to continue participation will be provided to the subject.
6. The approximate number of subjects involved in the study.
Please keep this sheet in case you have any questions about this research project.

1. **TITLE OF RESEARCH:** A Culture of Innovation: A Descriptive Case Study of the Nature of Entrepreneurial Orientation in a Jewish High School as Perceived Internally.

2. For answers to any questions you may have about this research, contact:

   **PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**
   
   Margaret Kirchoff Gorman
   
   mgorman@neu.edu
   
   202-425-7111

3. For answers to any questions you may have about your rights as a research subject, contact:

   **STUDENT INVESTIGATOR:**
   
   Andrea R.C. Kasper
   
   kasper.a@husky.neu.edu
   
   443-813-8979

**APPENDIX B: EMAIL CONSENT**
Dear ____,

I am in the process of earning my Doctorate in Education from Northeastern University and am very excited that Frankel Jewish Academy has given me permission to study the school to explore the extent to which it is an entrepreneurial institution as perceived by the leadership and personnel.

I am reaching out to you to see if you would be willing to participate in this study by partaking in an interview. To meet this study’s goals, we are looking for nine to fifteen study participants from amongst the leadership and faculty of the school.

The purpose of this research study is to develop a descriptive case study which explores the entrepreneurial orientation of a Modern Orthodox Jewish independent high school as perceived by the leadership and personnel. Entrepreneurial Orientation is an idea made up of behaviors that fit into five categories, the existence of these behaviors helps determine the entrepreneurial nature of an organization.

The interview will take between 60-90 minutes via phone or online communication, and if possible in person. The interview will be recorded and transcribed. The transcription will be shared with each participant for their review to assure accuracy.

To meet this study’s goals, I will also observe the school over a two day period looking for cultural indicators of entrepreneurial orientation through meetings both formal and informal, space, layout, and other interactions. If you wish to opt out of participating in this research, please email me directly.

If you choose to participate, all the information I receive from you, whether by phone or online communication, including your name and any other identifying information, will be
strictly confidential and will be kept under lock and key or password protected. I will not identify
you or use any information that would make it possible for anyone to identify you in any
presentation or written reports about this study, unless you prefer otherwise. If it is okay with
you, I might want to use direct quotes from you, but these would only be quoted as coming from
“a person” or a person of a certain label or title, like “one woman said.”

If you agree to volunteer to be a part of this study, or would like more information you
can contact me at Kasper.a@husky.neu.edu.

You can also call my advisor, Margaret Kirchoff Gorman, at 202-425-7111 or
mgorman@neu.edu with questions about the research study.

Best,

Andrea R.C. Kasper
Kasper.a@husky.neu.edu
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

Thank you for taking the time to provide your valuable information for this research project on entrepreneurial orientation in the school. Your participation, and the information you share will remain confidential. Any mention of you or your role will remain anonymous, unless you signify otherwise.

The interview will last between 60-90 minutes and will be recorded and later transcribed.

Participants will be provided, via email, with a digital, password protected, copy of their transcript to review and provide any necessary feedback.

These interviews will likely occur via online communication (i.e. skype), and if necessary by phone, and if geographically permitting, in person. We can take a break for any reason during the process. You are encouraged to share openly and honestly about your experiences.

Participants may, at any point in the process, drop out of the study.
Interview

- Tell me about your role in the school, how long you have been here and your experiences in professional growth.

- Tell me about a time when either you or a colleague had a new idea that might help the school and you were able to follow that idea from inception to implementation.
  - Can you tell me why you thought it was a good idea?

- Tell me about a time in the last year when the school took an action that was proactive, ahead of the curve?
  - Why did you make that choice? What was the process?

- Can you tell me what clues there are that the school encourages innovativeness?

- If you were to select an animal that describes the school’s general approach to risk taking what would it be and why?

- Assume it is 5 years from now tell me what animal you would like to describe the school and why?

- Describe steps taken by you, a colleague and the school to deal with competition.
  - How do you know what’s happening in other schools?
1. TITLE OF RESEARCH: A Culture of Innovation: A Descriptive Case Study of the Nature of Entrepreneurial Orientation in a Jewish High School as Perceived Internally.

2. For answers to any questions you may have about this research, contact:

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   443-813-8979