

A SELECTED HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE “COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL”  
MAIZE KANSAS

by

KENNETH CHRISTOPHER BOTTS

B.S., Kansas State University, 1999

M.A., Baker University, 2004

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Department of Educational Leadership  
College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Manhattan, Kansas

2015

## **Abstract**

School districts throughout the United States have continuous concerns about how to meet the needs of high school students who are at-risk of dropping out of school. Despite multiple resources available for addressing this concern through alternative education schools and programs, there continues to be an unacceptably high number of students who do not graduate from high school. While knowledge about what is working in alternative schools and the students they serve is progressing, additional research is still needed. In Maize USD 266, Complete High School Maize is an award-winning and nationally recognized dropout prevention program that has, over a fifteen year span (1999-2014), helped reduce the dropout rate in Maize.

The intent of this qualitative historical analysis was to serve two purposes. First, it delineated the historical evolution of Complete High School Maize as a model for school districts to emulate in an effort to reduce the number of high school dropouts. Secondly, this study provided historical documentation to help preserve and share in the history of the program for future generations of students.

This study examined the factors and circumstances present in Maize USD 266 that resulted in the creation of an alternative school for its students. This study also narrated the structural evolution of Complete High School Maize from 1999 to 2014 and examined the conditions and factors that resulted in the progressions. The findings of the study showed that Complete High School Maize had successfully helped reduce the number of dropouts in Maize USD 266.

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Approval by:

Co-Major Professor  
Dr. David C. Thompson

Approval by:

Co-Major Professor  
Dr. Mary Devin

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School districts throughout the United States have continuous concerns about how to meet the needs of high school students who are at-risk of dropping out of school. Despite multiple resources available for addressing this concern through alternative education schools and programs, there continues to be an unacceptably high number of students who do not graduate from high school. While knowledge about what is working in alternative schools and the students they serve is progressing, additional research is still needed. In Maize USD 266, Complete High School Maize is an award-winning and nationally recognized dropout prevention program that has, over a fifteen year span (1999-2014), helped reduce the dropout rate in Maize.

The intent of this qualitative historical analysis was to serve two purposes. First, it delineated the historical evolution of Complete High School Maize as a model for school districts to emulate in an effort to reduce the number of high school dropouts. Secondly, this study provided historical documentation to help preserve and share in the history of the program for future generations of students.

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to the students and staff members of Complete High School Maize. May your journey never end of being a life-long learner and may you always remember that you have a home at CHSM. You have each paved the way towards providing a brighter future for students who need something just a little bit different.

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*He who opens a school door, closes a prison.*

- Victor Hugo

# **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

## **Introduction to the Study**

In the report, *A Blueprint for Reform*, President Barack Obama based his correspondence on the premise that, “Every child in America deserves a world-class education” (United States Department of Education, 2010, p.1). Now, five years later, and while many citizens, parents, and educators would agree with this creed, the question of how to deliver a “world-class” education for all of America’s students has compelled a wide range of educational research and investigation. For decades since publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission of Excellence in Education, 1983), many educational stakeholders have demanded greater results from public schools, and today’s noise is no different. Yet despite multiple reform efforts to improve student achievement, many students continue to be unsuccessful in public schools and drop out (Lange & Sletten, 2002). In a report conducted by Snyder and Dillow for the National Center for Education Statistics (2012), the dropout percentage rate for individuals ages 16-to-24 is unacceptably high at 7.4%. To aid in the reduction of high school dropouts, educators and those involved in making policy believe that, “if an alternate educational option is provided for students at risk of school failure, they will be able to succeed” (Lange & Sletten, p. 1).

In the mid-1990s, Maize Unified School District 266, located in Maize, Kansas, was experiencing a significant number of high school dropouts. According to a USD 266 district-wide communications mailer sent out during the 1997-1998 school year, 45 students dropped out of Maize High School in 1996. This constituted over 4% of the high school population. Because of this, the local board of education commissioned a group to investigate starting an alternative school for the district. After countless hours spent in meetings, attending workshops and conferences, and touring other alternative schools, Complete High School Maize (CHSM) was

established and opened its doors for students in 1999. From early on, CHSM was considered a model program, as evidenced by the school being awarded the 2003 Crystal Star Award for dropout prevention by the National Dropout Prevention Network (“CHSM Shines,” 2003).

Kansas’ interest in dropout prevention has not been limited to a few localities as evidenced in 2010 when then-Kansas Governor Mark Parkinson launched the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery in an effort to help improve graduation rates and reduce the number of dropouts (*Ensure*, 2011). As a result, there has been an increased interest in alternative schools across Kansas, as well as other dropout prevention recommendations. In addition to Kansas, similar national concern has arisen based on President Obama’s commitment and vision to dropout prevention. “Significantly, the Administration’s vision includes expanding and enhancing alternative education, rather than focusing exclusively on redesigning traditional high schools” (Almeida, Le, Steinberg & Cervantez, 2010, p. 1). In response, many states are taking action. For example, in 2011, Ohio allocated over \$7 million to alternative schools and programs around the state through the Ohio Alternative Education Challenge Grant (Lieszkovszky, 2012). Elsewhere, the Louisiana Department of Education, in 2011, developed a best-practices manual for alternative schools charged with cultivating standards and policy to better alternative education (Pastorek, 2011). In New Jersey, the Department of Education’s Office of Support Services partnered with community members and businesses in hopes of creating new opportunities for students attending alternative education programs through service learning, vocation exploration, and interacting with business partners (New Jersey Department of Education, 2012).

Programs like CHSM have gained notoriety and success nationwide, sparking the question of whether such successes can and/or should be replicated on a larger scale starting with

whether an entire state like Kansas might experience the same success if systematically adopted. Given data in many states on dropouts including Kansas, the question takes on a new importance and raises the issue of how to best chronicle and repeat successes already in hand.

### **Statement of the Problem**

School districts in the United States have concerns about how to meet the needs of high school students who are at-risk of dropping out of school. According to the final report of the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery (2011), from 2004-2009, over 17,000 students dropped out of a Kansas school. More recently, the 2012-2013 Kansas State Department of Education Report Card (2013a) found the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate to be 84.9%; thus, suggesting that just over 15% of students in Kansas do not graduate four years after starting high school. Across the nation, many high schools similarly struggle with graduating students. Research completed by the National Center for Education Statistics found that, during the 2009-2010 school year, only 78% of students graduated high school on time. In large, urban districts, graduation rates are even lower at 65% (Aud et al., 2013). Additionally, in terms of non-traditional schools, many school districts nationwide are not operating their current alternative programs in an effective manner that is beneficial to student success. Fitzsimons-Lovett (2001), Cox (1999), Kim and Taylor (2008), and Lehr, Tan, and Ysseldyke (2009) suggested that many alternative education programs are nothing more than “dumping grounds” for underperforming students who cannot be molded to fit into traditional education models. These student holding tanks or “warehouses” are based on a “strict, punitive coercive approach with limited student and teacher choice” (Fitzsimons-Lovett, p. 39). Kim and Taylor (2008) add that alternative programs that provide no benefit to student success are operated in a manner that is “behavioristic, positivistic and reductive” (p. 4). Furthermore,

alternative programs that are not beneficial to student success manifest “social reproduction, social control, and reinforce existing inequities” (p. 4). Consequently, many of the current existing options for alternative education do not reinforce the need for students obtaining higher level skills that will help them be competitive in an “increasingly global, knowledge-based economy” (Almeida et al., 2009, p. 1).

A review of the literature on alternative education suggests that knowledge about what is working in alternative schools and the students they serve is progressing. Effective alternative programs are able to find ways of listening to students (Poyrazli et al., 2008; Quinn et al., 2006) and providing them a voice in the decision-making processes of their schools and educations (Kim & Taylor, 2008; Quinn et al., 2006). Research has also indicated that alternative schools that focus on career opportunities for students are effective in lowering dropout rates. Tavakolian and Howell (2012) found that meaningful connections to the real world are productive in increasing graduation rates (p. 141). Additionally, Aron (2006) and Carswell, Hanlon, O’Grady and Watts (2009) found that successful alternative programs cultivate their curriculums with personalized learning experiences for students and emphasize vocational opportunities.

Yet despite research displaying successful alternative programs, additional research is still needed. Aron and Zweig (2003) called for research describing “very basic descriptive analyses of students in need of educational alternatives, the programs and schools providing these alternatives, as well as more basic work on definitions, typologies, and inventories of approaches/programs” (p. 49). Moreover, Warren (2007) indicated that examination of alternative schools that are effective is lacking and needs to be conducted. Watson and Reigeluth (2013) suggested that additional studies be done on alternative schools or programs

“for a better understanding of the kinds of influences or interrelationships that educational change efforts have with disadvantaged populations” (p. 70). Glassett (2012) added that research should be performed to determine how well alternative school students are being served and to the extent that their individual needs are being met.

With the completion of the 2011 report, *Ensure Economic Success for Tomorrow: Graduate All Students Today*, the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery produced new statewide expectations. As a result, more attention has been given to effective alternative schools in Kansas. With Complete High School Maize being a nationally recognized (Best Practices in Dropout Prevention, 2008) and award-winning program (National Dropout Prevention Network, 2013), those charged with helping their school districts reduce the number of dropouts might consider emulating the historical evolution of CHSM.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The basis of this study serves two purposes. First, it delineates the historical evolution of Complete High School Maize as a model for school districts to emulate in an effort to reduce the number of high school dropouts. Such detailing could be instructive, as Carver and Lewis (2010) reported that enrollment in alternative schools is increasing and that there were 10,300 alternative schools and programs district-administered in the United States during the 2007-2008 school year (p. 3). While the concept of alternative education is not new, researchers agree that creating different alternatives to the traditional school model is crucial to meeting the needs of all students (Almeida et al, 2010; Lehr et al., 2009; Aron, 2006; Barr & Parrett, 2001; Natriello, McDill & Pallas, 1990; Raywid, 1989; Young, 1990).

Because Complete High School Maize has been recognized nationally for its efforts in dropout prevention and as the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and

Recovery works to ensure steps are taken to reduce the state dropout rate, stakeholders continue to examine successful programs to model. Each school year, representatives from multiple Kansas school districts visit and tour Complete High School Maize in an effort to gather ideas on how to help their districts keep students in school. This study therefore focuses on how CHSM has evolved from an idea into a reality for helping Maize USD 266 turn potential dropouts into high school graduates.

Secondly, the study provides historical documentation to help preserve and share the history of Complete High School Maize for future generations of students. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) highlight the importance of educationally-based historical chronicling by concluding:

The historical study of an educational idea or institution can do much to help us understand how our present educational system has come about; and this kind of understanding can in turn help to establish a sound basis for further progress or change.  
(p. 159)

As CHSM continues to evolve, the value of this historical research can help future leaders “improve education by its insights into the past, present, and future” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 1999, p. 390).

## **Research Questions**

This study serves as a report on alternative schools: in particular, a chronological development of Complete High School Maize. The following exploratory questions will be used to guide this study and to record the origination of Complete High School Maize:

1. What circumstances were present in Maize USD 266 that resulted in creating an alternative school for its students?



2. How has the structure of Complete High School Maize evolved from 1999 to 2014 and in response to what set of conditions and factors?
  - a. What data show the outcomes and bases for structural revision?

## **Methodology**

This study is a qualitative study using a modified historical research design-i.e., primarily chronicling through narrative a factual recitation of origins, processes, and outcomes. The research relies on qualitative data collection techniques to gain a thorough understanding of the exploratory questions. McCullough (2004), Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007), and Gay and Airasian (2003) agree that historical research is a process used to help answer questions regarding a past phenomenon. Specifically, Gay and Airasian (2003) claim, “The purpose of historical research is, as in all qualitative research, to help understand a person or event by providing in-depth description and interpretation of the data” (p. 173). Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) add, “Historical research helps educators understand the present condition of education through analysis of the past. It also helps them imagine and judge the likelihood of alternative future scenarios in education (p. 528). Finally, McCollough (2004) asserts that historical analysis is a technique of determining what has happened in the past to help predict future trends.

In conducting such practical descriptive research, the use of a variety of resources is acceptable. McCullough (2004) suggests using historical texts, diaries, maps, and newspapers as resources available to gain insight. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) also propose the use of “intentional documents, such as memoirs and yearbooks” as acceptable forms of primary resources (p. 537). In addition to these methods, a historical narrative and the use of oral testimonies are valuable. Gall, Gall, and Borg (1999) imply these methods to consist of “simply telling the story using primary source material to document trends or clarify events” (p. 410).

Consequently, the primary sources applied in this study were written documents and records, quantitative records, and oral histories.

Through oral history, “Historians can conduct oral interviews of persons who have witnessed and participated in events of potential historical significance” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007, p. 538). In particular, interviews were conducted with key stakeholders of Complete High School Maize who were purposefully selected due to their vested knowledge about the program including both current and past students, teachers, administrators, district leaders, school board members, parents, and committee members. In order to determine the individuals with vested knowledge about Complete High School Maize, information was first collected from the archival records and primary sources regarding the program from 1999 through 2014. The information collected included records of students who attended CHSM, committee members, staff, and administration. As the archival records and primary sources were reviewed, a list was created that identified all individuals who were documented as key stakeholders of the program. Once the list was created, the researcher purposefully selected individuals who were able to provide in-depth information regarding the history of the program from the perspective of the capacity in which they served. Each category of stakeholders had a predetermined initial set of questions that helped the researcher answer the study’s research questions and fulfill the purpose of the study.

Information was then gathered from the student enrollment folders stored at Complete High School Maize to chronicle the list of students who enrolled in the program between the years 1999-2014. Students were categorized into three enrollment categories: 1999-2004, 2005-2009, and 2010-2014. Next, the list of students was narrowed by examining the length of time the students were enrolled in the program. In order to obtain data that was meaningful and

thorough, the sample was reduced to those graduates and current students who were enrolled in the program for at least four semesters. For dropouts, the sample was reduced to those enrolled in the program for at least two semesters. One student from each time frame who met the total number of semester's enrolled criteria was then selected for interviewing.

In sum, a total of 24 subjects were interviewed. The information collected was summarized and descriptively analyzed to help develop the story describing the successes and failures of the program in responding to the two guiding research questions. During the interviews, each interviewee was asked questions regarding their experience concerning CHSM and what specific programs, school attributes, or activities were perceived to be the most beneficial to student success. Additionally, questions were asked regarding how CHSM has evolved over time, the purpose of CHSM, and why an alternative school was started in Maize, Kansas. A full detailed list and rationale of the subjects interviewed can be found in Table 3.4. Specific questions of the interviews can be found in Appendixes D through K.

The historical research conducted in this study therefore utilized all of the foregoing sources and followed the major stages in historical research studies as headlined by Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007):

1. Defining a problem for historical research;
2. Studying historical sources;
3. Recording information from historical sources;
4. Evaluation of historical sources;
5. Interpretation of historical research.

## **Limitations of the Study**

Because the researcher is a former alternative school teacher and administrator at Complete High School Maize, there may have been predispositions or biases that could affect research and interpretations. The researcher conducted this study with inherent beliefs about alternative education and CHSM. Specifically, the researcher may have been more apt to look for successes rather than failures and may believe in the overall purpose and mission of alternative education.

To help overcome these potential biases, the researcher used both internal criticism and external criticism to help validate the findings. Furthermore, the researcher utilized the aid of a proofreader with limited knowledge regarding the history of Complete High School Maize to help preserve impartial research and analysis.

## **Delimitations of the Study**

Complete High School Maize has been in existence from the start of the 1999-2000 school year through the present. The researcher conducted historical research from the early planning stages of the program starting 1997 and continued through the 2013-2014 school year. This time span allowed the researcher to have a specific starting point and ending point while conducting research on the school.

Additionally, while this study focused on alternative schools is general, the primary focus was on Type I alternative schools (see definition section of this study); specifically, Complete High School Maize.

## Definition of Terms

### **Alternative high school**

An alternative high school is a public high school that provides a non-traditional education for students who have not experienced success, are at-risk of dropping out, or have become dissatisfied with the traditional school setting. Special education centers and vocational training schools are not considered alternative schools (Sable & Hill, 2006).

### **Dropout**

“Any student who leaves school and does not enroll in another school or program that culminates in a high school diploma is considered to be a dropout” (Kansas Department of Education, 2012, n. p.).

### **Raywid’s typology of alternative education programs**

**Type I-** Type I alternatives seek to make school challenging and fulfilling for all involved. They “include divergence from standard school organization and practices; an especially caring, professional staff; small size and small classes; and a personalized, whole-student approach that builds a sense of affiliation and features individual instruction, self-paced work, and career counseling” (Aron & Zweig, 2003, p. 26).

**Type II-** This type of alternative school focuses on discipline. These programs “aim to segregate, contain, and reform disruptive students. Students typically do not choose to attend, but are sent to the school for specified time periods or until behavior requirements are met” (Aron & Zweig, 2003, p. 26).

**Type III-** “Type III alternatives are for students who are presumed to need remediation or rehabilitation—academic, social/emotional, or both. The assumption is that after successful treatment students can return to mainstream programs” (Raywid, 1994, p. 27).

## **Organization of the Study**

The dissertation was divided into five chapters, along with appendixes and list of references. Chapter 1 contained an introduction to the study, a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions that guided the study, a brief overview of the methodology, the delimitations of the study, and definitions of key terms used throughout the study. Chapter 2 reviewed the research and literature regarding the history of alternative schools in the United States, provided various descriptors of alternative schools, discussed recent governmental initiatives aimed at improving graduation rates and decreasing the number of dropouts synopsis including the Kansas Commission’s final report on graduation and dropout prevention and overview of President Obama’s *Blueprint for Reform*, gave an overview of Maize USD 266 with brief review of Complete High School Maize, and a summary of high school dropout data and the impact dropouts have on the United States. Chapter 3 described the historical analysis methodology and data collection methods used in this study. Chapter 4 chronologically depicted the development of Complete High School Maize from the early planning stages to an analysis of each school year starting in 1999-2000 school year through the 2013-2014 school year. Finally, Chapter 5 summarized the findings, discussed ideas for future research, and summarized and concluded the study.

## **Summary**

This present study addressed the historical evolution of Complete High School Maize beginning with the planning stages starting in 1997 through the first 15 school years of the

program from 1999 through 2014. This topic was important to address, as recent studies have shown the need for effective alternative programs to help reduce the dropout rate of high school students. Reviewing literature and research on alternative schools provided a context to historically analyze Complete High School Maize from 1997 through 2014. It was the hope of the researcher that this study filled a void in the existing literature on establishing Type I alternative schools that focused on creating environments where students had the opportunity to develop personal and social living skills, explore avenues for successful career attainment, and graduate with a high school diploma.

## Chapter 2 - Review of the Literature

### Introduction

The literature review for this study was organized into five major sections. The first section summarized high school dropout data and the impact on the United States. Additionally, it highlighted research completed signifying the importance of reducing the national dropout rate and economic impact of improving graduation rates. As a response to the high school dropout epidemic, the second section provided an overview of the history of alternative schools and gave a summary of the timeframes by which various alternative programs began and the purpose behind their initiatives. Additionally, this section discussed the various descriptors used in identifying alternative programs in existence and the students served. This essential section also identified noteworthy attributes of quality alternative education programs and the essential elements that many researchers have used to describe effective alternative schools. The third section provided a synopsis of two governmental reports: The federal *Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: A Blueprint for Reform* (2010) as well as the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Final Report (2011). These initiatives focused on innovative programs aimed at improving graduation rates, dropout prevention, and ensuring students were college and career ready upon graduating high school. The penultimate section of the literature review provided an overview of Maize USD 266 with a brief analysis of Complete High School Maize. The final section of this chapter, in setting the stage for Chapter 3 and the methodology of the study, concluded that although there were many characteristics describing various types of alternative high schools, there was still a need for further examination of Type 1 alternative programs focused on helping students earn a high



school diploma, providing vocational guidance, and developing positive social living skills; specifically, the historical analysis of the purpose and success of Complete High School Maize.

## **High School Dropouts**

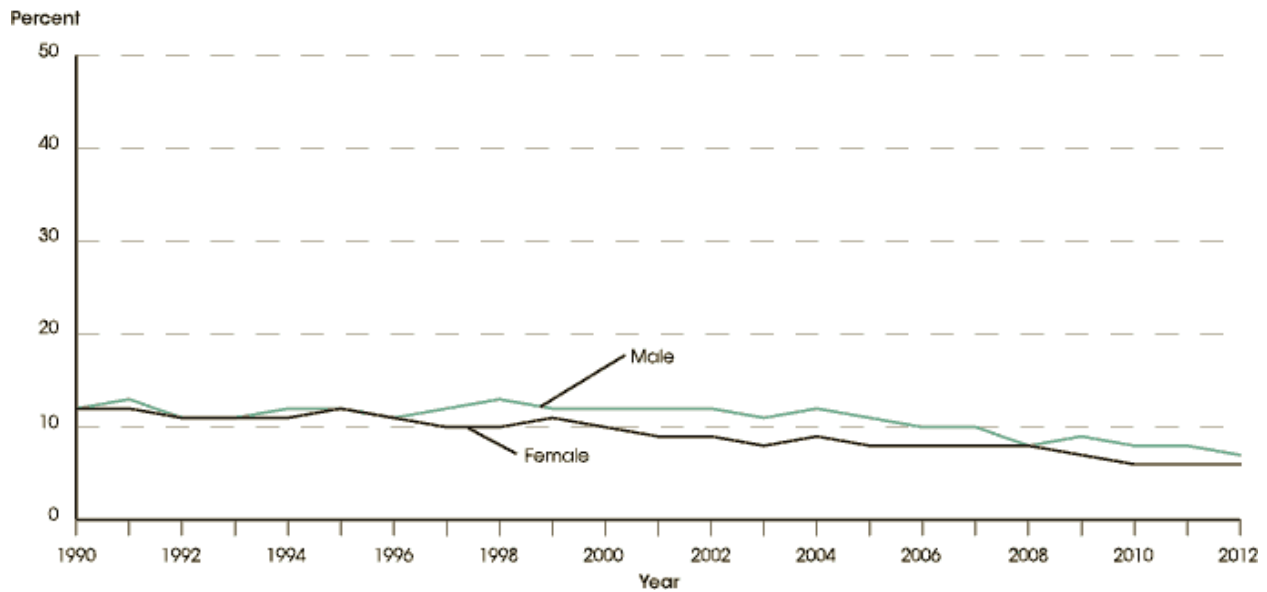
American schools and public education have continued to be prevalent topics of conversation by decision-makers at the local, state, and national levels. Regardless of the agenda, leaders have continually decried the need for students to become better educated in order for the United States to be competitive throughout the global economy and workforce. In decades past, high school dropouts were unfortunate, but these individuals were still able to obtain good-paying jobs that supported their families. Today's times have brought forth a new set of circumstances and challenges. The U.S. Department of Labor (2008) estimated that over 90% of future high-paying jobs and careers require some sort of post-secondary education. Furthermore, career options for high school dropouts that can support a middle-class lifestyle were difficult to find. Jobs that were once given to workers without a high school diploma became outsourced or automated; thus, minimally educated Americans had a difficult time supporting themselves and their families (Amos, 2008).

Amos (2008) added that not only did high school dropouts have a difficult time finding good-paying jobs, there were many other ramifications. Dropouts were also found to be physically and mentally unhealthy and possessed a greater probability of dying sooner than their graduate counterparts. Furthermore, dropouts were more likely to become parents at a young age and were considered to be more at-risk of tangling with the criminal justice system (Amos, 2008). Another consequence found with dropouts dealt with their children. Offspring of high school dropouts were found to be more likely themselves to become high school dropouts. As a result, the cycle of poverty was likely to be passed on from generation to generation.

As educators have continually striven to provide all students educational opportunities to be successful and pursue their goals, there has remained an economic crisis manifested by high school dropouts. Amos (2008), Almedia et al. (2009), and the Alliance for Excellent Education (2011, November) maintained that communities were drained economically, civically, and socially by high school dropouts. Amos added that “Increasing numbers of dropouts translate not only into lost human potential and lower tax revenues, but also a vitiated democracy and a weakened ability to compete in the global economy” (p. 5).

As seen in Figure 2.1, the trend of high school dropouts has slowly declined over a 12-year period. The data also suggested that male students typically have a higher dropout rate than females.

**Figure 2.1 Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds, by sex: 1990-2012**



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2013). *The Condition of Education 2013 (NCES 2013-037)*, Status Dropout Rates.

### ***Why Students Drop Out***

Despite the number of high school dropouts each year in the United States, no single reason has distinguished itself as the primary cause. In a study conducted by the Alliance for Excellent Education (2011, November), several reasons were revealed as barriers to graduation. These obstacles included students not making successful transitions from middle school to high school, students considered deficient in basic skills, and those who lacked engagement in classes. Furthermore, dropout prevention researchers quantified additional indicators regarding dropouts. Jerald (2006) found that low attendance and failing grades were identifiers; even as early as 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Balfanz and Legters (2006) suggested that of the students who repeated their freshman (9<sup>th</sup> grade) year of high school, only 15 percent of those students went on to graduate. Finally, Rumberger and Lim (2008) found that the factors related to high school dropouts were dependent upon the characteristics of the individual student. In particular, these characteristics included “their educational performance, behaviors, attitudes, and backgrounds-as well as the characteristics of the families, schools, and communities where they live and go to school” (p. 66). Similarly, MacIver and MacIver (2009) identified both individual factors and institutional factors as determining elements of students’ choices to stay in school or dropout. The individual factors included high absenteeism rate, multiple behavioral issues, and failing grades in coursework. For schools, factors included poor relationships, low expectations, and lack of instructional support for students.

A pivotal year for high school students was their freshman year. MacIver and MacIver (2009), Chang and Romero (2008), and Neild (2009) agreed that habitual or chronic absenteeism as well as course failure were strong predictors of dropping out. Moreover, MacIver and MacIver found that ninth graders who failed one or more classes had an increased chance of

dropping out. While data supported this notion, failure in earlier grades, as well as poor attendance in middle school, correlated to a higher probability of not staying in school.

Bridgeland, Dilulio, Jr., and Morison (2006) conducted a study in which perspectives of high school dropouts were surveyed. This study identified five reasons and themes that resulted in students leaving high school. These reasons included:

- Classes were not interesting for students;
- Students missed too many days and could not catch up;
- Students spent time with people who were not interested in school;
- Students had too much freedom and not enough rules in their lives;
- Students were failing their classes (p. 3).

In summary, no single factor was responsible for a student to drop out of high school. Conversely, no single factor was responsible for students to remain in school until graduation. In addition, while there were some institutional factors that resulted in students dropping out, the behavior and performance of students in school had a major influence over their decision. Also, student behavior outside of school mattered. Specifically, the probability of students dropping out increased for those who engaged in criminal or major misconduct behavior. Research also indicated that the process of students dropping out did not begin once they entered high school. School attendance, academic performance, and social behaviors in prior grades were also indicators for potential dropouts. Students who were not connected or engaged with peers or adults were also at risk of dropping out of school.

## ***Dropout Prevention***

Just as research provided data on reasons why students dropped out of school, research also was conducted for reasons why students stayed in school. Carver and Lewis (2011) conducted a student survey for the National Center for Education Statistics regarding dropout prevention services and programs. In their research, they found that at the high school level, school districts reported having programs aimed at addressing the needs of at-risk students through tutoring, summer school, remedial coursework, guided study hall, alternative schools or programs, and after-school programs. In addition, a majority of school districts offered credit recovery courses and programs, smaller class sizes, early graduation options, and self-paced classes. Carver and Lewis (2011) also found that many students identified as at-risk were enrolled in career and technical education classes or programs.

In another study, Dynarski et al. (2008) chaired a panel of dropout prevention experts in an effort to provide educators, administrators, and policymakers with recommendations focused on keeping students in school. The following recommendations were given by the panel:

- Recommendation 1: Utilize data systems that support a realistic diagnosis of the number of students who drop out and that help identify individual students at high risk of dropping out.
- Recommendation 2: Assign adult advocates to students at risk of dropping out.
- Recommendation 3: Provide academic support and enrichment to improve academic performance.
- Recommendation 4: Implement programs to improve students' classroom behavior and social skills.
- Recommendation 5: Personalize the learning environment and instruction process.

- Recommendation 6: Provide rigorous and relevant instruction to better engage students in learning and provide the skills needed to graduate and to serve them after they leave school. (pp. 10-11)

Similar to the recommendations given by Dynarski et al., Azzam (2007) listed five actions that schools can implement in order to improve students' chances of graduating:

1. Make school more engaging through real-world, experiential learning;
2. Improve instruction and supports for struggling learners through smaller classes, better teachers, individualized instruction, tutoring, and more time with teachers;
3. Improve school climate by increasing supervision and improving classroom discipline;
4. Ensure that students have a relationship with at least one adult in the school; and
5. Improve communication between parents and schools. (pp. 91-92)

Also interested in tackling the high school dropout epidemic were state governors.

According to Princiotta and Reyna (2009), "Addressing the high school dropout problem is one of the surest paths governors can take to support long-term economic growth for their state" (p.

6). In order to do so, it was recommended that governors take action on four suggestions:

1. Promote high school graduation for all;
2. Target youth at risk of dropping out;
3. Reengage youth who have dropped out of school; and

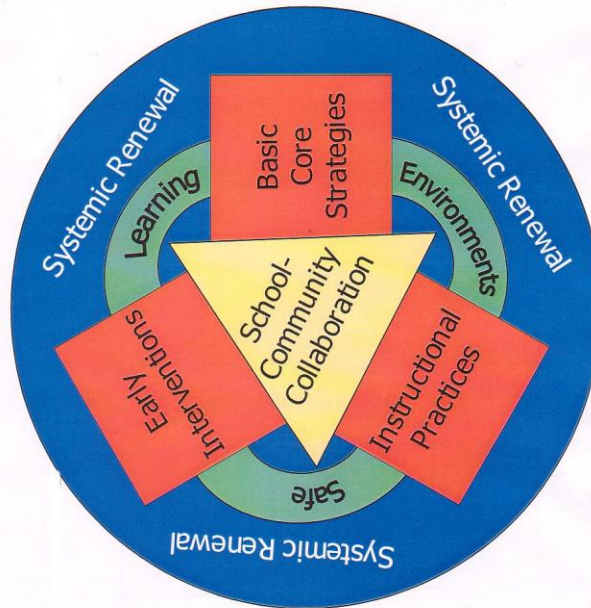
4. Provide rigorous, relevant options for earning a high school diploma. (pp. 4-5)

The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network promoted a study conducted by Smink and Reimer (2005), which identified fifteen strategies for improving student attendance and truancy reduction. The strategies endorsed were inherently independent of one another; however, they did overlap and work well collectively. These strategies were grouped into four categories including “school and community perspective, early interventions, basic core strategies, and making the most of instruction” (p. 2).

As shown in Figure 2.2, the illustration depicts the relationship of the four categories identified by Smink and Schargel (2005). Specifically, the illustration shows how Early Interventions, Basic Core Strategies, and Instructional Practices are based around ongoing School-Community Collaboration. In addition, these categories are based on the premise of Systemic Renewal in conjunction with Safe Learning Environments.

**Figure 2.2 Dropout prevention: Everyone’s problem**

## Dropout Prevention: Everyone's Problem



Source: Smink, J. & Reimer, M. (2005). *Fifteen effective strategies for improving student attendance and truancy prevention*. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network.

Listed below are the categories, along with the fifteen strategies given by Smink and Reimer (2005) that led to improved student attendance and reduced student truancy:

- **School and Community Perspective**
  - Systemic Renewal: Frequently restarting the process of “evaluating goals and objectives related to school policies, practices, and organizational structures as they impact a diverse group of learners” (p. 6).
  - School-Community Collaboration: When working as one collective group, support is given to students and an environment is created that promotes a strong and caring climate.



- Safe Learning Environments: Promote and plan for a safe and positive learning environment for all students.
- **Early Interventions**
  - Family Engagement: Studies show that “family engagement has a direct, positive effect on children’s achievement and is one of the most accurate predictors of a student’s success in school” (p. 12).
  - Early Childhood Education: Provide the best possible education for students from the time they enter school through graduation.
  - Early Literacy Development: Provide a strong foundation for students at an early age.
- **Basic Core Strategies**
  - Mentoring/Tutoring: Establish meaningful relationships between students and adults that are based on trust.
  - Service-Learning: Produce meaningful opportunities and experiences for students that promote “personal and social growth, career development, and civic responsibility” (p. 20).
  - Alternative Schooling: “Provides potential dropouts a variety of options that can lead to graduation” (p. 22). Additionally, programs focus on meeting the individual needs of students and leads to the awarding of a high school diploma.

- After-School Opportunities: Supplement the general education program by offering additional experiences for students aimed at closing the educational gap.
- **Making the Most of Instruction**
  - Professional Development: Provide educators opportunities to hone their skills in working with high-risk students.
  - Active Learning: This strategy encompasses “teaching and learning strategies that engage and involve students in the learning process. Students find new and creative ways to solve problems, achieve success, and become lifelong learners when educators show them that there are different ways to learn” (p. 28).
  - Educational Technology: Technology can be used to engage students in their education and provide many different learning opportunities.
  - Individualized Instruction: Allows students to promote their individuality and provide teachers with flexibility in meeting their unique needs.
  - Career and Technical Education: Helps prepare students with job skills while also preparing them for the future demands of the workforce.

### ***The Cost of High School Dropouts***

According to a 2013 report conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics, many high schools across the United States were struggling (Aud et al., 2013). The Alliance for Excellent Education (2011, November) affirmed this notion by estimating that over 1.3 million students throughout the United States dropped out of school in the class of 2010. Moreover, in a report conducted by the Alliance for Excellent Education (2011, October), over 30% of students

in the United States did not graduate from high school on time with a traditional diploma. Cullen, Levitt, Robertson, and Sadoff (2013) also reported that “only around 75 percent of students graduate on time, and approximately 8 percent of students drop out of high school altogether” (p. 133).

From an economic perspective, high school dropouts suffered from lost opportunities and reduced salary earnings. Murnane (2013) reported that when students drop out of high school, the economy is rendered a fiscal death sentence. For example, a high school dropout earned, on average, approximately \$260,000 less than a high school graduate over a lifetime. In addition, the Alliance for Excellent Education (2011, October) found that dropouts from the class of 2010 cost the nation over \$337 billion in lost wages over a lifetime. Cullen et al. (2013) provided a comparison of students who completed exactly twelve years of education to those who fell just short of receiving a high school diploma. This comparison found a \$300,000 variance in favor of those who earned a diploma in total lifetime earnings (p. 134). Research also showed that students categorized in the lowest quintile of family incomes were four times as likely to dropout as those students categorized in the highest income quintile (Cullen et al., 2013).

As seen in Table 2.1, the average earnings of high school graduates compared to high school dropouts within various industries were substantial. These lost wages over a lifetime had a substantial impact on the economy, as suggested in prior literature throughout this section.

**Table 2.1 Average 2010 earnings of high school graduates (excluding those with education beyond high school) and dropouts ages 35-44 by industry category**

Graduates		Dropouts	
<i>Male</i>	Female	Male	Female

Food & maintenance	\$24,866	\$16,271	\$20,758	\$14,712
Community & education	\$29,406	\$21,294	\$22,745	\$18,344
Manufacturing & production	\$37,546	\$23,481	\$29,611	\$20,177
Military & law enforcement	\$45,616	\$33,284	\$37,659	\$25,935
Business	\$46,223	\$29,907	\$37,289	\$23,935
Technology	\$53,452	\$35,268	\$40,891	\$31,826

*Source:* Cullen, J. B., Levitt, S. D., Robertson, E., & Sadoff, S. (2013). What can be done to improve struggling high schools? *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 27(2), 133-152.

High school dropouts also had an impact on the rest of the nation from a social perspective. Tyler and Lofstrom (2009) found that “lower tax revenues, greater public spending on public assistance and healthcare, and higher crime rates” had a deep impact on communities (p. 87).

Lynch (2013) questioned if too much focus on high school dropouts centered around the economic impact on society. Although earning a suitable living had value, Lynch believed that there was an intrinsic worth to dropout prevention. “Money is not everything and is certainly only one piece of the value of a high school diploma” (Lynch, para. 2). Lynch contended that other areas of focus should have included the value of a career versus a job, learning for the sake of learning, and social strength through the later years of high school through peer socialization. Finally, Lynch believed that, “To really reach today’s students and encourage them to finish at least a high school education, they should be valued as learners and not simply earners” (Lynch, 2013, para. 6).

## **History of Alternative Schools**

The first notion of an alternative school began in response to unhappiness and dissatisfaction within the traditional school setting. While high school dropouts became a societal problem in the latter portion of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, alternative schools started decades prior in response to a variety of other concerns. As such, the era of public schooling in the United States has mystified educational reformers with regard to how to provide the best education for all of America's students. Since their inception, alternative schools have represented many different facets of education (Raywid, 1999). Despite many progressive efforts aimed at addressing various educational concerns, the literature on alternative schools suggests that one reason alternative schools were originally developed was due to varying beliefs regarding the purpose and structure of the total educational system (Lehr et al, 2009; Raywid, 1999; Young, 1990). Lehr et al. (2009) added that "alternative schools were created in response to a public education system that was not serving all students in a fair and equitable manner" (p. 20). Furthermore, research has also indicated that many alternative programs were established as a means to educate students considered to be disorderly or disobedient (Gable, Bullock, & Evans, 2006). In doing so, Morley (1996), Raywid (1994) and Lange and Sletten (2002) concluded that alternative schools were designed to meet two objectives. First, alternative schools have served as a method of removing disruptive students from the traditional school environment, and secondly, have functioned as a vehicle to keep students in school until a high school diploma has been earned.

There have been many interpretations within the alternative school literature as to when alternative programs first started serving students. This has been in large part due to the many variations of how alternative education is defined. The U.S. Department of Education (2002) defined alternative education as a public school, either elementary or secondary, that "addresses

the needs of students which typically cannot be met in a regular school and provides nontraditional education which is not categorized solely as regular education, special education, vocational education, gifted and talented or magnet school programs” (p. 55). A more recent report conducted by Carver and Lewis (2010) builds upon the previous definition by adding, “The students who attend alternative schools and programs are typically at risk of educational failure (as indicated by poor grades, truancy, disruptive behavior, pregnancy, or similar factors associated with temporary or permanent withdrawal from school)” (p. 1). While there may not have been one precise and clearly defined definition of alternative education (Lange & Sletten, 2002), “most agree that alternative schools are defined by the fact that they tend to serve students who are at-risk of school failure within the traditional educational system” (p. 19).

Many researchers have long believed that the history of alternative schools in the U.S. can be traced back as early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Miller, 2009; Leiding, 2008; Young, 1990) when formal schooling was introduced, while others have contended that the development of alternative schooling can be traced back to the progressive theories of John Dewey in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Fowler, 2004; Conley, 2002; Barr & Parrett, 2001). Alternative types of education based upon race, social class, and gender have been available even as traditional schools have become more rooted within the culture of the United States (Young, 1990). Most notably, however, were two periods of reform that were marked by the progression of alternative schools (Raywid, 1999; Lehr et al., 2009; Ahearn, 2004). Identified as the Progressive Movement (1890-1940) and the Free School Movement (1960-1975), both periods were responses to the prevailing philosophy of the time:

The public school system, which began to take shape in the 1840s has developed systematically as a standardized and bureaucratic system so as to allow business leaders to control the socialization process of the nation's children. Those interested in opposing this process created alternative schools. The goals, methodology and decision-making process of the alternative schools are in direct opposition to the goals, methodology and decision-making processes of the public school system. (Emery, 2000, p. 4).

Still, many modern alternative schools throughout the United States can be traced back to John Dewey and the 1930s and 1940s' progressive movement. Dewey (1922) believed that alternatives to traditional schooling should focus on experimental learning where students were active participants in their education. Ornstein and Levin (2000) added that Dewey was a proponent of "hands-on" learning approaches, which is still a common theme in alternative education settings today.

Both Mottaz (2002) and Neumann (2003) found that throughout the 1950s, different options to public education in the United States predominantly focused on vocational education, disabled students, or students considered to be high-achieving. Additionally, some students had the opportunity to attend multiple schools within the same district. Others were allowed to attend nearby colleges or universities for specialized classes. As the decade progressed, arguments began suggesting that public education in the United States was not only supposed to be free for all students, but that it should also provide equality of educational opportunities for all students. These arguments were manifested by the beginning of the Civil Rights and the *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 1954. As such, these movements confirmed the notion of equity in education. Young (1990) observed, "The issue of equity or

equality was added to the demand for excellence in the national debate on public education” (p. 9). Other criticisms of the time arose regarding the purpose of education. Many found that education simply promoted the status quo of the time rather than encouraging student growth and intellectual fulfillment (Young, 1990; Emery, 2000).

Conley (2002) summarized the evolution of alternative schools with regard to the political focus of the era. Starting with the 1960s, Conley described the next decades as “the period of innovation; the 1970s, the age of accountability and improvement; the 1980s, the ‘Excellence Movement,’ which led to restructuring in the 1990s; and the twenty-first century, the era of competition, school choice, and re-privatization” (p. 3).

The 1960s were a pivotal point in the history of alternative education, as the first schools to be branded as “alternative” surfaced (Raywid, 1999; Mottaz, 2002). These new alternatives targeted students who were considered to be poor, part of a disadvantaged minority group, or otherwise unsuccessful in school. Young (1990) attributed this crusade as a response to President Lyndon Johnson’s “War on Poverty.” In 1965, Johnson signed into legislation the federal *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) with the hope that the focus on equity for all students would turn into excellence for all (Lehr et al., 2009). Specifically, Johnson hoped that improving public schools would promote equity amongst disadvantaged and minority students: “With government backing and funding, a new wave of alternatives was spawned that was meant to offer equal and meaningful education to disadvantaged and minority students” (Lange & Sletten, 2002, p. 3). The ESEA of 1965 caused a dramatic shift in how education was governed at both the state and federal level and “spurred an educational revolution with many innovative strategies on how to best improve schools” (Lange & Sletten, pp. 18-19). Young (1990) contended that while alternative education had been in place since the advent of public



schools in America, the war on poverty in the 1960s jump-started the alternative education movement in the United States.

As the 1970s arrived, “Open Schools” became more popular. These alternative programs were supported by parents, students, teachers, and community members who believed in a non-competitive, student-centered approach to education. In open schools, students had the opportunity to study at their own pace, with a curriculum that was partially controlled by individual choice, and school accountability was measured by individual improvements made by students. Both Raywid (1994) and Neumann (2003) asserted that many of the current reform efforts in education stemmed from the early alternative schools as exhibited by theme-based schools, smaller learning environments, and student and teacher choice established in that decade.

In 1975, the federal *Education of All Handicapped Children Act* (1975) was signed into legislation by Congress. This Act sought to address the inequalities that existed amongst disadvantaged students, and alternative education was viewed as a solution to help meet the needs of these students. Consequently, many criticisms came to be leveled at alternative education. Particularly, alternative education began to be perceived to segregate students with disabilities from the traditional school environment (Sagor, 1999; Fitzsimmons-Lovett, 2001). In addition, critics argued that this segregation of students did not provide students with the same access to educational opportunities as provided to traditional school students. With a society filled with passionate views on equality of educational opportunity for all students, the appeal of alternative education began to decrease (Sagor, 1999; Young, 1990).

Despite the frustrations and resistance brought forth in the mid-to-late 1970s, the alternative education movement persevered. In fact, the number of alternative programs grew

significantly throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s. In growing, both Raywid (1989) and Young (1990) submitted that throughout the 1980s, the focus of alternative schools again shifted. The new role of alternative education narrowed its focus to educate students who were at-risk of academic failure (McKee & Conner, 2007, p. 44). This new focus aimed at serving students who were disruptive in nature and who were failing through basic course instruction (Young, 1990). Lange and Sletten (2002) affirmed that 1980s' alternative schools "were geared toward students who were disruptive or failing in their home schools and that the character and variety of options was greatly shaped by this change" (p. 5). In particular, Garrison (1987), Harrington (1994), and Lehr, Lanners, and Lange (2003) identified these students as habitually disruptive and sometimes violent, at-risk of dropping out of high school, and low-achieving. In 1983, the National Council for Excellence in Education published the *A Nation at Risk*. As the report portrayed a dismal image of public education in the United States, it called for an immediate focus on excellence in education. As a result, there became yet another new focus and awareness on dropout prevention that persists today.

In the 1990s, many additional educational reform efforts commenced. On March 31, 1994, President William J. Clinton signed into law the Goals 2000: Educate America Act to provide a framework for meeting the National Education Goals. These eight goals, as identified by Congress, declared that by the year 2000, the following criteria would be met in an effort to reverse the rise of mediocrity in American public schools and focus on rigorous academic standards and assessments:

1. All children in America will start school ready to learn.
2. The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

3. All students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our Nation's modern economy.
4. The Nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.
5. United States students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.
6. Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
7. Every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.
8. Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children. (U.S. Congress, 1994).

Though ambitious, Goals 2000 did not address the needs of each school system and localities found it difficult to implement due to the complexities of the program (Cohen, 1995).

In order to be effective, “Goals 2000 will have to become useful to educational improvement. That will not be easy either, for the capability to undertake standards-based school improvement is limited everywhere in American education” (Cohen, 1995, para. 14). Despite the struggles to implement each goal locally, alternative education was again a focus of school systems and served as a means to help reach the 90 percent graduation rate. By 1997, “86 percent of 18-24 year olds nationwide had a high school credential, and 15 states met the goal of having 90 percent or higher state completion rate” (Cromwell, 1999, para. 5).

The 1990s also addressed violence issues in schools, as acknowledged in the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. This decade witnessed an increase in violence in public schools and was amplified in the press as a result of an increase in youth violence, gangs, and firearm availability (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Consequently, the enrollment in alternative programs again increased and the type of students the programs served became an even greater challenge. Legislation was passed mandating long-term suspensions or expulsions for offenders and school districts were required to place these students into alternative programs (U.S. Department of Education, 1996).

Finally, the 1990s brought forth another controversial issue in public education. School vouchers became available for parents to fund their personal choice of where their student attended school. Public schools found that the money usually designated for their budgets was now being redirected to both charter schools and private schools, including schools that offered a religious curriculum (Leiding, 2008), thus potentially violating the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. While the taxpayers of the United States wanted the best education for every student, a debate began to foment regarding how best to fund public education (Leiding, 2008; Lange & Sletten, 2002).

In spite of decades of reform efforts, challenges, and controversies, many students continued to be unsuccessful in traditional school settings. While there were believed to be many reasons why students can be unsuccessful in school, Carver and Lewis (2010) identified several indicators of students who should be considered “at-risk” of educational failure. These indicators included “poor grades, truancy, disruptive behavior, pregnancy, or similar factors associated with temporary or permanent withdrawal from school” (p. 1). As such, these students were being referred to or sent to alternative schools or alternative programs. These alternative schools and programs continued to be a medium for both dropout prevention and meeting the needs of at-risk students.

During the 2000 presidential election, George W. Bush promoted education reform as a high national priority. As a result, Goals 2000 was out the window and the U.S. was onto its next educational reform campaign: “The Texas Miracle,” which later became known as the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) of 2001. This new initiative, coupled with increased demands of the federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act* (IDEA) in 2004, saw many alternative programs become more academic and student-focused. In addition, numerous traditional schools were succumbing to tremendous pressure associated with high-stakes standardized tests brought about by NCLB and other state-level educational productivity reforms. Particularly, under NCLB schools were required to show continuous improvement for all students and make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). These acts, combined with AYP, mandated the same set of standards for all students, regardless of their exceptionality. Consequently, school officials looked for alternatives to help meet the individual needs of each student and in unfortunate scenarios, some school officials worked to drive out low performing students as well as disruptive students; many of whom came from diverse ethnic, racial, and

socioeconomic backgrounds (Gable, Bullock, & Evans, 2006). As a result, there came to be an increased number of students who were being placed in various alternative-type settings. Lehr, Lanners, and Lange (2003) identified 48 states in the nation having “some type of legislation addressing alternative schools or programs” (p. 1). This increase, however, included many different types of schools such as charter schools, magnet schools, schools assigned by the courts; detention schools, alternative learning centers; and second chance schools.

Another consequence of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* in alternative schools was related to the performance-based accountability systems. With NCLB, schools were held accountable for the performance of students in all groups which included minorities, English language learners, and students with low-socioeconomic status. Schools fall out of compliance with NCLB if any of the aforementioned groups do not meet annual targets. Hemmer, Madsen, and Torres (2013) stated, “For the alternative schools this is problematic because they experience limited enrollment and high student mobility” (p. 658). Additionally, Hemmer, Madsen, and Torres (2013) stated added that “alternative schools are encouraged to formulate a different design of schooling for the at-risk student, meaning that the accountability rules that govern the traditional school may not be appropriate for the alternative setting” (p. 658). Because of this, many states adopted policies that allow alternative programs to be assessed under a different criteria than those of their traditional counterparts.

By 2014, the current state of alternative education programs had come to be generally viewed as a dropout prevention strategy for students considered to be at-risk of academic failure (Raywid, 1999; Lehr et al., 2009; Carver & Lewis, 2010; Iachini, Buettner, Anderson-Butcher, & Reno, 2013). In addition, the number of alternative education programs and schools had continued to increase, as had policies and legislation supporting expansion (Lehr et al., 2009;

Almedia et al., 2010; Stetson, 2013; Mills, Renshaw, & Zipin, 2013). Despite these initiatives, Leiding (2008) contended that success in alternative education would only continue if stakeholders believe in a rigorous and relevant education for at-risk students equal to those in traditional school settings.

In a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) during the 2007-2008 school year, 64% of school districts reported having one or more alternative school or program for at-risk students that was administered either by the district or by another entity; by the 2010-2011 school year, sources indicated that the number had grown to 76% (Carver & Lewis, 2011). In fact, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2011), “over the past twenty years, alternative school expansion has tripled, and enrollment for these facilities have quadrupled since 1990” (Watson & Lewis, 2014).

With the obvious growth and acceptance of alternative education, two national organizations have formed to help promote best practices and strategies for keeping students at risk of educational failure in school. The National Alternative Education Association (NAEA, 2014) was established in 2002, and the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N, 2014) originated in 1986. Both organizations have long sought to enhance the quality of alternative education and to serve as formal resources aimed at dropout prevention. As organizations like these have worked for recognition, visibility and effect, the research suggests that the focus has shifted from educational experimentation to a major and concerted emphasis on dropout prevention.

### **Descriptors of Alternative Schools**

As the history of alternative schooling suggests, there have been many reasons for the advent of alternative education schools and programs across the nation. In examining the many

different types of programs, students served, and the characteristics of the programs, the need for alternative schools has been multiply evidenced. As Aron and Zweig (2003) noted, alternative education has become jointly “a source of both disconnection from and reconnection to mainstream institutions” (p. 3). Likewise, alternative education has meant something different to each student served through this channel. Aron (2006) used the following excerpt in suggesting what is meant by the phrase, “alternative education”:

The term ‘alternative education’ in its broadest sense covers all educational activities that fall outside the *traditional* K-12 school system (including home schooling, GED preparation programs, special programs for gifted children, charter schools, etc.), although the term is often used to describe programs serving vulnerable youth who are no longer in traditional schools. Ironically, because they are often associated with students who were unsuccessful in the past, many alternative schools are thought to be of much poorer quality than the traditional K-12 school system, and yet because they are challenged to motivate and educate disengaged students many alternate education programs are highly valued for their innovation and creativity. (p. 3)

Kleiner, Porch, and Farris (2002) argued that within the alternative education community, there have been many discrepancies on what has distinguished alternative programs from one another, what characteristics have defined these programs, and what the best practices have been in working with students identified as at-risk of educational failure. In general, “the definition and characteristics of alternative education are determined by individual states or school districts” (Lehr et al., 2003, p. 2). Morely (1991) added that within the scope of alternative



education, it has been widely recognized that not all students learn the same way. Additionally, alternative education has become “a means of incorporating variety and choice within school systems” to safeguard each student’s path to meeting their educational goals (p. 7). Finally, Raywid (1994) has promoted alternative schools as “models for any school that seeks innovative change” (p. 26).

### ***Definition of Alternative Schools***

With a tremendous amount of literature available on alternative education and alternative schools, there have been a number of contexts for definition. As such, Aron (2006) contended that there is no consensus on a standard definition of alternative education. While no customary definition has been agreed upon, the definition of alternative schools has been broken into categories that manifest the service provided. These categories have included historical, operational, legalistic/legislative, or type of students served.

Carver and Lewis (2010) formed perhaps the most recent and widely agreeable definition of alternative schools. This definition stated:

Alternative schools and programs are designed to address the needs of students that typically cannot be met in regular schools. The students who attend alternative schools and programs are typically at risk of educational failure (as indicated by poor grades, truancy, disruptive behavior, pregnancy, or similar factors associated with temporary or permanent withdrawal from school. (p. 1)

How alternative education is ultimately defined or what traits must exist in order for a school to be identified as “alternative” has varied from state-to-state, as have the policies that

govern them (Lehr et al., 2009). In Kansas, according to the *Student Data Item Descriptions* (2013b), the definition of an alternative school has been determined to be, “A school/program that is nontraditional, especially in education ideals, methods of teaching. Include virtual school classrooms in district buildings” (p. 13). Additionally, in Kansas, there is state statute has been legislatively adopted regarding alternative schools. Located in the Kansas Statutes Annotated, Article 92 of Chapter 72 (§ 72-9201), this statute (2009) decreed:

The board of education of any school district may establish an alternative school or schools at any of the levels of grade seven or above to provide an educational alternative for students determined by such board of educations to be unable to benefit from other schools of the school district. Courses of instruction and other requirements of statutes and rules and regulations shall apply to any such schools to the extent that the same are not obstructive to programs of learning and instruction in such schools. (para. 1)

### ***Purpose of Alternative Education***

The history of alternative education has suggested that there is still considerable ambiguity as to the purpose of alternative schools. While stakeholders including researchers, educators, policy makers, and parents have debated the rationale for staffing and funding alternative programs (Quinn et al., 2006), others have contended that the sole purpose of alternative education is to serve students who are considered at-risk of educational failure and at-risk of dropping out (Carver & Lewis, 2010). As such, keeping students in school coupled with dropout prevention strategies have become a current primary focus for alternative schools. Despite this focus, some have argued that simply keeping students in school until a diploma is earned has not been an adequate goal. For example, Kim and Taylor (2008) and Lehr et al.

(2009) disputed that alternative schools simply provide a warehouse for at-risk students, thereby conveniently ridding them from the traditional learning setting. In a similar manner, Raywid (1994) questioned whether alternative schools were historically for schools or school systems; for all students or only special-needs students; as a choice for students or by school mandate.

In light of these disparate perspectives, there have existed many additional purposes for alternative programs. Foremost, many alternative schools have been designed to help meet the needs of students who are typically not successful in traditional schools. According to Martin and Brand (2006), public alternative school programs have “[offered] students who are struggling or who have left school an opportunity to achieve in a new setting and use creative, individualized learning methods” (p. 2). Secondly, alternative schools have also served as a resource for school districts to overcome barriers manifested by traditional policies governing schools. One example of these barriers has included inflexible procedures put in place to help maintain consistency and have been a staple in most traditional learning environments across the country. Many alternative schools and programs have offered more flexible policies and procedures. Another obstacle found in education has stemmed from individual students and the background from which they come. Specifically, the Coalition of Juvenile Justice (2001) identified the following student backgrounds as barriers to student educational success:

- Poverty
- A poor educational start
- Community stress
- Racial/ethnic/language barriers
- Lack of adult supervision, mentors, and community supports
- Family stress and responsibility

- Learning disabilities and related conditions

Furthermore, alternative programs have typically aimed to serve students coming from diverse demographics. As socioeconomic, cultural and regional differences have increased the diversity of the American student population and their needs, the traditional high school has frequently been said to no longer meet the educational needs of every student. According to Morley (1991), “Alternative education is a perspective, not a procedure or program. It is based upon the belief that there are many ways to become educated, as well as many types of environments and structures within which this may occur” (p. 7). Though alternative students considered at-risk have long come from various socioeconomic backgrounds and ethnicities, these students have often shared other related qualities such as struggling with their academics, possessing a learning disability, having emotional or behavioral issues, falling prey to the behavioral problems of others, needing individualized instruction and being at-risk of expulsion, suspension, or dropping out (National Alternative Education Association, 2009). However, schools that serve the same or similar populations of students have been able to differ depending on the emphasis provided. Some of these differences have included types of credentials offered, services provided, and program types. Examples of credentials that some alternative schools can help students attain have included:

- High school diplomas
- General Educational Development (GED) diplomas
- Occupational and skills certification

The curriculum supporting these credentials has generally focused on teaching basic skills to students. In addition to these basic life skills, many alternative programs have focused on career development and helping prepare students for employment beyond high school. In these preparations, students typically have been provided the following career exploration initiatives as options:

- Career awareness/choices workshops
- Occupational exploration programs
- Apprenticeships
- Modified work/study programs
- Speakers' bureau
- Work visitations
- Tech-Prep (technical preparation in partnership with a community college)
- Vocational/technical training
- School to work programs
- Work experience
- Internships (Aron & Zweig, 2003, pp. 25-26)

### ***Alternative School Characteristics***

Descriptions of alternative schools and programs, despite their vast range of typologies, have long shared many similar characteristics. Lehr et al. (2009) found that alternative schools typically have had small student-to-teacher ratios, smaller enrollment, and greater degree of self-sufficiency compared to traditional learning environments. Other descriptions of alternative schools have included individualized and personalized learning environments for students, positive relationships between students and teachers, and students coming from unique and

diverse backgrounds (Lange & Sletten, 2002; Aron, 2006; Foley & Pang, 2006). Furthermore, alternative schools have been frequently distinguished by their “flexible schedules, smaller student-teacher ratios, relevant and career-oriented themes, and innovative curricula” (Martin & Brand, 2006, p. 2).

Common characteristics of students attending alternative schools have included status as dropouts, students with disabilities, and students partaking in risky behaviors (Lange & Sletten, 2002). In addition, Aron and Zweig (2003) included other attributes of alternative school students to take in pregnant/parenting teens, suspended/expelled students, recovered drop-outs, delinquent teens, low-achievers, and all at-risk youth. Morissette (2011) conducted research on alternative schools and programs in search of attributes and characteristics defining effective alternative schools. Identified characteristics included school environment/ambiance, sense of belonging, pedagogical expertise, program flexibility, and self-awareness.

In addition, the National Alternative Education Association (2009) adopted the following ten exemplary practices of quality alternative schools along with indicators that provided pointed guidance on what they considered essential to quality alternative schooling:

1. Mission and Purpose: There must be a clear definition of the target student population;
2. Leadership: Leaders must be passionate, innovative, competent and experienced;
3. Climate and Culture: Climate and culture must be positive, not punitive and promote collegial relationships among students, parent/guardians, and staff;
4. Staffing and Professional Development: Staff must be effective, innovative and qualified and given the opportunity to gain professional development that helps them

- “maintain an academic focus, enhance teaching strategies, and develop alternative instructional methods” (Aron & Zweig, 2003, p. 33);
5. Curriculum and Instruction: There must be a marriage of high academic standards with hands-on, creative instruction;
  6. Student Assessment: The program uses a research based framework of reliable measure to monitor student progress and adjust program services;
  7. Transitional Planning and Support: A plan is in place to transition the student from the traditional school to the alternative school, and then from the alternative school to post graduation;
  8. Parent/Guardian Involvement: Parents/guardians are involved beyond parent/guardian-teacher meetings;
  9. Collaboration: Collaborative partnerships promote opportunities for service learning, life skills, and career exploration; and
  10. Program Evaluation: Data is triangulated and includes the following items: program implementation ratings, student outcome data, and student, parent/guardian, and staff.

Raywid (1994) found two similar traits in characterizing alternative education programs. First, “they have been designed to respond to a group that appears not to be optimally served by the regular program” and secondly, “they have represented varying degrees of departure from standard school organizations, programs, and environments” (p. 26). Furthermore, Lehr et al. (2003) and Ahearn (2004) identified four themes that emerged in examining different alternative programs across the nation. These themes included:

- Alternative education includes schools or programs in nontraditional settings separate from the general education classroom;
- Alternative schools/programs serve students who are at risk of school failure;
- Alternative schools/programs serve students who are disruptive or have behavior problems;
- Alternative schools/programs serve students who have been suspended or expelled.

As seen in Table 2.1, alternative schools have typically fallen into a typology over years of development. These characteristics have set alternative schools on a very different path which has increasingly turned toward drop-out prevention rather than the containment profile many people attribute in stereotypic fashion.

**Table 2.2 Typical alternative education program characteristics**

Staffing	Instruction	Focus	Nontraditional
Small school, class size, staff	Standards-based	Supportive environment	Flexible scheduling, evening hours, multiple shifts
Low student-to-teacher ratio	Innovative and varied curricula	Informal or high structure	Student and staff entry choice
Adult mentors	Functional behavior assessments	Student-orientation	Reduced school days
Leadership from either a principal or director/teacher-director	Self-paced instruction	Proactive or problem focus (i.e., last chance)	Linkages between schools and workplaces
Lack of specialized services (e.g., library, career counseling)	Vocational training involving work in the community	Character, theme, or emphasis from interests of founding teachers	Intensive counseling and monitoring



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Dynamic leadership	Social skills instruction	Teacher-student and student-student relationships	Collaboration across school systems and other human service agencies
Fewer rules and less bureaucracy	Individualized and personalized learning		Collegiality with faculty and students

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*Source:* Adapted from “Expansion of an Alternative School Typology,” by R. S. Henrich, 2005, *The Journal of At-Risk Issues*, 2, p. 26.

### **Governmental Initiatives**

In response to the unacceptably high number of students who dropped out, improving high school graduation rates has become a major priority for educational stakeholders at both federal and state levels. As alternative education became more common and widely accepted, particularly in response to dropout prevention, the awareness for educational reform efforts became heightened. Although many reform efforts have been undertaken, two recent governmental initiatives have sparked a need to look at strategies and models for reducing dropouts. At the federal level, *A Blueprint for Reform* (2010) has created a sense of renewed urgency. At the state level, numerous initiatives described earlier have drawn legislative attention. In the case of Kansas, the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery (2011) has had the same effect. Both projects address dropout prevention strategies; particularly, redesigning and reforming alternative programs.

#### ***The Federal Blueprint for Reform***

On March 29, 2010, *A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) was released by the U.S. Department of Education as a set of

initiatives directed at reducing the achievement gap for students who struggle academically. A primary focus of the reauthorization was to promote a renewed focus on ensuring that students graduate from high school and in doing so, become college and career ready.

The blueprint built upon the already established American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which had four primary goals:

1. Improving teacher and principal effectiveness to ensure that every classroom has a great teacher and every school has a great leader;
2. Providing information to families to help them evaluate and improve their children's schools, and to educators to help them improve their students' learning;
3. Implementing college- and career-ready standards and developing improved assessments aligned with those standards; and
4. Improving student learning and achievement in America's lowest-performing schools by providing intensive support and effective interventions. (United States Department of Education, 2010, p. 3)

Furthermore, *A Blueprint for Reform* built upon these goals and added new priorities. The first priority was to ensure that students are college and career-ready. In order to accomplish this, standards set new benchmarks to ensure every student will graduate from high school ready for college and a career; regardless of their "income, race, ethnic or language background, or disability status" (p. 3). Additionally, new assessments were required to align with the college and career-ready standards.

The second priority of the Blueprint sought great teachers and leaders in all schools. This priority led by implementing a new evaluation tool to help measure growth. The third priority sought equity and opportunity for all students. The fourth priority sought to reward excellence by raising the bar through *Race to the Top* initiatives- a focus designed to incentivize school district for their willingness to change and create new reform efforts. Finally, the fifth and last priority sought to promote innovation. This initiative required investment in “new models that keep students safe, supported, and healthy both in and out of school, and that support strategies to better engage families and community members in the their children’s education” (p. 6).

### ***Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery***

If national focus on student retention and success has continued and accelerated, a concomitant state-level interest has also been exhibited. Kansas has followed that same path over time, and most recently has done so since the summer of 2010 when then-Governor Mark Parkinson issued an executive order to set up a commission aimed at reducing the school dropout rate in Kansas. The report cited Kansas Department of Education data stating that during the 2008-2009 school year, 3,003 Kansas students dropped out of school. In addition, the dropout rates were disproportionately high among African American, Hispanic, and American Indian students, special education students and students from low-income families. Subsequently, early in January 2011, the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery issued its final report titled *Ensure Economic Success for Tomorrow: Graduate All Students Today* (Ensure, 2011, p. 4).

The Commission’s report listed 38 recommendations on issues relating to graduation and dropping out in Kansas. Some of the recommendations that affect alternative schooling in Kansas included:

- Recommendation 2: By 2015 the dropout rate should be cut in half (reduced from current 1.4 to 0.7 percent)
- Recommendation 5: The Kansas Department of Education should develop an early warning system with key P-12 grade level indicators targeted at accurately predicting students likely to drop-out. This system should focus on dropout prevention, utilizing school and community-based intervention components
- Recommendation 28: Identify and inventory all educational programs in Kansas that serve adults 16 and over who lack a high school diploma or GED and research what, if any, improvements can be made to the service delivery models
- Recommendation 36: Seek a waiver from the American Council on Education to allow for dual enrollment in high school and General Equivalency Diploma (GED) testing

These recommendations, along with the former Kansas Governor’s proclamation, spotlighted programs in Kansas that prevented students from dropping out as well as reintegrated back into school students who dropped. As the Kansas Commission on Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery worked to implement its recommendations, they also looked at successful programs to model.

### **Intermediate Summary**

Given a long history of national involvement and a longstanding state-level interest in best approaches to alternative education for at-risk and underserved youth, including in the state

of Kansas, it was apparent that model programs needed to be explored and described. By all evidence such was the case of Complete High School Maize, located in Maize, Kansas.

## **The Maize USD 266 Public School System**

### *A Brief History*

Maize, Kansas was first settled in 1870 by J.K. Steele and his spouse Anna. As the community grew, it soon became the first railroad stop on the way out of Wichita, Kansas on the Missouri Pacific Railroad (City of Maize, 2014). Maize's first school opened its doors in 1894 as a preparatory school for what is now Wichita State University. Schooling continued in Maize for all children and in 1966, Maize became a Unified School District (Maize, 2014).

Throughout the 2013-2014 school year, the Maize school district served over 7000 students throughout a 42 square mile boundary. During the same span, Maize USD 266 ranked as the 12<sup>th</sup>-largest school district in Kansas (Maize, 2014).

According to the Maize USD 266 district website (2014), the demographics of the Maize school district for the 2013-2014 school year included:

- The ethnicity of the area was approximately 81% white, 6% Hispanic, 2% African American, 1% American Indian/Alaskan, 4% Asian and 6% of Maize students were multi-ethnic.
- The assessed valuation of properties within the Maize school district increased by 2.5% in 2012.
- The district's Moody bond ranking was rated "AA", the second highest long-term obligation rating it judges.
- In the 2012-2013 school year, the district was comprised of 12,221 homes.

- There were 32% of the households within the Maize school district that had children who attend Maize schools.
- The free and reduced lunch population was at 15.5%.
- Over 86% of Maize students resided within a Wichita zip code.

***Maize’s Alternative: The Complete High School Maize***

Complete High School Maize was an alternative high school in Maize, Kansas that was established in 1999 by a task force commissioned by the board of education called the Victory Street Council. This school was created to provide educational opportunities for students of Maize USD 266 who were high school dropouts or who were considered at-risk of dropping out.

CHSM won the National Dropout Prevention Crystal Star Award in 2003 for one of the top alternative schools in the nation. When opened in 1999-2000, the dropout rate for Maize High School was 2.9%. During this time, Maize was bounded by one single high school. The dropout rate for the 2008-09 school year was 0.6% and continued to decline to 0.3% in 2012 (Kansas Department of Education, 2013c).

Through its tenure as an alternative program, Complete High School Maize promoted three main goals for students. These primary goals were in place since the start of the program in 1999 through the 2013-2014 school year. These goals included:

- To help students earn a high school diploma;
- To assist students in learning personal and social living skills which will help them be successful in life; and
- To provide vocational guidance. (Complete High School Maize Student Handbook, 2013, p. 3)

Complete High School Maize has always been categorized as a Type I alternative school (Raywid, 1994). Additionally, many of the principles that have been used to guide the program were identified by Raywid: “First, these schools generate and sustain community within them. Second, they make learning engaging. And third, they provide the school organization and structure needed to sustain the first two” (p. 29). With unprecedented support and autonomy from district administration, CHSM operated with the flexibility to individualize student coursework as well as offer flexible scheduling while still being under the auspice of Maize High School. This strategy was advantageous for Adequate Yearly Progress reports as well as special education. Since CHSM was considered a voluntary program within Maize High School, even though located in a separate building, students with Individualized Educational Plans were required to revoke services prior to attendance.

Curriculum at CHSM was individualized but driven by a multiple intelligence test each student was required to take upon enrollment, as well as by results produced from the Kansas Career Pipeline Kuder test. This process was congruent with the Kansas Commission’s findings on dropout prevention Recommendation 20: Provide the opportunity for every student in Kansas to take the Kansas Career Pipeline Assessment and be counseled about available career opportunities (p. 24).

In research conducted by Williams (2013) regarding the structure of Complete High School Maize, the following were listed as key characteristics of the program:

- Four-day school week;
- Late daily start;

- Students were admitted at each quarter through an application and interview process;
- Waiting list for students to attend;
- 60 to 8, student to staff ratio;
- Student-centered approach;
- Students worked on self-paced curriculum contracts;
- Various incentive programs geared at encouraging student success;
- Graduation occurred for students anytime throughout the school year if they completed district graduation requirements and school requirements;
- Focused on service learning and career exploration;
- Program flexibility and willingness to change dependent upon student needs.

In addition, Williams also found that Complete High School Maize provided a setting for students who did not fit into traditional model schools. This was accomplished by meeting individual learning styles. Through the use of individualized teaching and personalized curriculum, students at CHSM became reengaged in their education as they took ownership of it. Finally, Complete High School Maize provided students with a relaxed educational setting where staff members were viewed as critical resources in helping students accomplish their goals.

Another important aspect of CHSM was the support received from the community and school district. In 2006, \$1 million was allocated to build a permanent alternative school building. Dozens of stakeholders from the community were on hand at the building dedication and showed support for students who were unable to fit in at the traditional high school. In what began as a controversial school in the Maize school system, CHSM grew into an award-winning,



nationally-recognized alternative program. Throughout 15 years of existence, over 350 students have earned their high school diploma at Complete High School Maize.

### **Summary**

As the literature showed, alternative schools underwent many educational reform efforts aimed at both dropout prevention and serving students considered unsuccessful in traditional settings. Research also showed that students were unsuccessful in school for a multitude of reasons including poverty, lack of family support, and racial, ethnic, or language barriers. While there were many different typologies of alternative schools that served a variety of student needs, Type 1 programs, as introduced by Raywid, offered a less costly alternative to districts. Specifically, Type 1 schools proved to be “both more pronounced and more long lasting” (Raywid, 1994, p. 28).

The number of high school dropouts in the United States had continued to be problematic. Because of this, President Obama “committed to reversing the nation’s low educational attainment with a sweeping dropout prevention strategy” (Almedia et al., 2010, p. v). In particular, Obama’s vision included “expanding and enhancing alternative schools that cater to young people who are struggling in school or who have dropped out of the school system” (p. v). Similarly, in Kansas, a commission was formed for the purpose of making recommendations on issues related to graduation and dropout prevention. As a result of the renewed focus on improving alternative programs as a dropout prevention strategy, researchers looked to find new recommendations directed at helping students remain in school.

One such district was Maize USD 266. Complete High School Maize was established and grew into a nationally recognized program successful in dropout prevention. Research

showed that the goals of Complete High School Maize were in line with what was needed to serve as an alternative model. Cullen et al. (2013) offered:

A handful of innovative programs have achieved great success on a small scale, but more generally, the economic futures of the students at the bottom of the human capital distribution remains dismal. In our view, expanding access to educational options that focus on life skills and work experience, as opposed to a focus on traditional definitions of academic success, represents the most cost-effective, broadly implementable source of improvements for this group. (p. 148)

Furthermore, Almedia et al. (2010) insisted that states should implement strategic and comprehensive efforts to invent educational models that improve outcomes for off-track students, and spread those that prove successful. States also had a responsibility to provide the models and funding that supported this kind of large-scale innovation (p. 13). McNulty and Roeseboro (2009) also contended that very “few alternative schools have entered the national scene by evidencing truly alternative means of education (p. 413). With Complete High School Maize being a nationally recognized (Best Practices in Dropout Prevention, 2008) and award-winning program (National Dropout Prevention Network, 2013), the literature showed a compelling need to document the historical evolution of CHSM for other school districts to emulate and to begin reducing the number of dropouts across the nation.

## **Chapter 3 - Methodology**

### **Introduction**

This study was a historical account of the evolution of Complete High School Maize in USD 266 over a span that included the early planning stages of the program beginning in 1997 through the 2013-2014 school year. Through an analysis of the history of CHSM, a deepened understanding of the change process and organizational strategies adopted have led to the continued progression of the selected alternative program in Maize USD 266. Schumacher and McMillan (1993) concluded that current educational practices could be understood by knowing how these practices developed and by examining the issues concerning them.

A historical account of change in a school could serve to inform both present and future change efforts through an analysis of that history. As Complete High School Maize evolved, an analysis of its history could help accomplish the goal of clarifying the present through the past. Gall, Gall, and Borg (1999) found that such historical research was able to help future leaders “improve education by its insights into the past, present, and future” (p. 390). Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) highlighted the importance of educationally-based historical research by concluding:

The historical study of an educational idea or institution can do much to help us understand how our present educational system has come about; and this kind of understanding can in turn help to establish a sound basis for further progress or change (p. 159).

Included in this chapter is a description of the rationale for the use of historical analysis methodology, a rationale for selecting CHSM as an organization to examine, followed by the data collection methods used in this study which guided the process for document review, oral testimonies, and individual interviews. Furthermore, this chapter details the type of interview used, the use of external and internal criticism, a data analysis overview, the role of the researcher, and finally, concludes with an end-of-chapter summary.

### **A Rationale for Historical Analysis**

Creswell (2007) identified qualitative research as an inquiry-based process of understanding whereby the researcher chose a methodology that studied a social situation or human problem. Historical research was a qualitative approach promoted by numerous authors including Munhall and Oiler (1986), Lancy (1993), and Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007). The use of a historical analysis methodology stresses the detailing of events in the context of criticism, or explanation, for the reason of ascertaining the unabridged truth or the framework from which the events progressed.

A history is an account of some past event or combination of events. Historical analysis is, therefore, a method of discovering, from records and accounts, what happened in the past. Gay and Airasian (2003) claimed, “The purpose of historical research is, as in all qualitative research, to help understand a person or event by providing in-depth description and interpretation of the data” (p. 173). Similarly, Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007), McCollough, (2004), McDowell (2002), Howell and Prevenier (2001), and Johnson and Christensen (2004) asserted that historical analysis was a technique of determining what happened in the past to help predict future trends.

Historical research, however, is more than an accumulation of facts and dates and a description of past events; rather, “it is a flowing, dynamic account of past events that involves an interpretation of the events in an attempt to recapture the nuances, personalities, and ideas that influenced these events” (Rowlinson, 2005, p. 296). A historical account is important in the research of educational organizations because, as Miles and Randolph (1980) found, “organizations cannot be understood apart from their history” (p. 72). A historical design to study the evolution of Complete High School Maize was fitting as one method of identifying the organizational progressions necessary to effect continuous change in an educational venue. Specifically, Kimberly and Miles (1980) concluded:

In every organization, there is a rich fabric of norms, values, and myths that help to shape and determine the behavior of the organization. Focusing on the questions of where those structures came from and how they developed has implications for an organization’s present and future structure and performance. (p. 4)

The two purposes of this study were to help broaden and deepen the understanding of Complete High School Maize through an examination of its educational past and to study the ways that it enriched the understanding of the educational present and future. Holistically, this study described the historical evolution of Complete High School Maize as a model for school districts to emulate in an effort to reduce the number of high school dropouts. Additionally, this study provided historical documentation of the school for future generations that preserved and shared in its history.

To help guide this study, the following over-arching research questions were used:

1. What circumstances were present in Maize USD 266 that resulted in creating an alternative school for its students?
2. How has the structure of Complete High School Maize evolved from 1999 to 2014 and in response to what set of conditions and factors?
  - a. What data show the outcomes and bases for structural revision?

### **Site Selection and Rationale**

Complete High School Maize was chosen as the site selection of this study for three reasons. First, the school had a 15-year history of successfully graduating at-risk students from high school and preparing them for life beyond compulsory education. Furthermore, this alternative high school survived and prospered during the leadership change of three superintendents and three principals of CHSM.

The second reason why CHSM was selected was because the researcher was an alternative school principal and had been in the USD 266 school system for sixteen years. This provided the researcher with exclusive background knowledge and perspective regarding the school. The researcher's prior experiences and immediate involvement in the program were a critical component of the data collection and essential toward the development of an all-inclusive understanding of the school. This insight aided in the researcher being able to direct and guide the research towards relevant concerns and drawing useful conclusions of the data obtained.

Finally, Complete High School Maize was specifically selected in order to formally chronicle the evolution of the program for both past and present students and staff members. Additionally, this chronicling of this history of CHSM serves as a guide for future planning and reform efforts of alternative schools.

## Research Design

For this historical analysis of Complete High School Maize, the research design followed the major stages headlined by Gall, Gall, and Borg's (2007) historical research model. This process was outlined by:

1. Defining a problem for historical research;
2. Studying historical sources;
3. Recording information from historical sources;
4. Evaluation of historical sources;
5. Interpretation of historical research.

In order to complete this study, the researcher followed the steps and processes outlined below:

**Table 3.1 Research process**

<b>Step</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Description</b>
1.	Identified the problem	Researcher reflected upon research questions and purposes of the study
2.	Located and identified primary resources	Researcher obtained artifacts and primary sources regarding CHSM
3.	Identified purposeful sample of key stakeholders	Researcher used artifacts found to confirm stakeholders and identified other interviewees

4.	Studied primary resources	Researcher examined all primary source documents
5.	Developed chronology of events	Researcher developed a timeline of events and identified gaps of information
6.	Conducted interviews	Researcher interviewed subjects with developed interview questions and filled in the gaps
7.	Evaluated data	Researcher examined data using internal and external criticism
8.	Documented and narrated findings	Researcher documented findings and told the history of CHSM

In doing so, the researcher was able to build a holistic overview of the Complete High School Maize program and was able to accomplish the goal of answering the research questions.

### **Data Collection Methods**

Schwartz (2003) concluded that there were four critical considerations when conducting historical research. First, there needed to be an availability of primary information on the topic. Secondly, there needed to be the ability to use a historical method to help answer the questions posed. Thirdly, there needed to be an urgency of the expected information gathered through the research, and finally, there needed to be receptivity on behalf of the audience who could use the research. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) added that, “One of the principal differences



between historical research and other forms of research is that historical research must deal with data that already exist” (p. 160).

The history of Complete High School Maize was reconstructed using two different methods. First, a review of documents was used, and secondly, oral testimonies were obtained through individual interviews of key stakeholders. Each method was described in further detail in the following sub-sections.

### ***Document Review***

Historical research analysis was procured by the collection and evaluation of primary source data to frame a historical description of the past. Gall, Gall, and Borg (1999) contended that those conducting historical research need focused efforts in discovering already existing data in such sources as diaries, official documents, and relics. It relies on the authenticity of primary documents to draw inferences and interpretations based on patterns or relationships in history. Primary sources included firsthand information, such as original documents and eyewitness observation reports. McCullough (2004) suggested using historical texts, diaries, maps, and newspapers as resources available to gain insight. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) also proposed the use of “intentional documents, such as memoirs and yearbooks” as acceptable forms of primary resources (p. 537). According to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007):

Quantitative records, which provide numerical information about an educational phenomenon, are another type of primary source. Census records, school budgets, school attendance records, test scores, and other compilations of numerical data can be valuable sources of data for historical researchers (p. 537).

The first method used in the collection of data was to review and examine the documents that were created during the planning and creation of Complete High School Maize. These documents were a source of data that helped establish a chronology of the evolution of CHSM. Additionally, the process of examining these sources of data helped to clarify and guide the questions used in interviews. These documents, considered primary sources of data, provided a paper trail that helped reconstruct the history of Complete High School Maize. The following primary source documents were reviewed:

- Minutes of USD 266 School Board meetings
- Minutes of USD 266 administrative meetings
- Kansas Public Charter Schools Planning Grant Applications
- Minutes from the Victory Street Council
- USD 266 publications used to communicate and educate the community
- School Improvement Plans for Maize High School
- Complete High School Maize publications
- End-of-Year Reports for CHSM
- Archival materials
- Personal papers
- Complete High School Maize yearbooks

Although a list of primary documents reviewed provided an overview of Complete High School Maize, it not did recreate the complete picture of the evolution of CHSM. In order to

obtain additional data and collect a more comprehensive overview, interviews were conducted with key stakeholders.

### *Individual Interviews*

In addition to examining written documents, historical researchers also conduct oral interviews in order to obtain recollections of past events. This type of historical research is commonly referred to as oral history and involves data creation. Through oral history, “Historians can conduct oral interviews of persons who have witnessed and participated in events of potential historical significance” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007, p. 538). Patton (1990) added, “We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe” (p. 278).

The second method used in collecting data regarding Complete High School Maize was obtaining oral testimonies from key stakeholders. These testimonies were obtained using individual interviews and were conducted with key stakeholders who were directly involved in the planning, creating, and implementation of CHSM. Additionally, interviews were held with the benefactors of CHSM including students and parents. An interview guide was used during the individual interviews (See Appendix C). The subjects selected for interviews were purposefully chosen based upon their relationship to CHSM and direct involvement in the program. In order to determine a suitable number of subjects to interview, the researcher followed the recommendations of Lincoln and Guba (1985), Wiersma (2000), and Patton (1990), who suggested that when subjects are selected purposefully, qualitative inquiry should be focused in depth on relatively small samples. Additionally, Patton (1990) explained that rather than studying a random sample of people in a setting, the “evaluator may focus on studying and understanding selected cases of special interest...” (p. 170). Patton (1990) also explained that,

“In many instances more can be learned from intensively studying extreme or unusual cases than can be learned from statistical depictions of what the average case is like” (p. 170). In this study, interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of stakeholders who were chosen because they had “stories to tell about their lived experiences” (Creswell, 2007, p. 128).

### *Selection of Subjects*

In determining the students selected to interview, students were first categorized into three groups: early attenders (1999-2004), middle attenders (2005-2009), and late attenders (2010-2014). The list of students who graduated was then narrowed based on having been enrolled in the program for at least four semesters. The list for students who dropped out of CHSM was narrowed based on enrollment in the program of at least two semesters. Two students were selected from each time category: one that graduated from CHSM and one that dropped out of the program. In addition to graduates and dropouts, three current students were selected based upon an 18-month enrollment at the school. Finally, students were contacted to determine their willingness to participate in the study.

**Table 3.2 CHSM student enrollment, graduation, and dropout data from 1999-2014**

School Year	# Students Enrolled	# Students Who Enrolled and Graduated from CHSM	Yearly Graduations	Dropout or Dismissed	Transfer or Moved	Deceased	Currently Enrolled
1999-2000	44	21	6	16	7	-	-
2000-2001	23	16	9	7	0	-	-
2001-2002	38	30	21	7	1	-	-

2002-2003	30	17	21	12	1	-	-
2003-2004	70	45	27	17	5	1	-
2004-2005	25	13	19	9	3	-	-
2005-2006	33	18	24	11	5	-	-
2006-2007	39	25	18	14	1	-	-
2007-2008	42	31	35	11	1	-	-
2008-2009	47	31	35	13	5	-	-
2009-2010	43	30	24	12	1	-	-
2010-2011	43	32	25	8	3	-	-
2011-2012	51	28	39	12	5	-	6
2012-2013	48	16	33	15	1	-	13
2013-2014	43	8	25	6	-	-	29
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>48</b>

**Table 3.3 CHSM graduates and dropouts who met time criteria**

	Graduates		Dropouts	
	Number	Number enrolled ≥ 4 semesters	Number	Number enrolled ≥ 2 semesters
1999-2004	84	39	59	15
2005-2009	131	31	58	13
2010-2014	146	34	53	15

The other subjects selected for interviews were purposefully chosen due to their ability to provide rich, in-depth information and history about the program.

**Table 3.4 List of subjects interviewed**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title/Description</b>	<b>Interview Questions</b>
Subject A	The original coordinator/principal of CHSM, who was involved with the program from the early planning stages in 1997 through 2006.	Appendix D
Subject B	The current principal of CHSM, who was involved in the program from 2001 through 2014.	Appendix D
Subject C	USD 266 school board member who was an elected official at the time of the program's inception in 1999 and continued to serve on the board in 2014.	Appendix H
Subject D	USD 266 school board member who was an elected official at the time of the program's inception in 1999 and continue to serve on the board in 2014.	Appendix H
Subject E	Member of the Victory Street Council, which was the school's original planning group and served on the school's original site council from 1997 through 2004.	Appendix G
Subject F	Member of the Victory Street Council, which was the school's original planning group and served on the	Appendix G

	school's original site council from 1997 through 2004.	
Subject G	Member of the Victory Street Council, which was the school's original planning group and served on the school's original site council from 1997 through 2004.	Appendix G
Subject H	The former Superintendent of USD 266, who oversaw the school from 1999 through 2007.	Appendix J
Subject I	The superintendent of USD 266, who oversaw the school from 2009 through 2014.	Appendix J
Subject J	A teacher from 1999 through 2007, who helped start the program and witnessed the program's growth and change.	Appendix F
Subject K	A teacher at CHSM with over five years of experience at the school.	Appendix F
Subject L	A teacher at CHSM with less than five years of experience at the school.	Appendix
Subject M	Parent of a CHSM student who graduated from the program.	Appendix I
Subject N	Parent of a CHSM student who dropped out of the program.	Appendix I
Subject O	Parent of a CHSM student who is a student in 2014	Appendix I
Subject P	Graduate of CHSM between the years 1999-2004.	Appendix E

Subject Q	Graduate of CHSM between the years 2005-2009.	Appendix E
Subject R	Graduate of CHSM between the years 2010-2014.	Appendix E
Subject S	Dropout of CHSM between the years 1999-2004.	Appendix K
Subject T	Dropout of CHSM between the years 2005-2009.	Appendix K
Subject U	Dropout of CHSM between the years 2010-2014.	Appendix K
Subject V	Student at CHSM in 2014 school year.	Appendix E
Subject W	Student at CHSM in 2014 school year.	Appendix E
Subject X	Student at CHSM in 2014 school year.	Appendix E

### **Type of Interview Used**

In order to obtain an array of responses from different stakeholders of Complete High School Maize, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews. Merriam (1988) suggested using semi-structured interviews as a method to guide the interview with questions that were developed prior to the interview. The characteristics of a semi-structured interview include:

- The interviewer and interviewee engage in a formal interview;
- An interview guide is used to promote and address specific questions and topics that need to be covered throughout the interview;
- The interview guide is followed; however the interviewer is able to stray from the guide when appropriate.

The interview guide created helped the researcher focus on the study's central research questions and set the tone for the interviews. The types of interview questions asked allowed the



interviewees to describe their experiences and perceptions in the evolution of Complete High School Maize.

By using semi-structured interviews, the researcher was able to modify wording of questions, introduce new questions, and eliminate questions on the guide; all dependent upon how the interview progressed. This flexible format allowed the researcher to explore different topics with different respondents according to their knowledge and involvement of CHSM.

### **Evaluation of Historical Sources**

Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) determined that the ultimate value of a historical study could be traced to the researcher's ability to "judge the authenticity and validity of the historical sources that come to light in the process of doing the study" (p. 540). The evaluation process of these sources was referred to as historical criticism. As such, the data collected in this study were subjected to both external criticism and internal criticism in an effort to validate the information obtained. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) define external criticism as the "process of determining whether the apparent or claimed origin of a historical document corresponds to its actual origin" (p. 541) and internal criticism as the process of "evaluating the accuracy and worth of the statements contained in a historical document" (p. 542). Other historical research authors, such as Schumacher and McMillan (1993), portrayed external criticism as the process of determining the authenticity of a document or oral testimony, while Shafer (1974) details internal criticism as the task of determining the credibility of evidence.

The issues of internal criticism conducted in this study centered on the level of accuracy in the statements from both individual interviews and written documents. Internal criticism was a complex process, as it "includes the historian's judgment about the truth of statements in a historical source and also an evaluation of the person who wrote them" (Gall, Gall, & Borg,

2007, p. 542). In conducting this historical study about Complete High School Maize, the researcher used a variety of sources and examined them for similarity, consistency, and variations, while also using them to develop a true picture of what occurred. These sources included USD 266 School Board minutes, Victory Street Council minutes, site-based documents, and the testimony of the participants involved in the interviews. Factors that affected the trustworthiness of the primary sources reviewed included participant bias based on past experiences within the school and time elapsed from the participants' experiences.

The researcher's background and familiarity with alternative schools served as an additional means of verifying the accuracy and trustworthiness of the data. Schumacher and McMillan (1993) promoted the notion of an individual who was considered an "insider" by their ability "to put oneself in the place of the individuals to interpret documents, events, and personalities with their eyes, standards, and sympathies" (p. 458). The accuracy of the historical account of Complete High School Maize was also verified by a reader who served at the school from 2001 through 2014.

The issues of external criticism in this study centered on the authenticity and genuineness of the data collected, rather than the interpretation of the data collected. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) asserted that external criticism should focus on the documents or sources, rather than the statements contained within. Therefore, in this study, the external criticism focused on the authenticity of the many sources examined. The documents obtained for this study were obtained from the Maize USD 266 district office vault and in the secured closet at Complete High School Maize. As a result, the process of determining the authenticity of the documents was verified. Furthermore, the individual interviews were authentic because the researcher conducted each interview and the resulting testimony was both audiotaped and transcribed.

## **Data Analysis**

This section presents the sequence of events used in analyzing the data obtained from the documents and interviews in discovering the history of Complete High School Maize. Through examination of these written documents and interviews, the researcher established a chronology of events that detailed the progressions of Complete High School Maize. This chronology was based upon the early planning stages of the program through the fifteen-year history of the program and helped guide the research.

As the chronology was established and the key events were identified, the researcher analyzed the data from both the written documents and interviews looking for patterns and trends from the responses and published materials. Once the patterns and trends were established, the researcher was able to describe and explain in detail each major area of the program. The researcher then provided extensive data and interpretation in response to the proposed research questions.

Next, the history of Complete High School Maize was reconstructed and told as a narrative, based upon the documents analyzed and the interviews evaluated. The reporting of the history of CHSM was then further analyzed by the researcher while continually focusing on the primary research questions. In an effort to ensure quality reporting was conducted, the researcher followed three questions identified by Good (1954) for guidelines:

1. Has the organization of the history observed the conditions of good story telling?
2. Does it show point, purpose, and meaning?
3. Does the researcher recognize the significance of the meaning of the story for his better understanding of current educational problems? (p. 212)

## **Role of the Researcher**

The researcher for this study was a doctoral student in educational leadership employed as a principal of a suburban high school with approximately 1,400 students. His professional background included thirteen years spent in alternative education settings and three years spent in traditional school settings.

With this study being a qualitative pursuit, the researcher brought his own experience, background, training, and perspective into this study. As a building principal, conversations were continually held with regard to how to best meet the needs of all students both in the district and in surrounding school systems. Having spent thirteen years in the alternative school setting, the researcher brought his own experiences which helped shape the narrative of this study. It was an ambitious goal to report the findings of this study without bias.

Because of the researcher's background in alternative education, the researcher was aware of personal biases in the beginning and throughout the study. In order to ensure objectivity, the researcher methodically included field notes during interviews. This process allowed the researcher to continually examine personal biases and how data was interpreted. Throughout the interviews, the researcher also performed multiple checks by restating, summarizing, and paraphrasing the information received from interviewees to ensure what was heard, seen, or written was accurate. Furthermore, the researcher continually monitored tone, voice inflections, and leading questions.

As an insider involved in history of Complete High School Maize, the researcher had the dual undertaking of both describing and analyzing the history. In doing so, the researcher faced the arduous challenge of reconstructing the history while omitting personal assumptions about the events.

## **Summary**

This chapter described the methodology that was used in this modified historical analysis, including the data collection methods, rationale for conducting historical analysis, site selection rationale, data collection methods, types of interviews conducted, internal and external criticism, data analysis, and role of the researcher. Using a historical research methodology, the researcher examined the circumstances present in USD 266 that resulted in creating an alternative school, the identity and mission of CHSM, the historical evolution of Complete High School Maize from 1999 to 2014, and analyzed the programs and initiatives implemented by the school that has helped reduce the number of dropouts. Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders who were involved in CHSM in various capacities.

In the upcoming chapters, the findings and answers to the research questions posed were addressed, as well as the conclusion of the study.

# Chapter 4 - Results of the Study

## Introduction

Patton (2002) concluded that, “The history of a program, community, or organization is an important part of the context for research” (p. 284). The purpose of this study was to go beyond a simple reporting of the history of the program; rather, this study interpreted the data collected and described not only what has happened throughout the history of the school, but also presented a rationale as to why the program had progressed and evolved as it had. This chapter reports the data aggregated from both the primary sources examined and the individual interviews conducted to address the research questions posed in Chapter One:

1. What circumstances were present in Maize USD 266 that resulted in creating an alternative school for its students?
2. How has the structure of Complete High School maize evolved from 1999 to 2014 and in response to what set of conditions and factors?
  - a. What data show the outcomes and bases for structural revision?

A summary of the historical evolution of the Complete High School Maize program and its impact on Maize USD 266 is provided. The results of the findings were depicted chronologically, beginning with the early planning stages of the program through the 2013-2014 school year. The early planning stages of Complete High School Maize consisted of five phases which identified the circumstances present in Maize USD 266 that resulted in the creation of an alternative school. Once the alternative school in Maize was established, the structure of CHSM evolved over a fifteen year span (1999-2014) as a result of various conditions and factors, as depicted in the School Years portion of this chapter. In order to protect the identity of all

individuals involved in the history of Complete High School Maize, aliases are used to identify each individual.

## **Phase 1: Kansas Public Charter Schools Planning Grant**

### ***Introduction***

On January 10, 1997, Maize USD 266 submitted an application to the Kansas State Department of Education in order to obtain a planning grant to begin a charter school. Grant writer and original school coordinator Christie Roberts explained that writing the grant was the first step in beginning the alternative school in Maize USD 266. Serving as the Director of Guidance at the traditional Maize High School, Roberts knew first-hand the struggle that many students were having throughout the district. Unwilling to do nothing, Roberts submitted an application for a charter planning grant to begin studying the process of beginning an alternative school in Maize. For several years, Maize USD 266 had been interested in developing a charter program. The grant application was the impetus for moving from the interest and desire mode into the action phase

As part of the grant, Roberts described the proposed charter school in Maize as “our hope for the future” (Kansas Public Charter Schools Program Planning Grant Application, p. 1). Complete High School would be an all-encompassing institution which would address all facets of a student’s success. As the name of the school suggests, the school would become the “complete” package of education. Roberts further added in the application that the school would be everything it needed to be for all students.

Gone are the days when we can sit back and point fingers at parents, the community, or the schools for not doing their jobs. Instead, we must acknowledge that someone needs

to do something, and we will take on that challenge at Complete High School (Kansas Public Charter Schools Program Planning Grant Application, p. 1).

### ***Charter School Goals, Objectives, and Population***

The charter planning grant identified the school’s global goal of being able to “produce graduates, through individualized educational programs in an alternative environment, who will achieve academic and social success and be responsible, productive citizens” (Kansas Public Charter Schools Program Planning Grant Application, p. 2). In order to meet this global goal, the grant application listed different objectives. The overall objective of CHSM was to help students earn a high school diploma. However, in an effort to go above the stated objective, CHSM would exist to “graduate individuals who are either working in a career oriented job or are enrolled in an institution of higher learning that is preparing them for a career” (Kansas Public Charter Schools Program Planning Grant Application, p. 2). As a related objective, CHSM also would work to help students develop personal and social skills that would ensure continued success beyond the diploma. With these challenging expectations and objectives geared towards serving at-risk youth, the charter grant explained that the school would enable all students to meet these demands through a committed and dedicated staff, as well as meaningful programs. “Therefore, dedicated teachers and staff will assure successful programs, which will yield successful students” (Kansas Public Charter Schools Planning Grant Application, p. 9).

The grant application also focused on the intended population. For CHSM, students would be in grades nine through 12, who resided in within school district boundaries and were dropouts, at-risk of dropping out, or students not successful in the traditional learning environment.



According to the charter grant proposal, during the 1996-1997 school year at Maize High School, there were 1180 students enrolled. Throughout the first semester of the same school year, six seniors, 15 juniors, 10 sophomores, and four freshmen dropped out of school. Additionally, 11 seniors, five juniors, and five sophomores did not have enough credits to allow them to graduate on time. Furthermore, five seniors, 22 juniors, and 16 sophomores had failed one or more course during their high school tenure. One year previous, during the 1995-1996 school year, 47 students dropped out of Maize High School. Throughout a year and a half, 146 students dropped out or had a strong potential to do so.

Another factor in Maize USD 266 was that the district was one of the fastest growing school districts in the state for the previous 10 years. In 1980, the entire student population of Maize USD 266 consisted of 1200 students. In 1996, the district served over 4400 students. In the previous five years, the district was growing at a rate of 300 students per year. This growth was significantly impacting the at-risk population. According to the charter grant application, “Such rapid growth has forced us to focus on simply keeping up with existing programs. We have had time to focus only on students who are in the majority-providing programs to benefit the masses rather than the individual” (Kansas Public Charter Schools Planning Grant Application, p. 10). With the rapid growth, and Maize High School turning into a class 6A high school (the largest school classification in Kansas), competition for spots on sports teams and other extracurricular activities became more competitive. As a result, low-to-average students were finding it more difficult to participate in school activities. For many students, the decrease in school involvement led to a decrease in school satisfaction.

## *Charter School Curriculum and Evaluation*

A major portion of the charter planning grant was aimed to focus on the review and evaluation of curriculum. The grant indicated that instructional practices would be sound pedagogically, and would also be driven by the needs of the students.

We understand that student retention of information increases when learning is hands on, internalized, and relevant. We know that to work and live in a global society one must develop group cooperation and collaboration skills. We know that decision making, problem solving, and creative thinking are valuable and necessary. And any curriculum that leads to the achievement of these skills will be considered (Kansas Public Charter Schools Planning Grant Application, p. 12).

In order to address the needs of all students, the school would focus on the student outcomes of the Quality Performance Accreditation process:

- Essential skills
- Communication skills
- Complex thinking skills
- Individual and group skills
- Physical and emotional well-being.

These skills would be developed in an alternative setting and would be accomplished through partnerships between students, parents, business/community, and school staff. Specifically, students would be able to:

- Read and comprehend;
- Communicate both orally and in writing;
- Use mathematics and mathematical principles;
- Access and use information;
- Analyze, summarize, and comprehend what is read in all subject areas;
- Write and orally communicate for clear articulation, analysis, conceptualization, syntheses, and summarization of information;
- Apply problem-solving skills;
- Find information-process, analyze and synthesize it and apply it to new situations;
- Use creative, imaginative, and divergent thinking;
- Work collaboratively in teams;
- Work together without prejudice, bias, or discrimination; and
- Have knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential to live a healthy and productive life.

### *Other Grant Criteria*

An additional criterion of the grant was to provide a description of how the charter school would be managed and the qualifications of the individuals to be employed. When Christie Roberts was interviewed for this study, she reiterated the success of the school was in large part due to the dedicated staff. “We had some unbelievably hard workers at CHSM who were dedicated to the overall mission of the school. They bought in to what we were trying to do and were some of the best people I have ever known” (Personal interview, January 18, 2015). The charter grant echoed Roberts’s statement:

The staff at Complete High School will need to be individuals who possess a wide array of characteristics. Among these are individuals who are flexible, hard-working,

nurturing, and understanding, though not enabling. They are individuals who are not interested in being tied to the constraints of a '9-5 day' or 185 day year. They need to look at problems as simply challenges to be conquered. They need to see the glass as half full. They need to have the belief that all students can learn and deserve the best we have to offer. These individuals must have an understanding and empathy for diversified backgrounds (Kansas Public Charter Schools Planning Grant Application. pp. 13-14).

The charter grant also needed to include an explanation of how parents, students, and community members were to learn about the charter school. The district would promote and communicate information about the alternative school through district newsletters, letters to potential students and parents, and with relationship building. The key, according to the grant application, was relationship building and personal contact.

Probably the most effective avenue we will use is through personal contact. We have the names of all 146 students who were identified as having already dropped out or are at risk of doing so. We have the capability of reaching the majority of these students either by phone or visiting their homes (Kansas Public Charter Schools Planning Grant Application. p. 15).

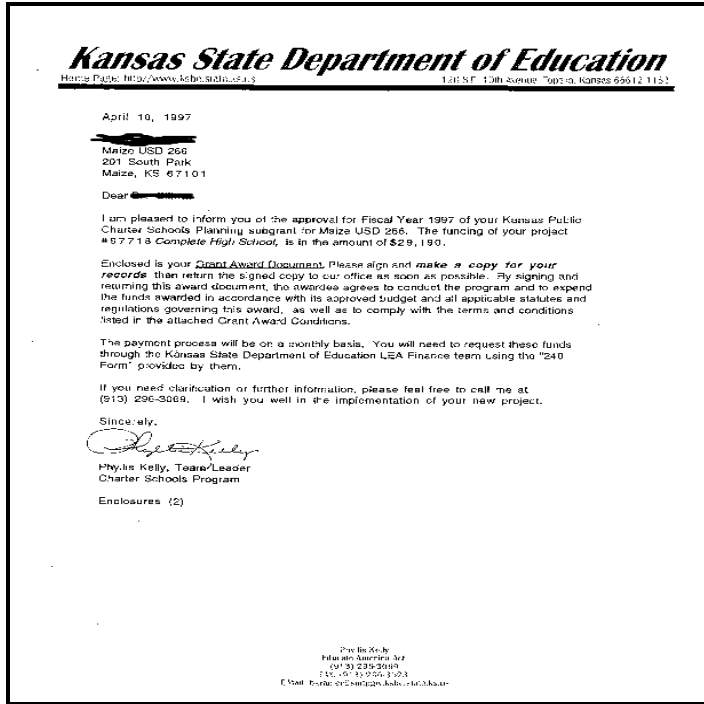
Detailed in the charter grant application was an initial plan for students in the community to have equal opportunity and access to attend the charter school. Students who would be able to meet the established criteria developed by the planning committee would be admitted to CHSM. The early criteria noted for admittance was that the students must live within the district

boundaries, be behind in credits toward graduation, and in need of assistance developing social and personal skills as evidenced by behavior problems at home or school. Should a time come when the school did not have room to accommodate all students who requested admittance, a procedure would be developed, “such as putting students on a waiting list and admitting as space becomes available” (Kansas Public Charter Schools Planning Grant Application, p. 16)

### ***Charter Grant Approval***

On April 10, 1997, Maize USD 266 received notification from the Kansas State Department of Education that it had been approved for a planning grant. Grant writer Christie Roberts recalled the moment she was called into the superintendent’s office to learn of the news that the grant had been approved. “The principal came into my office and said the superintendent needs to see you. I was a little nervous, but once I got there, he immediately told me we were approved. At last, our vision was becoming a reality” (Personal interview, January 18, 2015).

#### **Figure 4.1 Charter approval letter**



### **Charter Grant Funding**

The grant awarded the district \$29,190 to begin planning the Complete High School. These monies would go toward paying for the time served by each committee member, working dinners, and travel accommodations to visit other alternative programs. Although the grant funding did not cover all expenses, the remaining costs were absorbed by Maize USD 266. With the district being committed to the project, “They have agreed to provide financial support for postage, telephone, copying costs, paper, transportation, substitute pay for teachers who visit alternative schools, and any other miscellaneous costs that might occur” (Kansas Public Charter Schools Planning Grant Application, p. 19). A detailed budget projection for the grant is found in Figure 4.2 below.

**Figure 4.2 Charter planning grant budget**

Kansas Charter Schools Program  
120 SE Tenth Avenue  
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1182

Kansas Charter Schools Program  
**PROJECTED BUDGET**  
Planning Application  
Start Date: February 1, 1997

Project Title: Complete High School

Project Applicant: Maize USD 266

February 1997 - July 1998

Project Start and End Date  
(Not to exceed an 18-month time period)

An applicant may apply for a maximum amount not to exceed \* \$35,000

ACCOUNT NAME	DIRECT COST CATEGORIES DESCRIPTION	KANSAS CHARTER SCHOOLS PLANNING GRANT	LOCAL EFFORT	OTHER SOURCES
<b>DIRECT COST CATEGORIES</b> (The items listed under each category are not all inclusive and the applicant is not required to request funds in each category.)				
Personnel Salary/Wages	Stipends for committee members Stipend for advisor contact person Substitute pay (local effort)	\$17,550 540	\$600	
Personnel Benefits				
Travel	Transportation to visit alternative schools/to and from meetings		\$500	
Equipment (list) (Equipment requests will be reviewed very closely)				
Supplies and Materials (Office and educational)	Curriculum	1,500		
Evaluation of Project	Copies of instruments used		\$200	
Contractual (Consultants, subcontracts, mini-grants, public information costs, etc.)	Speakers, workshops, consultants	\$3,700		
General Operating Costs (Duplicating, postage, room rental, telephone, etc.)	Per diem fees Duplicating, postage, telephone (local) Meeting room expenses	\$3,300 2,000	\$600	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$29,190</b>	<b>\$1,900</b>	<b>Total</b>

\* No matching funds are required

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE APPLICANT USE THIS BUDGET FORM AND THESE COST CATEGORIES.

6

## Phase 2: The Study of an Alternative School in Maize USD 266

### *The Victory Street Council*

Once the charter grant was approved, grant writer Christie Roberts was tasked with recruiting individuals to become part of the charter school committee. Selective in the process, Roberts sought individuals who were advocates for students who didn't fit the traditional mold. Additionally, Roberts wanted to have a good cross-section of educators, former dropouts, parents, and local business/community members who were open-minded, flexible, and willing-to-work individuals. Roberts also sought to find individuals who served double roles such as parent/business representative, parent/former dropout, and teacher/parent. This committee was formed both through advertising for volunteers as well as by actively inviting certain individuals to join. The make-up of the committee included the following 13 personalities, with their

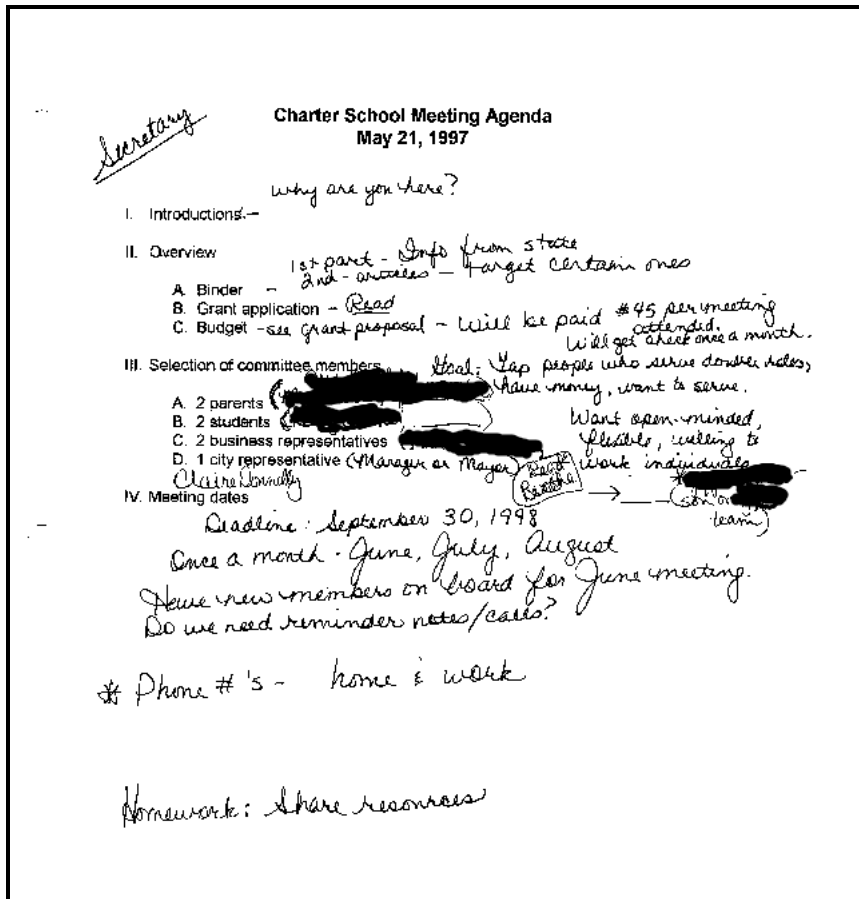
eventual identity contained within parenthesis:

- 1 grant applicant contact person/committee chairperson (Christie Roberts)
- 1 Superintendent/Superintendent designee (Ryan Johnson)
- 1 Board of Education member (Ben Lopez)
- 2 parents of students who had dropped out of school or were at-risk of dropping out (Carl Parker, Seth Hughes)
- 4 business/community representatives (Lori Sanders, Brandon Coleman, Rebecca Scott, Walter Flores)
- 1 Maize City Council member (Janice Perez)
- 1 student who had dropped out of school or at-risk of dropping out (Tim Washington)
- 2 existing traditional school staff members (Jason Brooks, Gayle Swanson)

On May 21, 1997, the group of individuals called the “Charter School Committee” or “The Lucky 13” met for the first time. Figure 4.3 shows the agenda for the first charter school meeting. This group would later be renamed, “The Victory Street Council.” This named was derived by the eventual address of the first location of CHSM: 120 West Victory Street.

**Figure 4.3 First Charter School Meeting Agenda**





This committee would go on to meet dozens of times over the next two years planning and preparing for the opening of Complete High School Maize.

### *An Alternative School in Maize USD 266?*

One of the most difficult tasks charged to the committee was convincing the school board and Maize community that there was a need for an alternative school. Furthermore, the committee needed to convince the board to fund the school. One school leader who did not need convincing was Superintendent Willie Butler. Butler stated in the charter school grant application his support for a charter school:

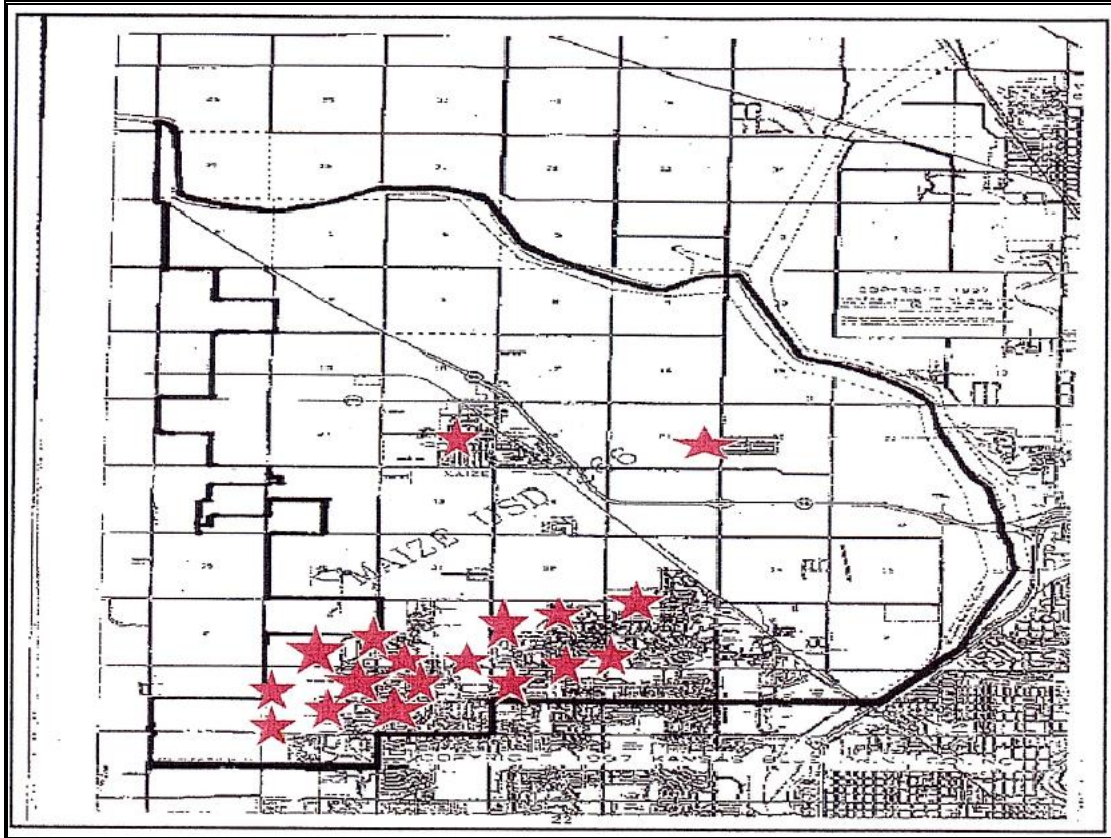
We have an excellent school system of which I am proud to be affiliated. But I am well aware that there is a segment of our population we are not serving. We must address the needs of our at-risk population and dedicate the finances, programs, and staff that will ensure their success. Charter schools are a common-sense approach to students who have charted an alternative path (Kansas Public Charter Schools Program Planning Grant Application, pp. 3-4).

While Superintendent Butler was on-board, the need for an intervention was in dire need at Maize High School. In 1996, 45 students dropped out of Maize High School. This number constituted 4% of the high school population. According to Christie Roberts, director of guidance at Maize High School and original coordinator of the Complete High School Maize program, these students were “very bright individuals who did not fit in to the traditional school” (Personal interview, January 18, 2015). Roberts added, “At first glance, people thought that 4% wasn’t a big deal. But, regardless of the numbers, these were significant, real people whom were not being served successfully in our school.” The background data of the Maize High School dropouts showed that nearly every housing area within the Maize boundaries was the home to a dropout. At Maize High School, from the beginning of the 1995-1996 school year until mid-year of the 1996-1997 school year, 99 students had either dropped out or would not have enough credits to graduate with their class. The dropouts in the Maize district did not fit the stereotype of poverty or problem students. Of the dropouts accounted for, only seven were on free- or reduced lunches. The students who were dropouts lived in almost every area within the district. A breakdown of the areas where 55 of the most recent dropouts at Maize High School lived from the 1995-1996 and 1996-1997 school year included:

- 15- City of Maize
- 3- Reflection Ridge
- 3- West Meadows
- 1- Timber Ridge
- 3- Sterling Farms
- 1- The Pines
- 1- Courtland
- 2- Sun Ridge II
- 1- Cedar Downs
- 5- Jamesburg
- 1- Twelve Oaks
- 5- Westlink 14<sup>th</sup>
- 4- Superior
- 2- Woodbridge
- 1- Whistling Walks
- 4- Childs Acres
- 1- Chadsworth
- 2- Westwood Heights

Figure 4.4 indicates the areas within the Maize USD 266 boundaries where a dropout resided, as denoted by the red star.

**Figure 4.4 Housing locations of dropouts**



Although Maize High School was essentially meeting the needs of 96% of its students, there was still a group of students whose needs were not being met. At the time, these students either dropped out or left Maize to enroll at the Metro alternative program in Wichita USD 259. In 1996, the waiting list to enroll at Metro was over 150 students. As a result, immediate or even near-future help was not available for these students. A mailer that went out to all postal customers in the Maize school system posed the following comment regarding addressing the number of dropouts in Maize: “We believe it is time to begin taking care of our district’s dropouts rather than simply passing them on to someone else” (Maize Complete High School mailer, October 1997).

Opening an alternative school in Maize USD 266 would certainly aid the reduction of high school dropouts. Moreover, members of the Victory Street Council voiced a further need

and purpose for an alternative school in the school district at a Board of Education meeting on September 8, 1997:

- To provide students with not only a second chance, but a second chance with different options;
- To provide a smaller, more personal setting, giving the students the semblance of a family;
- To provide a setting where the program is individualized and provides more one-on-one help;
- Students learn how to get along, negotiate, and work together. They learn what being a community means;
- Students can work at their own pace;
- Students have an opportunity to earn credits in different ways instead of the same old stuff all year long;
- There is not as much peer pressure;
- You can create a safe place for kids- not only physically, but emotionally as well  
(CHSM Charter School Committee presentation, September 8, 1997).

The Victory Street Council also took another perspective in convincing the school board that an alternative school in Maize would be beneficial. Not only would the proposed charter school benefit dropouts and students at-risk of dropping out, it would also benefit students at the traditional Maize High School. The committee used the following statistics to help make their point:

- 70% of students are distracted by unruly peers;

- 65% of students are not motivated to succeed;
- 50% of students believe that teachers should require stronger standards;
- 80% of students say they will learn more if school are stricter;
- 75% of students feel that higher standards are needed (CHSM Charter School Committee Presentation Booklet, September 8, 1997).

Christie Roberts explained in greater detail the challenges the committee members faced in convincing the Board and community that there was a need for an alternative program.

The bottom line is that the majority of our students could make it through in our current system, but others simply were lost. The challenge in Maize was convincing stakeholders that simply wishing students would graduate or condemning them for not playing by the rules or dialoguing about what we felt their problem was, was not going to change the fact that we still had students who were not graduating. For some students, school was like trying to fit a square peg in a round hold. A round hole was fine, unless of course, you were one of the students who was a square peg. Another struggle in the starting of an alternative program in Maize, which is an affluent suburban district, was simply convincing patrons that there was a need. At the board meeting when we put the map on the board and had stars representing homes that had a dropout; that was instrumental in gaining approval and acceptance and showing everyone that there was a need not just for those living in poor pockets throughout the district, but that dropouts lived in places like Reflection Ridge (Personal interview, January 18, 2015).

### **Phase 3: Facility Needs and Budgetary Study**

The Maize School system had long prided itself in implementing programs that were good for kids. In reality, however, over 45 students had dropped out of Maize High School in 1996-1997 and the number was on the rise. An alternative school in Maize would be a beneficial and rewarding program for dropouts and the Maize USD 266 Board of Education had the power to commit funds to address this issue.

As part of the Victory Street Council, subcommittees were formed. One particular subcommittee was formed to examine the facility needs of the proposed alternative school. The committee looked at a variety of options regarding housing an alternative school. The committee looked at the following site possibilities:

- Existing classroom space in existing district facilities;
- Portables at Maize East Elementary School;
- Central office location if it were to relocate;
- Downtown location in Maize;
- Move portable(s) to Central Office location;
- Use current facilities (Maize High School in the late afternoon/early evening);
- Rent or purchase other sites within the district (CHSM Charter School Committee Presentation Booklet, September 8, 1997).

In looking at other alternative programs throughout Kansas, the committee felt it was important to look for a site away from the existing high school. The most expedient and least expensive option would be to move portables from Maize East Elementary to the Central Office location. This option would give the alternative school its own identity, yet keep it centrally

located near other district facilities. The main consideration would be the addition of water and restroom facilities for the portables.

The question still remained for the school board: How can Complete High School Maize be funded? The school would require initial start-up funds to establish a program. The initial costs for a location would run between \$20,000 and \$25,000. When Maize High School opened the doors to its new facility in 1997, several portable classrooms were vacated. The proposed Complete High School Maize could utilize these existing classrooms. The \$20,000-to-\$25,000 would include relocating a portable, hooking up utilities, installing water and restroom facilities, and equipping the school with furniture and equipment. For technology needs, the district would repurpose existing hardware, software, and related computer supplies to CHSM.

After these initial costs, research of other alternative schools showed that Complete High School Maize would operate on exactly the same per-pupil cost as all other programs in the district. However, in many instances, CHSM could operate at a much lower per-pupil cost than the traditional cost of educating students because there would be less administrative services and no additional support services such as librarians and counselors required. Furthermore, classified staff such as paraprofessionals could be utilized, which traditionally, cost less than certified staff members.

Grant monies were also available for at-risk student programs. These programs include addressing dropouts, drug free schools, and community programs. The district apply for and receive multiple grants for at-risk students; however, there were additional at-risk grants for which the district could qualify. These grants included opportunity grants, "Learn and Serve America", Carl Perkins Grant, Federal Charter Schools Demonstration Program as administered through the U.S. Department of Education, Goals 2000, School-to-Work, and IASA (Improving



America’s Schools) funds that are awarded to states and communities . Although there would be no guarantee of obtaining grant monies, the staff of Complete High School Maize would actively pursue grant funding. Moreover, alternative and charter schools have been historically successful in marketing to solicit additional resources. Private funding could be available from solicitation of various foundations and business partnerships.

As part of a study and report to the Board for an alternative school in Maize, the Victory Street Council surveyed 15 alternative programs throughout the state of Kansas in September 1998. The Board was interested in learning about the longevity of other schools, enrollment caps, and student-to-teacher ratios. Listed below are the results of the study:

**Table 4.1 Survey of Various Alternative Schools in Kansas in 1998**

<b>Alternative School</b>	<b>District Size</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>Years in Operation</b>	<b># Students 1<sup>st</sup> Year</b>	<b># Staff 1<sup>st</sup> Year</b>	<b>Ratio 1<sup>st</sup> Year</b>	<b># Current Students</b>	<b># Current Staff</b>	<b>Current Ratio</b>
<b>Project Stay-Leavenworth</b>	4190	9-12	25	60	a) 4.0/1.0	12:1	72	a) 5.0 c) 1.0	14.4:1
<b>ACES-Arkansas City</b>	2936	9-12	0	30	a) 2.5 b) 1.0	12:1	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Garden City Alternative Center</b>	6979	9-12	7	75	a) 6.0 b) 3.0	12.5:1	80	a) 4.0 c) 1.0	20:1

<b>Great Bend Learning Center</b>	3195	9-12	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	a) 1.0 b) 1.0	25:1
<b>Emporia Alternative School</b>	4477	9-12	10	9	a) 1.0	9:1	20	a) 4.0 g) 1.0	5:1
<b>Dodge City-SOS</b>	4888	9-12	20	3	a) 2.0 b) 1.0	1.5:1	40	a) 2.0 b) 2.0	20:1
<b>Hutchinson Alternative School</b>	5015	7-12	24	N/A	N/A	N/A	70	a) 0/22.0	?
<b>Geary Alternative School</b>	6156	9-12	18	35	a) 5.0 c) 1.0	7:1	40	a) 3.0 b) 2.0 c) 1.0 e) 1.0 f) 1.0	13.3:1
<b>Derby Alternative School</b>	6537	9-12	12	12	a) 3.0 c) 1.0	4:1	107	a) 10.0 b) 1.0	10:1
<b>Liberal Alternative School</b>	4105	9-12	½	10	a) 1.5 b) 1.0	6.6:1	10	a) 1.0 b) 1.0	10:1

<b>Salina Alternative School</b>	7318	7-12	22	N/A	N/A	N/A	30	a) 6.0	5:1
<b>Hays West Side Alternative</b>	3533	K-12	8	6	a) 1.0	6:1	30	a) 3.0 b) 3.0	10:1
<b>Lawrence Alternative</b>	9782	10- 12	20	N/A	N/A	N/A	143	a) 12.0 b) 5.0	11.9:1
<b>Auburn- Washburn</b>	4983	10- 12	1	55	a) 2.0 b) 3.0 d) 1.0 e) 1.0	18.3:1	53	a) 3.0 c) 1.0 d) 1.0 e) 1.0 j) 1.0	17.6:1
<b>Haysville Alternative School</b>	4045	9-12	4	24	a) 2.0 e) 1.0	12:1	140	a) 4.0/3 h) 1.0 i) 1.0	35:1

**Legend for number of staff:** a) Certified Staff Full-Time/Part-Time; b) Paraprofessional; c) Secretary; d) Counselor; e) Administrator; f) Custodian; g) Day-Care Provider; h) Police Liaison; i) Social Worker; j) Work Coordinator

In terms of monies allocated to USD 266, Maize's per student budget allocation for the 1997-1998 was \$5500 (General Fund + LOB/FTE) of which the state base aid was \$3670. If at-risk students stayed in school and were counted, a Complete High School Maize program would increase district funds. If approximately 50 at-risk students were to enroll at CHSM, the district

would receive \$183,500 in additional funds from the state. Staffing, which would be the primary cost to the program, would depend on the number of students participating. Based on multiple localities in the Maize area (as identified in Table 4.2), the proposed alternative school’s per-pupil estimated cost would be able to operate on the state base aid or less.

**Table 4.2 Wichita-Metro Area Alternative School Per-Pupil Funding 1997-1998**

School	Cost
Clearwater	\$3670
Derby	\$2160
Haysville	\$2500
Hutchinson	\$1600
Wichita Metro Boulevard	\$3170

**Phase 4: Favorable Recommendation from Board of Education**

A major hurdle the committee members had to overcome was detailing the projected cost to serve the dropouts and students at risk of dropping out in an alternative school setting. The Board was not going to act on any proposal without having an understanding of the financial obligation and burden this school would be to the district. In order to accomplish this, the committee members contacted and surveyed dozens of alternative schools and programs throughout Kansas to obtain a portrait of the overall projected costs. Table 4.3 depicts a proposed budget for Complete High School Maize with estimated revenues, estimated expenditures, and an estimate of one-time start-up costs.

**Table 4.3 Proposed Budget for Complete High School Maize 1999-2000**

<b>Estimated Revenue</b>	
30 FTE Students x \$3720	\$111,600
Correlation Weighting 30 x 0.054183 x \$3720	\$5950
LOB 22.5% on 117,550	\$26,450
Textbook fees 30 x \$45	\$1350
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUE</b>	<b>\$145,400</b>

<b>Estimated Expenses</b>	
3.0 Full-time teachers x \$40,000	\$120,000
1.0 Secretary	\$13,000
District Taxes, Unemployment, Work comp @ 8.5%	11,300
Books/Materials 30 x \$100	\$3000
Telephone/Utilities Est. \$250 x 10 months	\$2500
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED YEARLY EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$150,700</b>

\*This budget would be based on a minimum of 30 student FTE and a 22.5% LOB

<b>Proposed One-Time Start-Up Costs</b>	
Move one additional portable classroom and set up costs (sewer, water, utilities for 3 portables)	\$15,000
Furniture/Textbooks	\$5000
6 Computers/Software/Printers	\$15,000
3 Teachers extra duty days \$200 x 20 days	\$12,000
1 TV/VCR/Cart	\$1000
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED START-UP COSTS</b>	<b>\$48,000</b>

**Source:** CHSM Board Requested Data, September 1998

On April 13, 1998, the Maize USD 266 Board of Education voted 7-0 on the implementation of the alternative school in Maize. The Board put a stipulation into the vote adding, “If funds are available” (USD 266 School Board meeting minutes, April 13, 1998). Essentially, this was action taken to support the project. Though this was a major step for the enactment of Complete High School Maize becoming a reality, there was still work left to be done.

The Board, though supportive of starting an alternative school in Maize, still had questions and concerns. These concerns were listed on a facsimile transmittal from Ryan Johnson, committee member and superintendent designee, to another committee member, Janice Perez. Listed on the fax were concerns about assurance of student numbers, affordability of an alternative school, teacher buy-in and peer pressure, and community buy-in. Because of these concerns, the committee was charged with addressing the following items:

1. Contact students who would benefit attending Complete High School Maize and get some numbers. Probably need to contact both 1998 students who dropped out, etc., and 1997 students because 1997 kids have been out in the ‘real world’ and should see the need to complete their high school education.
2. Address the cost of gifted vs CHSM and the number of gifted classes and cost to the district vs CHSM classes.
3. Contact Auburn/Washburn Alternative School and obtain information on planning, implementation of their program. Schedule a visit. Superintendent Butler thought this school should be looked at because it is in a district with similar socioeconomic status and characteristics as Maize. (School Board Concerns, June 4, 1998)

While data showed that there was a need for an intervention to address the dropout problem, the Board wanted to be assured that there was interest in this type of program from potential students. In response to the Board’s concern, the charter school committee conducted a survey of 114 recent dropouts and students at risk of dropping out. The results of the survey are found in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4 Survey of Dropouts in USD 266 from 1995-1998**

114	Number of survey’s mailed
7	Letters returned (incorrect address)
7	Graduated or received GED
1	Joined the military
6	Moved out of the area
2	Returned to high school (1 doing well; 1 is failing 3 classes)
46	Disconnected telephone/not able to reach at this time (Follow up from non-returned mailings)
14	Not interested in attending alternative school
31	Have interest in attending alternative school (18 from 1997-98; 8 from 1996-97; 5 from 1995-96)
15	Students wanting to attend who did not receive a letter (current dropout; recent move-in; students who left MHS who were not classified as dropouts when they left)

Of the student surveyed, the committee found that 40 of the students would be considered “new” money brought into the district. The committee explained that with time and investigation, they would be able to contact many more students whom they were not able to reach.

The second concern addressed by the Board was that of class sizes for gifted and upper level classes and the cost to the district compared to expected low class sizes at CHSM. The committee found that during the 1997-1998 school year, the district was funding many programs that had a low teacher-to-student ratio. These classes included honors and college bound classes, special interest classes, and Advanced Placement and School to Careers programs. Specifically, the following trends were noted:

- Nearly three full-time teachers teach special interest classes with a teacher-student ratio of 1-to-6, 1-to-9, and 1-to-10;
- The honors and college bound classes have almost two full-time teachers with a teacher-to-student ratio of 1-to-5, 1-to-6, 1-to-9, and 1-to-10;
- General classes have ½ of one full-time teacher with a ratio of 1-to-4 and 1-to-10.

(CHSM Charter School Committee, September 7, 1997)

The committee explained that CHSM “will not require this low of a teacher student ratio, but all of these programs compliment the traditional programs by addressing individual student needs” (CHSM Charter School Committee, September 7, 1997, p. 3).

The final item that was asked of the committee was to visit the Auburn-Washburn school district and tour their alternative school in Topeka, Kansas. On September 11, 1998, members of the Victory Street Council to a trip to visit Washburn Rural Alternative High School.

Finally, after countless hours of work, the Maize USD 266 School Board unanimously voted to approve the alternative school to open its doors in the fall of 1999 (USD 266 School Board meeting minutes, October 12, 1998). In an interview conducted with Randy Butler, a long-time USD 266 Board of Education member, funding the program ended up being a decision based on not only what was best for students, but for the purpose of economics.



We knew that there would be those in the community who would be unsupportive of an alternative school; however, when statistics showed that the cost of a dropout costs the country billions of dollars over their lifetime, we felt that the cost of the program, which was relatively low, was worth the investment (Personal interview, January 23, 2015).

## **Phase 5: Complete High School Maize Becomes Reality**

### ***Establishing the Core Values of CHSM and Building a School Profile***

The Victory Street Council often tried to use metaphors, analogies, and anecdotes when possible to help explain the purpose and vision of the proposed alternative school to the Maize community. Although alternative schools were not new, they were new to the Maize community. The committee worked purposefully with regard to every aspect of designing Complete High School Maize. Many of their plans to educate others were found in artifacts including meeting minutes, hand-written notes, and documents created for the Board of Education such as the CHSM Charter School Committee Presentation Booklet (September 8, 1997), letters to committee members from June 12 1997 through April 6, 1999, and CHSM Board Requested Data (September 1998).

In establishing the core values of Complete High School Maize, the committee members envisioned the actual building of a school. The foundation of a building is key. Similarly, the foundation of the alternative school in Maize USD 266 was the recognition of the personal worth of every student. Each student would be valued as an individual. Commitment from the Maize community to provide a strong foundation for each student's academic achievement meant designing a school tailored to teach techniques and curriculum that meant that met the individual needs of each learner.

To frame the school and erect walls, windows, and doorways on the foundation, master building was required. The structure was to be open but sound, offer windows of opportunity, non-rigid spaces, and an environment that promoted cooperation, problem-solving, and decision-making.

The school's intended population would be for grades nine through 12. Additionally, the school would only serve those students who lived within the Maize school boundaries while no out-of-district students would be allowed to enroll. Students eligible to enroll may have already dropped out of school and all potential students would be required to show that they are at-risk of not being successful in the current high school and have need of an alternative path to graduation. All students who sought to enroll must apply through both an application and interview process. In the beginning, the target enrollment would be between 30 and 50 students with the capability of adding future enrollment as needed. The open structure of the school would serve a segment of the district population that was not presently being served.

In determining the criterion for accepting students, the staff at CHSM would conduct interviews with potential students and their parents. The major theme for allowing acceptance into the program was an internal notion by the student to choose to attend. Students could not be placed into the program by administration from the traditional school and parents could not make their student attend. The committee of staff members would be the governing body that determined if a student was allowed to enroll or not. Reasons given by students during the interview process for acceptance into the program would be considered on an individual basis by the staff committee. One criteria that the staff would not consider for acceptance into the program would be if the prospective student was only interested in attending CHSM for the sole purpose of trying to graduate faster.

The alternative high school would provide an alternative means for students to complete courses to meet state requirements for the high school diploma. The school would help the student become established in a career or enrolled in college or vocational/technical training. The premise of the school would be based on an individual education contract for the student, tailored to meet each student's individual needs.

Students who enrolled at the alternative school would be provided a curriculum that included the chance to pick up where they left off if they were returning to school after dropping out. Essays and student projects would be designed to meet state standards and student needs. There would be no coasting allowed. The only grades given would be an "A", "B", or "C." A "D" would be unacceptable to earn credits.

Motivation would be the constant theme with lessons that included life skills and personal development. The instructional process would be driven by the needs of the student with sound pedagogical findings practiced.

The environment of the school would be a positive, student-centered culture. In order to create a positive learning environment, lessons would be taught in a hands-on manner. The committee strongly believed that students internalized information learned, and that when the learned by doing, it became more relevant. Additionally, an important quality of the school would be for students to learn and develop group cooperation and collaboration skills, problem solving skills, creative thinking skills, and decision making abilities. Any curriculum devised that accomplished these goals would be considered important.

Complete High School Maize would not only be considered a second chance, it would be considered a second chance with different options. Establishing opportunities for students to work and learn independently would be fostered.

The roof of the school would be built to provide protection. Protection for the school would be provided by the USD 266 Board of Education, with supervision coming from the superintendent's office. One major difference between Complete High School Maize and the traditional school would be with regard to decision making. At CHSM, no one person would be the ultimate decision maker; rather, decisions would be a collaborative effort of staff, parents, students, and the business community.

The new school would be managed on day-to-day operations by the entire staff. Long-term projects would be developed by the collaborative efforts of the planning committee. The staff would collaborate on issues and collectively make decisions for the school. The staff would be individuals who possess a wide array of characteristics. Among these would be individuals who are flexible, hard-working, nurturing, and understanding. The teachers would have an understanding and empathy for diversified backgrounds. Dedicated, successful teachers and staff would assure a successful program. Teachers would be those who relate well to those students who are challenging and in need of a second chance.

The school would be administered in the same manner as the existing high school: it would be treated as another high school within the district while be operated under the umbrella of Maize High School. There would be a strong partnership between the two schools, and the programs from the traditional high school could also be utilized by students from the new alternative school.

Although the school would have a strong foundation, a well-planned and framed structure, and a solid roof, it would need to be enhanced by landscaping. Strong roots would be considered essential to the school's long-term survival. The school plan would be established as an ongoing process to scrutinize progress on a regular basis. Students would be tracked once

they graduate and there would be follow up meetings with the graduates to evaluate the student's growth in both their career and personal life. The results of the interviews and follow-up would serve as a guide as to how successful the school is at producing students who live a productive life. The planning committee would be involved in the evaluation of the school. Changes would be made continuously to provide the most positive learning environment

The sidewalk of the school would lead to and from the community. One path would lead from the school to the community. Students would be expected and encouraged to participate in community volunteering endeavors. They would work in a mentoring environment for both personal and job related gains. Numerous incentive programs would be used to reward positive behavior and academic growth. The planning committee supporting and evaluating the school, the Board of Education, and business partnerships would take the path from the community to the school. A strong partnership with businesses within the district would enhance programs in terms of mentoring and training. The businesses would benefit by being the recipient of qualified potential employees.

The newly planned alternative school would help the students and their families, the traditional high school and the community.

### ***Selling the Community***

The committee had an understanding that it needed to be proactive to communicate the need for the alternative school in Maize. It would not be an easy sell. The Maize community was conservative, but also very supportive of the schools. The committee chose to use a variety of mediums to educate the community about CHSM. These included articles in the monthly district newsletter called The Maize Messenger, independent mailers to patrons of the district, frequent articles in the Maize High School student newspaper, periodic updates at Board of

Education meetings, holding town hall meetings, and morning coffees. In addition, the committee worked on being proactive by addressing potential concerns or questions that the community might have. Examples of questions and scripted responses shown below were communicated in a mailer titled, *Maize Complete High School* from October 1997:

- **Question:** What is the difference between an alternative school and a charter school?
  - **Answer:** A charter school is a public school, funded with public funds, that allows an opportunity to divert from traditional instructional practices. However, because it is a public school, charter schools must follow guidelines such as non-discrimination of its selection of students and separation of church and state. An alternative school is a school designed to meet the specific needs of at-risk students. Therefore, an alternative school can petition to become a charter school, thereby gaining access to federal grants that are now available. President Clinton has requested \$100 million be allocated to charter schools. Our committee received a charter planning grant to investigate our alternative school. We felt an alternative school would be important to have at Maize, regardless of whether or not it achieves charter status. The advantages most obviously would have been seen in the form of additional grant money for startup costs.
- **Question:** Why can't these students be successful in the regular school?
  - **Answer:** This is a complex issue that cannot be answered with a short response. Basically, the very structure of the traditional school is what many times impedes the success of these students. What we can respond to is the fact that our traditional school is doing a fantastic job educating the majority

of our students. It tries to address the dropout issue as best it can. However, we still continue to lose students every year. We know that alternative schools have success with many of these students. Therefore, by adding an alternative school to our district we are making a genuine effort to help all students.

- **Question:** Do alternative school just let students do their own thing, thereby never teaching students about responsibility and how to accept the consequences of their actions?
  - **Answer:** One thing that our committee quickly discovered was that students in alternative schools are held to very high standards. Yes, they are learning responsibility, just in alternative ways. As one student put it, “In my regular school I was dictated responsibility. In the alternative school I am earning, learning, and experiencing responsibility.
- **Question:** Isn't this going to cost the district a lot of money?
  - **Answer:** Traditionally, alternative schools are less costly than other schools. There are no administrator costs, as well as other support staff such as counselors, librarians, etc. Many alternative schools operate in old buildings or portables with little overhead. In some schools, students are responsible for custodial and maintenance duties. Because many of these students would not be in school were it not for the alternative school, the district receives funds for these students they might not otherwise get. Also, there are monies available for at-risk students, as well as dropout prevention programs that alternative schools try to access.

- **Question:** Why an alternative school at Maize?
  - **Answer:** Last year alone, 45 students dropped out of Maize High School. That constitutes 4% of the high school population. For the most part these were very bright individuals who did not fit into the traditional school. Where do these students live? Background data shows that these students live in nearly every housing area in our district. Only seven of the last 86 students who dropped out of Maize were low socio-economic students. Therefore, dropouts in our district do not fit the stereotype of poverty or “problem” students. They simply are students who learn in alternative ways that are not being able to be addressed in our school. Currently, we refer these students to Metro in Wichita. The currently waiting list at Metro is 150 students. We feel that it is time that we begin taking care of our own dropouts.
  
- **Question:** How do dropouts affect me?
  - **Answer:**
    - Fact- For every \$1 million spent on jailing repeat felons we can prevent 61 serious crimes. For every \$1 million spent on high school graduation incentives, we can prevent 258 serious crimes.
    - Fact- 82% of America’s prisoners are high school dropouts.
    - Fact- Each year’s class of dropouts will cost the country over \$200 billion during their lifetimes in lost earnings and unrealized tax revenue.
    - Fact- The proportion of tax dollars spent daily on public school students and on prisoner is 2 to 7, respectively.



### *Putting the Pieces Together*

The school board recognized that in order for the Complete High School Maize program to be successful, it needed a leader who would be able to sustain criticism and overcome potential obstacles. They needed a leader to recruit dedicated staff members and align them with the mission and purpose of the school. The leader also needed to be able to be compassionate toward all students, while simultaneously, hold students accountable. This leader was Christie Roberts. Not only had Roberts spearheaded the charter school grant and committee, she was a guidance counselor who just so happened to be a former high school dropout.

The first hire Roberts made was Byron Barnes. Barnes was a veteran teacher with a background in special education and also held certification in English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science. As a veteran educator, Barnes was known for his calm demeanor and ability to develop positive student relationships.

Next on the list of staff to hire was a clerical staff member who would serve as the building secretary. Though this would be her official title, Estelle Neal would also serve as the school nurse, bookkeeper, and instructional paraprofessional.

The final piece of the puzzle that Roberts needed to hire was a math teacher. Fresh out of college, Spencer Bryan was hired to be the school's math teacher.

To aid in housekeeping duties, Roberts was able to secure a retired custodian to work five hours each week cleaning toilets and vacuuming the classrooms.

With the staff in place and a group of students enrolled, all that was left was the need for a big group work day to get the school ready. Two days prior to the first day of school, a group of parents, community members, students, and staff joined forces to help put the finishing

touches on getting the school ready for the first day of school. Figure 4.5 shows a group picture of those who volunteered their time.

**Figure 4.5 CHSM Work Day Prior to First Day of School**



With full school board support, 34 eager students, and a committed staff of four full-time educators plus a part-time custodian, Complete High School Maize opened its doors for the first time on August 20, 1999.

## **The Complete High School Maize Years**

### ***1999-2000 School Year***

On August 20, 1999, all of the students enrolled at the new Complete High School Maize gathered around rectangular tables looking at one another wondering, “What did I get myself in to?” Soon thereafter, four adults walked into the room, dressed in costumes and began dancing and singing the words to a made up song. This group, known as the *Teachers With Attitude* (TWA), consisted of the four hired staff members charged with leading the new alternative school in Maize. They wasted little time showing their students that this school would be different. Pictured in Figure 4.6 is staff at Complete High School Maize performing for the new

students on the first day of school.

**Figure 4.6 CHSM Teachers With Attitude Skit**



The first year of Complete High School Maize was not only different for the students, it was different for the staff. Byron Barnes, a teacher at CHSM who helped start the school, explained the importance of being different. “Complete was how all schools should be run. We did what was best for each student and had the freedom and flexibility to be different; to take risks and try new ways to reach kids” (Personal interview, January 31, 2015). From the first day the staff was hired, each member was committed to the mission and purpose of Complete High School Maize. Christie Roberts, CHSM’s first school leader, was committed not just to the diploma, but also to preparing students for life beyond high school. “The diploma was important, but it wasn’t the end all-be all of the program. We wanted our graduates to have personal and social living skills; things like honesty, compassion for others, and a good work ethic” (Personal interview, January 18, 2015). Getting students to see the need for these skills

would be a challenge. Roberts and Barnes knew that one reason students were not successful in the traditional school was because they were not committed to something. “We had to find a way to get students to buy in to what we were selling. We saw a great way to get buy in and to develop those social skills was to create programs that required student participation” (Personal interview, January 18, 2015). Roberts also added, “We had to be creative in with our resources. We wanted to be frugal with our staffing and budget so that we weren’t perceived as a burden to the district financially. We didn’t have custodians per se, or cooks, or librarians. What we did have was a bunch of students and we wanted to make sure they bought in to what we were doing, so those jobs were divvied out to students” (Personal interview, January 18, 2015). As a result, the first major program was established at CHSM and was called “Complete Leaders.”

### ***Complete Leaders***

The Complete Leader program paired two students together who, as a team, would take turns with custodial duties and perform other duties around the school as needed. Every two weeks, the Complete Leaders change and by the end of each school year, all students would have served in this capacity. Byron Barnes made mention of the significance and importance of Complete Leaders.

When I was at MHS, students had no regard for the appearance of the school. Students would walk by trash on the ground, not push in their chairs, or leave a mess at lunch. The Complete Leaders were a great way to get students to take pride and ownership at Complete. When it was their shift to be a Complete Leader, it gave them a new lens to see things. They were now the ones picking up trash or pushing in chairs. Pretty soon, all of our students were picking up trash because they knew what it was like to be a Complete Leader. In perhaps the first time in their high school career, they had pride in

their school and didn't want anything bad to happen to it. (Personal communication, January 31, 2015)

The Complete Leader program continued to evolve in the first year of the school. One area of concern that came about was with regard to student lunches. First, while the portables were equipped with an oven, stove, and refrigerator, cooking and preparing lunch for over 30 students each day became a difficult chore to sustain on a daily basis. In addition, there were many students who were on free or reduced lunches, and the cost of cooking meals each day became an expense that had not been taken into account. Because of this, the school partnered with Maize Middle School, which was geographically close in proximity to CHSM. This partnership allowed CHSM to order lunches from Maize Middle School each day. One of the Complete Leaders would walk over to the school and pick up lunches that had been ordered while the other Complete Leader would assist the Maize Middle School kitchen as a volunteer worker. Pamela Ross, a graduate of CHSM in 2002, recalled her experience as a Complete Leader and in working lunches with the middle school staff.

When I first learned I had to work lunches, it made me really mad. I wasn't getting paid and it was hard work. In my time there though, I really learned to like those ladies and realized how hard they worked. I had never had a job before. I wasn't about to let those ladies out work me. I remember inviting them to my graduation and they actually came. That was a program that made an impact on me. (Personal interview, February 2, 2015)

### ***Contracts***

Developing a curriculum for students at Complete High School Maize was a major process. The staff needed to develop a curriculum that could be individualized for each student. The concept that was created was that of “contracts” for the core curricular areas of math, English/Language Arts, science, and social studies. Having only three certified teachers, there was an inherent challenge of being able to deliver a comprehensive curriculum to each student in class. With class sizes averaging 12 students, the process was manageable; however, in each class, every student could potentially need different content or a different contract. The staff at CHSM took a traditional full credit course and divided the entire course content into four contracts, each worth 0.25 credit. The staff recognized that the students at CHSM needed small, yet attainable goals. Rather than focus on the full credit, students would see continued progress as they worked toward completing each curriculum contract. The contracts were a self-paced curriculum that students worked on during class time. Each teacher served as a facilitator of the curriculum by assisting students as they needed help or instruction. Mastery learning was required, as students could earn nothing lower than a 70% on any assignment or test. Students were required to have each assignment listed on the contract checked off by the teacher before they could move on to the next assignment.

### ***No Homework***

Another caveat to the curriculum was that the concept of homework was not allowed. In examining aspects of students who were not being successful in the traditional school, the staff found that a major reason for failing grades was that students did not turn in homework. This was for a variety of reasons including students who lost their work or forgetting to turn it in, not knowing how to do the work, time commitments of work or family, or were simply apathetic

to doing homework. At Complete High School Maize, students were expected to do their homework during class. If they chose not to do their work, the natural consequence was that they would fall behind on their work. Included in the CHSM Student Handbook (2013) was a description of the homework policy:

Because students are expected to be productive while in attendance of CHSM, and because students work one-on-one with staff, students should not expect to be given homework. Any outside work will be negotiated by the student. Misplaced contracts or if a student is found to have taken a contract home without permission could result in the student needing to start over on their contract. (p. 8)

Students were expected to complete each contract in approximately 4.5 weeks. If they did not meet this minimum requirement, students were required to come in after school to work until they were caught up. This after school time was referred to as “Doghouse.”

### ***The Doghouse***

During the 1999-2000 school year, Doghouse was offered after school from 3:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. Students who got into the “Doghouse” were required to attend. Doghouse was explained in further detail in the Complete High School Maize student handbook:

Doghouse is one of the few ‘hard-and-fast’ rules enforced at CHSM. If a student is at school every day, works, and gets contracts finished, the students will not have mandatory Doghouse. If a student fall short of accomplishing contracted goals or accumulates too much non-productive time, the student will be **REQUIRED** to attend Doghouse. Calling in sick, attending doctors’ appointments, going out of town, family vacations, work, not having a ride, having a flat tire, traffic was bad, the alarm did not go

off, etc. are not reasons to miss or be tardy to Doghouse. If a student does miss Doghouse, it is very likely that the student will be dismissed from CHSM.

Doghouse also served as an opportunity for students to work ahead on their contracts. Because homework was not allowed, students could come in and work ahead in order to earn credits faster. Doghouse also served as an opportunity for students to make up their school time missed. The staff of CHSM wanted there to be natural consequences for student behavior and actions. If a student missed a day of CHSM, they received “non-productive time.” Much like a job, if a student missed a day at work, he or she would not get paid. At CHSM, if a student missed a day, he or she would not earn productive time. Once a student accumulated three days’ worth of accumulated non-productive time, the student was required to come in and make up their non-productive time. Once a student’s non-productive time was made up during Doghouse that resulted in the student’s overall non-productive time falling below the maximum amount of time allowed to miss, the student was able to get out of the Doghouse.

### ***Non-Productive Time***

Non-productive time and productive time were very important to the students and staff at CHSM. If a student missed a day for any reason, he or she would receive non-productive time. If a student was in class but was not working on their contract, the student would receive non-productive time. Each teacher was responsible for recording the amount of time students were productive. Each week, non-productive time was updated to track student progress.

### ***Graduation***

During the first year of the existence of Complete High School Maize, Christie Roberts formed a committee of CHSM students charged with establishing a graduation tradition and



ceremony procedure. The graduation committee wanted to make sure that each student who graduated from CHSM was celebrated. They wanted to ensure that the graduation was personalized for each graduate. In addition to the CHSM graduation, students who graduated CHSM were invited to graduate with the entire graduating class of Maize High School at commencement.

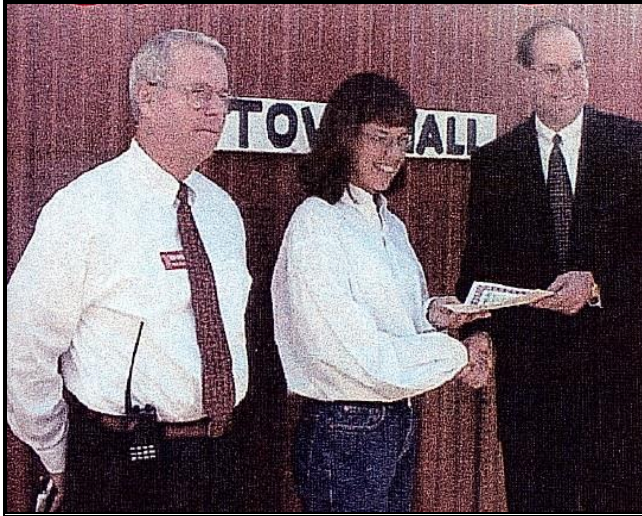
The traditions and rituals established for the CHSM graduations included the following steps:

- When a graduate received their final credit, the graduate would go to the CHSM principal to get an air horn. The graduate would blow the air horn signifying that he or she had finished their credits;
- As the horn was blown, all of the students and guests would stop what they were doing and go to a large classroom for the graduation;
- The CHSM principal welcomed all of the guests;
- Each graduate received an inspirational book that was inscribed by each CHSM teacher providing an inspirational message. In 1999, this book was titled, *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul*;
- The CHSM administrator selected an inspirational story that exemplified the graduate of the day;
- The CHSM staff would take turns sharing their thoughts about the graduate;
- Guests who were invited to the graduation were allowed to share their thoughts about the graduate;
- A representative from the Maize district office was invited to present the graduate with their certificate of completion;

- A CHSM student presented the graduate with a cape and a crown;
- The CHSM graduate would go to the white board and change the “Number of Graduates Served” board;
- CHSM graduate would sign the graduate registry;
- The graduate would be presented with a card that was signed by all of the current CHSM students;
- The CHSM graduate would then have the opportunity to give a graduation speech to their guests;
- Cake and punch was provided and served for all guests and students;
- The guests then formed a line outside and sent the graduate off through a line and the students all tossed bird seed in the air.

On October 21, 1999, Complete High School Maize graduated its first student. The first graduate of CHSM was Erica Patrick who was 22 years old at the time of her graduation. In Figure 4.7, Erica Patrick is pictured with a Maize USD 266 School Board Member and Principal of Maize High School.

**Figure 4.7 First CHSM Graduate**



### ***Thanksgiving Feast***

On November 23, 1999, the students and staff of Complete High School Maize invited parents, community members, and anyone who helped CHSM become a reality to CHSM in what would become the first annual CHSM Thanksgiving Feast. The students prepared all of the food for the event and served over 150 guests. Students were required to dress up for the occasion. For the weeks leading up to the feast, the staff at CHSM trained the students on manners, serving food, and playing the role of being a good host.

### ***Bad Press***

Early on in its history, Complete High School Maize received publicity. With the first graduation taking place, the event was covered by the local newspaper and television stations. In an attempt to gain more information, the Wichita Eagle did a feature story on CHSM. The students were excited about the publicity until they read the headline in the paper following the visit from the Eagle. The title said, “Maize Starts School for Troubled Students.” Many of the students at CHSM took offense to the article; particularly, the headline of the article. As a result, Figure 4.8 shows a response written by CHSM students to the letter of the editor at the Wichita

Eagle newspaper.

Figure 4.8 Wichita Eagle Newspaper Article



**It's a school for serious students**

Students from Complete High School Maize were confused and disturbed by the headline "Maize starts school for troubled students" in the Nov. 11 Eagle. An assumption was made that, because our school has some students who have had academic difficulty in the past, we are all troubled.

The fact is, only students who are serious about getting their diploma are allowed to attend.

We have done numerous community-service projects, tutored students in lower grades, made quilts for six different charities, hosted parent-teacher conferences with 100 percent attendance and recently planned a Thanksgiving feast for more than 150 guests. Our attendance policy is more rigorous than most traditional schools. Does this sound like something troubled students would do?

The students at CHSM are dedicated, creative and bright. We are here because we learn in different ways. In fact, the learning here closely reflects real-world situations. For example,

when you do not show up for work, you do not get paid. When you do not show up for school at CHSM, you do not receive credits.

Other than referring to us as remedial students, the story itself was pretty accurate. However, we wonder how many people read past the headline. Therefore, the impression many people have about our school and students could be negative and inaccurate.

We are taught at CHSM to see the good in everyone, focus on being positive and try to help others. We wish The Eagle's staff had used these same principles when writing the headline.

**[Redacted Signature]**  
Students  
Complete High School Maize

*Editor's note: This letter was also signed by 19 other students and staff members of Complete High School Maize.*

***Buff-it-Up***

Without a certified physical education teacher and with this content area being a requirement for graduation, CHSM staff developed a weekly physical education class called "Buff-it-Up." One afternoon each week was devoted to health and physical fitness activities. All students and staff participated in order to develop an appreciation for life-long fitness. Staff

members took turns planning the weekly activity. Examples of Buff-it-Up activities included playing tennis, bowling, softball, exercising at the Sedgwick County Park and the YMCA.

### ***Exploratory Speakers***

One day weekly, CHSM arranged for a speaker from an outside agency or organization to give a presentation to students. Career speakers, representatives from community colleges, vocational schools, and other businesses or outside agencies were brought in to meet with students regarding careers, training programs, and community events. During the 1999-2000 school year, examples of guest speakers included members of the Wichita Police Department, Sean Covey, who authored *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, cosmetologists, veterinarians, Wichita State University women's basketball, Wichita Area Technical College and journeymen apprenticeship programs.

### ***Matinee Classes***

Due to the small number of teachers at CHSM, all of who were core curriculum teachers, there was a need for students to earn required elective credits towards graduation. As a result, the CHSM staff developed mini elective courses called "matinee classes." Matinee classes were small, teacher-led classes that provided students a choice of what they would like to study. Many options for matinee classes were offered to students and were scheduled to be taught in the afternoon portion of the school day. Classes were offered in two-week increments and students sign up for the classes they would like to take. Productive time is recorded in the students cumulative credit file kept by the clerical staff. Students were required to participate in matinee courses in order to receive time-based credit based on the Carnegie Unit of 120 clock hours being equivalent to one credit. Examples of matinee classes offered included cooking classes, music, foreign language, automotive repair, and health.

### ***Field Trips***

Another focus of the staff at CHSM was to provide as many experiential learning opportunities as they could for students. Many of these experiential learning opportunities were in the form of field trips. During the 1999-2000 school year, CHSM students and staff took field trips to the Kansas Cosmosphere, the Kansas State Fair, the Sedgwick County Zoo, the Wichita Art Museum, KAKE television studios, Crown Uptown Dinner Theatre, and Exploration Place. Another type of activity that CHSM students experienced was service field trips. During service field trips, students did volunteering and serving others, as well as the community. Examples of service field trips included visiting the Senior Citizen Center in Colwich, Kansas, Toys for Tots, Operation Holiday, and helping out with Earth Day activities at the Sedgwick County Zoo.

### ***Summary***

Table 4.5 is a summary of student and staff information throughout the school year. The first year, the staff decided that the first year and each sequential school year would have a motto for the year. During the 1999-2000 school year, the staff decided upon the motto, “Do the right thing because it is the right thing to do.” The staff chose this motto to give students a focus on decision-making. Although the school year started with 34 students, an additional 10 students enrolled throughout the school year. During the 1999-2000 school year, there were six graduations. Of the 44 students who enrolled, 21 ended up graduating from Complete High School Maize and 16 either dropped out or were dismissed. A total of seven students either transferred or moved out of the district.

**Table 4.5 1999-2000 CHSM Profile**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Notes</b>
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Motto	Do the Right Thing Because It Is the Right Thing to Do
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Administrator/English/Speech Teacher</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Social Studies/Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Estelle Neal- Secretary</li> <li>- William Wilder- Part-time Custodian</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	44
Graduates	6 students graduated from CHSM during the school year; 21 of the students who enrolled eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	16 students dropped out/dismissed and 7 students transferred/moved
Building Structure	3 portables located at 120 W Victory in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	Monday through Friday; 8:45-3:00; Doghouse from 3:00-4:00

### ***2000-2001 School Year***

After what was considered to be a successful first year at Complete High School Maize, the staff looked to continue building the program. The waiting list for students to enroll at CHSM continued to grow and the number of graduates slowly increased.

One change from the previous year was with regard to staffing. Complete High School Maize was allowed to hire a full time instructional paraprofessional to work individually with students. With the hire, CHSM was also able to accommodate more students at a time. The enrollment cap moved from 30 students to 40 students. This also helped the school serve students who were on the waiting list.

#### ***Active Learning Opportunities***

Many of the programs that started the first year continued throughout the 2000-2001 school year. Results from a parent and student survey showed that students viewed the exploratory speakers, field trips, and Buff-it-Up activities as beneficial. As a result, the staff



setup the following active learning opportunities for students throughout the year found in Table 4.6:

**Table 4.6 2000-2001 Active Learning Opportunities**

Exploratory Speakers	Buff-it-Up	Field Trips
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Photographer</li> <li>-Communications Director</li> <li>-Tobacco Prevention Specialist</li> <li>-Maize City Council Member</li> <li>-Kansas Highway Patrol</li> <li>-Racecar Driver and team</li> <li>-Butler Community College</li> <li>-Veterans of World War II</li> <li>-Actor</li> <li>-Television news anchor</li> <li>-Mary Kay consultant</li> <li>-Cosmetologist</li> <li>-Occupational Therapist</li> <li>-Russell J. Simon, Jr. (Ten Seconds Can Change Your Life Forever)</li> <li>-Printmaker</li> <li>-Apprenticeship programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-All-Star Sports Center</li> <li>-Softball</li> <li>-YMCA</li> <li>-Bowling</li> <li>-Roller Skating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Kansas State Fair</li> <li>-Mosey Outdoor Adventure</li> <li>-Habitat for Humanity</li> <li>-Hawthorne Ranch</li> <li>-Wichita Area Technical College</li> <li>-American Red Cross</li> <li>-Adult Day Center</li> <li>-Koch Industries</li> <li>-Cessna Aircraft</li> <li>-Wichita Air Museum</li> <li>-The All-American Indian Center</li> <li>-African-American Heritage Museum</li> <li>-Museum of Ancient Treasures</li> <li>-Wichita Garden Show</li> <li>-Crown Uptown Dinner Theatre</li> <li>-Eisenhower Museum</li> <li>-Botanica</li> </ul>



-Sedgwick County Sherriff		-Sedgwick County Zoo
-EMT		

After the initial first year of the CHSM program, the staff continued to look for new ways to help reach students. With having such a small staff, Christie Roberts recognized a need to get more adults involved in student’s lives. As a result of this need, Roberts developed the CHSM “Somebody’s Someone” program.

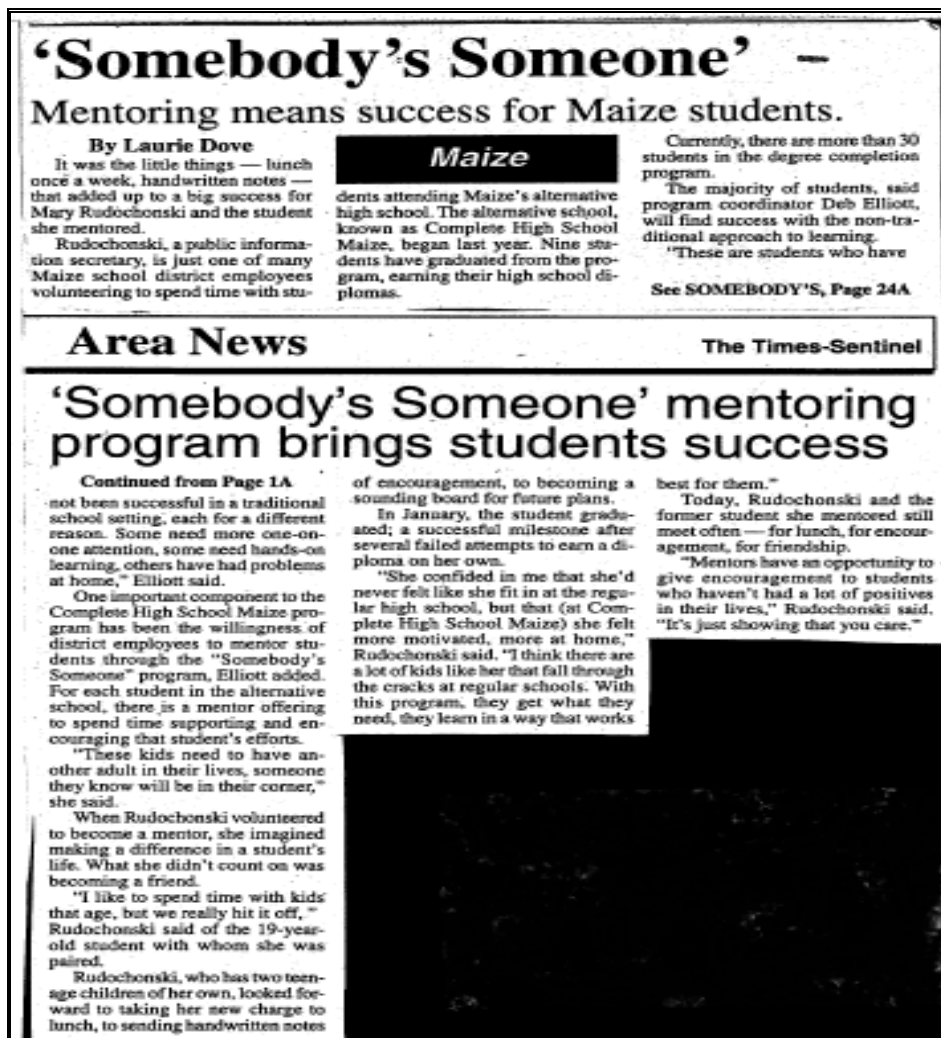
***Somebody’s Someone Program***

During the 2000-2001 school year, Complete High School Maize started a new program involving caring partners from the district. Christie Roberts, coordinator/administrator of CHSM, made a plea with community members in a letter in the Maize Messenger (October 2000):

We know that successful students are those who surround themselves with caring adults. We would like to have adults—secretaries, custodians, teachers, administrators, etc. volunteer to support our students. You would be paired with a student and be asked to get to know them and take an interest in their lives. This might include sending them a note, taking them out for lunch, dropping by to see them, etc. If you volunteer we ask that you just commit to making contact with them at least twice a month—our preference would be weekly contact but we know this may not be possible with the busy lives everyone leads. Once you get to know our students you will realize that this will be a fun and rewarding activity. They really are good kids who thrive on positive reinforcement.

There was a tremendous response from the Maize community. Each student at CHSM was paired with an adult mentor. There was also a waiting list of adult mentors started for future CHSM students. Original Victory Street Council member Rebecca Scott volunteered to be a Somebody's Someone. "It was rewarding to see some of my efforts in action as part of the original committee and then to serve as an adult mentor. I made a connection with my student that still exists today" (Personal interview, January 18, 2015). Included in Figure 4.9 is an article in the Times-Sentinel, a local newspaper, highlighting the Somebody's Someone program.

Figure 4.9 Times-Sentinel Newspaper Article



### ***Vocational Partnerships***

Another initiative that started during the 2000-2001 school year was the partnership established between CHSM and Cowley County Community College. As part of this partnership, CHSM students could enroll in a vocational program during the school day. The programs offered were welding, automotive repair, and automotive body repair. During the first year of this partnership, two CHSM students enrolled in the welding program.

### ***Four-Day Week***

During Parent-Teacher Conferences in the spring of the 2000-2001 school year, conferences took place during a two-day span on a Wednesday and Thursday. During these two days, CHSM staff worked extended days in both conducting school and then staying to hold conferences with parents. To compensate the staff for their extended day efforts, they were granted Friday off. Because it was a long week for staff, Doghouse was moved to Friday and Christie Roberts volunteered to serve as the worker for the day. Throughout the Friday Doghouse, many of the students in attendance commented on how beneficial it was to have an extended amount of time to make up their work or make up their non-productive time. This gave Christie Roberts the idea of examining the possibility of having a four-day school week, with teachers taking turns working on Friday. With Board approval, Complete High School Maize was given permission to pilot a shortened work week during the last term of the school year. In piloting the shortened work week, Roberts commented on the impact it had on student achievement:

When we were able to pilot the four-day week, the Board wanted data. The data showed that student attendance improved and students were getting more work done. The four day week incentivized the students to show up and work hard during the four day so that they could have Fridays off. (Personal interview, January 18, 2015)

Byron Barnes also commented on the impact the four day week had on teacher morale. “We were dealing with some really tough students. The days went by so fast and we didn’t have much time to grade or plan. The four day week improved morale and gave us all a day to help plan” (Personal communication, January 31, 2015).

***Summary***

The 2000-2001 saw the commencement of three new programs for CHSM. Students and staff moved to a four-day school week, the Somebody’s Someone program began, and a partnership began with a local vocational program.

The theme for the school year was “Takin’ Care of Business.” Staff members at CHSM wanted students to begin taking responsibility for their education. This meant showing up each day, working on contracts, and preparing for their future.

In addition to the students who started the CHSM program during the 1999-2000 school year, an additional 23 students were enrolled throughout the 2000-2001 school year. CHSM conducted nine student graduations during the school year. This brought the total number of CHSM graduates to 15 over a two-year period. Of the 23 students who enrolled during the school year, 16 ended up graduating from CHSM. Seven of the 23 students ended up dropping out or were dismissed. The staff at CHSM was able to add one paraprofessional and serve more students at one time than the previous year. Table 4.7 summarizes the data collected from the 2000-2001 school year.

**Table 4.7 2000-2001 CHSM Profile**

Category	Notes
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Motto	Takin' Care of Business
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Administrator/English/Speech Teacher</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Social Studies/Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Estelle Neal- Secretary (later replaced by Jan Lamb)</li> <li>- William Wilder- Part-time Custodian</li> <li>- Helen Davis- Paraprofessional</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	23 new students enrolled
Graduates	9 students graduated throughout the school year; 16 students who enrolled during the 2000-2001 school year eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	7 students dropped out or were dismissed
Building Structure	3 portables located at 120 W Victory in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:20-4:20; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

### ***2001-2002 School Year***

Because the duties of Christie Roberts had continued to increase, she was unable to provide full attention to those taking English/Language arts classes. As a result, CHSM was able to hire Hilda Grant as the new English/Language arts teacher. Also during the 2001-2001 school year, Christie Roberts continued to look out for the future of Complete High School Maize. Similar to the charter planning grant Roberts wrote in 1997, Roberts submitted and was approved for an Implementation Grant from the Kansas Public Charter School Program. In her Petition to Establish a Charter School Grant Application (August 8, 2001), Roberts identified the need for the grant:

Throughout its short existence CHSM has maintained a waiting list and would like to expand in order to serve additional student needs. Since our planning, we have learned

many things which could help our school be more successful. Therefore, this charter grant is respectfully submitted in order to expand to accommodate those students on our waiting list and also to implement programs necessary for success of students. (p. 1)

***Charter Implementation Grant***

In February of the 2001-2002 school year, Roberts learned that CHSM had qualified to receive \$244,000 from the Charter Implementation Grant. With this grant, CHSM was able to better financially support the addition of a full-time teacher, an additional portable classroom, as well as purchase instructional supplies needed to enrich the curriculum such as a computer lab, books, supplies, and a greenhouse.

***Active Learning Opportunities***

Complete High School Maize again continued to provide active learning opportunities for students through guest speakers, buff-it-up activities, and field trips. These included the activities listed in Table 4.8:

**Table 4.8 2001-2002 Active Learning**

Exploratory Speakers	Buff-it-Up	Field Trips
-Maize Middle School kitchen supervisor	-Bowling	-Kansas State Fair
-Principal of Pray-Woodman - Elementary School	-Soccer	-Mosey Outdoor Adventure
-Cake Decorator	-YMCA	-American Red Cross
-Professional Scrapbook Artist	-Billiards	-Sandpiper Bay Retirement Home
-Sedgwick County Rural	-Ice Skating	-Wichita Area Technical College
	-Tennis	-Wesley Medical Center
		-St. Francis Medical Hospital

<p>Electric Company linemen</p> <p>-Manpower</p> <p>-Handwriting analyst</p> <p>-Maize USD 266 police officer</p> <p>-Islamic Society of Wichita</p> <p>-Valley Hope addictions counselor</p> <p>-Expect Respect</p> <p>-Flight Attendant</p> <p>-Medical Doctor</p> <p>-Marine recruiter</p>		<p>-Vernon's School of Cosmetology</p> <p>-Exploration Place</p> <p>-Vatterott College</p>
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***Taking Notice***

In March 2001, on two separate occasions, visitors from school districts across the state toured CHSM. First, the Kansas Teacher of the Year tour stopped at CHSM to visit with students and staff about the program. A week later, members from the Pratt school district visited CHSM to learn about the school and see what programs were offered that could help benefit their at-risk population.

On December 2, 2001, CHSM was invited to make a presentation at the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB) annual conference. The presentation titled, "The

Complete Program at CHSM,” offered suggestions to school board members about alternative schools.

### ***Teacher of the Year Award***

On May 7, 2002, Christie Roberts entered a portable classroom as part of an all-school meeting. To her surprise, there were many additional guests in the room. After countless hours of planning for and leading Complete High School Maize, the appreciative students at CHSM nominated Roberts for a teacher of the year award through Wal-Mart. Roberts was awarded a \$500 check that would be used for school needs. Figure 4.10 shows Roberts receiving her teacher of the year check from two representatives from Wal-Mart.

**Figure 4.10 Teacher of the Year Award**



### ***Summary***

During the 2001-2002 school year, 21 students had their graduation from CHSM. A total of 36 students total had now graduated from CHSM in the first three years of the schools



existence. The staff now consisted of one administrator, three certified teachers, one secretary, one paraprofessional, and one part-time custodian.

The major event that occurred during the 2001-2002 school year was the awarding of the charter implementation grant in the amount of \$244,000. In addition, CHSM was beginning to establish a name for itself as being a successful alternative program.

The motto for the year was aimed at encouraging students to make no excuses. Despite many students coming from unfortunate home lives, this motto sought to provide hope to students and let nothing get in the way of future success. Table 4.9 summarizes the data collected from the 2001-2002 school year.

**Table 4.9 2001-2002 CHSM Profile**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Motto	No excuses
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Administrator</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Social Studies/Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- William Wilder- Part-time Custodian</li> <li>- Helen Davis- Paraprofessional</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	38 new students enrolled
Graduates	21 students graduated during the school year; 30 of the students who enrolled during the 2001-2002 school year eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	7 students dropped out or were dismissed and 1 student transferred/moved
Building Structure	4 portables located at 120 W Victory in Maize, Kansas

Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:20-4:20; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.
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***2002-2003 School Year***

Once again, Complete High School Maize started the 2002-2003 school year filled to capacity with students. The staff at CHSM had continued to work on developing innovation new programs and continually revising the curriculum contracts. The waiting list at CHSM had grown to 14 students. Helen Davis, paraprofessional, chose to retire over the summer. In her place, Leslie Owens was hired to take her spot. Furthermore, CHSM was in its second year of receiving funds from the Charter Implementation Grant. A big focus for the staff was to continue looking for ways to get students involved in the community through volunteer opportunities. The school year started off with 52 students. In each year of CHSM’s existence, the school was able to accommodate more students than it had in the prior year.

***Active Learning Opportunities***

The staff at CHSM continued to evolve the active learning opportunities for students. Once again, students and parents recognized that these opportunities were benefiting students. Examples of these active learning opportunities for the 2002-2003 school year are included in Table 4.10:

**Table 4.10 2002-2003 Active Learning Opportunities**

Exploratory Speakers	Buff-it-Up	Field Trips
-Geologist	-YMCA	-Kansas State Fair
-Mrs. Kansas	-Billiards	-American Red Cross

-Foreign exchange student	-Roller skating	-Habitat for Humanity
-Paramedics	-Basketball	-Baker University
-Additions counselors	-Bowling	-Orpheum
-USD 266 Board of Education members	-Sedgwick County Park	-Museum of Ancient Treasures
-Handwriting analyst	-Softball	-Operation Holiday
-Meteorologist	-Scavenger Hunt	-Sandpiper Bay
-Author		-Kansas Oil Field Museum
-Pilot		-Z Bar Ranch
-Butler Community College		-4-H
-Motivational speaker		-Mosey Outdoor Adventure
-Environmentalist		-Karg Art Glass
-Zookeeper		-Sedgwick County Zoo
-Veterinarian		
-Paramedic		

***Board of Education Presentation***

The Maize USD 266 Board of Education asked the staff members of CHSM to make a presentation to the Board regarding the program. The presentation was done on Monday, February 10, 2003. Listed below were the highlights of the meeting as documented in the Maize Messenger (March 2003):

- A phone survey of all 45 CHSM graduates found that 37 of the 45 graduates are either working in a career, attending college/technical college or working in order to save money to attend college. Six graduates are stay-at-home mothers who are working and/or have a partner who is working. Two graduates are working in non-career type jobs.
- Twenty-seven of the graduates are living on their own with no support from their parents. The others live at home, five of them while attending college.
- Five students said they would probably have gotten their diploma had CHSM not been available to them. Thirty-seven said they would not have gotten their diploma, and three were not sure.
- Since 1999, CHSM has brought in grant money and donations of \$616,081 above and beyond what is received in per pupil state aid.
- Last year, it cost \$256,734 to fund CHSM. Including the per pupil allotment, textbook fees and grant money/donations, CHSM received \$548,755 last year for the district. This means that CHSM is a self-sustaining program that actually is under budget. The extra money is funneled into other areas in the district.
- The bottom line is that CHSM offers a valuable service by producing productive, tax-paying citizens at a low cost to the district.

At the board meeting, a recommendation was made that the school have a maximum size of 60 students in order to sustain the current programs and goals.

### ***Summary***

The motto for the 2002-2003 school year was “Nothing but the truth.” In the 2002-2003 student yearbook, Christie Roberts explained the meaning behind the motto:

Honesty and being able to trust one another is the foundation of this school. We want students to get used to the idea that they are always better off telling the truth, no matter how much trouble they think they will get into. (p. 2)

By the end of the 2002-2003 school year, Complete High School Maize graduated 21 students for a grand total of 57 students. Table 4.11 summarizes the data collected from the 2002-2003 school year.

**Table 4.11 2002-2003 CHSM Profile**

Category	Notes
Motto	Nothing but the truth
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Administrator</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Social Studies/Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- William Wilder- Part-time Custodian</li> <li>- Leslie Owens- Paraprofessional</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	30 new students enrolled
Graduates	21 students had their graduation during the school year; 17 students who enrolled during the 2002-2003 school year eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	12
Building Structure	4 portables located at 120 W Victory in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:20-4:20; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

***2003-2004 School Year***

The 2003-2004 school year proved to be one of many historic events for the program. The program would go on to receive a national award for excelling at dropout prevention. Furthermore, CHSM began the process of designing a permanent building structure. Controversy began to spark as many questioned the rationale behind CHSM students reviving the same diploma as Maize High School students. CHSM also experienced tragedy as two students were involved in a motorcycle accident, killing one and permanently disabling another.

As Complete High School Maize continued to graduate students, the waiting list for the school continued to grow as well. Because there were numerous students unable to get into CHSM, the district allowed CHSM to hire another staff member. Gayle Swanson became the new social studies teacher and also served in an administrative role serving as the program’s work study coordinator.

***Active Learning Opportunities***

Complete High School Maize again continued to provide active learning opportunities for students through guest speakers, buff-it-up activities, and field trips. These included activities listed in Table 4.12:

**Table 4.12 2003-2004 Active Learning Opportunities**

<b>Exploratory Speakers</b>	<b>Buff-it-Up</b>	<b>Field Trips</b>
-Valley Center VFW	-Billiards	-Kansas State Fair
-Tuskegee Airmen	-Bowling	-Mosey Outdoor Adventure
-U.S. Army Veteran	-YMCA	-Wichita Eagle
-Expect Respect	-Ice Skating	-President’s Museum

-Cosmetologist		-Eisenhower Museum
-Social Worker		-Adopt-a-Highway Service Project
-Pilot		-Operation Holiday
-Actor		-Botanica
-Engineer		-City Arts Convention
		-Love Box
		-Koch Industries
		-Sedgwick County Zoo

***Crystal Star Award***

On Monday, October 27, 2003, the staff of Complete High School Maize was awarded the Crystal Star Award from the National Dropout Prevention Center. The Crystal Star Award is given to three programs each year throughout the nation to recognize their efforts with dropout prevention. Complete High School Maize was recognized for their unique programs it offers to students. The award was presented to the staff at a luncheon during the National Dropout Prevention Center’s national conference held in Kansas City.

***New Building***

As Complete High School Maize continued to evolve, the Board of Education was focused on providing the students and staff at CHSM a more permanent location. Although the portables were able to accommodate the needs of the students, there became safety concerns regarding the structure of the portables. First, the campus was wide open and would be easy for any visitor to gain access to both students and staff. Second, the portables were not built to

withstand inclement weather such as tornado. The district looked at all existing resources available throughout the district as possible locations for a new CHSM building. At the time, USD 266 was continually growing and in 2003, had completed the building of a new middle school. As Maize Middle School relocated to a new campus, the district was planning on renovating the old middle school to become an elementary school. As part of the old middle school, there was a structural addition that was called “Building 2.” The architects overseeing the construction taking place in the district had no intentions of keeping Building 2; however, because it was not structurally attached to Maize Middle School, this would become the new home of CHSM as the district continued to look for a permanent location for CHSM. This also allowed the construction workers to begin renovation of the old Maize Middle School and not impede on the education of CHSM students.

Throughout the 2003-2004 school year, Christie Roberts and the staff of CHSM frequently met with architects in designing the new Complete High School Maize building. Eventually, the district decided that the new location of CHSM would be straight west of an existing elementary school called Pray-Woodman Elementary. The future address of CHSM would be 11411 West 49<sup>th</sup> Street North in Maize, Kansas. As part of the design process, students and staff of CHSM compiled a wish list for the new building. The wish list included the following requests:

- Enclosed are rooms that we would hope could be included in a new building.

Obviously, this is a wish list and could be modified to make it workable.

- Classrooms that could accommodate 18 to 20 students:
  - Math;
  - English;



- Social Studies;
- Science – with lab, Greenhouse off science room where greenhouse would be on south side of building if possible;
- Family and Consumer Science – sewing room large enough for quilting machine and an optional kitchen area;
- Extra Classroom (used for variety of classes);
- Town Hall – Large area to accommodate at least 75 people with tables and chairs. This should be the center of the building. It would be nice if many of the other rooms could feed off of this room;
- Kitchen – Off Town Hall with ample storage. Plenty of space for several microwaves.
- Library – Not extremely large;
- Office Area – Area for secretary and coordinator. Space for computer lab. Safe for locking up checks/money. Plenty of storage – student records, etc.;
- Conference Room – Small room (8-10 people with a table) located near the office area;
- Work Room – In office area for copy machine, printer, fax, teacher mailboxes, etc.;
- Laundry Room – Place for washer, dryer, and shower;
- Exercise Room – small room with exercise equipment;
- Multipurpose Room – Room with small basketball court to be used for physical fitness;

- Student Lounge – Area for students to read (table, couch), vending machines;
- Storage Rooms – Office area/kitchen area;
- Rest Rooms – One for male and female and as few stalls as possible in each one;
- Janitorial Closet – to house trash bags, custodial supplies;
- School Store;
- Tornado Shelter –Or tornado safe building.

Construction began early in the 2013-2004 school year on the new building for Complete with most of the requests listed being granted.

### *Diploma Controversy*

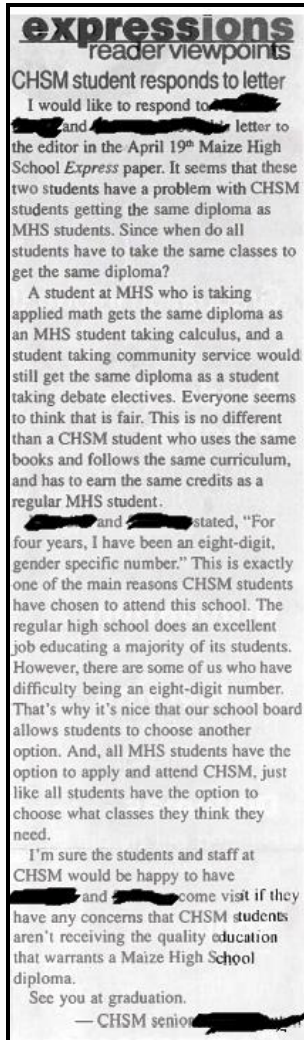
In the spring of 2003, an article appeared in the Maize High School newspaper questioning fairness of students at CHSM receiving the same diploma as students from MHS. As many read through the article, several stakeholders throughout the district began contemplating the article’s merits. Christie Roberts knew that this question would come about. “When we started CHSM, we knew there would be individuals who would question our program and we knew the diploma questions would appear” (Personal interview, January 15, 2015). Roberts added, “We were never ashamed of having a diploma that said ‘CHSM’ on it. However, we were concerned about the stigma attached to the phrase ‘alternative school.’ We had to educate those who did not understand CHSM.” In a letter written to the superintendent of Maize Schools on December 3, 2003), Roberts made several points supporting the same diploma:

- CHSM uses same textbooks, curriculum maps, number and kinds of credits required for graduation as MHS. The only difference is in delivery style.
- CHSM is not a standalone school. We are a program within the high school, just like special education, the gifted program, fine arts, etc.
- We are the at-risk program for MHS.
- MHS students often “specialize”. Some take numerous PE, Advanced PE, and weight lifting classes, while others take numerous fine arts classes. Other students take mostly advanced placement courses. Therefore, right now there is no equity within MHS and it doesn’t seem logical to single out CHSM.
- Employers and patrons often misunderstand what an alternative school is. Some think it is a school for “dumb” students or rebellious students and trouble makers. We know it is a school for students who learn in different ways and that most of our students are neither dumb nor rebellious. By receiving an alternative diploma our students might be discriminated against by those people who don’t understand what alternative schools are. Therefore, an MHS diploma resolves that issue.
- It could be argued that our students go above what is expected of MHS students. They must participate in volunteer service and civics education. They are never given credit for time they are inattentive in class or for days they are absent. At CHSM students must receive a “C” or better on every assignment or test before they can receive credit. The bottom line is that because we have one diploma at MHS for students who take a wide array of electives, it would be impossible for anyone to ascertain which students receive what kind of diploma.

- Even though we do not vary from the number of credits earned or the kinds of credits required, I do know that some students at MHS are on alternative education plans that allow them to receive fewer credits or substitute kinds of credits earned. These students still receive an MHS diploma. If we start differentiating diplomas for CHSM, I would think we would have to look at doing so in other areas. Who would like to make that determination? Is a science background more valid than a fine arts? Is a math background more valid than an industrial technology one?
- Most of what we do is very similar to MHS. CHSM students take state assessments. They use the Pass Keys program utilized at MHS. There are probably more similarities than differences.
- When people who don't understand the CHSM concept argue that CHSM is "easy" what they don't understand is that by meeting the learning style of our students, learning is easier—for most students it's easier than it's ever been in the past because their learning styles are being met. For most students at MHS who fit the learning style of the teachers, learning is also easy for them.
- We have not had any students from MHS visit CHSM firsthand to verify concerns they might have. Therefore, any information they have about CHSM is hearsay or rumor. Before a decision would be made I hope credence would be given to the facts and not to unsubstantiated opinion.

In addition to Roberts's letter, a CHSM student took it upon herself to address the article by writing a letter to the editor of the Maize High School newspaper. Figure 4.11 shows the letter written by the student.

**Figure 4.11 Letter to the Editor Regarding Diplomas**



After consideration by the Maize High School administration and the Maize USD 266 School Board, CHSM was allowed to continue using the same diploma as the traditional school. CHSM was considered a program of Maize High School that was located on a separate campus.

### ***Tragedy***

On March 17, 2004, two students were on a motorcycle ride before school began. The accident proved to be fatal, as one student, age 17, lost his life due to the injuries sustained in the wreck. Another student on the motorcycle, age 16, was severely injured and became permanently disabled.

### **Summary**

The motto for the 2003-2004 school year was “Walk the talk.” This motto was given to students as a challenge to back up their words with action. The staff was finding the students were saying the right things; however, their actions and words were not always aligned.

The 2003-2004 school year saw 27 students graduate during the school year. This brought the total number of graduates at CHSM to 84. Table 4.13 summarizes the data collected from the 2003-2004 school year.

**Table 4.13 2003-2004 CHSM Profile**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Motto	Walk the walk
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Christie Roberts- Administrator</li><li>- Byron Barnes- Science Teacher</li><li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li><li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li><li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Paraprofessional</li><li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li><li>- Gayle Swanson- Social Studies Teacher/Work Study Coordinator</li></ul>
Students Enrolled	70 new students enrolled during the 2003-2004 school year
Graduates	27 students graduated throughout the school year; 45 of the students who enrolled during the 2003-2004 school year eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	19 dropped out or were dismissed; 5 students transferred; 1 student was killed in a motorcycle accident
Building Structure	Building 2 at the vacated Maize Middle School
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

***2004-2005 School Year***

The 2004-2005 school year was an exciting one for the students and staff at CHSM. The year began with the students and staff moving into a brand new facility. The school was now able to accommodate 60 students at a time. Despite being able to have 60 students enrolled, the waiting list at CHSM still existed. As a result, students continued to struggle in the traditional high school setting.

***Active Learning Opportunities***

Complete High School Maize again continued to provide active learning opportunities for students through guest speakers, buff-it-up activities, and field trips. As these opportunities became frequently repeated, the staff began creating unique service type projects and activities. These included activities listed in Table 4.14:

**Table 4.14 2004-2005 Active Learning Opportunities**

<b>Exploratory Speakers</b>	<b>Buff-it-Up</b>	<b>Field Trips</b>
-Investment broker	-Billiards	-Sedgwick County Firefighters
-Wichita Police detective	-Bowling	Museum
-Valley Hope addictions counselor	-Softball	-Sedgwick County Zoo
-FBI investigator	-Sedgwick County Park	-Kansas State Fair
-Actress		-Salvation Army
-Law Enforcement officers		-Cornerstone Assisted Living Facility

-Firefighters		-Intrust Bank
-Exploited and Missing		-Flight Safety
Children’s Unit detective		-Wichita Area Builders Home and
-Vietnam veteran		Garden Show
-Winfield Correctional Facility		-Wichita Wranglers baseball game
-Navy recruiter		-Butler Community College
-Target Corporation		-KAKE television network
-KAKE news television anchor		-Mosey Outdoor Adventure
-Local business entrepreneur		

***A Brand New Facility***

On Wednesday, August 18, 2004, students and staff began to move into their new building located in Maize at 11411 West 49<sup>th</sup> Street North. During the move, students were responsible for unpacking boxes and deciding where items needed to be placed. Pamela Ross, a graduate of CHSM who was involved in the move recalled her experience. “It was fun helping the teachers out. I like arranging the classrooms how I thought they should be. It was a ton of work but we all worked together to get it done” (Personal interview, February 2, 2015).

The staff of CHSM made the decision for students to be involved in the moving process as a way of having ownership in the new building. Having over 60 students eager to help proved to be one of the best things the school could have done to get students to buy in to the new school. Teacher Byron Barnes added his thoughts about the move. “I must admit that I was apprehensive about having 60 plus students in charge of the move, but the students did a lot of



team building. They experienced an abundance of pride in what they accomplished” (Personal interview, January 31, 2015).

On Monday, September 27, 2004, CHSM held a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house. According to the 2004-2005 CHSM Yearbook, Approximately 250 students, graduates, parents, and community members attended the ceremony. Figure 4.12 shows members of the USD 266 Board of Education and Christie Roberts cutting the ribbon to the new facility for Complete High School Maize.

**Figure 4.12 CHSM New Building Ribbon Cutting Ceremony**



### ***Memorial***

Complete High School Maize lost an advocate in August 2004. Former school board member Daniel Ortega lost a battle with cancer. Ortega had been instrumental in advocating for the program to get a new facility. In addition, Ortega was an advocate for the program and for

the students at CSHM. Upon his passing, Ortega established a memorial in the name of Complete High School Maize.

In honor of Ortega, the CHSM student body submitted a proposal to the superintendent of schools with a plan for the memorial. The students and staff of CHSM wanted to hire a local artist to make a CHSM sculpture for the front of the school. The school received \$2040 from the memorial and the students wanted to make create something permanent in memory of Ortega. The students were drawn to Ortega because of his characteristics. The sculpture, when completed, would be over eight feet tall, comprised of granite letters spelling out CHSM with a bronze cast of a student climbing the letters and a bronze eagle on top. In the proposal, the students wrote, “The characteristics Mr. Ortega possessed are the very ones that are promoted at CHSM. This memorial would be erected in the ‘spirit of Dan’” (Student Council letter, January 26, 2005).

The committee of students recognized that the sculpture would be a costly endeavor. They outlined their plan in the letter to the superintendent:

- We would like to do the base and letters first. The bid price was \$2675 and the granite letters were \$8302. We have contacted s concrete company and we feel that we could get the concrete donated to us.
- To date, we have \$2040 from the Ortega memorial. Our hope is that the district could contribute \$5000 which is the approximate cost of the entrance signs provided at Maize High School and Maize South Middle School. The balance of \$1262 would be raised by CHSM students.
- To raise the balance of the money, the school would divide students and staff into groups where each group would be responsible for a monthly service project. We

hope to raise enough money so that we could construct the sculpture in the fall of 2005.

- We would increase monthly student fees by \$1. The extra dollar would go towards the sculpture fund.
- Solicit help from the district at \$1000 per year for five years.
- Receive a donation of \$500 per year for five years from the PTO.
- In sum, we would raise \$13,500 to erect the CHSM sculpture.
- A plaque would be attached to the sculpture saying, “This symbolizes the struggle that CHSM students have experienced, as well as their ever hopeful goal of soaring to the top.” (Student Council letter, January 26, 2005)

### *Summary*

With a new facility, the staff and students at Complete High School Maize felt like they had the support of the district. Christie Roberts explained her thoughts about the new building. “The district made an investment in our program by building the new facility. Not only did we feel more secure from a safety standpoint, we also felt safe for the first time in that our program was here to stay” (Personal interview, January 18, 2015). The new building also made it possible to accommodate more students. In the previous two facilities, enrollment was capped due to staffing and also space. Having a new facility afforded the program the opportunity to take in more students and utilize additional staff members.

The sculpture project also started and the school began raising money to pay for the cost of the memorial.

The motto for the school year was “Don’t do what is easy, do what is right.” This motto applied to all of the students and staff of CHSM. This was especially the case for the sculpture

memorial. These students were charged with raising a substantial amount of money; not because it was easy, but because they felt it was the right thing to do to honor Dan Ortega.

During the 2004-2005 school year, 25 new students enrolled. Additionally, there were 19 graduations held during the school year and of the 25 students who enrolled, 13 would go on to eventually earn their diploma from CHSM. Figure 4.15 summarizes the data collected from the 2004-2005 school year.

**Table 4.15 2004-2005 CHSM Profile**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Motto	Don't do what is easy, do what is right
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- paraprofessional</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li> <li>- Gayle Swanson- Social Studies Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	25 new students enrolled during the 2004-2005 school year
Graduates	13 students who enrolled at CHSM eventually graduated; 19 graduations were celebrated during the 2005-2005 school year
Dropouts/Transfers	9 students dropped out or were dismissed; 3 students transferred
Building Structure	Brand new facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

***2005-2006 School Year***

The 2005-2006 school year marked year number two in the new building. There were a two staff changes made during the school year. Paraprofessional Agnes Rodriguez had earned

her teaching degree and was hired by the school to become a computer/business teacher. Gayle Swanson went from a full-time social studies and assistant principal to half-time social studies. Swanson spent the other half of her work day serving as assistant principal at Maize Middle School.

***Active Learning Opportunities***

Staff members at CHSM continued to set up and create active learning opportunities for students, as organized in Table 4.16:

**Table 4.16 2005-2006 Active Learning Opportunities**

Exploratory Speakers	Buff-it-Up	Field Trips
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-USD 266 Board of Education members</li> <li>-Drywall Company owner</li> <li>-Wichita Area Technical College</li> <li>-Electrician</li> <li>-Social Worker</li> <li>-Bataan Death March survivor</li> <li>-Registered Nurse</li> <li>-Vatterott College</li> <li>-Butler Community College</li> <li>-Personal Trainer</li> <li>-Priest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Softball</li> <li>-Laser Tag</li> <li>-Basketball</li> <li>-YMCA</li> <li>-Bowling</li> <li>-Horseback riding</li> <li>-Ice skating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Kansas State Fair</li> <li>-Kansas Oil Museum</li> <li>-Grizzly Adventure Challenge Course</li> <li>-Hutchinson Community College</li> <li>-Kansas Cosmosphere</li> <li>-Xenon’s Cosmetology School</li> <li>-Southwestern College</li> <li>-Chisholm Trail Museum</li> <li>-Kansas State Capitol</li> <li>-Brown vs Board of Education Museum</li> <li>-Big Dog Motorcycle</li> </ul>

		-Karg Glass Company -Wichita Lawn and Garden Show -Crown Uptown Dinner Theatre -Wichita Wranglers baseball game
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*Service Day*

The staff at CHSM continued to create volunteer opportunities for students. As students continued to gain experiences working with others and serving the community, a sense of pride and accomplishment settled upon them. Sharon Griffin, a 2006 graduate of CHSM, mentioned the Service Day opportunities as memorable experiences. “I found a true value in helping others and volunteering is something I will pass on to my children. Although Adopt-a-Highway was not fun, it made me think about my role; my role in not littering” (Personal interview, February 2, 2015). Listed below are service day opportunities that CHSM students participated in during the 2005-2006 school year:

- Cornerstone Assisted Living
- American Red Cross
- Deep cleaning CHSM
- Clean overhead projector filters throughout the district
- Wichita Festivals
- Adopt-a-Highway
- Safety Day project
- Earth Day project
- Elementary school field day

### **Summary**

The motto for the 2005-2006 school year was “Getting better every day.” The motto sought continuous improvement from each person at CHSM. Throughout the 2005-2006 school year, 33 new students enrolled at CHSM. A total of 24 students graduated during the school year, bringing the total number of CHSM graduates to 127. Of the 33 new students who enrolled at CHSM, 11 either dropped out or were dismissed from the program. Figure 4.17 summarizes the data collected for the 2005-2006 school year.

**Table 4.17 2005-2006 CHSM Profile**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Motto	Getting better every day
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Christie Roberts- Associate Principal</li><li>- Byron Barnes- Science Teacher</li><li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher/Assistant Principal</li><li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li><li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li><li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li><li>- Gayle Swanson- 0.5 Social Studies Teacher</li><li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li></ul>
Students Enrolled	33 new students enrolled at CHSM during the 2005-2006 school year
Graduates	24 students graduated during the school year; 18 students who were new eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	11 students either dropped out or were dismissed; 5 students transferred
Building Structure	Facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

### ***2006-2007 School Year***

The 2006-2007 school year would be the last year for CHSM founder Christie Roberts to work at Complete. Leaving the school she poured her heart and soul into would not be easy. “I am most proud of the work I have done for the students at CHSM. The job was just draining me. My health was suffering and I just felt it was time to pump some new blood into the school” (Personal interview, January 18, 2015). In addition, Byron Barnes, who had helped start CHSM in 1999, decided to move into a half-time position at the school. Additionally, CHSM hired a new full-time science teacher named Ralph Graham while Barnes would move back to teaching English/Language Arts.

#### ***Active Learning Opportunities***

Staff members at CHSM continued to set up and create active learning opportunities for students, as organized in Table 4.18:

**Table 4.18 2006-2007 Active Learning Opportunities**

<b>Exploratory Speakers</b>	<b>Buff-it-Up</b>	<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>Service Day</b>
-Court Reporter	-YMCA	-Kansas State Fair	-Clean CHSM
-Firefighters	-Scavenger Hunt	-Grizzly Adventure	-Adopt-a-Highway
-Pilot	-Bowling	-Coronado Heights	-Cornerstone Assisted-
-Phlebotomist	-Dancing	-African-American	-Living
-Expect Respect	-Ice Skating	Museum	-American Red Cross
-Attorney	-Ultimate Fitness	-Rolling Hills Zoo	-YMCA
-Detective		-Crown Uptown	-Habitat for Humanity
-Westar Energy		Dinner Theatre	-Toys for Tots



linemen		-Society of Decorative	-Grandparent's Day
-Vietnam Veteran		Painters	-Earth Day
-Mechanic		-Vatterott College	
-Winfield Correctional Facility convicts		-Wichita Lawn and Garden Show	
-Entrepreneur		-Sedgwick County	
-Bomb Squad		Zoo	
-Eric Fisher Academy			

***Sculpture Update***

Progress was being made on the CHSM sculpture project. Funds continued to be raised by the students and staff. As funding was available, the project was broken into tiers for completion. Figure 4.13 shows the block letters erected and Figure 4.14 shows the eagle being installed onto the letters.

**Figure 4.13 CHSM Sculpture Phase 1**



**Figure 4.14 CHSM Sculpture Phase 2**



***Summary***

The motto for the 2006-2007 school year was “Chuck the past, fix the future.” The staff at CHSM continued to work with students who had troubled histories. This included

academically, socially, and with regard to their family. The staff worked to encourage students to focus on the future.

During the 2006-2007 school year, 39 new students enrolled at CHSM. Additionally, 18 students graduated throughout the year bringing the total number of CHSM graduates to 145. Of the 39 newly enrolled students, 25 would eventually receive their diploma. In the contrary, 14 students either dropped out or were dismissed, while one student transferred. Table 4.19 summarizes the 2006-2007 school year:

**Table 4.19 2006-2007 CHSM Profile**

Category	Notes
Motto	Chuck the past, fix the future
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- 0.5 English/Social Studies</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Ralph Graham- Science Teacher</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	39 new students enrolled during the 2006-2007 school year
Graduates	18 students graduated during the school year; 25 students who were new eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	14 students dropped out or were dismissed; 1 student transferred
Building Structure	Facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

**2007-2008 School Year**

For the first time in CHSM’s existence, there was new leadership at the school. School founder Christie Roberts transitioned into a district office job, and in her place Spencer Bryan became the associate principal. Because Bryan was the new leader at CHSM, his math position needed to be filled. Louise Burton was hired to be the new math teacher at CHSM. Ralph Graham left CHSM and in his place, CHSM hired Victoria Clarke as the new science teacher. Hilda Grant moved into the assistant principal role while she continued to teach English/Language Arts and Speech. At the district level, Superintendent Willie Butler retired. In his place, the district hired an interim superintendent.

***Active Learning Opportunities***

Staff members at CHSM continued to set up and create active learning opportunities for students, as organized in Table 4.20:

**Table 4.20 2007-2008 Active Learning Opportunities**

<b>Exploratory Speakers</b>	<b>Buff-it-Up</b>	<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>Service Day</b>
-Dillon’s hiring manager	-Billiards	-Grizzly Adventure	-Operation Backpack
-Entrepreneur	-Basketball	-Kansas State Fair	-Pennies for Patients
-Marketing Analyst	-Flag Football	-Ft. Riley	-Adopt-a-Highway
-Wichita State University	-Skywalkers	-Bergmann’s Corn	-Cornerstone Assisted
-Kansas Drunk Driving	-Softball	Maze	Living
Coalition	-Flag Football	-Exploration Place	-Overhead projector
-Air Traffic Controller	-Sedgwick County	-All-American	cleaning
-Wichita Eagle columnist	Park	Indian Center	-American Red Cross

-Social Worker	-Ice Skating	-Crown Uptown	-Habitat for Humanity
-Expect Respect	-Bowling	Dinner Theatre	-Safety Day
-Blockbuster manager	-YMCA		
-Gang prevention speaker	-Pathways		
-Hypnotherapy			
-Winfield Correctional Facility			
-Nurse			
-Wake-a-Wish Foundation			
-Chiropractor			
-Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center			
-Social and Rehabilitation Services			
-Eagle Med			
-Information Technology			

***Summary***

The motto for the 2007-2008 school year was, “It begins with me.” The staff recognized that any change that students needed to make had to come from within. Many of the lessons and character building activities throughout the school year were focused on starting with the individual.

During the 2007-2008 school year, 42 students enrolled. There were 35 graduations that took place throughout the school year, bringing the overall graduate total to 180. Of the 42 students who enrolled, 31 eventually graduated from CHSM. During the school year, 11 students either dropped out or were dismissed. One student transferred. Table 4.21 summarizes the 2007-2008 school year.

**Table 4.21 2007-2008 CHSM Profile**

Category	Notes
Motto	It begins with me
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- 0.5 English/Social Studies</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Speech Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Victoria Clarke- Science Teacher</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	42 new students enrolled during the 2007-2008 school year
Graduates	35 students graduated during the school year; 31 students who were new eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	11 students dropped out or were dismissed; 1 student transferred
Building Structure	Facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

**2008-2009 School Year**

In the Maize district, the leadership transition at the district level continued to be in flux. The School Board extended the contract of the interim superintendent for one year.

During the 2008-2009 school year, district administrators learned that the base state aid per pupil was going to be reduced by almost \$400 per student. As a district, this cut meant a major budget reduction for the district. Paired with an interim superintendent, the staff at Complete High School Maize began to worry that their school would be on the list of programs to be cut.

**Active Learning Opportunities**

Staff members at CHSM continued to set up and create active learning opportunities for students, as organized in Table 4.22:

**Table 4.22 2008-2009 Active Learning Opportunities**

<b>Exploratory Speakers</b>	<b>Buff-it-Up</b>	<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>Service Day</b>
-Wichita	-Sedgwick County	-Kansas State Fair	-Camp Hiawatha
Apprenticeship	Park	-Hutchinson Salt	-Operation Holiday
Program	-YMCA	Mine	-Study Buddies
-Election volunteer	-Grizzly Adventure	-Exploration Place	-Clean CHSM
-Pastor	-Side Pockets	-Leavenworth	-Cornerstone
-Caring Hearts	-Tae Kwon Do	Alternative School	-American Red Cross
-Platinum Pools	-Westlink Church	-Warren Theatres	-Adopt-a-Highway
-Gang Prevention		-Orpheum	
-Human Resources			

Director -Christie Roberts -Pharmaceutical Sales -Social Worker -KSN television personality -Radio station manager -School Board member -Kansas State University -Catering company -Franchisee -Insurance agent -Wichita Area Technical College -Roller Derby team members -Wichita Paranormal Research Society			
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***Summary***

The motto for the 2008-2009 school year was, “You make a difference.” The staff recognized that any change that students needed to make had to come from within. Many of the



lessons and character building activities throughout the school year were focused on starting with the individual.

During the 2008-2009 school year, 47 students enrolled. There were 35 graduations that took place throughout the school year, bringing the overall graduate total to 215. Of the 47 students who enrolled, 31 eventually graduated from CHSM. During the school year, 13 students either dropped out or were dismissed. Five students transferred. Table 4.23 summarizes the 2008-2009 school year.

**Table 4.23 2008-2009 CHSM Profile**

Category	Notes
Motto	You make the difference
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- 0.5 English/Social Studies</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English//Speech Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Victoria Clarke- Science Teacher</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	47 new students enrolled during the 2008-2009 school year
Graduates	35 students graduated during the school year; 31 students who were new eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	13 students dropped out or were dismissed; 5 students transferred
Building Structure	Facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

### ***2009-2010 School Year***

The 2009-2010 school year was witness to several staff changes. Science teacher Victoria Clarke moved out of the state. In her place, CHSM hired Eileen Bishop as the new science teacher. At the end of the first semester, Byron Barnes retired. In his place, CHSM was able to hire Jean Parker as a full-time instructional paraprofessional. For the first time, CHSM had eight full time staff members. At the district level, the Maize School Board hired Matthew Long as the new superintendent of schools.

#### ***A New High School in Maize***

During the 2009-2010 school year, Maize USD 266 opened a second traditional high school called Maize South High School. For the previous 10 years, Complete High School Maize had operated under the umbrella of Maize High School. The addition of Maize South High School forced district administrators to study the effects of the new high school on CHSM. The result of the district decision was that students from Maize South would be allowed to attend CHSM; however, the base school would be whichever high school they came from. If a student was dismissed from CHSM, they would return to their base school. All state testing results would go back to the base school. Similarly, if a student dropped out, the base school where the student came from would count the dropout. If students from CHSM wanted to participate in extracurricular activities, they participated at their base school. Graduation and prom were no different. Students who graduated from CHSM would be allowed to walk with their class from the traditional high school they came from. Any new-to-the-district student would be assigned to Maize High School.

#### ***Active Learning Opportunities***

Staff members at CHSM continued to set up and create active learning opportunities for students, as organized in Table 4.24:

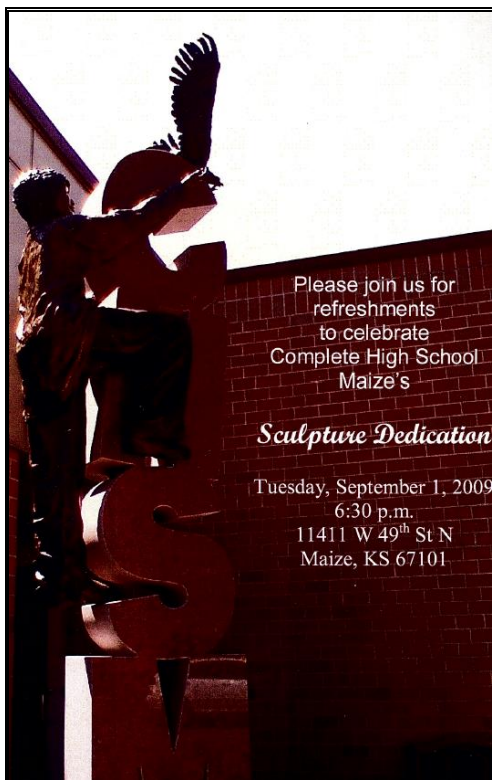
**Table 4.24 2009-2010 Active Learning Opportunities**

<b>Exploratory Speakers</b>	<b>Buff-it-Up</b>	<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>Service Day</b>
-Purple Heart	-Bowling	-Grizzly Adventures	-Operation Holiday
Veterans	-Basketball	-Maize Water Treatment	-Toys for Tots
-CHSM Graduate	-Sedgwick County	Plant	-Grandparent’s Day
Panel	Park	-Russell Stover Factory	-Cornerstone
-Digital	-YMCA	-Kansas State Fair	-Adopt-a-Highway
Citizenship		-Crown Uptown Dinner	-American Red Cross
-Medical Doctor		Theatre	
-Embalmers		-Hutchinson Community	
-U.S. Navy		College	
-Cessna Aircraft		-Eisenhower Museum	
-Accountant		-Sedgwick County Zoo	
-Gang Prevention		-Westlink Church	
-NetSmart			
-Artist			
-Ottawa University			
-Hartman Arena			
manager			

### ***Sculpture Project Completed***

At last, over five years after starting the project to erect a sculpture outside of Complete High School Maize, the project was completed. To help dedicate the final product, CHSM hosted a sculpture dedication night and invited the individuals and businesses who helped contribute to the memorial and project. Figure 4.15 shows the invitation that was mailed out and includes an image of the completed project.

**Figure 4.15 CHSM Sculpture Final**

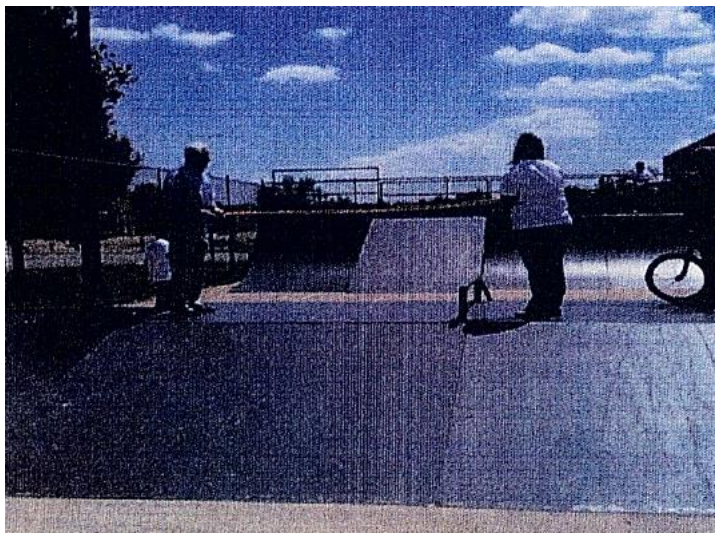


### ***The Maize Skate Park***

On Sunday, April 25, 2010, over twenty students and staff from CHSM attended the celebration for the skate park in Maize. The project started several years prior by CHSM teacher Agnes Rodriguez and her students. The joint effort between CHSM and the city of Maize Tree

and Parks Board provided students with a real-world project that came to fruition. The students at CHSM planned the design of the park and worked together to solicit donations. Figure 4.16 shows a picture of the skate park that was helped put into action by CHSM students.

**Figure 4.16 Maize Skate Park**



### *Summary*

The motto for the 2009-2010 school year was, “Respect.” The focus for the entire year centered on showing respect for others and oneself. Many of the lessons and character building activities throughout the school year were focused on exemplifying respect.

During the 2009-2010 school year, 43 students enrolled. There were 24 graduations that took place throughout the school year, bringing the overall graduate total to 239. Of the 43 students who enrolled, 30 eventually graduated from CHSM. During the school year, 12 students either dropped out or were dismissed. One student transferred. Table 4.25 summarizes the 2009-2010 school year.

**Table 4.25 2009-2010 CHSM Profile**

Category	Notes
Motto	Respect
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- 0.5 English/Social Studies (retired mid-year)</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English//Speech Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Eileen Bishop- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Jean Parker- Paraprofessional (hired mid-year)</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	43 new students enrolled during the 2009-2010 school year
Graduates	24 students graduated during the school year; 30 students who were new eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	12 students dropped out or were dismissed; 1 student transferred
Building Structure	Facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

### ***2010-2011 School Year***

At the end of the first semester, paraprofessional Jean Parker moved. Dorothy Kelly was hired as the new instructional para for the school. The remaining staff members were in place. During this school year, the staff began to really focus efforts towards helping promote career awareness.

#### ***Active Learning Opportunities***

Staff members at CHSM continued to set up and create active learning opportunities for students, as organized in Table 4.26:

**Table 4.26 2010-2011 Active Learning Opportunities**

<b>Exploratory Speakers</b>	<b>Buff-it-Up</b>	<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>Service Day</b>
-Christie Roberts	-Bowling	-Kansas State Fair	-Cornerstone
-Radio DJ personality	-Sedgwick County	-Wichita Area Technical	-Red Cross
-Mechanic	Park	College	-Habitat for
-Exterminator	-Westlink	-Museum of World	Humanity
-Maize Water	-Grizzly	Treasures	-Adopt-a-
Treatment Plant	Adventure	-Wichita Downtown	Highway
-Digital media expert		Library	
-Interior designer		-Hutchinson Community	
-Vietnam Veteran		College	
-Children Advocate		-Brown vs. Topeka Board	
-Planned Parenthood		of Education Museum	
-Detective		-Kansas State Capitol	
-Quad amputee		-Crown Uptown Dinner	
-ITT		Theatre	
-Banker		-ITT	
-Economist			

*Summary*

The motto for the 2010-2011 school year was, “Whatever it takes.” Many of the lessons and character building activities throughout the school year were focused on exemplifying determination traits as well perseverance.

During the 2010-2011 school year, 43 students enrolled. There were 25 graduations that took place throughout the school year, bringing the overall graduate total to 264. Of the 43 students who enrolled, 32 eventually graduated from CHSM. During the school year, eight students either dropped out or were dismissed. Three students transferred. Table 4.27 summarizes the 2010-2011 school year.

**Table 4.27 2010-2011 CHSM Profile**

Category	Notes
Motto	Whatever it takes
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Math Teacher</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Eileen Bishop- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Jam Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Dorothy Kelly- Paraprofessional</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	43 new students enrolled during the 2010-2011 school year
Graduates	25 students graduated during the school year; 32 students who were new eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	8 students dropped out or were dismissed; 3 students transferred
Building Structure	Facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.



**2011-2012 School Year**

Employment and employability was the focus of the 2011-2012 school year. With the same staff remaining the same from the previous year, continuity spread throughout the school. As a result, the staff had started making plans for students to learn skills that would help make them successful in future jobs and careers. During this school year, students would experience a nine-week internship.

**Active Learning Opportunities**

Staff members at CHSM continued to set up and create active learning opportunities for students, as organized in Table 4.28:

**Table 4.28 2011-2012 Active Learning Opportunities**

<b>Exploratory Speakers</b>	<b>Buff-it-Up</b>	<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>Service Day</b>
-Bounty Hunter	-Ice Skating	-Kansas Aviation	-Cornerstone
-Trade Specialist	-P90X	Museum	-YMCA
-Vietnam Veteran	-Westlink Church	-Exploration Place	-Adopt-a-Highway
-Cyberbully expert	-Scavenger Hunt	-Orpheum Theater	-Red Cross
-Police Officers	-YMCA	-Sternberg Museum	-Projector Cleaning
-Christie Roberts	-Sedgwick County	-Rolling Hills Zoo	-Crossroads Church
-Gang Prevention	Park	-Ulrich Museum	
Specialists		-Wichita State	
-ITT		University	
-Students from Wichita		-Grizzly Adventure	
Southeast High School		-Butler Community	

		College	
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***Internships***

The 2011-2012 school year at Complete High School Maize was unlike any previous year. Since the school’s inception, the staff at CHSM emphasized many of the soft skills that future employers look for such as a strong work ethic, dependable, initiative, honesty, and integrity. Those skills would be put to test during the school year. For the first time, all Complete High School students would partake in a work-related internship. For the staff, this was an ambitious undertaking. Over 60 students would be placed at an internship.

Early in the fall, staff members began inventorying student career interests. Once they had the list, the staff began making phone calls and started working on finding placements for all students. Throughout the semester, the staff created lessons that helped prepare students for what to expect at their internship. They were required to complete resumes and cover letters, practice interviewing, learn how to communicate effectively, and most importantly, learn how to be employable.

Transportation for the internships proved to be the greatest hardship for the staff. “Driving one bus wasn’t going to get the job done. We had to have all of the staff members transport students in vans, a mini bus, and a big bus” (Personal interview, January 22, 2015). On the first day of the second semester, students were loaded up and driven to their internships.

The internship program proved to be a very successful venture for the students. Many of them were able to secure summer jobs and make connections for future employment. Figure 4.17 shows an article written by a CHSM intern at the Wichita Eagle regarding the internships:

**Figure 4.17 Internship Article in Wichita Eagle**



Ashley Compass/Complete High School Maize  
Ashley Compass, a junior at Complete High School Maize, gets a manicure during her internship at the Eric Fisher Academy.

## High school interns gain valuable experience

By [redacted]  
Special to The Eagle

In a struggling economy, people who have the most trouble getting jobs are those with the least experience, skills and education — high school students. To boost chances of these wannabe workers, a high school in Maize has implemented an internship program that has students working for experience.

The 57 students from Complete High School Maize are doing facials at Eric Fisher Academy and Xenon's, organizing samples at Law Kingdon Architecture and holding critical-care babies at Vis Christ and Wesley Medical Centers.

The internship idea grew from an annual job-shadow day at the school where students shadowed a person in a career they were interested in for one day.

"Last spring, when I asked for students who were interested in having a job shadow, everyone raised their hands," said [redacted], assistant principal. "My first thought was, 'There's no way I can get these all set up by myself.' My second thought was 'if we're going to call all of these employers, let's see if we can do this for more than one day.'"

Staff members found businesses that would take the student interns for two hours a day, three times a week, for nine weeks.

"It took an extreme amount of time and energy to find internships for the students, but when I called most companies, they were excited about our program and very

Please see INTERNS, Page 6A



[redacted], a student at Complete High School Maize, works on a diesel engine at Truck Parts and Equipment, where he served a 9-week internship.

## INTERNS

From Page 6A

willing to help if they could," said [redacted], a science teacher.

Students interned at 34 businesses including Sedgewick County Zoo, Sedgewick County EMT, Walgreens Pharmacy, Mid-America Power Sports and KWCH TV.

Once the internships were arranged, the staff tackled how to get 57 students from Maize to their jobs in Wichita and surrounding towns.

"One of the things that makes our program unique from other school internship programs is that teachers not only intensely monitor the students, but we also provide transportation to and from the internships," Custer said.

"Our transportation department bent over backwards to help us make this program a success. It wouldn't have worked had they not supported us."

The school also provided insurance for the students in case they were injured on the job.

Staff members spent the first semester working with students on job etiquette, resume writing, interviewing and employer expectations. The students were given a list of guidelines. On the list: no eating on the job, turn off cellphones, accept supervision graciously, and conduct yourself in a dignified and courteous manner.

"The teachers of CHSM have been very adamant about letting the students know that this is in fact a very big deal," said [redacted], senior intern with Sedgewick County EMS.

Students were also taught how to dress. Every work place has a different dress code; some are more laid-back than others. The school provided clothing for some students.

Students practiced in mock interviews and listened to weekly career speakers talk about what really happens in their chosen career fields.

Through the internships, some students learned that

the beds they chose were not what they thought.

"I have always wanted to be a photographer. Through my internship I realized that photographers spend a lot more time on the computer editing, taking orders and sending out prints than actually taking pictures," said [redacted], intern at Avion Photography.

These experiences were exactly what staffers were hoping for when the internships began.

"To me, learning what you don't like doing is more important than learning what you like. If something is 'OK,' I don't mind doing it, but if I hate doing something, I don't ever want to do it again," [redacted] told her class.

For many of the students, the internship is their first job.

"As my first job experience it was hard at first because I'm very shy," said Brett Woodruff, an intern for Truck Parts and Equipment. But once he worked there awhile, he got used to it, he said, and "I started to have a lot of fun."

Employers have provided feedback to students. Halfway through and at the end of the program, the students are required to provide their employer with an interns evaluation.

"One is only here two hours a day three times a week, it's hard to show somebody in that short of time, but she's delightful," said Connie Harms from Law Kingdon Architects about intern [redacted].

Some strong points listed by the employers include: looking the part, completing assignments, and having a good, positive and fun attitude.

Parents also appreciated the opportunities for the students.

"This experience has been a valuable preview of the world of work for my daughter who has never had a job before," said [redacted], whose daughter, [redacted], is interning with Design Gallery.

The school hopes to continue the internships next year to give students an early start on planning careers.

"This program has made me really start to think about what I'm going to do with my life in the future and given me an idea of what I don't want to do as well as what I could be really good at," said [redacted], a senior interning at the Maize Education Support Center accounting department.

[redacted], a senior at Complete High School Maize, interned at The Eagle.

Wichita Eagle  
Monday, March 12, 2012

The Maize Messenger also included an article about the student internships. Figure 4.18 shows the article.

Figure 4.18 Internship Article in Maize Messenger

## CHSM Students Will Work for Experience

*by [Redacted], Complete High School Maize Assistant Principal; Language Arts Teacher/Career Counselor*

When parents of Complete High School Maize students ask, "What did you do at school today?" they never know what answer they're going to get. From doing facials at Eric Fisher Academy and Xenon's to organizing samples at LawKingdon Architecture to holding critical care babies at Via Christi and Wesley Medical Centers, CHSM students garnered first-hand experience about their future careers.

Starting third term, all CHSM students participated in a nine-week internship program that consisted of students going to businesses throughout the area Monday-Wednesday for two hours each day. The idea for doing the internships grew from the annual job-shadow day offered to CHSM students in years past. By extending the job-shadow experience, CHSM staff members immediately saw the value of tying what the students were learning in the classroom first and second term to what they would be doing third term.

"All of a sudden, doing resumes, interviewing and on-the-job etiquette took on a new level of importance when the students knew they were actually going to be applying these skills at a job," [Redacted], business teacher, said.

Students spent first and second terms learning what employers would be expecting of them on the job, while staff members spent first and second terms calling area businesses to see if they would be interested in having a high school student in their offices three days a week for two hours a day.

The response was an overwhelming, "Yes." By the time the internships began on January 9, every student had a placement, and it wasn't long before staff members started to get positive feedback.

"At first when she (CHSM intern [Redacted]) got here, I wasn't sure what to do with her," [Redacted], metro editor at

*The Wichita Eagle*, said. "When I saw what she was capable of, I didn't know what not to do with her."

While many students did not have the technical skills needed to perform many of the tedious tasks of the jobs they were interning at, employers found creative ways to include them in the day-to-day operations of the job.


"We knew [Redacted] wouldn't be able to just come in and drop a transmission," [Redacted], shop supervisor at Truck Parts and Equipment, said. "However, he was able to assist by handling tools, changing king pins, changing brakes and overall just observing what the mechanics were doing."

From the internships, students got to see first-hand if the job they thought they would like to do after high school was really as great as they anticipated it would be.

"Doing this internship just cemented for me that I want to become a zookeeper," [Redacted], interning with the Sedgwick County Zoo, said.

Looking back at how all of the elements came together to create the experience, [Redacted], CHSM principal, knows not many schools could do something so unique.

"The support we got from everyone from the business community to ESC to transportation was just incredible," [Redacted] said. "Everyone was really pulling for us to make this successful."



**ABOVE:** [Redacted] (left) and [Redacted] practice the proper technique used in washing hair at Eric Fisher Academy. PHOTO BY KRISTY CUSTER

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Eric Fisher Academy	Traina Studios
Xenon's	TransNet
CMW, Inc.	Truck Parts & Equipment
Colwich Fire Department	USD 266-ESC
Country Child Care	USD 266-Maintenance
Damm Music	USD 266-Transportation
Design Gallery	Via Christi Clinic
DucuForce	Walgreen's Pharmacy
Sedgwick County EMS	Wesley Medical Center
Sedgwick County Fire	Peds Clinic
Station 33	Wesley Medical Center
Game Stop	PICU
Haverty's	Wesley Medical Center Pre-
Heath/Intake Studios	Op/PACU
KWCH	Wichita Bar Association
Wichita Eagle	Wichita Welding Supply

Spring 2012

### **Summary**

The motto for the 2011-2012 school year was, “Get back up.” Many of the lessons and character building activities throughout the school year were focused on exemplifying grit and determination. The internship program manifested these traits.

During the 2011-2012 school year, 51 students enrolled. There were 39 graduations that took place throughout the school year, bringing the overall graduate total to 303. Of the 43 students who enrolled, 28 eventually graduated from CHSM. During the school year, 12 students either dropped out or were dismissed. Five students transferred. Table 4.29 summarizes the 2009-2010 school year.

**Table 4.29 2011-2012 CHSM Profile**

<b>Category</b>	
Motto	Get back up
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Spencer Bryan- Associate Principal</li><li>- Hilda Grant- English Teacher/Assistant Principal</li><li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li><li>- Louise Burton- Math Teacher</li><li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li><li>- Eileen Bishop- Science Teacher</li><li>- Jam Lamb- Secretary</li><li>- Dorothy Kelly- Paraprofessional</li></ul>
Students Enrolled	51 new students enrolled during the 2011-2012 school year
Graduates	39 students graduated during the school year; 28 students who were new eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	12 students dropped out or were dismissed; 5 students transferred (6 students are enrolled during the 2014-2015 school year)
Building Structure	Facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N in Maize, Kansas

Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.
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***2012-2013 School Year***

During the summer of 2012, a vacancy opened up for the principal at Maize High School. As a result, Spencer Bryan left CHSM to become the new principal at MHS. In his place, Hilda Grant became the new associate principal. Because Grant was the assistant principal and English/Speech teacher, CHSM hired Julia Stevens to fill Grant’s position.

***Active Learning Opportunities***

Staff members at CHSM continued to set up and create active learning opportunities for students, as organized in Table 4.30:

**Table 4.30 2012-2013 Active Learning Opportunities**

<b>Exploratory Speakers</b>	<b>Buff-it-Up</b>	<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>Service Day</b>
-Elementary Principal	-Pathways Church	-Kansas State Fair	-Operation
-Christie Roberts	-Scavenger Hunt	-Vietnam Moving Wall	Holiday
-United Way	-YMCA	-Wichita Area Technical	-Salvation Army
-Attorney	-Wichita Ice	College	-Adopt-a-Highway
-Meritrust Credit Union	Center	-Great Plains Nature	-Cornerstone
-Tall Oaks Productions	-Sedgwick County	Center	-Red Cross
-Vietnam Veteran	Park	-Islamic Society of Wichita	-Projectors
-Medical		-Wichita Catholic Dioceses	-Toys for tots
Transcriptionist		-Phap Hoa Temple	

-Interior Designer		-Cybertron	
-Genesis Health Club		-Hutchinson Community	
-Mission worker		College	
-Relationship panel			
-Social media safety			
-Gang prevention			
specialist			
-Pratt Community			
College			
-Wichita Area			
Technical College			
-Graphic Design			

***Summary***

The motto for the 2012-2013 school year was, “Better than I used to be.” Many of the lessons and character building activities throughout the school year centered on building self-confidence in students and being accepting.

During the 2012-2013 school year, 48 students enrolled. There were 33 graduations that took place throughout the school year, bringing the overall graduate total to 336. Of the 48 students who enrolled, 16 eventually graduated from CHSM. During the school year, 15 students either dropped out or were dismissed. Thirteen students of the current students were enrolled for the start of the 2014-2015 school year, as they had not yet graduated. One student

transferred. Table 4.31 summarizes the 2012-2013 school year.

**Table 4.31 2012-2013 CHSM Profile**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Motto	Better than I used to be
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hilda Grant- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Julia Stevens- English Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Math Teacher</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Eileen Bishop- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Jam Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Dorothy Kelly- Paraprofessional</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	48 new students enrolled during the 2012-2013 school year
Graduates	33 students graduated during the school year; 16 students who were new eventually graduated from CHSM
Dropouts/Transfers	15 students dropped out or were dismissed; 1 student transferred (13 students are enrolled during the 2014-2015 school year)
Building Structure	Facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

***2013-2014 School Year***

During the 2013-2014 school year, instructional para Dorothy Kelly left CHSM and in her place, Orlando Saunders was hired. In addition, long-time CHSM secretary Jan Lamb retired. Beth Paul replaced Lamb as the new secretary at CHSM.

***Active Learning Opportunities***



Staff members at CHSM continued to set up and create active learning opportunities for students, as organized in Table 4.32:

**Table 4.32 2013-2014 Active Learning Opportunities**

Exploratory Speakers	Buff-it-Up	Field Trips	Service Day
-Christie Roberts	-Pathways Church	-Governor speech in	-College Hill
-Drug counselor	-All-Star Sports	Maize	Elementary
-Pastor	-Grizzly Adventure	-Kansas State Fair	-Cornerstone
-Child abuse awareness	-Geocaching	-Wichita Area	-Valentines Cards
-Lawyer	-Scavenger Hunt	Technical College	-Visit former CHSM
-Professional baseball	-YMCA	-Kauffman Museum	custodian
player	-Roller Skating	-Kansas African	-Operation Holiday
-Wichita Area		American Museum	-Salvation Army
Technical College		-City Arts	-Adopt-a-Highway
-Law Enforcement			-Red Cross
officer			-Projector cleaning
-Audiologist			
-Orphan Train			
-Teacher			
-Firefighter			
-Army			
-Zookeeper			
-Marriage Counselor			

-Boy Scouts			
-Pratt Community College			
-Career advisor			
-Musician			

**Summary**

The motto for the 2013-2014 school year was, “We are family.” Many of the lessons and character building activities throughout the school year were focused on team building, acceptance, and compassion for others.

During the 2013-2014 school year, 43 students enrolled. There were 25 graduations that took place throughout the school year, bringing the overall graduate total to 361. Of the 43 students who enrolled, 8 eventually graduated from CHSM. During the school year, six students either dropped out or were dismissed. In addition to the new students who would enroll at the start of the 2014-2015 school year, a total of 29 students were scheduled to return to CHSM from the 2013-2014 school year. Table 4.33 summarizes the 2013-2014 school year.

**Table 4.33 2013-2014 CHSM Profile**

Category	Notes
Motto	We are family
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hilda Grant- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Julia Stevens- English Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Math Teacher</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Eileen Bishop- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Beth Paul- Secretary</li> <li>- Orlando Saunders- Paraprofessional</li> </ul>
Students Enrolled	43 new students enrolled during the 2013-2014 school year
Graduates	25 graduations were held during the school year; 8 students who were new to CHSM eventually graduated
Dropouts/Transfers	6 students dropped out or were dismissed; 29 students were still on the roster at the end of the 2013-2014 school year and would be students at CHSM during the upcoming 2014-2015 school year
Building Structure	Facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N in Maize, Kansas
Schedule	4 day work week; Monday through Thursday from 8:25-4:25; Doghouse on Friday from 8:00-noon.

### ***Interview Results and Analysis***

As part of this historical analysis of Complete High School Maize, 24 interviews were conducted with various stakeholders. As the interviews were transcribed, several excerpts from the interviews were used to help tell this history of the CHSM program. Although not every subject interviewed was quoted, each individual had a story to tell. Each subject played a prominent role in the historical development of Complete. In an effort to ensure all voices were heard, the researcher transcribed their interviews and analyzed their words carefully for themes. Although not all interview questions were the same for each individual, common themes arose in their descriptions and experiences related to CHSM.

Throughout the interviews, each individual had a story to tell and an eagerness to explain their participation in the program. Individuals were categorized based on their role throughout the history of CHSM. These categories included school and district administration, students,

parents, school board members, site council members, and teachers. A synopsis of each category of interviews is listed below.

### *Summary of Administrator Interviews*

Interviews were conducted with two individuals who led or formerly led Complete High School Maize. The first interview conducted was with Christie Roberts, the individual all stakeholders of the school associate with being the founder and individual most responsible for the creation of CHSM. An interview was also conducted with Hilda Grant, who had served as the schools building leader from 2012 through 2014.

Extensive time was spent individually with both Roberts and Grant, as each leader shared rich history of the program from its early beginnings through many of the schools transitions. Both leaders had great passion for the school and for the students they served.

Multiple themes arose from interviewing both Roberts and Grant that focused on the overall success of CHSM and their perceptions of the school's success. These themes included:

- CHSM is a school of choice.
  - o Roberts and Grant both agreed that in order for CHSM to be successful, students could not be sent to or placed at the school. They felt this was critical in getting students to buy-in the purpose and mission of the school and their education.
- The waiting list is a critical component of CHSM.
  - o There were multiple reasons why the waiting list was a positive component of the school. First, it created an atmosphere the encouraged student accountability. Roberts and Grant both recognized that the waiting list was an incentive in encouraging students to not take their spot at the school for granted. Hilda Grant reiterated her perspective on the waiting list by saying, "The waiting list lets

students know that there is someone ready to take their spot at any time” (Personal interview, January 22, 2015). A second reason why the waiting list was perceived to be beneficial to students was identified by Roberts. “The waiting list also made students appreciate the school once they got in. Had they immediately gotten in, they would not be as grateful for the opportunity” (Personal interview, January 18, 2015).

- A dedicated staff is vital to the success of CHSM.
  - o Roberts and Grant repeatedly stressed the importance of having a dedicated staff. Both school leaders mentioned that the teachers were the primary reason for the success of the school. A dedicated staff has played a vital role in the historical development of the school. Without these individuals, the school might not have overcome the early struggles of starting a program. Furthermore, the qualifications needed and desired for employment at CHSM are specific. “We want hard workers, teachers who love kids, who are dedicated to making a difference. Teachers have to want to be here” (Personal interview, January 22, 2015).

### ***Summary of Current Students and Graduate Interviews***

Three current students and three graduates of Complete High School Maize were interviewed. Graduates from CHSM were selected based on the time frame of their enrollment. Pamela Ross was a graduate of CHSM who was enrolled between 1999 and 2004, Sharon Griffin was a graduate of CHSM who was enrolled between 2005 and 2009, and Teresa Gonzales was a CHSM graduate who was enrolled between 2010 and 2014. Three other students who were enrolled during the 2013-2014 school year were also selected to interview based upon a

minimum enrollment of at least 18 months in the program. These students were Skyler Fason, Walter Bishop, and Jean Parker. In conducting the interviews of both current students and CHSM graduates, several common themes arose:

- Teachers make the difference.
  - o Having a staff dedicated to student success was mentioned by every student. Jean Parker, current CHSM student, said, “It is almost like they want it more than me. Having that kind of support has made me feel like I can do anything. They truly make the difference” (Personal interview, February 16, 2015).
- The curriculum contract system benefits student learning.
  - o Each student interviewed reiterated the positive impact of working on curriculum contracts. Students were able to work at their own pace and the contracts were able to help students make up deficient credits.
- The career focus helps students find internal motivation.
  - o Teresa Gonzales, CHSM graduate, promoted the impact the career internships had on her life. “I didn’t even know what I wanted to do. When I was able to intern at the architecture firm, I felt like I had value for the first time in my life. They even gave me my own office” (Personal interview, January 28, 2015).

### ***Summary of Teacher Interviews***

Three individuals who spent time teaching at Complete High School Maize were selected to interview. These individuals were selected with varying amounts of time served at CHSM. Byron Barnes, one of the original staff members of the program, was selected to interview. In addition to Barnes, Phil Maldonado was chosen as an interview candidate. Maldonado was as a

staff member with over five years of experience at the school. Corey Avett was selected as a teacher to interview who had less than five years teaching experience at the school.

Two themes emerged after analyzing the interviews conducted for CHSM teachers:

- The teachers at CHSM believe in the mission and purpose of the school.
  - o Each teacher interviewed expressed the importance of the three main goals of the school. Each was able to recite the three goals almost exactly the same: to help students earn a high school diploma, to help students develop personal and social living skills, and to help them with successful career attainment. Having a staff committed to the overall purpose of the school has given laser-sharp focus to accomplishing goals.
- The teachers want to be at CHSM.
  - o The teachers who were selected for interviews explained that they were not sent to CHSM and that it was their choice to work there. Phil Maldonado expressed his desire to be at CHSM: “I grew up wanting to coach. When I started at CHSM, my goals changed because I believed I have been called to work here. This is my heart and my passion and there is no place else I’d rather be” (Personal interview, February 2, 2015).

### ***Summary of Site Council Members Interviews***

The Victory Street Council played a significant role in helping start Complete High School Maize. Each member served on the Council from 1997 through 2004. Three members of the site council were interviewed: Janice Perez, Lori Sanders, and Rebecca Scott.

Two common themes were expressed by the Victory Street Council:

- Complete High School Maize has exceeded expectations of success.

- The members of the Site Council selected to interview believed that what they were doing was important and needed in Maize, but were unsure if the school would be able to be sustained over time. Rebecca Scott expressed her expectations:

Never in my wildest dreams did I foresee CHSM having the magnitude of success that it has. I was hopeful that good things would come from it, but to see where the school is now compared to what we originally thought it would become is just amazing. (Personal interview, January 18, 2015)

- Site Council members are proud of the work they did in helping start the school.
  - Each member of the committee was proud to have been part of helping establish CHSM. Each interviewee restated the long hours and time commitment endured, but was appreciative of the opportunity to help start the school. Lori Sanders recapped her experience:

I've done some things in my life that I am proud of. At the top of my list is the work we did in helping create Complete. I am so proud of that school and honored to have played a small role in its history. (Personal interview, January 15, 2015)

### ***Summary of Board of Education Members Interviews***

Randy Butler and Ben Lopez were both school board members of Maize USD 266 who held office at the time Complete High School Maize opened its doors in 1999. Both Butler and Lopez have served multiple tenures for Maize.



One major theme emerged from the interviews conducted with both Randy Butler and Ben Lopez. Both Board members believe that the perception of CHSM has improved over time.

- The overall perception of the school has improved each year.
  - o Lopez and Butler expressed the frequency of concerns and criticism they received in the beginning years of CHSM. Citizens and concerned patrons expressed their worries about the additional costs associated with running an alternative school. Lopez stated, “I fielded a bunch of concerns about Complete early on, but I couldn’t tell you the last time someone said something negative about the school to me. It is a great program” (Personal interview, January 23, 2015).

### ***Summary of Parent Interviews***

A total of three parents were selected to interview. The parents selected each had a varying perspective based on the role and outcome of their student’s enrollment. Alice Foster was the parent of a CHSM graduate, Diana Cox was the parent of a student who dropped out of CHSM, and Orlando Sanders was the parent of a current student enrolled in 2014.

One major theme appeared through parental interviews:

- CHSM changed my student for the better.
  - o The parents of three CHSM students agreed that they observed a positive change in their student. Each parent expressed the dislike their student had for the traditional school, but said their dislike changed once they were accepted into CHSM. “Even though my kid never finished, I am so thankful for Complete. My daughter went from hating school and not having any self-confidence to liking school and believing in herself. That self-confidence is still with her” (Personal interview, February 2, 2015).

### *Summary of Superintendent Interviews*

Throughout Complete High School Maize's existence, three superintendents have led Maize USD 266. Willie Butler was the superintendent of Maize at the time CHSM opened its doors in 1999. The other superintendent selected to interview was Matthew Long, who served as the district leader of Maize from 2009 through 2014.

Two themes developed from analyzing the interviews conducted with both district leaders of Maize:

- CHSM is a source of pride for the district.
  - o Both Butler and Long commented on the numerous calls received from other district leaders asking questions about Maize's alternative school. In addition, Long commented on his pride for CHSM: "When I first arrived in Maize, I wasn't sure what Complete was all about. The first time I went to a graduation there, I knew this place was special. I am so proud that Complete is part of Maize" (Personal interview, February 16, 2015).
- CHSM is a self-sufficient model for other school districts.
  - o Both district leaders addressed the frequency that other Kansas superintendents would call and ask questions about Complete. Additionally, Butler discussed the frugality that CHSM operated.

Beg, steal, and borrow. Fundraising and donations. Complete was about as self-sufficient of a school and program that I ever saw. They knew all eyes were upon them and they acted accordingly. With the additional funding brought in through at-risk weightings and full-time enrollment for those who wouldn't even be in school;

I'm pretty certain Complete was a money maker for the district.

(Personal interview, February 17, 2015)

### *Summary of Dropout Interviews*

Three dropouts of Complete High School Maize were selected for the study. Each dropout was selected in five-year increments based on their time enrolled at CHSM. Justin Smith dropped out in 2001 and was enrolled between 1999 and 2004. Robert McHatton dropped out in 2008 and was enrolled between 2005 and 2009. Ted Emerson dropped out in 2014 and was enrolled between 2010 and 2014.

The major themes that emerged from conducted interviews with dropouts from CHSM include:

- Students dropped out of CHSM despite being given multiple opportunities.
- Lack of success was related to external factors.
  - o Of the three dropouts, each identified drugs and alcohol as factors into them not being successful in school. In addition, two students expressed the need to work to support their families as another reason why they were not successful in school. Justin Smith voiced his experience: "I had no money, I was into drugs. I couldn't stay awake at school. Regrets. One of these days I'm gonna go back to Complete and get that diploma" (Personal interview, February 14, 2015).

**Conclusion and Summarization of Interviews**

Conducting the interviews of the selected participants helped the researcher gain a deepened understanding of the historical evolution of Complete High School Maize. Each participant had a story to tell and added to the history of CHSM.

Table 4.34 shows a summary of the interviews conducted regarding stakeholder’s perceptions and beliefs about the beneficial programs at CHSM and stakeholders favorite and least favorite aspects of the program.

**Table 4.34 CHSM Interview Data Frequency**

	<b># of Interviews</b>	<b>Beneficial Programs or Activities (Frequency)</b>	<b>Favorite Thing About CHSM</b>	<b>Least Favorite Things About CHSM</b>
Students	9	-Contracts/Self-Paced (9) -Internships/Career Focus (8) -Career Speakers (7) -Matinee Classes (7) -Tutoring at elementary (6)	-4 day week (9) -Teachers (9) -Graduations (8)	-Lunch (8) -Doghouse (7) -No Homework (7)
Parents	3	-Career Focus (3) -Volunteering (3) -Contracts/Self-Paced (2)	-4 day week (3) -Contracts (3) -Staff (3)	-Waiting list (2) -Lack of electives (2)

Teachers	3	-Character Education (3) -Internships (3)	-4 day week (3) -Staff (3) -Graduations (3)	-Losing a student (3) -District connectedness (2)
CHSM Administration	2	-Internships (2) -Somebody's Someone (2) -Self-Paced Contracts (2)	-Staff (2) -4 day week (2) -Students (2) -Flexibility (2) -Waiting List (2)	-Waiting List (2)
Board of Education	2	-Self-paced curriculum (2)	-Opportunities for students (2)	-Waiting List (2)
Victory Street Council	3	-Career Opportunities (3) -Contracts/Self-Paced (3)	-Graduations (3) -Volunteering (3) - Opportunities (3)	-Waiting List (2)
Superintendent	2	-Career Focus (2)	-Innovativeness (2) -Character Education (2)	-Waiting List (2)

## **Chapter 5 - Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

### **Introduction**

The purposes of this research were to delineate the historical evolution of Complete High School Maize as a model for school districts to emulate in an effort to reduce the number of high school dropouts and to provide historical documentation to help preserve and share in the history of CHSM for future generations of students.

The major research questions that guided this study were:

1. What circumstances were present in Maize USD 266 that resulted in creating an alternative school for its students?
2. How has the structure of Complete High School Maize evolved from 1999 to 2014 and in response to what set of conditions and factors.
  - a. What data show the outcomes and bases for structural revision?

The historical method of research was used to chronicle the evolution of Complete High School Maize. The history of CHSM was recreated through the review of documents and from oral testimonies obtained through conducting individual interviews with stakeholders. An analysis of the history was conducted to determine the factors that resulted in the starting of an alternative school in Maize USD 266 and the factors present that resulted in structural revisions to the program throughout of fifteen year period from 1999 to 2014.

This chapter is divided into seven sections: (a) introduction, (b) discussion of research question one, (c) discussion of research question two, (d) significance of the study, (e) implications of the research, (f) recommendations for future studies, and (g) summary.

## **Summary of Research Question One**

*What circumstances were present in Maize USD 266 that resulted in creating an alternative school for its students?*

Multiple factors were identified in examining the circumstances that were present in Maize USD 266 that resulted in the creation of an alternative school for its students. The first factor was need. In 1996, over 45 students dropped out of Maize High School. The second circumstance present in Maize was identifying the students who dropped out. These dropouts did not fit the traditional characteristics of dropouts, including those coming from economically disadvantaged homes or problem students; rather, the dropouts in Maize were simply students who learned in alternative ways whose needs were not being addressed in the traditional school environment. Thirdly, another circumstance present in USD 266 was the dropouts from Maize leaving the district to enroll at an alternative school in Wichita USD 259. With a waiting list of over 150 students, the dropouts from Maize continued to be dropouts, as there was not any room to enroll in Wichita 259 alternative programs. The fourth circumstance present in Maize that resulted in the opening of an alternative school was the Maize community acknowledging that it was their responsibility to take care of their own dropouts rather than passing them on to someone else.

With these circumstances present in Maize USD 266, research needed to be conducted to learn about alternative education. The fifth circumstance present was the awarding of a charter planning grant from the Kansas Department of Education. This grant provided financial support for a group of individuals to help study, design, and formulate an alternative program for the district. The sixth circumstance present was the support of the local school board. The board provided support for the study and also allocated resources to the initiative. Getting community buy in was the seventh circumstance that led to the starting of an alternative school in Maize.

The committee understood the importance of selling the community on the school and worked to establish partnerships with patrons and businesses that continue to exist present day. The school board had to give final approval and authorization for Complete High School Maize to open. The eighth and final circumstance present in Maize was given on October 12, 1998, when the school board unanimously approved the creation of CHSM as an alternative for students seeking an alternative learning environment.

### **Summary of Research Question Two**

*How has the structure of Complete High School Maize evolved from 1999 to 2014 and in response to what set of conditions and factors?*

The structure of Complete High School Maize has continually evolved through many facets throughout the school's fifteen years of existence. These structures included building configurations, number of students served, staffing, and programs offered. One constant that has remained and has been the focal point for change has been the goals of the school:

1. To provide a quality academic environment that leads to the awarding of a high school diploma.
2. To provide students with personal and social living skills that will help them be successful for life.
3. To provide vocational guidance and placement that will lead to successful career attainment.

### **Changes to Building Configurations**



In 1999, Complete High School Maize was located at 120 West Victory Street in Maize, Kansas. The school first opened on August 20, 1999 and served 34 students. The campus of CHSM was located west of the Maize Central Office and was composed of three portable classrooms. One portable was called “Town Hall” and served as the lunchroom and common meeting place for all students and staff. The second portable consisted of two classrooms. The first room served as the classroom for English/Language Arts and the second room served as an elective curriculum classroom. The third portable had two classrooms: one for science/social studies and the other for mathematics.

During the 2001-2002 school year, an additional portable was added to the CHSM campus. With this addition, CHSM was able to serve more students. The enrollment went from 34 students and increased to 45 students served at one time. The new portable became “Town Hall” for all students. The former Town Hall portable became the main office for the program.

Growth of the Complete High School Maize program was in the works during the 2003-2004 school year. The school board recognized the early success of the program and looked to find a more permanent location for the school. The new permanent location would be able to serve more students, but would also show the district’s commitment to the program.

Furthermore, a permanent structure added safety security measures to the program. The CHSM campus was open and allowed easy access to the classrooms. From a safety standpoint, this was not ideal. Additionally, the portables were not build to withstand inclement weather.

As the school board pondered building a brand new school for the program, the CHSM program was moved to “Building Two” at the former Maize Middle School located at 304 West Central in Maize, Kansas. The Maize School district was experiencing continual growth and a new Maize Middle School was built for students in grades seventh and eighth on a different

location and campus. “Building One” of the former Maize Middle School was going to be renovated to become a new elementary school. This location would be a temporary spot for CHSM as construction would soon begin on a permanent building for the school. CHSM was housed in this location for one school year.

The 2004-2005 school year produced a brand new building for Complete High School Maize. This building was constructed for the purpose of serving as the district’s alternative program. This facility was located at 11411 West Central in Maize, Kansas. This facility has continued to serve as the location of Complete High School Maize since the 2004-2005 school year.

### **Changes to Students Served and Staffing**

The Complete High School Maize program began during the 1999-2000 school year with 34 students who were served by three certified teachers, one secretary, and one part-time custodian.

During the 2000-2001 school year, CHSM increased its staff by one full-time paraprofessional. The paraprofessional was hired to help provide additional one-on-one instruction for students and to do necessary tasks throughout the day. As a result, CHSM was able to accommodate more students who were placed on the waiting list. As the school year began, the enrollment cap increased from 34 students to 40.

At the start of the 2001-2002 school year, an additional certified staff member was hired to teach English/Language Arts. This teacher was hired as the demands of the school’s coordinator increased. Furthermore, CHSM received a charter school grant from the Kansas

Department of Education that provided additional funding to help grow the program. Because of the increase in staffing, CHSM was able to increase the enrollment cap from 40 to 45.

Complete High School Maize continued to produce graduates and the number of students who wanted to enroll continued to increase. During the 2003-2004 school year, when CHSM moved to Building Two at the former Maize Middle School, an additional certified teacher was hired to serve as a social studies teacher and assistant principal. The enrollment cap increased from 45 to 55.

During the 2005-2006 school year, CHSM added a half-time teaching position. This position was a full-time business teacher, while the social studies teacher position moved to a half-time contract. A business teacher was needed as a result of students enrolling at CHSM who had not yet met the business credit requirement needed for graduation. This full-time position was made possible by a middle school assistant principal retiring within the district. Rather than replace the assistant position full-time, the CHSM social studies teacher would teach half-time at CHSM and would become a half-time assistant principal at a middle school.

As the 2006-2007 commenced, the half-time social studies teacher at CHSM left for a full-time administrative assignment within the district. In her place, long-time CHSM teacher Byron Barnes moved into a half-time social studies position. Additionally, CHSM hired a full-time science teacher. The result increased the enrollment cap at CHSM from 55 to 60. Although CHSM continued to maintain a waiting list, students were not having to wait as long and their needs were being met within a reasonable time frame.

In the 2009-2010 school year, the half-time social studies teacher retired. In his place, the school was able to hire a full-time paraprofessional. This staff configuration has remained since the 2009-2010 school year with one full-time administrator, one math teacher/assistant

principal, one English teacher, one science teacher, one social studies teacher, one business teacher, one secretary, and one full-time paraprofessional.

In sum, the Complete High School Maize program had graduated 361 students from 1999 through 2014 and had served 619 students.

### **Changes to Programs Offered**

One aspect of Complete High School Maize that has benefited students is the ability and freedom for staff to create programs that directly impact students and are relevant to their needs. With innovative staff members, the faculty at CHSM has worked to create numerous opportunities for students. Examples of these programs included:

- Buff-it-Up: This program is the physical education program for CHSM. Without having a certified physical education teacher, CHSM staff creates weekly activities for students to earn productive minutes towards their physical education credit. The staff works to create practical physical education opportunities for students that they could eventually do with their families. The major rule for buff-it-up activities is that all students and staff members must participate in the activity. They may not opt-out.
- Service Day: Once a month, CHSM students and staff work towards a common service day project. Students are able to choose which service groups they would like to become involved with. These activities vary from working to help out other schools within the school district or helping an organization within the community. All students and staff participate in service activities. Service Day began as a

- response to help students buy-in to the program and to also help change negative perceptions about the alternative school.
- Career Exploration: A major component of CHSM is the focus on vocational guidance. Each week, career or vocational guests are invited to CHSM to speak to students about careers. The guests are invited to stay for lunch and students are able to make personal connections with those in the work force and ask individual questions that pertain to their future goals.
  - Internships: To aid in the school's mission of providing vocational guidance to students, the students at CHSM are placed in internships for a nine-week period. These internships are set up by CHSM staff members and are chosen by examining each student's career and interest inventory taken on a computer program called Career Cruising. Staff members spend the first 18 weeks of the school year preparing students to be successful interns by developing students' soft skills, interview skills, and work habits. The internship program began as a response to student's desires to become employable. In the local economy, many jobs that were once given to teenagers were being filled by unemployed aircraft workers. Students in high school were having a difficult job finding employment. The internship program gave students an opportunity to gain work experience despite not having jobs.
  - Complete Leaders: One of the first programs started at CHSM, the Complete Leader program started for multiple reasons. First, CHSM was limited in the number of staff members employed. The Complete Leader program allowed the school to function and operate by having students complete necessary duties around the school. Additionally, this program helped students buy-in to the school.

- Somebody's Someone: The Somebody's Someone program is an adult mentoring program for CHSM students. Each student at CHSM is paired with an adult from within the USD 266 community or faculty. This program started for multiple reasons. First, the students at CHSM needed more positive adult mentors in their lives. With a limited number of staff members at CHSM, more adults were needed to develop positive relationships with students. Additionally, this program started as a method of changing negative perceptions about CHSM students. As more adults from the school district community began to understand what CHSM was and its purpose and mission, many negative perceptions began to disappear.
- The Waiting List: Though not an official program of CHSM, the waiting list is viewed as one of the most important factors of success for the school. By having a waiting list, it keeps CHSM in high demand by those who need it most. Secondly, the waiting list is a method used by staff to help motivate current students. Because CHSM is a Type 1 alternative school and school of choice, students are not required to attend. If students are not at CHSM for the right reasons and are not working towards the goal of graduation, the staff at CHSM can refer to the waiting list and let students know that others are waiting to take their place. Further, the waiting list helps students appreciate the school. If students were immediately granted admittance, they would be less likely to view CHSM as a privilege.

## **Summary of Data on Outcomes and Bases**

### ***What data show the outcomes and bases for structural revisions?***

Over a fifteen year span, Complete High School Maize evolved from a small, 34 student program housed in portable classrooms to serving over 60 students at a time in a building erected

for the specific purpose of educating students at-risk. Throughout this duration, the major structures of the program that were revised included:

- Building Structure
- Students Served Structure
- Staffing Structure
- Type of Programs Structure

Many of the structural revisions of Complete High School Maize were in response to the growing number of students interested in attending. Table 5.1 shows the number of students new to CHSM who enrolled throughout the school year. Over a span of fifteen school years, CHSM has served 619 students.

**Table 5.1 Number of Students Served at CHSM**

1999-2000	44
2000-2001	23
2001-2002	38
2002-2003	30
2003-2004	70
2004-2005	25
2005-2006	33
2006-2007	39
2007-2008	42
2008-2009	47

2009-2010	43
2010-2011	43
2011-2012	51
2012-2013	48
2013-2014	43

In addition to the number of students served, the building structure of CHSM evolved as a response to the growing number of students interested in earning their education at CHSM. In order to accommodate more students on the CHSM waiting list, multiple facility upgrades and changes occurred. Table 5.2 shows the building structures of the program over the fifteen year period:

**Table 5.2 CHSM Building Structures**

1999-2000	3 portable classrooms located at 120 W Victory
2000-2001	3 portable classrooms located at 120 W Victory
2001-2002	4 portable classrooms located at 120 W Victory
2002-2003	4 portable classrooms located at 120 W Victory
2003-2004	Building 2 located at the former Maize Middle School
2004-2005	Brand new construction located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N
2005-2006	CHSM facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N
2006-2007	CHSM facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N
2007-2008	CHSM facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N
2008-2009	CHSM facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N



2009-2010	CHSM facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N
2010-2011	CHSM facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N
2011-2012	CHSM facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N
2012-2013	CHSM facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N
2013-2014	CHSM facility located at 11411 W 49 <sup>th</sup> St N

As the number of students who enrolled and were placed on the waiting list increased, CHSM also evolved with regard to staffing. Curriculum changes were needed throughout the span of CHSM's existence in response to changing graduation requirements, student needs and interests, and staff workloads. Table 5.3 shows the evolution of staffing at CHSM.

**Table 5.3 CHSM Staffing Structures**

1999-2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Administrator/English/Speech Teacher</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Social Studies/Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Estelle Neal- Secretary</li> <li>- William Wilder- Part-time Custodian</li> </ul>
2000-2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Administrator/English/Speech Teacher</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Social Studies/Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Estelle Neal- Secretary (later replaced by Jan Lamb)</li> <li>- William Wilder- Part-time Custodian</li> <li>- Helen Davis- Paraprofessional</li> </ul>
2001-2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Administrator</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Social Studies/Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- William Wilder- Part-time Custodian</li> <li>- Helen Davis- Paraprofessional</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li> </ul>
2002-2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Administrator</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Social Studies/Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- William Wilder- Part-time Custodian</li> <li>- Leslie Owens- Paraprofessional</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li> </ul>
2003-2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Administrator</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Paraprofessional</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li> <li>- Gayle Swanson- Social Studies Teacher/Work Study Coordinator</li> </ul>
2004-2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- paraprofessional</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li> <li>- Gayle Swanson- Social Studies Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> </ul>
2005-2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gayle Swanson- 0.5 Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> </ul>
2006-2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christie Roberts- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- 0.5 English/Social Studies</li> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Mathematics Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Language Arts/Speech Teacher</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Ralph Graham- Science Teacher</li> </ul>
2007-2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- 0.5 English/Social Studies</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English/Speech Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Victoria Clarke- Science Teacher</li> </ul>
2008-2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- 0.5 English/Social Studies</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English//Speech Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Victoria Clarke- Science Teacher</li> </ul>
2009-2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Byron Barnes- 0.5 English/Social Studies (retired mid-year)</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Mathematics Teacher</li> <li>- Jan Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hilda Grant- English//Speech Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Eileen Bishop- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Jean Parker- Paraprofessional (hired mid-year)</li> </ul>
2010-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Math Teacher</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Eileen Bishop- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Jam Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Dorothy Kelly- Paraprofessional</li> </ul>
2011-2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spencer Bryan- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Hilda Grant- English Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Math Teacher</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Eileen Bishop- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Jam Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Dorothy Kelly- Paraprofessional</li> </ul>
2012-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hilda Grant- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Julia Stevens- English Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Louise Burton- Math Teacher</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Eileen Bishop- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Jam Lamb- Secretary</li> <li>- Dorothy Kelly- Paraprofessional</li> </ul>
2013-2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hilda Grant- Associate Principal</li> <li>- Julia Stevens- English Teacher/Assistant Principal</li> <li>- Phil Maldonado- Social Studies Teacher</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Louise Burton- Math Teacher</li> <li>- Agnes Rodriguez- Business Teacher</li> <li>- Eileen Bishop- Science Teacher</li> <li>- Beth Paul- Secretary</li> <li>- Orlando Saunders- Paraprofessional</li> </ul>
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With a continued increase in student interest in attending CHSM, combined with adequate facility space and staffing, CHSM had established a solid foundation for success. As student interests and needs have evolved, so too has the program and curriculum at Complete High School Maize. The major foundation for curriculum and program changes over the 15 year span is in large part due to a focus on successful career attainment for students.

### **Significance of the Study**

The state of Kansas reported a graduation rate of 85.8% for the 2013-2014 school year. This rate was based upon the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate. The five-year cohort graduation rate for the same school year slightly increased to 86%. In Maize USD 266, during the 2013-2014 school year, the five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate was 97.1%. With the help of Complete High School Maize, the graduation rate for Maize USD 266 has increased, though slightly, over a seventeen year period.

This study was significant because educators across Kansas, and perhaps beyond, can see the success in Maize having reduced the drop-out rate and having increased the graduation rate through the help and resources of an alternative program. Complete High School Maize, with the small size of the school, also has served as a pilot for many district initiatives.

This study was also significant because it helped establish a written history of a highly successful and intentionally focused drop-out prevention program. This is important to the

students, staff, graduates, current students, and future students at CHSM in helping celebrate the school's existence and successes. And it may well be important to districts throughout the state and nation.

## **Recommendations for Future Studies**

### **Recommendation One**

One recommendation for future research would be to do a comparative analysis of the different types of alternative programs in Kansas. Research could be collected regarding the various typologies of each program, and data could be collected and analyzed to determine graduation successes. The study could conduct a cost-analysis for each program in relation to yearly spending and graduates produced. It would be beneficial to have data showing the most cost-effective programs that produce the greatest results in improving school district graduation rates and reducing the number of dropouts.

### **Recommendation Two**

This study analyzed the historical evolution of the CHSM program across fifteen years. Throughout the fifteen-year period, 361 students graduated from Complete High School Maize. A case study could be conducted to examine the extended lived experiences of graduates from Complete High School Maize. It would be beneficial to examine graduates career choices, economics, family status, and involvement/non-involvement in the criminal justice system.

### **Recommendation Three**

Leadership is a strong component of program success. Throughout the school's fifteen year period, three individuals led Complete High School Maize. A case study could be

conducted to examine the leadership characteristics of these individuals. The study could examine the leadership traits and qualities of the three individuals to consider whether their successes (or lack thereof) are confined to alternative learning settings.

#### **Recommendation Four**

As this study was being conducted, Complete High School Maize received notice from the Kansas Department of Education that it had been awarded the 2015 Kansas School of Character Award. Though CHSM was the first alternative program to earn this award, a case study examining all of the school in Kansas to earn such an award could be beneficial in developing a model that could be implemented at all schools needing a character education program.

### **Summary**

Chapter Five reported the conclusions of the study. This chapter started with a discussion of the purposes of the study and identified the research questions that guided the study. The chapter then summarized the results of the research questions, provided a significance of the study, identified the implications of the research, and provided recommendations for future studies.

With the graduation rate for the state of Kansas hovering around 86%, room for improvement is still warranted. Though not successful with absolutely every student who is enrolled, Complete High School Maize has provided USD 266 with a persuasive alternative to the traditional learning environments. With 361 graduates to its credit, CHSM has helped improve the district's graduate rate over a fifteen year period.

In a district of over 2000 high school students, it is easy for students at the secondary level to fall between the cracks, not fit in, or simply not successfully learn in a traditional school environment. Alternatives such as Complete High School Maize has made it possible to for this group of students to find an avenue of achieving academic and social success.

Alternative programs such as Complete High School Maize should be looked at as models for school districts to effectively and efficiently emulate in order to help improve graduation rates and student successes beyond the diploma.



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## Primary Sources

### *Personal Interviews*

Title	Artifact Type	Date	Alias
The original coordinator/principal of CHSM, who was involved with the program from the early planning stages in 1997 through 2006.	Personal interview	January 18, 2015	Christie Roberts
The current principal of CHSM, who was involved in the program from 2001 through 2014.	Personal interview	January 22, 2015	Hilda Grant
USD 266 school board member who was an elected official at the time of the program's inception in 1999 and continue to serve on the board in 2014.	Personal interview	January 23, 2015	Ben Lopez
USD 266 school board member who was an elected official at the time of the program's inception in 1999 and continue	Personal interview	January 23, 2015	Randy Butler

to serve on the board in 2014.			
Member of the Victory Street Council, which was the school's original planning group and served on the school's original site council from 1997 through 2004.	Personal interview	January 15, 2015	Janice Perez
Member of the Victory Street Council, which was the school's original planning group and served on the school's original site council from 1997 through 2004.	Personal interview	January 15, 2015	Lori Sanders
Member of the Victory Street Council, which was the school's original planning group and served on the school's original site council from 1997 through 2004.	Personal interview	January 18, 2015	Rebecca Scott
The former Superintendent of USD 266, who oversaw the school from 1999 through 2007.	Personal interview	February 17, 2015	Willie Butler

The superintendent of USD 266, who oversaw the school from 2009 through 2014.	Personal interview	February 16, 2015	Matthew Long
A teacher from 1999 through 2007, who helped start the program and witnessed the program's growth and change.	Email interview	February 1, 2015	Byron Barnes
A teacher at CHSM with over five years of experience at the school.	Personal interview	February 2, 2015	Phil Maldonado
A teacher at CHSM with less than five years of experience at the school.	Personal interview	February 2, 2015	Corey Avett
Parent of a CHSM student who graduated from the program.	Personal interview	February 2, 2015	Alice Foster
Parent of a CHSM student who dropped out of the program.	Personal interview	February 2, 2015	Diana Cox
Parent of a CHSM student who is a student in 2014	Personal interview	February 2, 2015	Orlando Sanders
Graduate of CHSM between the years 1999-2004.	Personal interview	February 2, 2015	Pamela Ross
Graduate of CHSM between the years 2005-2009.	Personal interview	February 2, 2015	Sharon Griffin

Graduate of CHSM between the years 2010-2014.	Personal interview	January 28, 2015	Teresa Gonzales
Dropout of CHSM between the years 1999-2004.	Personal interview	February 14, 2015	Justin Smith
Dropout of CHSM between the years 2005-2009.	Personal interview	February 15, 2015	Robert McHatton
Dropout of CHSM between the years 2010-2014.	Personal interview	February 15, 2015	Ted Emerson
Student at CHSM in 2014 school year.	Personal interview	February 16, 2015	Skyler Fason
Student at CHSM in 2014 school year.	Personal interview	February 16, 2015	Walter Bishop
Student at CHSM in 2014 school year.	Personal interview	February 16, 2015	Jean Parker

*Artifacts*

<b>Title</b>	<b>Artifact Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Item Number</b>
Maize Complete High School	Mailer	October 1997	1
Kansas Public Charter Schools Program Planning Grant Application	Grant Application	January 10, 1997	2
CHSM Charter School Committee	Booklet	September 8, 1997	3

Presentation Booklet			
CHSM Board Requested Data	Packet	September 1998	4
USD 266 School Board meeting	Minutes	April 13, 1998	5
USD 266 School Board meeting	Minutes	October 12, 1998	6
School Board Concerns	Facsimile Transmittal	June 4, 1998	7
Charter School Meeting Agenda	Agenda	May 21, 1997	8
Charter School Committee Letter	Letter	June 12, 1997	9
Committee Meeting Agenda	Agenda	June 19, 1997	10
Charter Meeting Minutes	Minutes	June 19, 1997	11
Charter School Committee Letter	Letter	July 22, 1997	12
Charter School Committee Agenda	Agenda	July 29, 1997	13
Charter Meeting Minutes	Minutes	July 29, 1997	14
Charter Committee Member Letter	Letter	August 4, 1997	15
Charter Meeting Agenda	Agenda	August 19, 1997	16
Charter Meeting Minutes	Minute	August 19, 1997	17
Letter to Communications Director	Letter	September 4, 1997	18
Letter to Individual Committee Member	Letter	September 4, 1997	19
Script for Board Presentation	Script	September 4, 1997	20
Committee Member Letter	Letter	September 10, 1997	21
Charter Meeting Minutes	Minutes	September 16, 1997	22
Charter Meeting Agenda	Agenda	September 16, 1997	23

Charter Committee Letter	Letter	September 17, 1997	24
Individual Letter to a Local Business	Letter	September 19, 1997	25
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	October 8, 1997	26
Charter Meeting Agenda	Agenda	October 14, 1997	27
Charter Meeting Minutes	Minutes	October 14, 1997	28
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	October 21, 1997	29
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	November 12, 1997	30
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	November 25, 1997	31
Charter Meeting Agenda	Agenda	December 2, 1997	32
Charter Meeting Minutes	Minutes	December 2, 1997	33
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	January 13, 1998	34
Charter Meeting Agenda	Agenda	January 21, 1998	35
Charter Meeting Minutes	Minutes	January 21, 1998	36
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	February 5, 1998	37
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	February 19, 1998	38
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	February 24, 1998	39
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	April 14, 1998	40
Letter to Board of Education	Letter	April 16, 1998	41
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	May 19, 1998	42
Letter from Superintendent Designee to Charter Committee	Letter	May 7, 1998	43
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	May 26, 1998	44
Charter Planning Grant State Meeting	Notes	June 1998	45

notes			
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	July 28, 1998	46
Letter to prospective students	Letter	August 10, 1998	47
Letter from Superintendent Designee to Charter Committee	Letter	August 12, 1998	48
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	August 19, 1998	49
Charter Meeting Minutes	Minutes	August 5, 1998	50
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	September 8, 1998	51
Various alternative schools notes by charter school chairperson	Notes	n/a	52
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	September 22, 1998	53
Charter Meeting Minutes	Minutes	September 15, 1998	54
Charter Member Letter re: Final Report	Letter	September 23, 1998	55
Celebration Flyer for approval of CHSM	Flyer	October 12, 1998	56
Patron Letter from Committee Chairperson	Letter	October 15, 1998	57
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	October 26, 1998	58
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	November 4, 1998	59
Charter Committee Letter	Letter	January 12, 1999	60
CHSM Site Council Letter	Letter	March 19, 1999	61
CHSM Site Council Letter	Letter	April 6, 1999	62
Charter Planning Grant End-of-Project	Memo	September 23, 1998	63



Report			
Charter Planning Grant End Financial Report	Memo	September 23, 1998	64
Charter Planning Narrative Evaluation	Report	September 23, 1998	65
Second Chance at School: New Alternative Learning Environment Offered	Article from school newspaper	November 20, 1998	66
Maize Messenger	Newsletter	August 1997	67
Maize Messenger	Newsletter	September 1997	68
Maize Messenger	Newsletter	November/December 1997	69
Alternative School Being Considered	School Newspaper	January 16, 1998	70
CHSM Timeline Notes	Timeline	January 1998	71
The Top 10 Reasons To Develop an Alternative School (Project Stay in Leavenworth)	Notes	n/a	72
Board of Education Presentation Script	Script	April 7, 1998	73
Needs Analysis Script	Script	April 7, 1998	73
Governmental Relations Bulletin: Charter School Law	Bulletin	November 7, 1997	74
Kansas Juvenile Offender Conference Notes	Notes	May 14, 1997	75
Travel Itinerary for National Dropout	Itinerary	n/a	76

Prevention Conference, Project Stay, National Society for Experiential Education, and Work Now Conference			
Project Stay Notes	Notes	n/a	77
Project Stay Handbook	Handbook	n/a	78
Project Stay Orientation Contract	Contract	August 1997	79
Complete High School Taking Applications	Article	March 19, 1999	80
Complete High School Questions During Visits	Notes	n/a	81
Complete High School Maize Application	Application	n/a	82
Complete High School Maize Orientation Contract	Contract	n/a	83
Sculpture Fund Letter	Letter	October 3, 2006	84
Sculpture Fund Letter	Letter	May 23, 2007	85
CHSM Special Edition	Mailer	Spring 2003	86
A Special Edition From Complete High School Maize	Mailer	Spring 2004	87
A Week at Complete	Newsletter	August 2003	88
A Week at Complete	Newsletter	September 2003	89
A Week at Complete	Newsletter	October 2003	90
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A Week at Complete	Newsletter	December 2003	92
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A Week at Complete	Newsletter	March 2003	102
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CHSM Yearbook	Yearbook	1999-2000	105
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CHSM Yearbook	Yearbook	2002-2003	108
CHSM Yearbook	Yearbook	2003-2004	109
CHSM Yearbook	Yearbook	2004-2005	110
CHSM Yearbook	Yearbook	2005-2006	111
CHSM Yearbook	Yearbook	2006-2007	112
CHSM Yearbook	Yearbook	2007-2008	113
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CHSM Yearbook	Yearbook	2009-2010	115
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Petition to Establish a Charter School Grant Application	Letter	August 8, 2001	120
Phase I-Implementation Grant	Grant Application	August 8, 2001	121
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# Appendix A – Written Informed Consent Form

## KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**PROJECT TITLE:** A Selected Historical Analysis of the “Complete High School” Maize Kansas

**APPROVAL DATE OF PROJECT:** 12/3/2014 **EXPIRATION DATE OF PROJECT:** April 1, 2015

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Dr. David C. Thompson

**CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):** Kenneth C. Botts

**CONTACT AND PHONE FOR ANY PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS:** (785)532-5535

**IRB CHAIR CONTACT/PHONE INFORMATION:** Dr. Rick Scheidt; (785)532-3224

**SPONSOR OF PROJECT:** None

**PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:** There are two purposes for conducting this study. First, this study describes the historical evolution of Complete High School Maize (CHSM). This is important because CHSM has been recognized locally and nationally as a model alternative school charged with helping improve graduation rates and reduce the number of high school dropouts. As many school districts look to reduce their number of dropouts, many seek guidance in how to start an alternative school or improve their already existing program. The CHSM program can serve as an example for other alternative programs to emulate and model as well as provide valuable insight into the structures of the program that have evolved. The second purpose of this research is to help provide historical documentation that will help preserve and share in the school’s history.

**PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE USED:** The researcher will collect and analyze primary resource artifacts and documents of the selected alternative program. In doing so, the researcher will begin to develop a chronology of events and insight into the school’s past. To help fill in gaps left by the documents, the researcher will conduct interviews with key stakeholders from the school that will provide additional data for analysis. The data collected will be analyzed and synthesized for meaning related to the study’s research questions.

In determining the key stakeholders of the alternative program, a list will first be created with all individuals who are considered to be stakeholders of the program. For the purpose of this study, a stakeholder of the program is considered to be an individual who is documented as having served in some capacity throughout the history of the program. These individuals include both current and former teachers, administrators, parents, school board members, and site council members. Once the list is created, the researcher will purposefully select individuals who can provide in-depth information regarding the history of the program from the perspective of the capacity in which they served. Each category of stakeholders has a predetermined initial set of questions that will help the researcher answer the study’s research questions and fulfill the purpose of the study.

The researcher will also interview both current and former students of the program. In doing so, the researcher will list every student who has enrolled in the program from 1999 through 2014. The researcher will then stratify the list of students into three categories according to the year they first enrolled: 1999-2004, 2005-2009, and 2010-2014. Then, the researcher will narrow the list in each category according to the number of semesters the student was enrolled. For graduates, the minimum length of enrollment is four semesters and for students who dropped out of the program, the minimum length of enrollment was 2 semesters. Once the final list of students is complete, the researcher will randomly select one individual from each category: graduates and dropouts from each stratified time frame. The researcher will also create a list of current students in the program and randomly select three students who have been enrolled in the program for at least 3 semesters. The researcher will ask predetermined questions

for graduates, dropouts, and current students that will help answer the study's research questions.

Interviews will be conducted face-to-face when possible. In the event that an interview cannot be conducted face-to-face, the format of the interview will be over the phone. The researcher will record all interviews and will inform the interviewees prior to the start of each interview. If any subject selected for an interview is a minor (under the age of 18), parental permission will be obtained prior to any interview taking place.

**ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES OR TREATMENTS, IF ANY, THAT MIGHT BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO SUBJECT:** None

**LENGTH OF STUDY:** The projected length of time for the research of this study will begin in the fall of 2014 and continue through the spring of 2015.

The estimated time to complete each personal interview is 30 minutes. Each respondent should expect to spend 30 minutes total.

**RISKS ANTICIPATED:** There are no anticipated risks of the study. Should the researcher observe any sign of distress from a subject during an interview, the researcher will immediately inform the participant of their right to end their participation in the study. Furthermore, the researcher will provide contact information of counselors who can help in the coping and stress reduction process.

**BENEFITS ANTICIPATED:** School district leaders will gain a better understanding of how to start an alternative program in their district or model some of the programs used at Complete High School Maize for the purpose of helping reduce the number of high school dropouts.

**EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY:** The data will be treated confidentially and none of the data will be personally identifiable. Participation is strictly voluntary and participants may withdraw at any time without fear. Participants will be assured of complete confidentiality and all data will be protected for confidentiality. A participant's decision to participate or not participate will be kept completely confidential. The names of participants will not be associated with the data. Data collected from participants will only be available to the researcher. Consent forms will be signed by all participants and parents/guardians to document their voluntary participation; this will be completed prior to any involvement in the study.

**IS COMPENSATION OR MEDICAL TREATMENT AVAILABLE IF INJURY OCCURS:** No

**PARENTAL APPROVAL FOR MINORS:** Yes

**TERMS OF PARTICIPATION:** I understand this project is research, and that my participation is completely voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled. I further understand that my responses to the personal interview questions will be tape recorded for the purpose of accurate reproduction of answers and that the tapes will be destroyed upon production of an accurate transcript.

I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.

**Participant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Witness to Signature: (project staff)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B – IRB Application

<b>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:</b> IRB Protocol # _____	<b>Application Received:</b> _____
Routed: _____	Training Complete: _____

### Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB)

#### Application for Approval Form

Last revised on January 2011

**ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:**

- **Title of Project:** (if applicable, use the exact title listed in the grant/contract application)

A Selected Historical Analysis of the "Complete High School" Maize Kansas

- **Type of Application:**

- New/Renewal**       **Revision (to a pending new application)**  
 **Modification (to an existing # \_\_\_\_\_ approved application)**

- **Principal Investigator:** (must be a KSU faculty member)

<b>Name:</b>	Dr. David C. Thompson	<b>Degree/Title:</b>	Department Chair
<b>Department:</b>	Educational Leadership	<b>Campus Phone:</b>	(785)532-5535
<b>Campus Address:</b>	363 Bluemont Hall	<b>Fax #:</b>	(785)532-7304
<b>E-mail</b>	thomsond@ksu.edu		

- **Contact Name/Email/Phone for Questions/Problems with Form:** Kenneth C. Botts/cbotts@usd266.com/316-461-3700

- **Does this project involve any collaborators not part of the faculty/staff at KSU?** (projects with non-KSU collaborators may require additional coordination and approvals):

- No**  
 **Yes**

- **Project Classification** (Is this project part of one of the following?):

- Thesis**  
 **Dissertation**  
 **Faculty Research**  
 **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Class Projects should use the short form application for class projects.

- **Please attach a copy of the Consent Form:**

- Copy attached**  
 **Consent form not used**

- **Funding Source:**  **Internal**     **External (identify source and attach a copy of the sponsor's grant application or contract as submitted to the funding agency)**

- Copy attached**       **Not applicable**

- **Based upon criteria found in 45 CFR 46 – and the overview of projects that may qualify for exemption explained at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/checklists/decisioncharts.html> , I believe that my project using human subjects should be determined by the IRB to be exempt from IRB review:**

- No  
 Yes (If yes, please complete application including Section XII. C. 'Exempt Projects'; remember that only the IRB has the authority to determine that a project is exempt from IRB review)

**If you have questions, please call the University Research Compliance Office (URCO) at 532-3224, or [comply@ksu.edu](mailto:comply@ksu.edu)**



## Human Subjects Research Protocol Application Form

The KSU IRB is required by law to ensure that all research involving human subjects is adequately reviewed for specific information and is approved prior to inception of any proposed activity. Consequently, it is important that you answer all questions accurately. If you need help or have questions about how to complete this application, please call the Research Compliance Office at 532-3224, or e-mail us at **comply@ksu.edu**.

Please provide the requested information in the shaded text boxes. The shaded text boxes are designed to accommodate responses within the body of the application. As you type your answers, the text boxes will expand as needed. After completion, print the form and send the original and one photocopy to the Institutional Review Board, Room 203, Fairchild Hall.

<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	<b>Dr. David C. Thompson</b>
<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>A Selected Historical Analysis of the "Complete High School" Maize Kansas</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>December 2, 2014</b>

### **MODIFICATION**

**Is this a modification of an approved protocol?**  Yes  No **If yes, please comply with the following:**

If you are requesting a modification or a change to an IRB approved protocol, please provide a concise description of all of the changes that you are proposing in the following block. Additionally, please highlight or bold the proposed changes in the body of the protocol where appropriate, so that it is clearly discernable to the IRB reviewers what and where the proposed changes are. This will greatly help the committee and facilitate the review.

### **NON-TECHNICAL SYNOPSIS** (brief narrative description of proposal easily understood by nonscientists):

**This qualitative historical analysis will explore the evolution of Complete High School Maize, which is an alternative high school in Maize, Kansas. Specifically, this study first seeks to describe the circumstances that were present in Maize USD 266 that resulted in the starting of an alternative school for its students, and second, describe how the structure of CHSM has evolved over a fifteen year period.**

### **I. BACKGROUND** (concise narrative review of the literature and basis for the study):

**Students across the country continue to drop out of high school at an alarming rate. Many strategies have been identified to help schools meet the needs of those at-risk of dropping out. Despite decades of implementing these strategies, additional research is still needed to examine effective alternative programs that focus on meeting each student's individual needs. As Complete High School Maize has evolved and continually focused on each student, the program has achieved successes that other school districts have aimed to emulate. This study seeks to document the historical evolution of Complete High School Maize to serve as a guide for districts to help reduce the number of high school dropouts.**

**For the purpose of this study, an alternative high school is defined as a public high school that provides a non-traditional education for students who have not experienced success, are at-risk of dropping out, or have become dissatisfied with the traditional school setting. This particular study is about a Type I alternative program. A Type 1 alternative school seeks to make school challenging and fulfilling for all students involved. Specific characteristics of Type I alternative programs include a non-traditional school setting that is distinguished by a caring and professional staff, small size and small classes, and a personalized, whole-student approach that builds a sense of affiliation and features individual instruction, self-paced work, and career counseling.**

**At Complete High School Maize, enrollment in the school is accomplished by filling out an application. CHSM has a maximum capacity of serving 60 students at a time. Once the application is filled out, the student is placed on a waiting list which is done on a first-come, first-serve basis. There are two requirements for students to be accepted into CHSM. First, the student must be at**

least 16 years old. Secondly, the student must individually want to attend, i.e. students cannot be sent or placed at the school. Each 9 weeks, a new cohort of students is accepted into CHSM according to their placement on the waiting list.

**II. PROJECT/STUDY DESCRIPTION** (please provide a concise narrative description of the proposed activity in terms that will allow the IRB or other interested parties to clearly understand what it is that you propose to do that involves human subjects. This description must be in enough detail so that IRB members can make an informed decision about proposal).

**This research will use an alternative school located in Maize, Kansas called Complete High School Maize (CHSM) as the focus of the study. This school, located in Maize USD 266, has been in existence for over sixteen years and has helped over 350 students earn their high school diploma. CHSM has been recognized locally and nationally as a model alternative program.**

**Utilizing a historical analysis methodology, the researcher will collect and analyze primary resource artifacts and documents of the selected alternative program. In doing so, the researcher will begin to develop a chronology of events and insight into the school's past. To help fill in gaps left by the documents, the researcher will conduct interviews with key stakeholders from the school that will provide additional data for analysis. The data collected will be analyzed and synthesized for meaning related to the study's research questions.**

**They researcher will use these artifacts and interviews to help answer the research questions. These questions are:**

- 1. What circumstances were present in Maize USD 266 that resulted in creating an alternative school for its students?**
- 2. How has the structure of Complete High School Maize evolved from 1999 to 2014 and in response to what set of conditions and factors?**
  - a. What data show the outcomes and bases for structural revision?**

**III. OBJECTIVE** (briefly state the objective of the research – what you hope to learn from the study):

**The purpose of this study is to document the historical evolution of the program in order to serve as an example for other alternative programs or future alternative programs to emulate for the primary purpose of reducing the number of high school dropouts. Additionally, this study will provide historical documentation that will help preserve and share in the school's history for future generations of students, staff members, and community members.**

**IV. DESIGN AND PROCEDURES** (succinctly outline formal plan for study):

- A. Location of study: Complete High School Maize, USD 266, located in Maize, Kansas,**
- B. Variables to be studied: Alternative school graduates, drop outs, and current students; parents of alternative school students; teachers and administrators with alternative school experience; school district leaders with experience overseeing alternative school program; school site council members for alternative school**

- C. Data collection methods: (surveys, instruments, etc – PLEASE ATTACH)**

**This modified historical analysis will utilize interviews and document analysis to help document the historical evolution of CHSM.**

**Interviews: Participants in the study will complete an interview that will be directed by the interview guide and established interview questions. The interview guide and questions can be found in the appendices of the study. Each interview is expected to be completed in less than 30 minutes. Interviews will be conducted at Complete High School Maize.**

**Documents:** The documents and artifacts obtained include minutes from meetings, grant applications, publications, yearbooks, school improvement plans, district communication artifacts, and other archival materials. These documents will be obtained from the Maize USD 266 district office vault, the CHSM vault, the CHSM school library, and through a records request at the Maize USD 266 district office. Once obtained, these documents will undergo both internal and external criticism for verification.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| D. List any factors that might lead to a subject dropping out or withdrawing from a study. These might include, but are not limited to emotional or physical stress, pain, inconvenience, etc.: | <b>No factors are anticipated as reasons for any participant to withdraw from the study. The researcher will pay close attention to the participants for signs of distress. If observed, the researcher will immediately inform the participant of their right to end their participation at any time. In addition, the researcher will provide contact information of counselors who can help in the coping and stress reduction process.</b>                     |
| E. List all biological samples taken: (if any)  | <b>None</b>  |
| F. Debriefing procedures for participants:  | <b>At the conclusion of the interview, the participants of the study will be debriefed and reminded of the study's objectives. In the debriefing, the participants will also be encouraged to contact the lead investigator and IRB if any questions or concerns arise. The participants will be given contact information of the researcher and IRB. Finally, the participants will be informed about how to request access to the final report of the study.</b> |

**V. RESEARCH SUBJECTS:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| A. Source:   | <b>Maize USD 266: Complete High School Maize</b>  |
| B. Number:   | <b>24</b>   |
| C. Characteristics: (list any unique qualifiers desirable for research subject participation)  | <b>Each participant in the study will have a role in the historical evolution of CHSM. These participants include the former and current principal at CHSM, current and past students, current and past teachers, school board members, committee members, parents of students, and current and former superintendents.</b>   |
| D. Recruitment procedures: (Explain how do you plan to recruit your subjects? Attach any fliers, posters, etc. used in recruitment. If you plan to use any inducements, ie. cash, gifts, prizes, etc., please list them here.) | <b>In determining the key stakeholders of the alternative program, a list will first be created with all individuals who are considered to be stakeholders of the program. For the purpose of this study, a stakeholder of the program is considered to be an individual who is documented as having served in some capacity throughout the history of the program. These individuals include both current and former teachers, administrators, parents, school board members, and site council members. Once the list is created, the researcher will purposefully select individuals who can provide in-depth information regarding the history</b> |

of the program from the perspective of the capacity in which they served. Each category of stakeholders has a predetermined initial set of questions that will help the researcher answer the study's research questions and fulfill the purpose of the study.

The researcher will also interview both current and former students of the program. In doing so, the researcher will list every student who has enrolled in the program from 1999 through 2014. The researcher will then stratify the list of students into three categories according to the year they first enrolled: 1999-2004, 2005-2009, and 2010-2014. Then, the researcher will narrow the list in each category according to the number of semesters the student was enrolled. For graduates, the minimum length of enrollment is four semesters and for students who dropped out of the program, the minimum length of enrollment was 2 semesters. Once the final list of students is complete, the researcher will randomly select one individual from each category: graduates and dropouts from each stratified time frame. The researcher will also create a list of current students in the program and randomly select three students who have been enrolled in the program for at least 3 semesters. The researcher will ask predetermined questions for graduates, dropouts, and current students that will help answer the study's research questions.

Interviews will be conducted face-to-face when possible. In the event that an interview cannot be conducted face-to-face, the format of the interview will be over the phone. The researcher will record all interviews and will inform the interviewees prior to the start of each interview. If any subject selected for an interview is a minor (under the age of 18), parental permission will be obtained prior to any interview taking place.

- VI. **RISK – PROTECTION – BENEFITS:** The answers for the three questions below are central to human subjects research. You must demonstrate a reasonable balance between anticipated risks to research participants, protection strategies, and anticipated benefits to participants or others.
- A. **Risks for Subjects:** (Identify any reasonably foreseeable physical, psychological, or social risks for participants. State that there are “no known risks” if appropriate.)  
**There are no known risks beyond what participants would experience in their daily lives.**
- B. **Minimizing Risk:** (Describe specific measures used to minimize or protect subjects from anticipated risks.)

**Should the researcher observe any sign of distress from a subject during an interview, the researcher will immediately inform the participant of their right to end their participation in the study. Furthermore, the researcher will provide contact information of counselors who can help in the coping and stress reduction process. The counseling services will be immediately be provided at the location of the interview, which is Complete High School Maize.**

**Prior to beginning the interview, the researcher will work to establish a level of comfort with the subject. In addition, the participant will be informed of the study design. The participant will be given a chance to ask any questions they have and will be given the contact information for the primary investigator and IRB should they have questions at a later time. All interviews will be conducted at Complete High School Maize, and in a location that ensures confidentiality. If interviews cannot be conducted at Complete High School Maize, a phone interview will take place. All data will be stored in a secure location where only the researcher has access. Any transcripts prepared by someone other than the researcher will require a signed agreement with the transcriber to maintain confidentiality as well.**

- C. **Benefits:** (Describe any reasonably expected benefits for research participants, a class of participants, or to society as a whole.)

**With this study, several potential benefits could arise. By helping students stay in school in not drop out, society as a whole could benefit economically and socially. Students who stay in school and earn a high school diploma have a greater opportunity earn higher wages, are both physically and mentally healthier over the course of their lifetime, and help stop the cycle poverty passed on from generation to generation.**

**Current and past students and stakeholders of CHSM could benefit intrinsically by feeling they have helped preserve the history of CHSM and help future students stay in school.**

In your opinion, does the research involve **more than minimal risk** to subjects? (“Minimal risk” means that “the risks of harm anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, considering probability and magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.”)

Yes       No

**VII. CONFIDENTIALITY:** Confidentiality is the formal treatment of information that an individual has disclosed to you in a relationship of trust and with the expectation that it will not be divulged to others without permission in ways that are inconsistent with the understanding of the original disclosure. Consequently, it is your responsibility to protect information that you gather from human research subjects in a way that is consistent with your agreement with the volunteer and with their expectations. If possible, it is best if research subjects’ identity and linkage to information or data remains unknown.

Explain how you are going to protect confidentiality of research subjects and/or data or records. Include plans for maintaining records after completion.

**The data will be treated confidentially and none of the data will be personally identifiable. Participation is strictly voluntary and participants may withdraw at any time without fear. Participants will be assured of complete confidentiality and all data will be protected for confidentiality. A participant's decision to participate or not participate will be kept completely confidential. The names of participants will not be associated with the data. Data collected from participants will only be available to the researcher. Consent forms will be signed by all participants and parents/guardians to document their voluntary participation; this will be completed prior to any involvement in the study. Recordings of interviews will be destroyed upon production of an accurate transcript. All materials collected for the purpose of this study will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's home for three years after successful dissertation defense. After three years has passed, all materials related to the study will be destroyed.**

**VIII. INFORMED CONSENT:** Informed consent is a critical component of human subjects research – it is your responsibility to make sure that any potential subject knows exactly what the project that you are planning is about, and what his/her potential role is. (There may be projects where some forms of “deception” of the subject is necessary for the execution of the study, but it must be carefully justified to and approved by the IRB). A schematic for determining when a waiver or alteration of informed consent may be considered by the IRB is found at

<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/consentckls.html>

Even if your proposed activity does qualify for a waiver of informed consent, you must still provide potential participants with basic information that informs them of their rights as subjects, i.e. explanation that the project is research and the purpose of the research, length of study, study procedures, debriefing issues to include anticipated benefits, study and administrative contact information, confidentiality strategy, and the fact that participation is entirely voluntary and can be terminated at any time without penalty, etc. Even if your potential subjects are completely anonymous, you are obliged to provide them (and the IRB) with basic information about your project. See informed consent example on the URCO website. It is a federal requirement to maintain informed consent forms for 3 years after the study completion.

**Yes No Answer the following questions about the informed consent procedures.**

- A. Are you using a written informed consent form? If “yes,” include a copy with this application. If “no” see b.
- B. In accordance with guidance in 45 CFR 46, I am requesting a waiver or alteration of informed consent elements (See Section VII above). If “yes,” provide a basis and/or justification for your request.

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- C. Are you using the online Consent Form Template provided by the URCO? If “no,” does your Informed Consent document has all the minimum required elements of informed consent found in the Consent Form Template? (Please explain)

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- D. Are your research subjects anonymous? If they are anonymous, you will not have access to any information that will allow you to determine the identity of the research subjects in your study, or to link research data to a specific individual in any way. Anonymity is a powerful protection for potential research subjects. (An anonymous subject is one whose identity is unknown even to the researcher, or the data or information collected cannot be linked in any way to a specific person).

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- E. Are subjects debriefed about the purposes, consequences, and benefits of the research? Debriefing refers to a mechanism for informing the research subjects of the results or conclusions, after the data is collected and analyzed, and the study is over. (If “no” explain why.) Attach copy of debriefing statement to be utilized.

**\*It is a requirement that you maintain all signed copies of informed consent documents for at least 3 years following the completion of your study. These documents must be available for examination and**

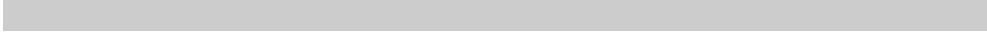
review by federal compliance officials.

IX. **PROJECT INFORMATION:** (If you answer yes to any of the questions below, you should explain them in one of the paragraphs above)

- | Yes                      | No                                  | Does the project involve any of the following?   |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a. Deception of subjects   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | b. Shock or other forms of punishment  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | c. Sexually explicit materials or questions about sexual orientation, sexual experience or sexual abuse            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | d. Handling of money or other valuable commodities   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | e. Extraction or use of blood, other bodily fluids, or tissues   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | f. Questions about any kind of illegal or illicit activity   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | g. Purposeful creation of anxiety  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | h. Any procedure that might be viewed as invasion of privacy   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | i. Physical exercise or stress   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | j. Administration of substances (food, drugs, etc.) to subjects  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | k. Any procedure that might place subjects at risk   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | l. Any form of potential abuse; i.e., psychological, physical, sexual  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | m. Is there potential for the data from this project to be published in a journal, presented at a conference, etc? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | n. Use of surveys or questionnaires for data collection  |
- IF YES, PLEASE ATTACH!!**

X. **SUBJECT INFORMATION:** (If you answer yes to any of the questions below, you should explain them in one of the paragraphs above)

- | Yes                                 | No                                  | Does the research involve subjects from any of the following categories?   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | a. Under 18 years of age (these subjects require parental or guardian consent)   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | b. Over 65 years of age  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | c. Physically or mentally disabled   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | d. Economically or educationally disadvantaged   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | e. Unable to provide their own legal informed consent  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | f. Pregnant females as target population   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | g. Victims   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | h. Subjects in institutions (e.g., prisons, nursing homes, halfway houses)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | i. Are research subjects in this activity students recruited from university classes or volunteer pools? If so, do you have a reasonable alternative(s) to participation as a research subject in your project, i.e., another activity such as writing or reading that would serve to protect students from unfair pressure or coercion to participate in this project? If you answered this question "Yes," explain any <u>alternatives options</u> for class credit for potential human subject volunteers in your study. (It is also important to remember that: Students must be free to choose <b>not</b> to participate in research that they have signed up for <b>at any time</b> without penalty. Communication of their decision can be conveyed in any manner, to include <b>simply not showing up</b> for the research.) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | j. Are research subjects <b>audio</b> taped? If yes, how do you plan to protect the recorded information and mitigate any additional risks?<br>Only the researcher will have access to the audio taped and transcribed material. All material will be kept in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's house. The material will be retained for at least three years after the study's completion. After at least three years all transcribed material will be destroyed. Once recorded interviews have been transcribed and confirmed for accuracy, they will be destroyed.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | k. Are research subjects' images being recorded (video taped, photographed)? If yes, how do you plan to protect the recorded information and mitigate any additional risks?  |



XI. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Concerns have been growing that financial interests in research may threaten the safety and rights of human research subjects. Financial interests are not in themselves prohibited and may well be appropriate and legitimate. Not all financial interests cause Conflict of Interest (COI) or harm to human subjects. However, to the extent that financial interests may affect the welfare of human subjects in research, IRB's, institutions, and investigators must consider what actions regarding financial interests may be necessary to protect human subjects. Please answer the following questions:

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/> | <b>No</b><br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <p>a. Do you or the institution have any proprietary interest in a potential product of this research, including patents, trademarks, copyrights, or licensing agreements?</p> <p>b. Do you have an equity interest in the research sponsor (publicly held or a non-publicly held company)?</p> <p>c. Do you receive significant payments of other sorts, eg., grants, equipment, retainers for consultation and/or honoraria from the sponsor of this research?</p> <p>d. Do you receive payment per participant or incentive payments?</p> <p>e. If you answered yes on any of the above questions, please provide adequate explanatory information so the IRB can assess any potential COI indicated above.</p> |
|--|--|--|

**XII. PROJECT COLLABORATORS:**

**A. KSU Collaborators – list anyone affiliated with KSU who is collecting or analyzing data:** (list all collaborators on the project, including co-principal investigators, undergraduate and graduate students)

Name:	Department:	Campus Phone:	Campus Email:
David C. Thompson	Educational Leadership	785.532.5535	thomsond@ksu.edu
Kenneth C. Botts	Educational Leadership (student)	785.532.5535	thebotty@ksu.edu

**B. Non-KSU Collaborators:** (List all collaborators on your human subjects research project not affiliated with KSU in the spaces below. KSU has negotiated an Assurance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP), the federal office responsible for oversight of research involving human subjects. When research involving human subjects includes collaborators who are not employees or agents of KSU the activities of those unaffiliated individuals may be covered under the KSU Assurance only in accordance with a formal, written agreement of commitment to relevant human subject protection policies and IRB oversight. The Unaffiliated Investigators Agreement can be found and downloaded at <http://www.k-state.edu/research/comply/irb/forms/Unaffiliated%20Investigator%20Agreement.doc>)

**C.** The URCO must have a copy of the Unaffiliated Investigator Agreement on file for each non-KSU collaborator who is not covered by their own IRB and assurance with OHRP. Consequently, it is critical that you identify non-KSU collaborators, and initiate any coordination and/or approval process early, to minimize delays caused by administrative requirements.)

Name:	Organization:	Phone:	Institutional Email:



**Does your non-KSU collaborator's organization have an Assurance with OHRP?** (for Federalwide Assurance and Multiple Project Assurance (MPA) listings of other institutions, please reference the OHRP website under Assurance Information at: <http://ohrp.cit.nih.gov/search>).

No

Yes If yes, Collaborator's FWA or MPA # \_\_\_\_\_

**Is your non-KSU collaborator's IRB reviewing this proposal?**

No

Yes If yes, IRB approval # \_\_\_\_\_

- C. Exempt Projects:** 45 CFR 46 identifies six categories of research involving human subjects that may be exempt from IRB review. The categories for exemption are listed here: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/checklists/decisioncharts.html>. If you believe that your project qualifies for exemption, please indicate which exemption category applies (1-6). Please remember that only the IRB can make the final determination whether a project is exempt from IRB review, or not.

**Exemption Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**XIII. CLINICAL TRIAL**  Yes  No

(If so, please give product.)

**Export Controls Training:**

-The Provost has mandated that all KSU faculty/staff with a full-time appointment participate in the Export Control Program.

-If you are not in our database as having completed the Export Control training, this proposal will not be approved until your participation is verified.

-To complete the Export Control training, follow the instructions below:

Click on:

<http://www.k-state.edu/research/comply/ecp/index.htm>

1. After signing into K-State Online, you will be taken to the Export Control Homepage
2. Read the directions and click on the video link to begin the program
3. Make sure you enter your name / email when prompted so that participation is verified

If you click on the link and are not taken to K-State Online, this means that you have already completed the Export Control training and have been removed from the roster. If this is the case, no further action is required.

-Can't recall if you have completed this training? Contact the URCO at 785-532-3224 or [comply@ksu.edu](mailto:comply@ksu.edu) and we will be happy to look it up for you.

**Post Approval Monitoring:** The URCO has a Post-Approval Monitoring (PAM) program to help assure that activities are performed in accordance with provisions or procedures approved by the IRB. Accordingly, the URCO staff will arrange a PAM visit as appropriate; to assess compliance with approved activities.

**If you have questions, please call the University Research Compliance Office (URCO) at 532-3224, or [comply@ksu.edu](mailto:comply@ksu.edu)**

## INVESTIGATOR ASSURANCE FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

(Print this page separately because it requires a signature by the PI.)

P.I. Name: Dr. David C. Thompson  
Title of Project: A Selected Historical Analysis of the "Complete High School" Maize Kansas

**XIV. ASSURANCES:** As the Principal Investigator on this protocol, I provide assurances for the following:

- A. **Research Involving Human Subjects:** This project will be performed in the manner described in this proposal, and in accordance with the Federalwide Assurance FWA00000865 approved for Kansas State University available at <http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/polasur.htm#FWA>, applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines. Any proposed deviation or modification from the procedures detailed herein must be submitted to the IRB, and be approved by the Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB) prior to implementation.
- B. **Training:** I assure that all personnel working with human subjects described in this protocol are technically competent for the role described for them, and have completed the required IRB training modules found on the URCO website at: <http://www.k-state.edu/research/comply/irb/training/index.htm>. I understand that no proposals will receive final IRB approval until the URCO has documentation of completion of training by all appropriate personnel.
- C. **Extramural Funding:** If funded by an extramural source, I assure that this application accurately reflects all procedures involving human subjects as described in the grant/contract proposal to the funding agency. I also assure that I will notify the IRB/URCO, the KSU PreAward Services, and the funding/contract entity if there are modifications or changes made to the protocol after the initial submission to the funding agency.
- D. **Study Duration:** I understand that it is the responsibility of the Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB) to perform continuing reviews of human subjects research as necessary. I also understand that as continuing reviews are conducted, it is my responsibility to provide timely and accurate review or update information when requested, to include notification of the IRB/URCO when my study is changed or completed.
- E. **Conflict of Interest:** I assure that I have accurately described (in this application) any potential Conflict of Interest that my collaborators, the University, or I may have in association with this proposed research activity.
- F. **Adverse Event Reporting:** I assure that I will promptly report to the IRB / URCO any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others that involve the protocol as approved. Unanticipated or Adverse Event Form is located on the URCO website at: <http://www.k-state.edu/research/comply/irb/forms/index.htm>. In the case of a serious event, the Unanticipated or Adverse Events Form may follow a phone call or email contact with the URCO.
- G. **Accuracy:** I assure that the information herein provided to the Committee for Human Subjects Research is to the best of my knowledge complete and accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal Investigator Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

# Appendix C – Interview Guide

## *The Interview Guide for Individual Interviews*

### 1. Initial Documentation

- a. Time of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Date:
- c. Location:
- d. Interviewee:
- e. Description of interviewee’s position and role in the evolution of CHSM:

### 2. Introduction: Opening Statement

*(Begin recording)*

The purpose of this project is to recreate the history of Complete High School Maize in USD 266. This is important for two reasons. First, this study will be able to serve as a guide for other school districts who are interested in creating an alternative program for their students. Secondly, this study will serve as a historical documentation to help preserve and share the history of Complete High School Maize for future generations of students.

I will use the information gathered throughout this interview for my dissertation to help me reconstruct the history of CHSM. The information you provide is important because of your direct involvement within CHSM. Your involvement in this history gives you a unique viewpoint to describe what you see has

happened during the school's fifteen year history. The questions I will ask involve your perceptions of why CHSM exists, how it has evolved over the years, and what you believe to be the schools strengths and weaknesses.

In total, I will interview 24 stakeholders from CHSM. I will combine everyone's responses to obtain a clear picture of the history. Nothing you say will be directly attributed to you in the dissertation or in any discussions with others. This report will not be used in any way to evaluate the school; rather, it will be used to write the collective history of Complete High School Maize.

As the interview begins, feel free to ask any questions that help clarify the questions for you. If there is a question that you do not feel comfortable responding to, please say so. You will not be required to answer anything you are not comfortable answering. I will be tape recording our conversation so that I can have an accurate account of what you say. Do I have permission to record our conversation? At any time in our conversation, you can stop the recorder. In addition to tape recording, I will be taking notes. Do you have any questions before we begin?

### **3. Begin Interview**

- a. Key reminders for researcher:
  - i. Have appropriate questions ready
  - ii. Silence is okay

iii. Repeat to check for clarity and understanding

#### **4. Interview Conclusion and Debriefing**

a. Statement:

Thank you once again for volunteering to be a part of this study. Your insight is invaluable to the research of reconstructing the history of Complete High School Maize. Your contributions to this research could have a direct impact on helping other school district model their alternative program after CHSM and in doing so, can help keep students in school.

If you come up with any questions once we depart, please do not hesitate to contact me. Here is my business card. You can also review your copy of the informed consent form.

Again, I would like to remind you of my interest in protecting your confidentiality. I will not use your name or any identifiers that can be traced back to you.

*(Stop recording)*

## **Appendix D – Interview Questions for Administrators**

### *Interview Questions for Administrators*

Thank you for taking time to complete the following interview questions for my original research about your perceptions related to Complete High School Maize. If you consent, your interview will be recorded and transcribed. An alias name will be assigned to you to help protect your identity.

1. How long have you (did you) served (serve) as the principal of CHSM?
2. What role did you play in the creation of CHSM?
3. Why do you choose to work at CHSM? (Why did you choose to work at CHSM?)
4. What programs/activities do you feel are most beneficial to students?
5. How has the perception of CHSM changed (if at all) over time?
6. What obstacles or barriers have hindered the potential success of CHSM?
7. What is your favorite thing about CHSM?
8. What is your least favorite thing about CHSM?
9. What qualities do you look for in determining staff?

10. Is CHSM a successful alternative program? Why or why not?

## **Appendix E – Interview Questions for Current Students and Graduates**

### *Interview Questions for Students*

Thank you for taking time to complete the following interview questions for my original research about your perceptions related to Complete High School Maize. If you consent, your interview will be recorded and transcribed. An alias name will be assigned to you to help protect your identity.

1. Are you a current CHSM student or a former CHSM student?
2. How long have you been a student at CHSM? (How long were you a student enrolled at CHSM?)
3. What are your thoughts about Complete High School Maize? Did your perception about CHSM changed once you enrolled? Please explain.
4. What positive things have you (did you) witnessed once you became a CHSM student?
5. What negative ramifications have you witnessed since you enrolled at CHSM? (What negative ramifications did you witness when you were enrolled at CHSM?)
6. What programs or activities do you feel are the most beneficial? (What programs or activities did you feel were the most beneficial?)
7. What do you like the most about CHSM?
8. What do you like the least about CHSM?
9. Would you or would you not recommend CHSM to another student? Why or why not?
10. What role, if any, did you play in the creation of CHSM?



## **Appendix F – Interview Questions for Teachers**

### *Interview Questions for Teachers*

Thank you for taking time to complete the following interview questions for my original research about your perceptions related to Complete High School Maize. If you consent, your interview will be recorded and transcribed. An alias name will be assigned to you to help protect your identity.

1. Are you a current teacher at CHSM? How long have you taught at CHSM?  
(How long did you teach at CHSM?)
2. What role did you play in the creation of CHSM?
3. Why do you choose to teach at CHSM? (If no longer there, why did you choose to leave CHSM?)
4. What is your favorite thing about CHSM?
5. What is your least favorite thing about CHSM?
6. What programs/activities do you feel are most beneficial to students?

## **Appendix G – Interview Questions for Site Council Members**

### *Interview Questions for Site Council Members*

Thank you for taking time to complete the following interview questions for my original research about your perceptions related to Complete High School Maize. If you consent, your interview will be recorded and transcribed. An alias name will be assigned to you to help protect your identity.

1. Why did you choose to serve on the Victory Street Council and help investigate starting an alternative school in Maize?
2. When you first joined the committee, what were your expectations?
3. What role did you play in the creation of CHSM?
4. What is your perception of CHSM today?
5. What obstacles were overcome to help turn CHSM from an idea into a reality?
6. What programs/activities do you feel are important to the success of CHSM and the students of CHSM?

## **Appendix H – Interview Questions for School Board Members**

### *Interview Questions for School Board Members*

Thank you for taking time to complete the following interview questions for my original research about your perceptions related to Complete High School Maize. If you consent, your interview will be recorded and transcribed. An alias name will be assigned to you to help protect your identity.

1. How long have you been a school board member in Maize? Were you on the school board when CHSM went from an idea to a reality?
2. What role did you play in the creation of CHSM?
3. What is your perception of Complete High School Maize?
4. Do you feel there is a need in Maize for students to have an alternative to the traditional education setting? Explain.
5. What feedback do you (did you) receive regarding CHSM from tax payers residing in the district?
6. In your opinion, what programs or activities are most beneficial to students?
7. Without an alternative school in Maize, do you believe the dropout rate would increase throughout the district?

8. (If on BOE when CHSM started): What barriers or obstacles were overcome in developing CHSM?

## **Appendix I – Interview Questions for Parents**

### *Interview Questions for Parents*

Thank you for taking time to complete the following interview questions for my original research about your perceptions related to Complete High School Maize. If you consent, your interview will be recorded and transcribed. An alias name will be assigned to you to help protect your identity.

1. Are you the parent of a current CHSM student or a former CHSM student?
2. How long has your student been a student at CHSM? (How long was your student enrolled at CHSM?)
3. What are your thoughts about Complete High School Maize? Did your perception about CHSM change once your student enrolled as a student? Please explain.
4. What role did you play in the creation of CHSM?
5. What positive things have you (did you) witnessed (witness) once your student became (became) a CHSM student?
6. What negative ramifications have you witnessed since your student enrolled at CHSM? (What negative ramifications did you witness when your student was enrolled at CHSM?)

7. What programs or activities do you feel are the most beneficial to your student? (What programs or activities did you feel were the most beneficial to your student?)
8. What do you like the most about CHSM?
9. What do you like the least about CHSM?
10. Would you or would you not recommend CHSM to another parent? Why or why not?

## **Appendix J – Interview Questions for Superintendents**

### *Interview Questions for Superintendents*

Thank you for taking time to complete the following interview questions for my original research about your perceptions related to Complete High School Maize. If you consent, your interview will be recorded and transcribed. An alias name will be assigned to you to help protect your identity.

1. How long have you (did you) served (serve) as the superintendent of USD 266?
2. In your opinion, what is the purpose of CHSM?
3. What, if any, concerns were brought to your attention regarding CHSM? How did you respond to those concerns?
4. How has the perception of CHSM changed (if at all) over time?
5. What role did you play in the creation of CHSM?
6. What obstacles or barriers have hindered the potential success of CHSM?
7. What is your favorite thing about CHSM?
8. What is your least favorite thing about CHSM?
9. Is CHSM a successful alternative program? Why or why not?

## **Appendix K – Interview Questions for Dropouts**

### *Interview Questions for Dropouts*

Thank you for taking time to complete the following interview questions for my original research about your perceptions related to Complete High School Maize. If you consent, your interview will be recorded and transcribed. An alias name will be assigned to you to help protect your identity.

1. How long were you a student at CHSM?
2. What caused you to leave CHSM?
3. If you could and wanted to, what would you do differently if you were able to go back in time and be a student at CHSM?
4. What are your thoughts about Complete High School Maize? Did your perception about CHSM changed once you enrolled? Please explain.
5. What positive things have you (did you) witnessed once you became a CHSM student?
6. What negative ramifications have you witnessed since you enrolled at CHSM? (What negative ramifications did you witness when you were enrolled at CHSM?)
7. What programs or activities do you feel are the most beneficial? (What programs or activities did you feel were the most beneficial?)
8. What do you like the most about CHSM?
9. What do you like the least about CHSM?
10. Would you or would you not recommend CHSM to another student? Why or why not?
11. What role, if any, did you play in the creation of CHSM?