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Engaging Elementary Teachers in Reform: What Administrators and Policy Makers Should Know

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What Administrators and Policy Makers Should Know

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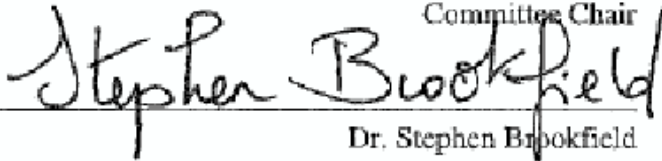
Engaging Elementary Teachers in Reform:
What Administrators and Policy Makers Should Know

We certify that we have read this dissertation and approve it as adequate in scope and quality. We have found that it is complete and satisfactory in all respects, and that any and all revisions required by the final examining committee have been made.

Dissertation Committee

Dr. Deb DeMeester
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Dr. Tom Fish
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Final Approval Date

ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study sought to illuminate the voices of elementary educators experiencing reform. Common and disparate concerns in reform from both elementary teachers and administrators were explored. The study revealed the motivations, desires and fears of 14 elementary teachers and three administrators through semi-structured interviews. Teacher interview data revealed a passion for teaching, the ethical tensions involved in reform, and the ways their sense of competence is challenged by reform. An examination of administrators' assumptions regarding reform/trend cycles, issues of time for reform, and a failure to engage teachers in decision making were presented.

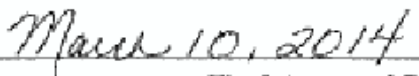   The findings indicated both teachers and administrators care for students, but a strong theme of care revealed itself as a "hidden" curriculum in the main concerns of teachers. In addition, findings showed reform disrupts the relationships between teachers, administrators and students. Analysis of the data also indicated a lack of clarity in communication from administrators to teachers, an assumption by administrators that teachers do not need time to adjust to reform, and while dialogue in reform exists between administration and teachers, teachers are usually excluded from decision-making in reform initiatives. Recommendations for administrators and policy makers include applying Kotter's (1996) eight change stages and the translated lessons from the data in reform. Future study could include an examination of standardized testing and reform on students' emotional safety, as well as the notion that reform creates competition between teachers, schools and districts.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my father who was not physically present on my journey but I know he was smiling and supporting me all the way. I would also like to dedicate this paper to teachers who make a difference in the lives of students every day.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Completing this dissertation involved the work and support from many individuals. First, I want to thank my dissertation committee: Chair, Dr. Deb DeMeester, Dr. Tom Fish, and Dr. Stephen Brookfield. Thank you for your wisdom, support and insightfulness not only on the work of this paper, but as the professors of many of my classes. Your modeling of educational professionalism, talent, and care reflects the excellence with which educators should aspire. May I emulate and share the gifts you have given. To my husband, Patrick, thank you for all of the support and love you have given me in the past years. I realize raising a four-pawed furry creature, taking care of household chores by yourself, and making sure I had "office time" was not an easy task.   To my mom and dad for living, breathing, and embodying the importance of a good education and of course, to my mom, for her fiscal and emotional support.

Thank you to all my friends and family who showed an interest (or perhaps feigned an interest to humor me) in my work and supported me with love. Thank you to the Doctorate in Educational Leadership Staff at the Minneapolis Campus at the University of St. Thomas. May you carry on your cohort tradition and engage many future members in the visions of powerful leadership. Lastly, I want to thank the members of Cohort 23. The cohort model is amazing and the members of our small yet talented, spiritual, and supportive group are outstanding. I could not have survived it without you! May we be "Forever Young" and sing, laugh, and share again soon!

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Over the years many efforts by leaders in educational reform have changed how schools operate. Educational reform refers to the implementation of initiatives intended to improve educational quality, efficiency, and equity (Brand, 2009). In 1965 the first wave of educational reform, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), a federal statute enacted by congress, became the most far reaching legislation affecting education. This Act reformed education by funding primary and secondary education, assuring equal opportunity for a quality education to all students. The Act defined and funded several Title programs, such as Title I, a program ensuring quality education for low-income families. Continual revisions of this Act resulted in additional amendments, requiring schools to administer statewide tests to increase schools' accountability (20 U.S.C. 2701 et seq., sec 101).

In the 1980s the next wave of reform, a governmental policy entitled *A Nation at Risk*, written by The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983), highlighted the decline of public education. It called for states and the federal government to embark on a series of reforms. As a result, state and local leaders drafted new policies and implemented new initiatives, shaping the way classroom teachers delivered instruction. In some cases, policies demanded more homework, longer school days, and were based on the assumption that more school time would improve student learning (Good, 2011).

The largest and most impactful recent wave of educational reform, the revision and enactment of the original ESEA during the George W. Bush Administration, called the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2002) led to more public scrutiny of education and school accountability through test scores (Olsen & Sexton, 2009). Over time the authors and implementers of reform created a policy-laden culture in education, significantly changing how

schools operate, how administrators lead, and how teachers teach. Despite the current research

on the various arguments in reforming public education and suggested strategies for supporting

teachers and leaders in reform, teachers continue to get pulled under the tow, struggling with the

impacts of educational change.

In response to the national call for reform, state leaders and school administrators quickly

implemented new policies to bridge the gap between national mandates and classroom activities.

New policies at the state and local level included the requirement of state mandated tests,

mandated texts and mandated curriculum. School district leaders required a "strict adherence to

purchased curricula, prescriptive teaching methods and mandated textbooks" (Olsen & Sexton,

2009, p. 10). As a result, many teachers exhibited resistance to change and workplace cultures

became tense (Berkovich, 2011; Olsen & Sexton, 2009; Sannino, 2010). Under decades of

educational policy in public schools, Ball (as cited in Priestley, Edwards & Priestley, 2012)

found, "Work has intensified, bureaucracy has increased, and teachers have felt increasingly

disempowered and professionally marginalized" (p. 192). Researchers (Olsen & Sexton, 2009;

Priestley et al., 2012; Sannino, 2010; Vetter, 2012) noted that teachers continue to experience

barriers to change including a lack of power and a lack of support from their leaders in reform.

Finally, the newest initiative launched by the Obama administration, renewed the federal

commitment to school reform through ESEA and his "Educate to Innovate" campaign (The

White House, 2009), in which he emphasized a need for more curricular programming in the

areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education. Nationally, the effects

of this legislation are fairly unknown due to the recent unveiling of his program. Several

authors' work (DeJarnette, 2012; McGrew, 2012) support the inclusion of STEM in K-12

education. Locally, the effects of this legislation have inspired the creation of STEM based

schools, curriculum and other initiatives.

Reflexive Statement

In the district we are about to examine, these national and state waves of reform continue

to shape my experiences as a teacher and leader in education. As a result of NCLB, the state of

Minnesota's policy makers created a statewide standardized test called the Minnesota

Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs). Teachers administer this test once a year and the results

are published in local and state newspapers, declaring some school districts as "passing" and

others as "failing." This political spectacle causes a domino effect in communities and

neighborhoods. Based on the publicized scores of this one annual test, schools and teachers

become the objects of intense scrutiny. The high stakes associated with this test force teachers to

spend the majority of their springs each year reviewing concepts, sending home practice sheets

to families, and altering their normal practice; in other words, "teaching" to the test. For the

elementary schools in my district identified as "failing," principals have become micromanagers

of prescriptive curriculum and prescribed behaviors of staff.

My interest in educational change stems from my passion for teaching and learning. In

my years of teaching I experienced roles as a teacher, staff member and mentor in five different

schools. Working with different leaders and staff, I have witnessed how they interpret and

implement educational reform from one end of the spectrum to the other. I have seen teachers

embrace each reform and implement each change. I have also seen teachers implement a reform,

only to have it change a few years later. Their frustration in having to throw out the current

mastery of the content must feel like the "sand" rubbing in their face as the next wave of reform

rolls by. I understand the frustration and resistance teachers feel when a new reform or initiative comes along.

In my own teaching practice I have experienced and implemented numerous changes through educational reform. Having served on our district science committee, I experienced a shift from textbook teaching to a pedagogy utilizing hands-on learning and inquiry. In moving to a different building in the last few years, I discovered unused and unopened science materials from our newest and our last adopted science curriculums. In my mind, these materials serve as evidence from teachers who "rejected" the newest reform and led me to wonder what causes some teachers to ignore the mandates of the district and others to follow them. Other trends and reforms in education I have implemented include numerous grading systems, Outcome Based Education (OBE), whole language and hands on inquiry. Due in part to Obama's STEM initiative, my district allocated funding for a few STEM coordinators at the elementary buildings to support inquiry literacy. As this paper is being written, I currently serve as one of these coordinators in a full-time position.

As a staff member in my district for over 20 years I have seen educational trends come and go and wonder what teachers have learned in the process. I see and hear about teachers who are exhausted from reform and the demands children and families place on them on a daily basis. A colleague of mine who has been in education for only seven years is already questioning her role in the classroom due to frustration in fulfilling all of the needs of children and the resulting exhaustion she experiences on a daily basis. I observed another colleague of mine complain about the lack of time necessary to teach all of the subjects in primary grades, particularly with new initiatives, such as STEM, at the forefront of our curriculum planning. I have also witnessed teachers' refusal to change their practice because they know something new will come

along, so "Why bother changing?" As waves of new initiatives and reform rolled in, teachers in

my district became overwhelmed. In time, they started giving up in trying the latest "fad" and

would not change their practice.

However, as our students become digital natives and as our educational environment

shifts with the needs of society, teachers' practice will have to change. Therefore, it is important

for administrators to hear and understand teachers' experiences during educational reform.

Hence, it is important to illuminate the voices of those experiencing the impact of reform; the

teachers--the deliverers of instruction, the caretakers of children. On a larger scale, teachers are

frustrated with the consequences of educational reform related to standardized-testing. Teachers

are striking or protesting in neighboring states due to unfair teacher evaluation systems based on

limited testing data. Teachers are rallying for support and strength from their unions to oppose

state and federal legislation that creates inequity between public and private schools. Teachers

feel the effects of this legislation in my district as well. As a result, teachers have experienced a

sense of alarm and panic, thinking they will be fired due to student test scores or even seniority.

Teachers are removed from policy making, yet their livelihood depends on compliance.

Statement of the Problem

Historical Context

In this fast paced modern world of digital information and globalization, educational

reform continues to affect schools. As policy makers alter the dimensions of reform, many

school districts struggle to meet their demands. Hence, educational change in schools is

inconsistent and school reforms are not resulting in the positive changes intended for teachers

and students. If teachers are directly responsible for the implementation of these changes, what

are the "disconnects" between the policy makers, the administrators and the teachers?

Researchers' findings indicate a history of reform that includes teacher resistance and an examination of teachers' needs. What is missing in the literature is an understanding of teachers' experiences during a history of educational reform. The authors in a study on school reform (Thornburg & Mungai, 2011) proposed that "most research has obscured the political wisdom of those teachers who resist reform" (p. 207). In addition, they identified a limitation in their study for future research, concluding that it would have been useful to interview teachers in the schools not directly involved with reform processes. What perspective do they bring to the reform process? In order to discover the current perceptions of elementary teachers in the face of many changes, I propose the following question for study: what factors enhance or inhibit teachers' ability and desire to implement school reform?

In several studies, researchers (Berkovich, 2011; Bottema, Beuving, Scherpbier, Tromp, & Roermund, 2011; Thornburg & Mungai, 2011) found national and state governments' visions in reform became at odds with local school districts' visions of education. Through a study on teacher resistance in Israel, Berkovich (2011) stated that national reform policies included a reconstruction of the main components of education such as school structure, curriculum, pedagogy, and learning objectives combined with standardized testing. In the United States, the passing of NCLB mandated state school administrations to implement standardized testing to ensure every school's students reach 100% proficiency by the years 2013-2014. Schools not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in all of their subgroups were labeled as "failing" by the state. Through this revised version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), schools must now not only show student growth through testing measures, but also evaluate teacher effectiveness, offer school choice, and enhance or change school leadership. In order to control the consequences of these new testing measures, most states' governments' main

concern or vision became the ability to maintain authority over all aspects of school district decisions, taking much of the autonomy away from superintendents, principals, and teachers (Bushnell, 2003). Teachers deliver curriculum and facilitate learning; yet those in control of policy have usurped teachers' visions and power in deciding how education should change. As a result, many teachers have shown resistance (Berkovich, 2012; DeFour, 2012; Olsen & Sexton, 2009; Priestley et al., 2012).

Resistance from teachers has appeared in many forms from body language and hallway conversations to strikes on sidewalks (DeFour, 2012). Most recently teacher union strikes in Wisconsin and Chicago, Illinois illustrated teachers' power through resistance. Chicago teachers walked off the job in September of 2012, objecting to teacher evaluations tied to student performance and poor school conditions (DeFour). The president from the Wisconsin Education Council indicated the complexity of their resistance, stating they "offer their full support to the Chicago Teachers Union in a fight that is about much more than a contract for the 26,000 teachers" (DeFour). The Chicago teachers' strike represented a power struggle between the Chicago Public School (CPS) system's administration, led by a CEO and a corporate based school board, and the teachers and community.

When political and business leaders drive reform and control major decisions affecting teachers without teacher input, disengagement and resistance between administration and teachers occur. Much of the research on educational reform and teacher resistance focused on reducing barriers to change (Brock, 2005; Fullan, 2001; Sherbinko, 2011). Sherbinko (2011), in his research on evaluating teachers, suggested in order to facilitate change district leaders must provide administrative support, time for reflection, time for collaboration, and resources for improving teacher practices. Borko, Wolf, Simone, and Uchiyama (2003), in a study on reform

efforts and school capacity, highlighted successful leadership strategies in reform. District leaders created a distributed leadership model through the promotion of collaboration and collective expectations for their staff.

Despite the research revealing strategies and suggestions for successful reform, teachers continue to resist. Yet little research focuses on teachers' experiences, why they continue to resist, and what perspective teachers bring to the topic of reform.

Significance of the Problem

In the midst of educational reform, administrators increasingly expect teachers to become agents of change in their roles as professionals, curriculum implementers, and guardians of students' academic results (Priestley et al., 2012). Rapidly changing expectations marginalize teachers and evoke resistance. In the last twenty years, paperwork and bureaucracy for teachers and administrators have increased, and teachers have felt "disempowered and professionally marginalized" (Priestley, et al., 2012, p. 192). Researchers have indicated teachers must have a voice in reform (Brand, 2009; Levitt, 2008; Sherbinko, 2011).

Various studies outline the issue of teacher voice and participation in reform. Findings by Sherbinko (2011) revealed collaboration and ownership by stakeholders as key elements in reform. "Maintaining fidelity to change requires the influence of a collegial work environment with the alignment of systems and structures that support, respect and nurture individuals so they can assume ownership of reform" (Sherbinko, 2011, pp. 156-157). Teacher participation and voice in reform pushes the imbalance of power. "Educators must shift the development of educational programming back into the hands of teachers, educators, parents and communities" (Levitt, 2008, p. 59).

If educators are controlled and marginalized in the decision-making process embedded in reform, administrators must acknowledge and leverage power structures in order to include their voices in change. "Educators need to take part in the public discourse ... together from across relationships of power to engage in discussion and develop consequent action on public problems" (Bushnell, 2003, p. 268). With micro-politics and macro-politics influencing administrative and teacher control, reform and resistance become the dialectic (Berkovich, 2011). Micro-politics refers to the mechanisms of power through which school systems achieve their goals whereas macro-politics refers to the power affecting educational decision-making processes at a national or larger level (Bjork and Blase, 2009). With the influence of district and national power on state policy in reform, how can the teacher voice be heard?

Need For Study

Due to the lack of qualitative research illuminating the elementary teachers' voices in educational change, a study on this topic is appropriate and necessary. The purpose of this study is to understand the voices of the elementary teacher experiencing waves of educational reform. While many studies examine the recognition of barriers to change and offer suggestions to administrators regarding change, none boldly state the current perceptions of elementary teachers and their experiences in riding the waves of reform.

Several studies (Brand, 2009; Craig, 2012) focus on a specific group of teachers at the secondary level, or just an individual teacher's frustration in reform. For example, Brand (2009), in a study on music teachers, found teachers are "exhausted from educational reform" (p. 87). Teachers expressed frustration from the additional reform demands on their job, as well as the lack of inclusion in decision-making from government bureaucracies in which their viewpoints were forgotten. Craig's (2012) case study focused on one teacher's experience of what is lost

and gained in compulsory curriculum reform efforts by a district. Craig's research utilized data

from previous researchers in the examination of the frustrations of teachers as curriculum

implementers versus teachers as curriculum makers and independent professionals.

These studies informed my research in ways that led me to questions such as, "What

stories/experiences do elementary teachers possess in regards to reform?" More specifically,

"What are their desires, motivations and fears in reform?" and "What do administrators

experience from teachers in reform?" All of these questions underlie the factors inhibiting and

enhancing teachers' ability and desire in implementing reform. A critical examination from the

teachers' lenses regarding their positive and negative experiences in education reform is lacking.

Because the research involving educational reform, barriers to change, and teacher agency and

identity lacks an elementary teacher voice, I conducted a study utilizing educational frameworks

well-grounded in theory to address the gaps.

Research Questions

Thus the research questions framing my study included: (1) what factors inhibited or

enhanced teachers' ability and/or desire to implement educational reform; and (2) what do

administrators and policy makers need to hear from teachers in implementing the next reforms?

Overview of the Chapters

In Chapter One I include sections that provide background on educational policy, my

educational journey, and a discussion of the study's problem statements, and the significance of

the problem. Lastly, I outlined a need for my study and defined the research questions informing

my study.

In Chapter Two I provide a review of the literature that looked at previous tensions in

educational reform. I explore the historical aspect of educational reform and the theories

surrounding educational change and experiencing change in teaching. The literature provides a theoretical outline used in the analysis of the study.

In Chapter Three I review the study's methodology: a qualitative case study. I also discuss the methods of data collection as well as the methods used in the analysis.

In Chapter Four, I discuss the issues in understanding elementary teachers experiencing reform and provide an analysis of the data. I include theoretical frameworks that guided my analysis of the teachers' experiences.

In Chapter Five I examine the impact of the reform process on the relationships between children, teachers and administrators. I also outline the assumptions of administrators for teachers in reform. I include theoretical frameworks that guided my analysis of the administrator's perspective compared to the teachers' experiences in reform.

In Chapter Six I present the conclusions from key findings in Chapters Four and Five. In addition, I provide recommendations for administrators and policy makers in implementing future reform. Lastly, I provide suggestions for future study in the area of education and reform.

<div style="text-align:center">Summary</div>

The purpose of this study is to illuminate the voices of elementary teacher experiencing reform and then illustrate key components in engaging teachers in reform. Understanding the impact of reform on the relationships between teachers and administrators as well as the concerns of teachers in providing a curriculum of care for children is crucial for policy makers and administrators in their implementation of future reforms. The next chapter presents the topical and theoretical literature relevant to this study.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature on educational reform is vast. Due to the far reaching effects of reform policies such as NCLB on school cultures, researchers have garnered rich material for study regarding school tensions. Theorists and researchers revealed the effects of reform on teacher quality, on teacher training and preparation programs, high stakes testing, and various initiatives such as dual language schools (Ray, 2009) and new pedagogical curriculum implementation (Burgess, Patterson, & Robertson, 2010). Research on change in education is not new, but the current literature focuses on more qualitative studies. These include case studies and phenomenological studies, using mixed methods and are set in high school arenas where high-stakes testing has the most impact (Brand, 2009; Craig, 2012; vanVeen, Sleegers, & van de Ven, 2005) as well as in elementary settings (Bushnell, 2003; Ray, 2009; Thornburg & Mungai, 2011). Several researchers (Berkovich, 2011;   Burgess et al., 2010; Craig, 2012; vanVeen et al., 2005) revealed issues stemming from educational reform in schools across the globe.

In my review of the literature, I utilized electronic search engines including: the University of St. Thomas's (UST) Central Search, Google/Google Scholar, and EBSCO data bases, finding most of the pertinent research in the UST dissertation and theses data base as well as the Educational Research Information Center (ERIC) data base. I conducted my search using the key words: *educational reform, educational initiatives, teacher change, teacher agency, teacher identity, teacher resistance.* Upon further study, as I began to do an analysis of my data, I included more key words specific to educational change such as *power, safety* and *standardized testing.* I have organized my review of literature based on the major themes in the research on the central topic of educational change and the nature of power in educational change.

Topical Literature

Findings from many studies revealed teachers' frustration with educational change at every level, from Pre-Kindergarten through post-secondary education. Most researchers agreed reform requires training, reflection, collaboration and a partnership in power between administrators and teachers. Other authors (Fullan, 2007; Vetter, 2012) indicated a discrepancy between providing these efforts and success in reform. In addition, Both Fullan (2007) and Vetter (2012) found resistance from teachers when being trained by someone else. Lastly, researchers (Brand, 2009; Good 2011; Priestley et al., 2012) indicated that bureaucratic powers limit the agency teachers have for a change in curriculum as applied in the classroom.

Overall I explored the historical aspects of educational reform and the theories surrounding educational change and change in teaching. Within this frame I found subthemes of teacher identity, agency, barriers to change in education, reducing barriers to change, teacher resistance, and political power in education. In the following sections, I will briefly highlight and discuss each theme.

Experiencing Change in Teaching

Change in the practice of teaching is both internal and external. Internally, teacher knowledge and practice originates from experiences teachers had as students, their experience in teacher preparation programs, and from experience gained in the classroom (Bottema et al., 2011; Thornburg & Mungai, 2011). As a result, educators build up a sense of identity or sense of self (Thornburg & Mungai, 2011), and agency or capacity to act, through their lived experience (Priestley et al., 2012; Ray, 2009). Akkerman and Meijer (2011), in conceptualizing teacher identity, surmised that teacher identity cannot be seen as an endpoint but rather an ongoing process of negotiating and participating in experience. In leveraging their experiences

to foster change, teachers must shift their mental models based on a priori knowledge, and experience a dissonance between their practice and current knowledge (Duffy, 2003). In a study on how educators learn, Duffy (2003) found that mental models must be adjusted to accommodate change and what educators think they know can prevent them from seeing what they need to learn. Externally, teachers experience change through the foisted policies of administrators and state and national leaders. VanVeen et al. (2005), in their analysis of a Dutch school teacher's experience of reform, found the "key role of teachers' sense of professional and personal identity is almost completely ignored in reform strategies and educational innovation policy" (p. 918). Tensions between authors in studies on reform (Berkovich, 2011; Brand, 2009; Duffy, 2003; Hashweh, 2003; Knight, 2009) revealed a disagreement on when and how to involve teachers in reform.

Teachers hold tightly to their own viewpoints as framed by their prior experiences and social cultures. "Lasting change in teacher practice is difficult because it expects that teachers challenge and reconstruct deeply embedded practices and beliefs" (Vetter, 2012, p. 27). Vetter (2012) found that lasting changes or a transformation in practice occurred when teachers redefined and repositioned their viewpoints and affiliations (Vetter, 2012). Duffy (2003) emphasized, in order to shift the lived experience or a priori paradigm, mental models must be reframed. Reframing the concept of lived experiences as "mental models," Duffy claimed mental models must change in order for people to change their practice. Mental models are "truths" that guide us by framing and influencing our beliefs in the world. In order for people to change current mental models, they must construct new ones to replace them. Educators must not only see, but experience new models different from their current knowledge, beliefs and methods (Duffy, 2003; Hashweh, 2002).

Taking it a step further, several researchers (Chapman & Heater, 2010; Duffy, 2003; Hashweh, 2002) revealed teachers must experience a dissonance in order to change. Duffy (2003) found people held onto their theories until evidence or experience convinced them to accept new paradigms. Chapman and Heater (2010) confirmed Duffy's research through their own premise that change is rooted in the tensions between classroom experience and practice. Finally, Hashweh (2002) acknowledged a gap in teachers' experience. "Teachers must see a gap between their ideals, their goals, and their existing practices, in order to change" (p. 426). Constant mental models will continue as long as they produce reasonable results. To disrupt these constant models, new knowledge, beliefs, decision-making, and expectations are necessary. To help teachers unlearn mental models Duffy suggests staff should engage participants in metacognition through conversations surrounding unstated assumptions, untested attributions, and teacher perceptions. Ultimately, in order to change "teachers must be internally motivated, construct alternative knowledge, resolve conflicts between prior ideas and new, and do so in a climate of collaboration, reflection, trust and deliberation" (Hashweh, 2002, p. 421).

In addition to resistance through fixed mental models, bureaucratic power also encourages resistance to change. Authors of several findings (Duffy, 2003; Sherbinko, 2011; Vetter, 2012) emphasized when a directive comes from a top-down bureaucratic system, lasting change rarely occurs. "Teachers often resist change when the decision to transform comes from someone other than themselves" (Vetter, 2012, p. 29). Thus, when administrators present new concepts which are divergent with teachers' views, teachers may feel uncomfortable and unable to teach the new concepts, leading to a loss of motivation and self-confidence (Thornburg & Mungai, 2011). A lack of change may also stem from a bureaucratic disconnect between administrators' and teachers' long-term visions, goals, and actions (Sherbinko, 2011). To

implement educational reform, it is imperative administrators acknowledge a teacher's identity which includes prior experiences and knowledge, and an agency for learning and change (Day, Elliot, & Kingston, 2005). Despite the existing literature on educational change, administrators still struggle to effectively implement changes within their buildings.

Teacher identity. Many teachers, including myself, find their sense of self intertwined with their careers. Barnett (2006) found "Teachers' sense of self and self-worth was often tied up with their role as a teacher" (p. 182). In addition, teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning are ingrained from years of schooling as students (Berg, 2012; Bottema et al., 2011). Teachers' learning experiences as children influence the way they teach today. In a study by Bottema et al. (2011) regarding teachers in the medical field, researchers found teachers' ideas about good teaching tend to be mainly rooted in their own educational experiences and memories, which are context based and unstructured.

Identity in educational research has become an important element in understanding educators (Berkovich, 2011; Day et al., 2005). Akkerman and Meijer (2010) examined the complexity of teacher identity. "Teacher identity, cannot be seen as an end point, but should be defined as a renegotiation, a simultaneously unitary and multiple, continuous and discontinuous, individual and social concept" (pp. 315-316). Social contexts, political structures, and personal experience influence a teacher's identity. Findings by Berkovich (2011) in a study on an Israeli teachers' strike revealed personal reflections from a teacher, "For us the teaching profession is a national and spiritual mission and not merely a job" (p. 7). Hence, change for a teacher is complicated. Vetter (2012) summarized teacher identity and change as an identity process; when a person changes they can be considered taking on a new identity and in order to do so, they must learn new behaviors and must practice them regularly. Several studies (Bottema, 2011;

Vanderberg & Stephens, 2010; Vetter, 2012) linked identity and self-concept with a teacher's agency or capacity. The literature suggests, when considering educational reform, administrators must consider teacher identities, acknowledge agency, and identify and reduce barriers to change.

Teacher agency. Change reflects the agency of individuals interacting within their social contexts. Agency is the control over one's own thoughts, motivations, and actions (Ray, 2009). In addition, agency reflects the capacity of actors to "critically shape their responses to problematic situations or the capacity for autonomous action" (Biesta & Tedder, 2006, p. 11). According to Priestley et al. (2012), teacher agency varies from context to context depending on the conditions of possibility and constraint. Large internal structures of bureaucracy, teachers' fears, and a lack of recognition of teacher agency from leaders create these constraints (Priestley et al., 2012). Agency also depends on teachers' beliefs, values, and attributes (Ray, 2009).

Barriers to Change

Barriers to change derive from internally and externally related sources. Berg (2012) noted, "The extent and likelihood of change is related to a teachers' recognition of change, developing the capacity to change, feeling accountable to change, and possessing a motivation to change" (p. 98). In addition, teachers' dilemmas must be addressed in order to move toward reform based teaching practices. Research (Burgess et al., 2010; Vetter, 2012) findings suggested administrators reduce external barriers such as a lack of time, funding, materials, support, the existing beliefs surrounding teaching, and the demand of high stakes testing. In addition, Burgess et al., (2010) found a lack of support and limited training as a barrier to the success of professional development. Sherbinko's (2011) future considerations for study included research on teacher support. Sherbinko's findings suggested, "Leadership should

survey teachers to identify perceptions of change, then facilitate various workshops to address areas of concern" (p. 148). Lastly, high stakes testing measures have placed leaders and teachers in the awkward position of generating quick changes. In researching educational reform, Fullan (2008) found that school leaders have floundered under the pressures of policy implementation in an attempt to quickly change curriculum and instruction to raise student achievement.

Consequences of high stakes testing. As afore-described in the statement and significance of the problem (in Chapter One), several historical aspects of educational reform contributed to the issues surrounding change in teaching. Most notably, through high stakes testing implemented during the Bush Administration and the No Child Left Behind Act, researchers found several tensions precipitating from educational change. Sherbinko's (2011) research on teacher evaluation and change in reform revealed pressures put on leadership and teachers. As a result, Sherbinko's research implications for practice included training for teachers. "Continuing to address teachers' perceptions of change requires a cyclical assessment of reform to monitor and then prompt adjustments to professional development" (p. 148). Fullan, (as cited in Sherbinko, 2011), noted the pressures put on teachers and leadership in change sometimes produces quick actions. "High stakes testing and the consequences of failure often place teachers and leaders in the unenviable position of generating quick changes and results" (p. 148).

In a study on school reform, Olsen and Sexton (2009) examined the experiences of six teachers at one high school experiencing the threat of educational policy. Their study focused on the tensions, or effects of "threat rigidity" on the organization and individual teachers. According to Staw et al. (as cited in Olsen & Sexton, 2009) threat rigidity is the theory that "an organization when perceiving itself under siege, responds in stressed ways such as commanding

centralized control, conformity and efficiency; and innovative thinking is discouraged" (p. 15).

Olsen and Sexton found tensions between teachers due to frustration, loss of professional

autonomy and decreased perceptions of their value to the organization. Olsen and Sexton also

found high stakes testing affecting students as well. "We found evidence that these tensions

among educators spilled onto the students in various ways" (p. 21). Student learning suffered in

the form of breaks in concentration and class time squandered on relaying school information.

A theme noted by Olsen and Sexton (2009) in their research from one teacher included

"safety". The teacher commented that the classroom was a kind of safe place, a "refuge from the

school complications and a place where she could do what she entered teaching to do: work with

students" (p. 22). She continued to describe the pressure placed on her by administrators in

implementing a curricular map which forced them to teach a specific set of content. Besides,

content, she indicated a need to teach students life skills "I feel like you need to give kids a broad

range of skills, and there are a lot of classroom experiences that they will benefit tremendously

from in life, things learned in high school that are not necessarily in the standards of the map" (p.

26). Through their study on standardized testing and curriculum in one high school, Olsen and

Sexton found leaders needed to pay closer attention to the perceived threats on teachers in

reform.

Lastly, in the literature on change in reform involving high stakes testing under the

subheading of "safety", there were a series of articles surrounding the support of the social and

emotional well-being of children. In a study on NCLB and its effect on quality and equity in

education, Guisbund and Neill (2004) outline a false assumption undergirding the policy. The

main assumption they introduced was, "Boosting standardized test scores should be the primary

goal of schools" (p. 12). In several public opinion polls referenced in 2000 and 2003, the

public's key concern was about social issues, not issues addressed by tests. Guisbund and Neill

noted, "This assumption ignores a desire for schools to address academic as well as social goals"

(p. 12). In a second article, focusing on social and emotional success, authors Schonert-Reichl

and Hymel (2007) stressed education for school and life success. "Because social and emotional

factors play such an important role, schools must attend to this aspect of the educational process

for the benefit of all students" (p. 23).

Finally, in an empirical study linking social and emotional learning to school success,

Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg and Walberg (2007) found that teaching a specific Social and

Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum alongside other curriculums, helps ensure a successful

academic and social life for students. Zins et al. (2007) define social and emotional learning as,

"the process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make

good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships and avoid

negative behaviors" (p. 192). Zins et al. acknowledged high stakes testing as one of the

pressures put on teachers and students.

> While most schools remain highly concerned about the social and emotional
>
> development of their students and the need for safe, supportive schools that educate
>
> socially and emotionally competent students, they often are hesitant to engage in any
>
> activities for which they cannot predict clear, discernable benefits to students' academic
>
> progress as reflected in their test scores. (p. 191)

The study examined how, under the circumstances of high stakes testing, teachers could help

students handle the stresses of life by teaching an SEL curriculum. "These key characteristics

need to be developed for our children to be successful not only in school but in life; those who

do not possess these skills are less likely to succeed" (p. 191). According to the literature, with

the passing of NCLB, high stakes testing became one of the barriers to change for teachers.

In summary, reducing barriers to change requires district leaders to provide time for

collaboration, reflection, an acknowledgment of teacher agency, and a change in the power

structures or ownership over implementation and change in teaching.

Reducing Barriers to Change

Researchers (Fullan, 2001; Priestley et al. 2012; Sherbinko, 2011) have suggested

administrators reduce the barriers to change for teachers by acknowledging their professional

identities and agency in providing opportunities for reflection, collaboration, research, and by

presenting professional development opportunities. In a grounded theory based case study,

Vetter (2012) emphasized the provision of professional development for successful change,

particularly focused on student gains, on content areas, and on quality continuing education for

teachers. Leaders must also allow room for ownership (a recognition of identity/agency)

(Priestley et al., 2012), collaboration (Fullan, 2001) and reflection (Sherbinko, 2011).

Collaboration. Researchers indicated collaboration empowers stakeholder support and

maximizes professional development and change in education (Hashweh, 2002; Sherbinko,

2011; Vetter, 2012). Yet, teachers rarely have time to collaborate (Vanderberg & Stephens,

2010). When administrators allow time for collaboration, teachers feel empowered. An

improved educational social climate, according to Hashweh (2002), should be characterized by

collaboration. Themes from Sherbinko's (2011) qualitative study on change in teacher

evaluation revealed that teachers thrived on collaboration, and their experiences with reform

were enhanced by planning and attending professional learning communities (PLCs). "Change

requires school districts to create and/or maintain the systems and structures that encourage

collaboration and collegiality, enabling teachers to weave reform into their instructional

practices" (Sherbinko, 2011, p. 149). Sherbinko's (2011) recommendations from this study

included time for collaboration by providing common times for teachers to meet, hiring

substitute teachers to support collaboration during the school day, and providing stipends for

teacher leaders to facilitate professional development sessions.

Reflection. Reducing barriers to change also include administrators' support for

reflective time for teachers. Researchers (Brock, 2005; Sannino, 2010; Sherbinko, 2011)

indicated teachers' attitude improved towards educational reform when given the opportunity for

reflection. Sherbinko's (2011) research on change in teacher evaluation indicated a support for

reform from principals and teachers when teachers were given time to collaborate and then

reflect on reform. Brock (2005) indicated self- reflection, rather than feedback from

administrators, drastically improved performance in teaching. In a study on teacher resistance

through change, Sannino (2010) outlined a shift from resistance in educational reform to

engagement. The teacher involved in Sannino's study moved beyond resistance by expressing

his/her self through reflection. The teacher became engaged through a process of "being

involved in self-reflective work on the problematic aspects of teaching...and in starting to face

inner conflicting motives" (p. 844). When given time to muddle or work through their own

dilemmas and conflicts, teachers became more empowered (Sannino, 2010). Overall, Sannino

found that teachers started to face inner conflicting motives and renewed their teaching goals.

Vetter (2012) echoed John Dewey's theories of imagination and contemplation through the

analysis of a teacher's journey in changing positions from a classroom teacher to a science

literacy coach and confronting resistance from staff. The school leadership's provision of

reflection time for teachers acknowledged their sense of identity and agency.

Recognition of identity and agency. In reducing barriers to change, district leaders

must recognize teachers' sense of identity. "With more opportunities to envision, enact,

maintain, and realize a new identity through a supportive group, teachers are more likely to

become architects of transformation that positively shape learning and instruction for students"

(Vetter, 2012, p. 46). One example of identity change in Craig's (2012) work illuminated a

teacher's identity as a science coach for a high school building staff. Craig's narrative inquiry

research focused on curriculum reform, examining a teacher's identity as curriculum-

implementer versus curriculum-maker. The latter image respected the teacher's identity and

agency "as the holder, user and maker of knowledge" (p. 91).

Research indicates the importance of a leadership imperative including the recognition

and involvement of teachers in decision making regarding curriculum and teaching practices.

Schwab asserted (1983), teachers "*must* be involved in debate, deliberation, and decision about

what and how to teach" (p. 245). Schwab emphasized that teachers must be included in

collaboration as essential decision-makers and developers of curriculum. In addition to agency,

collaboration between teachers and teachers, and administrators and teachers, acknowledges

identity. Positioning theory, as described by Vetter (2012), suggests educators can position

themselves as leaders in schools and their colleagues will position them as leaders. Vetter's case

study of a teacher moving from an identity of teacher to science leader suggests practitioners will

successfully engage in an "inquiry of the self in which they explore new positioning" (p. 45).

In addition, Vetter's (2012) research on teachers as architects of transformation

acknowledges a need for leadership's recognition of agency. "In order for practitioners to be

situated in teaching, learning and leading, educators must view teachers as change agents rather

than passive entities who need to be transformed by other professionals" (p. 28). A potential for

agency develops over time through a process of engagement and emergence, interaction with

social structures, and people's potential for agency (Priestley et al., 2012). In their research,

Priestley et al., (2012) discovered, "People's potential for agency changes in both positive and

negative ways as they accumulate experience and as their material and social conditions evolve"

(p. 197). In summary, to lead teachers through change, administrators must reduce barriers to

change and recognize teachers' identity and agency.

Teacher Resistance

When leaders outside of education control policy decisions, power struggles ensue.

Raider-Roth, Stieha, & Hensley, (2012) described resistance as "a conflict between what is

being asked of the individual and how that coincides with the self" (p. 495). Policy leaders

outside of education create the reform and then expect leaders and teachers to follow suit

without acknowledgment of the collective educational wisdom within the system. "Therefore,

political processes and dimensions of power, such as influence, values, ideology, and patterns of

cooperation and conflict are relevant to understanding educational policymaking and

implementation processes" (Berkovich, 2011, p. 564). Findings by Berkovich (2011) revealed

that teachers desire ownership in education and feel "imposed" upon when reform is led by

someone else. The research examined media use as a way to illuminate teacher's voices during

a strike. During a teachers' strike, Berkovich set up an Internet blog to provide a forum for

teachers' expressions of frustration and marginalization. In resistance to government reform

over education, one teacher commented,

> Committees are set up to quickly formulate the reform, or to import the reform 'off the
>
> shelf' without thinking where it failed, and attempt to impose it on the teachers. These
>
> committees usually consist of people who have no idea what the teaching profession is.

They know how to do business, they know how to evaluate and test product quality, but

they do not understand education. (p. 570)

In Thornburg and Mungai's (2011) research on resistance, teacher empowerment, and

school reform, teachers viewed reform as externally implemented. They also failed to see the

purposes of reform based on their own experiences with past policies and practices. As a result,

teachers had concerns about communication in reform and the time involved in taking on new

initiatives, and new identities or roles in reform. Disengagement and resistance between

administration and teachers occurs when leaders neglect to acknowledge teacher voices (Brand,

2009). Implications for leadership in change include allowing spaces for teacher voice and

changing identities in reform. Findings from Vetter (2012) indicated resistance is a part of

change. The teacher in this case study found support from a group of teachers who provided "a

safe space for her to try on new identities" (p. 46). In both research cases, Vetter (2012) and

Thornburg and Mungai (2011) focused on teacher resistance as an aspect of teacher

empowerment. Others, however, acknowledge the limits of teacher power due to the power held

by administrators and policy makers.

Power in Reform

While reviewing the literature, I found a subtle yet strong subtheme running through the

literature in the area of power in reform. Soares and Soares (2002) in their research on the

"power trail" blamed those in education with the most control. "Those who have control over

the resources, and authority over the players, in the learning game are most culpable" (p. 309).

National and state mandates impose a power structure over school administrations, which in turn

impose a power structure over teachers. In a study on educational reform, Levitt (2008) noted

teacher's professional roles are consistently devalued by the imposition of administrative

controls on teaching, curricula, standards, and testing. Hence, mandates in teaching curriculum

continue to dictate the knowledge base. Priestley et al. (2012) in the vein of Michel Foucault,

posit administrators seek to supplant agency with structure influenced by the relationships

between power, knowledge, and subjectivity. An aforementioned barrier to change, professional

development or curricular change implemented by an outsider draws resistance from teachers.

Richardson (1998) suggests perspectives on teacher change are related to issues of status and

power in that "the view of the teacher as reluctant to change is promulgated by those who think

they know what teachers should be doing in the classroom and are in a position to tell them what

to do" (p. 1).

Brand (2009) also acknowledged bureaucratic powers, revealing in his qualitative study

on music teachers in change that teachers were exhausted from reform and felt disempowered by

administrators. "The imposition of government imposed educational reform leaves out teachers'

wisdom, experience and knowledge" (Brand, 2009, p. 91). In addition, Good (2011) found

classroom improvement is best approached with teacher cooperation. His research outlines the

fragility of change when administrators conduct reform initiatives too fast or too early and

sometimes try to change elements of education they do not understand. Priestley et al. (2012)

argued there is relatively low capacity or agency for teachers in terms of curriculum development

as a result of prescriptive national curriculum and the use of outcome-driven methods. Reform

continues to move from the top bureaucratic powers down to the schools implementing them.

Competing visions exist between the teacher as owner and creator of curriculum and the leaders

who impose the policies (Priestley et al, 2012)

Summary

The quantity of literature on educational change is vast. As I searched, multiple themes emerged, including experiencing change, barriers to change, teacher identity, agency, and power in education. Missing from the research is a more recent focus on the connection between power structures, leadership, and teachers in change. In addition, a lack of qualitative data revealing teachers' voice in educational change exists. Research is needed to answer the questions surrounding change as it affects teachers through the implementation of initiatives and the influence of power over decision making. Can administrators provide the spaces for the teacher voice in change? What conditions need to be present in order for teachers to lead reform? In the following section I will present three theoretical frameworks shaping the literature on educational reform.

Theoretical Frameworks

In reviewing the literature on educational change and reform, I identified three main theoretical frameworks. Anfara and Mertz (2006) define theoretical frameworks as "any empirical or quasi-empirical theory of social and/or psychological processes at a variety of levels (e.g., grand, mid-range, and explanatory), that can be applied to the understanding of phenomena" (p. xxvii). Researchers referred to a variety of theories, particularly in cognitive psychology and sociology, but applied very few educational theoretical frameworks. In this section, I present the following three theoretical frameworks most commonly used by researchers in the area of educational reform, educational change by Fullan & Miles (1992), human agency by Bandura (1989), and power and knowledge by Foucault (1990). Within these theories I outline the gaps and methodologies in the research and the research limitations.

Fullan's Theory on Educational Change

Fullan's theory on educational change contains several dimensions. In an article on educational change, Fullan and Miles (1992) characterized educational change as a learning process, a costly systemic endeavor, and a highly managed task. Most importantly, they emphasized that all large-scale change should be implemented by local everyday teachers, principals, parents, and students. The latter characteristic of change Fullan and Miles mentioned summarizes their overall view; change needs to happen by the stakeholders in education. In addition, Fullan (2008) coined the term "initiativitis" in describing principals' work around initiatives employed in schools for change. Fullan claimed initiativitis is an "accountability scheme employed by districts that is externally imposed, ill-conceived, and punitively driven" (p. 3). Regarding bureaucratically imposed change, Fullan and Miles (1992) recommend, "Successful change efforts are most likely when the local district office is closely engaged with the changing school in a collaborative, supportive way and places few bureaucratic restrictions in the path of reform" (p. 747). In other words, decisions and reform should be made by teachers and leaders in collaboration.

In a study on teachers' resistance to educational reform, Berkovich (2011) utilized Fullan's theory to frame his research. Berkovich found the cooperative attitude of teachers toward a proposed reform is crucial for its success and concurred with Fullan's theory, "When they [teachers] do not support the reform at hand, it has little chance of succeeding" (p. 564). Berkovich (2011) employed a qualitative research design through a documentary case study, involving teachers' responses on an Internet blog during a teacher strike. Berkovich indicated teachers' rhetoric in resisting educational reform showed similarity to the rhetoric of political campaigns through teachers' themes of the media front, themselves as champions of education,

the power in charge of reform as fools and villain, and the distance between the ivory tower, and

the trenches. Teachers in this study expressed disdain for the implementing of reform by

powerful policy makers and the lack of inclusion of educators in decision making (Berkovich,

2011).

Fullan's theories also led Borko et al., (2003) to ask the question, how do statewide,

standards-based reform initiatives impact school and classroom-level practices? Change in

reform framed Borko et al.'s research in an analysis of Washington State's educational reform

agenda and its impact on two elementary schools. Borko et al. conducted a multistep sampling

using observation, interviews and artifacts in a case study methodology. In their analyses, Borko

et al., discovered Fullan's point on "change is systemic and must be local" (p. 197), realized

through the case study of their two schools. In collaborating for reform, these schools provided

examples of successful individual and collective capacities for reform. Borko et al.'s research

also offered insights to policymakers in that educational reform efforts required support as well

as pressure and that they strengthen the capacity of schools and teachers to execute the reform's

vision. National reform policies such as A Nation at Risk (1983) and NCLB (2002) create a

complex situation for leaders and educators. Current educational policy relies on student test

scores to indicate success in education. This vision competes with a school district leader's

vision of creating an educational program that nurtures the whole child. School district leaders

seek innovative ways to continue good programming. "Quality education is marked by

sustained, innovative efforts to address the complex changes required by state reform agendas"

(Borko et al., 2003, p. 199).

Limitations. The limitations of Fullan's theories in this case are found in future research

questions. How do school leaders and teachers provide a quality holistic education for their

students when policy makers judge schools on limited information such as a single test score?

How can leaders follow Fullan and Miles (2002) suggestions on change if policies measure test

scores but not academic growth? These suggestions neglect the improving nature of schools.

Finally, under competing visions of education, how can district leaders and teachers work

together to provide a quality education for students?

Bandura's Theory of Human Agency (1989)

Several studies (Priestley et al., 2012; Ray, 2009; Zemblyas, Espinet, Milne, &

Scantlebury, 2006) on change in education emphasized the value of recognizing a teacher's

capacity or agency for change. Bandura (2001) described agency.

> Agency embodies the endowments, belief systems, self-regulatory capabilities and
>
> distributed structures and functions through which personal influence is exercised, rather
>
> than residing as a discrete entity in a particular place. The core features of agency enable
>
> people to play a part in their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal with
>
> changing times. (p. 2)

According to Ray (2009), Bandura's theory supports the idea that humans need to have

control over situations which require their ability to act. "Understanding people's beliefs about

their ability to exert control over their situation, or their sense of efficacy, is a key mechanism in

understanding human agency" (p. 117). Bandura's (1989) theory of human agency framed Ray's

research on a dual language education model in identifying factors influencing teachers' agency

in opening a new dual language school. Ray used purposive sampling, collecting rich data from

teachers experiencing change in a new school setting. The researcher uncovered themes framed

by Bandura's notion of human agency and found, "when manifestations of agency, such as

teamwork and planning are successful, they reinforce the sense of mastery that then leads to further agentic behavior" (Ray, 2009, p. 127).

In defining human agency a bit further, Bandura (as cited in Ray, 2009) designed a model (see Figure 1) illustrating the relationship between three determinants of human action or agency; personal determinants, behavioral determinants and environmental determinants. In a reciprocal causation model, a person's internal wants and needs affect their behaviors, which are also affected by environmental events. Each of these influence the others bi-directionally.

Figure 1. Bandura's (1997) Three Major Determinants of Human Actions
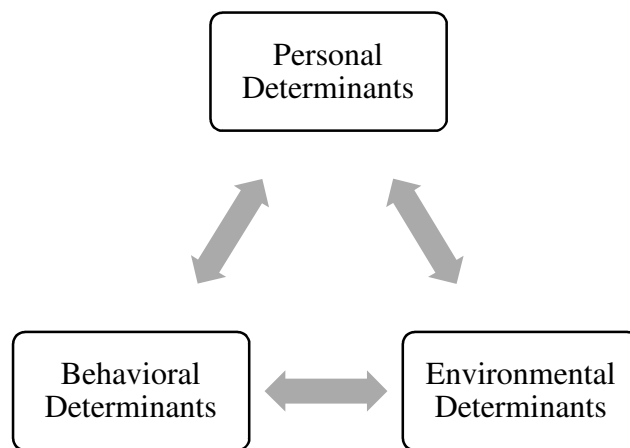
Figure 1. Bandura's (1997) Three Major Determinants of Human Actions. A model illustrating the relationships between the three major determinants of human action. Adapted from "A template analysis of teacher agency at an academically successful dual language school" by J.M. Ray, 2009. Retrieved from http://www.sagepub.com/journals/Journal202069.

Bandura dispelled the theory that human beings are either completely independent actors, or are controlled entirely by external influences. Instead, Bandura purported these three determinants as influential on human behavior and act as reinforcements of a person's agency or efficacy. In other words, no person makes decisions without considering (or under the duress of) external

factors. So if administrators are trying to move teachers to act differently in change, they must change the factors influencing teachers' behavior. In addition, by excluding teachers as key players in change initiatives, administrators loosen the bond between teachers' personal determinants and their actions; teachers will not be invested.

Priestley et al. (2012) in their case study on teacher agency in curriculum making, found the degree to which secondary and post-secondary teachers achieve agency varies from context to context based on environmental conditions and the beliefs and values teachers possess. Aligned with Bandura's theory that people change themselves based on personal factors, Priestley et al. defined human agency as "autonomy and causal efficacy" (p. 195) including personal beliefs and values. Priestley et al. (2012) gathered multiple-researchers' definitions of agency which included ecological or environmental influences on teacher agency, one of which is power. Their research takes Bandura's theory further in acknowledging values and beliefs under the influence of power. "An alternative view of agency is grounded in the influence of society over the individual seeking to supplant agency with structure" (p. 195). Couched in the work of Foucault, Priestley et al. (2012) view agency as molded by the relationships between power, knowledge, and subjectivity. These multiple definitions of agency framed Priestley et al.'s work in understanding resistance and that human agents are reflexive, creative, and can act counter to societal constraints as well as their possibilities. Priestley et al. concluded from their study that educational policies must consider teacher agency.

Limitations and Strengths. Limitations of Bandura's theory came from critics who suggested it did not account for the consistency in some behaviors, and inconsistency in others due to various factors. In addition, Zemblyas, et al. (2006) argued agency is problematic in how teachers realize they *possess* agency in certain situations as well as how to *enact* their agency (p.

353). Thus, in order to achieve educational reform, leaders must recognize the capacity of

teachers in change and the environmental factors inherently influential on teachers' agency. In

addition, it is crucial for teachers to realize they have agency and a voice in reform.

Levitt's Use of Foucault's Theories of Power and Knowledge

Michel Foucault's theories of power and knowledge framed several researchers' (Evans,

Thornton, & Usinger, 2012; Levitt, 2008; Soares & Soares, 2002) studies on reform in education.

Foucault (1990) recognized power in every context. "Power is everywhere; not because it

embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (p. 93). He also outlined

collective and subjective knowledge. Foucault claimed the definition of knowledge is influenced

by societal power. Those in power repressed the local, marginalized voices, overriding them

with scientific and political discourse. Using his studies on genealogy, Foucault focused on local

memories to establish historical knowledge to emancipate it from what has become "popular

knowledge" (p. 82). Popular or disqualified knowledge contains a history of struggles, a

genealogy that a hierarchical knowledge lacks.

While many authors used Foucault's theories as a way to direct attention to the negative

aspects of bureaucratic power, Levitt's (2008) study reframed this for teachers in a positive,

empowering way. Levitt employed several theories of power by Foucault in an analysis of the

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) on teachers' power. Levitt argued teachers must exercise

their freedom and exert their power by adding their own discourse to the "regime of truth" and

disquiet the importance of high stakes testing. "Foucault proposed that one can still exercise a

power over the other because the other still has options" (Levitt, 2008, p. 54). Levitt suggested

educators remain true to a vision of controlling discourse through positive discussion and

resistance. "Teachers need to review and question old tenets and policies and propose novel strategies both individually and collectively" (p. 58).

Limitations and strengths. The limitations of Levitt's (2008) work in using Foucault is the notion that our educational structure allows spaces in which teachers can exercise power and do so without interference. While Levitt acknowledged teacher vision in using power positively in discussion and resistance, this researcher neglected to recognize the powerful structures of national policy makers outside of education. Foucault's focus on power at the micro level makes it difficult to use or apply his theory at a macro, or national level. So even though not all schools follow a standardized testing regime and have escaped the punishing power of high-stakes testing, many continue to do so because they are under the threat of privatization if they do not (Levitt). In exercising freedom and power, Levitt (2008) insisted communities must transform the power for school reform. "Educators must shift the development of educational programming back into the hands of teachers, educators, parents, and communities" (p. 59).

Another author utilizing theories of Foucault, Bushnell's (2003) study on teachers in the "schoolhouse panopticon" refers to the external regulation of teachers in the vein of Foucault and Jeremy Bentham. The panopticon is a physical and social structure (much like a prison) designed for the multi-angled observation and regulation of its residents' activities. Foucault's theory of power framed Bushnell's research through an analyses of the NCLB (2002) accountability measures. In other words, the monitoring of teachers through the accountability measure of NCLB represents a panopticon of surveillance. It is the presumption that "external regulation of teachers is necessary because we cannot trust teachers to regulate themselves" (Bushnell, 2003, pp. 251-52). Bushnell revealed qualitative data on new and veteran New York City school teachers in the current climate of NCLB accountability measures. Through surveys,

Bushnell found the over-surveillance of teachers and lack of substantive decision-making autonomy limited teachers' professionalism. "It perpetuates teachers' subordinate status, restricts their pedagogical choices, and dampens their intellectual freedoms" (p. 253). A limitation of this theory in considering Foucault's panopticon for surveillance, analyzing teachers' resistance ignores teachers' resiliency and the creative moral capacity of district leaders to interfere in the regulation of teachers by allowing them a voice in decision-making. In the following section, I describe the theory by Brookfield shaping my interview questions, and I present three innovative analytical theories.

Analytic Theory

In my study, I utilized four analytic theories not presented in the literature on educational change or reform. The innovative frameworks I applied were elements of Brookfield's Critical Reflection (1995), the four organizational frames of Bolman and Deal (2008), Kotter's (1996) eight change stages, and two of Enomoto and Kramer's (2007) sources of ethical tensions: a desires or utilitarian ends-based ethics and a duties-based or deontological ethic. Combining these approaches allowed for investigation of the contradictions between what teachers and administrators experience and believe during reform as viewed through an organizational context and in an examination of ethical tensions occurring during reform. My study utilized the concepts of change theory, reframing organizations and the ethical tensions of a teacher's duties versus desires in order to provide more depth in analysis previously missing from the topic of reform.

Brookfield's Critical Reflection

In his theory of critical reflection, Brookfield (1995) outlines four critically reflective lenses for viewing teaching: our autobiographies as teachers and learners, our students' eyes, our

colleagues' experiences, and the theoretical literature. According to Brookfield these lenses help

teachers reflect, confront assumptions, and recognize possible discrepancies between practice

and experience. Applying Brookfield's reflective lenses while interviewing teachers provided

me with an innovative approach in analyzing the data.

Our autobiographies as learners and teachers. Brookfield's first critical lens of our

own autobiographies asserts that we use people as mirrors in sharing our assumptions. As a

result, our internal conversations with ourselves and the external conversations with others tend

to affirm the same prejudices and sympathies. Brookfield's lens of examining our own

autobiographies helps us view our practice from a different point of view and we become more

connected to what others are experiencing. In this type of personal reflection "We become aware

of the paradigmatic assumptions and instinctive reasoning that frame how we work" (Brookfield,

1995, pp. 29-30). Underlying these assumptions is submerged power dynamics or hegemony

omnipresent in institutions (Brookfield, 2000).

> Hegemonic assumptions are assumptions about practice that we believe represent
>
> commonsense wisdom and that we accept as being in our own best interests, without
>
> realizing that these same assumptions actually work against us in the long term by
>
> serving the interests of those opposed to us. (p. 6)

Assumptions, according to Brookfield (1995), are the "taken-for-granted beliefs about the world

and our place within it that seem so obvious to us as not to need stating explicitly" (p. 2).

Brookfield describes various sources for our assumptions and suggests ways to objectively view

the power within those assumptions. Examining the assumptions of administrators and teachers

through a critical reflection lens may assist teachers and leaders in understanding each other's

needs in reform. More on assumptions will be presented in Chapter Five.

Our students' eyes. Second, reflecting on our practice through the lens of our students is crucial. Seeing ourselves as the "other" whether it be a student or staff member makes us aware of the actions and assumptions existing in power relationships in the classroom and school system. In addition, "no matter how carefully we monitor our actions, we can never really know their full impact on students" (Brookfield, 1995, p. 94). Reflection using this lens could also help examine the meanings we intend. Even our best of intentions as leaders and teachers may be misinterpreted by students. Thus, in one interview question I asked several of the teachers what their students experienced in reform; in essence, inviting them to assess themselves on their teaching practices through their students' eyes.

Our colleagues' experience. Third, examining our practice from a colleague's point of view helps us notice aspects of our practice we may not see. Perhaps colleagues notice elements of our teaching or our actions as a professional that a principal or other leader may not observe? Brookfield (1995) noted, by engaging in critical conversations with others, elements of our practice may be seen in a new light. Critical conversations are truly critical when members approach the conversation with "tolerance, patience, and respect for differences…" and when members acknowledge their own inclinations and predispositions (p. 142). During the interviews I gathered data from teachers through their colleagues' eyes. Several teachers revealed comments from their colleagues on their reactions to reform.

Theoretical literature. Lastly, Brookfield's lens of using theoretical literature in many areas of education, such as staff development, student learning and new trends in teaching, can provide multiple interpretations for understanding teachers' experiences in reform. Teacher's use of educational literature could also provide avenues for conversation, for the development of new and "best" (see chapter 4) practices and for the reversal of political contradiction. Realizing

contradictions will not change them, but "the realization will prevent teachers from mistakenly blaming their personal inadequacies for situations that are politically created" (Brookfield, 1995, p. 37). The theoretical literature lens provided a frame for asking teachers about their own research and pedagogical practices in the classroom.

Summary. Using Brookfield's lenses provided me with questions during my interview that illuminated the real story behind teachers' experiences in change. I believe it helped teachers reflect upon their own practice and the practice of administrators in the politically created moves of reform. Perhaps the emotional energy teachers spend on criticizing themselves or criticizing the power structures in the system would be channeled into working for change?

Bolman and Deal's Theory on Reframing Organizations.

Bolman and Deal (2008) describe a frame as a "mental model—a set of ideas and assumptions" (p. 11) or a metaphor and diagnostic tool used to analyze an organization's current situation. A frame is a lens enabling leaders to see and understand the internal operations of an organization from day to day. This mental model parallels other organizational schema such as mind maps, cognitive lenses and perspectives from which humans organize and make sense of a set of facts. From research and practice Bolman and Deal outline four specific frames, structural, human resource, political and symbolic, in describing an organization's mode of operation. Each of these frames evokes a certain metaphor, chosen by Bolman and Deal, as a way to capture the essence of each organizational model. In addition, Bolman and Deal utilize Kotter's (1996) eight stages of change to generate a model of strategies for leadership in change. Overall, the four frames provide lenses to analyze an organization's dilemma.

Structural frame. The structural frame, represented by a factory metaphor, depicts a "rational world, and emphasizes organizational architecture, including goals, structure,

technology, specialized roles, coordination and formal relationships" (p. 15). Organizations create policies, procedures, systems and hierarchical taxonomies to align individuals' efforts. The structural frame argues for "putting people in the right roles and relationships" (p. 47). Several assumptions surround the structural frame, including organizations exist to achieve established goals and objectives, and organizations work best when "rationality prevails over personal agendas and extraneous pressures" (p. 47).

In schools, structure provides the backbone to a historically bent institution. Rooted in industrial bureaucratic models influenced by Frederick Taylor and Max Weber (p. 48), the structural frame follows a "fixed division of labor, a hierarch of offices, a set of rules governing performance" and rationality. The school day depends on structure: the timing of classes, the arrangement of desks, and the materials used by students and staff, as well as the training teachers acquired to procure the positions they hold. A school district's basic hierarchy reflects the structural frame with the superintendent at the top, curriculum managers, administrators, principals, with teachers and others towards the bottom. Lastly, the school system relies on a set of rules governing the behaviors of students, staff and administrators.

Human resource frame. The human resource frame views an organization as an extended family made up of individuals with needs, skills and limitations. The organizational goal in this model is for leaders to "find ways for people to get the job done while feeling good about themselves and their work" (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p.16). The frame centers on what organizations and the people in them do for each other. The human resource frame is rooted in works of Follett and Mayo (as cited in Bolman & Deal, p. 121) who challenged the unfair treatment of workers and argued that the skills and traits people possess are a vital resource.

Assumptions underlying this frame include the consideration of human needs and the best fit between the organization and the individual's talents and energy.

In schools, human resources are plentiful. Teachers bring many talents to the educational table, including various teaching pedagogies, a care and concern for children and a knack for "school sense" or quick decision-making using "rapid cognition" (p. 11). Like a basketball player during a game, teachers possess the ability to rapidly scan a room and comprehend all that is happening in order to make a quick decision and follow through. Change disrupts this frame and forces leaders to decide between efficiency and human resources. Change also has the ability to make teachers feel unvalued as persons with expertise.

Political frame. The political frame, applying a jungle metaphor, maps an organization as a competitive arena for power and resources. Bolman and Deal (2008) describe normalcy in an organizational jungle as one of "bargaining, negotiation, coercion and compromise" (p. 16). Using a political frame in which to view an organization, differences and scarce resources put power at the top. "Power in organizations is basically the capacity to make things happen" (p. 196). This frame views politics as the process of making decisions and allocating resources in a context of scarcity and diverse interests. Assumptions undergirding the political frame include allocating scarce resources which illuminates power, bargaining and negotiation drive goals and decisions, and members of an organization have enduring differences. Oftentimes schools and education become the center of politics.

Schools become political arenas when money, students and resources are scarce. "Differences and scarce resources make power a key resource. Power in organizations is basically the capacity to make things happen" (Bolman and Deal, 2008, p.196). Teachers become involved in political power when invested values, interests and perceptions clash. An

example of this includes the NCLB mandate from the Bush Administration. "Current culture in education reinforced by *No Child Left Behind* often uses data to punish teachers and schools for failure" (Evans et al., 2012, p.158). Failing schools are threatened with a scarcity of resources unless they improve.

Symbolic frame. Finally, Bolman and Deal (2008) utilize the symbolic frame to analyze an organization's social and cultural "anthropology." Symbols and symbolic actions are represented or occur in everyday life, ebbing and flowing as historical, economic, political or social events arise. Temples and carnivals serve as a metaphor to illuminate the group's rituals, ceremonies, heroes and myths. For example, after 9/11 people sought solace in specific American symbols such as the American flag, monuments, and patriotic songs. Assumptions guiding the symbolic frame and a group's culture reveal that the meaning of things, not the events, matter most; multiple interpretations of experiences are welcome; and people create symbols to resolve confusion and find direction. Symbols reflect an organization's culture and may take many forms. Bolman and Deal explain that an organization's myths, vision and values support its overall purpose and drive. Specifically, an organization's values "convey a sense of identity, from boardroom to factory floor, and help people feel special about what they do" (p. 255).

School districts use symbols and slogans on a regular basis to motivate staff and promote a message to their communities. The mere experience and concept of school includes rituals such as parents walking their children to the bus on the first day, and teachers dressing up and "setting the table" for parent-teacher conferences. Ritual and ceremony become the finality of school through the pomp and circumstance of graduation.

In their chapter on reframing change in organizations, Bolman and Deal (2008) outline the conflicts in change and use their four frames as a lens for solving organizational dilemmas. For many reasons change agents or initiatives often fail. Through the lens of the four frames, Bolman and Deal specifically note, "change agents fail when they rely mostly on reason and structure while neglecting human, political and symbolic elements" (p. 394).

Kotter's Change Stages

Bolman and Deal (2008) highlight John Kotter, an author and professor of leadership and change, in their section on "Change Strategy." In his first seminal work on change management, Kotter outlines his eight stages for change. Bolman and Deal combine Kotter's stages of change with their own four frames to suggest strategies for leaders and change agents. They outline Kotter's (1996) eight stages found in change initiatives: (1) Creating a sense of urgency; (2) Pulling together a guiding team; (3) Creating an uplifting vision and strategy; (4) Communicating the vision and strategy; (5) Removing obstacles, or empowering people to move; (6) Producing visible symbols of progress through victories; (7) Sticking with the process and refusing to quit; and (8) Nurturing and shaping a new culture to support innovative ways (as cited in Bolman and Deal, p. 395). They illustrate how Kotter's stages align with actions a change agent might take as viewed through one of the four frames.

Kotter's eight change stages from his book *Leading Change* (1996) combined with Bolman and Deal's (2008) four frames provides a responsive design for leadership. For example, stage one involves creating a sense of urgency for change within the organization rather than from those outside the organization. Bolman and Deal's human resource frame answers the sense of urgency stage by providing techniques of skill building, open meetings and opportunities for participation that help members feel valued by contributing input. Another

example, Kotter's fifth step suggests "removing obstacles and empowering people to move forward" (p. 394). Through a structural frame, a leader should identify rules, roles, and procedures that block progress and rework them to fit organizational needs.

      Summary. In summarizing the conflicts of change, Bolman and Deal (2008) note that "Innovation inevitably generates four issues" (p. 396). First, it affects a member's ability to feel valued and in control. The human resource frame provides support for moving people forward in power. "Change alters power relationships and undermines existing agreements and pacts…it intrudes on deeply rooted symbolic forms, traditional ways and customary behavior" (p. 378). Second, change disrupts patterns of roles and produces uncertainty. The structural frame realigns roles to support the organization's new direction. Third, change creates conflicts between two opposing factions; a taxonomy of winners and losers, the innovators and traditionalists. "Change almost always benefits some people while neglecting or harming others" (p. 385). Fourth, change generates a sense of loss for recipients of the change. "Loss is an unavoidable by-product of improvement. As change accelerates executives and employees get caught in endless cycles of unresolved grief" (p. 390). The symbolic frame provides transition rituals and ceremonies to mourn the past and celebrate the future.

Enomoto and Kramer's Theory of Ethical Tensions

      In their text, *Leading Through the Quagmire*, Enomoto and Kramer (2007) outline four schools of ethical theory and note the common conflict or tensions between individuals and groups in education. They illustrate the four sources of ethics: virtue ethics or the definitive qualities of a good person; duties-based or deontological ethics which outlines the basic laws of an authoritative group; good society ethics or societal rights and freedoms; and lastly, desires/ends-based ethics or utilitarian ethics which maximizes good for the most people most of

the time. Ethical dilemmas develop as ethics come into conflict with each other, creating ethical tensions. In the analysis of data (Chapter Four) I will examine two of the four sources of ethical tensions and apply it to this case.

Duties-based ethics. Deontological or *duties based ethics*, is based upon laws or rules and "proposes ways to consider ethical conduct within one's personal and professional duties" (Enomoto and Kramer, 2007, p. xviii). It includes the duties of authorities, such as religious or government, and outlines the duties of the citizen to the group or what a good person is "responsible for doing in society" (p. 20). Not only is this ethic governed by rules and legislated principles, the system aims to instill a universal law to be upheld by all, or a universalist ethics. Roles in education, such as teacher, principal or superintendent have specific duties and responsibilities associated with them. These roles are shaped and guided by external and internal factors such as the affiliated group's beliefs, individual beliefs and differing senses of responsibility. Deferring to Kant, a Prussian philosopher, Enomoto and Kramer (2007) connect beliefs, duty and behavior with ethics or "a rational application of reason" (p. 23) leading to moral maxims. Thus, an ethical responsibility becomes higher in the order of duties than a legal or rules based responsibility. Such duties become an ethical standard.

According to Enomoto and Kramer (2008), duties-based ethics are an important consideration in leadership decisions because of the responsibilities and roles people are playing as well as the deeply seated beliefs they possess. Leaders should be mindful then, that conflicts tend to occur because people are operating from what they believe to be their ethical duty in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities of the authoritative group. Enomoto and Kramer suggest leaders attend to the varied beliefs, values and sense of duty their staff possesses in order for conflicts to be resolved and/or solutions to be made.

Desires-based ethics. Enomoto and Kramer (2007) describe their second source of

ethical theory as *desires-based (or utilitarian) ethics*. This term refers to the things we generally

desire and want and is also recognized as an ends-based ethic or utilitarian ethic. Desire based

ethics from a utilitarian point of view, is based on the premise of maximizing the good for the

most people most of the time. What we desire, we deem to be "good" for us and in

extrapolation, believe it would be good for everyone to have the same. However, what is "good"

is relative and depends upon several factors such as historical context and circumstance of each

situation. Thus, conflict arises when a system attempts to define what a good ultimate desire or

end looks like.

In examining this ethic, Enomoto and Kramer (2007) defer to Bentham's notion that

maximizing the greatest good to the greatest number allows us to serve society as a whole. This

becomes a rationale for leaders who are trying to serve the majority of their constituents, or staff

members. But sometimes what is good for the majority is not always good for the minority.

Enomoto and Kramer suggest leaders consider supporting a minority view and also examine the

consequences of a value judgment-based ethic. They pose reflective questions for leaders such

as "What is good?" and "Who determines it?" (p. 29). In contrasting duties with desires,

Enomoto and Kramer (2007) suggest leaders pay attention to what people believe (duties) and

what they want to achieve (desires), checking for consistency and alignment as well as possible

conflict between them.

Summary. Enomoto and Kramer (2007) identified four sources of ethics and the ethical

tensions that occur when people's beliefs and responsibilities conflict. Duty-based ethics, or the

universalist principles upheld by all can come in conflict with the desires-based ethics or ends-

based ethic of individuals in an organization. In each source of ethical tension lies a set of

assumptions and beliefs people use in decision making. Organizational systems clash when leaders and their staff operate from different ethical perspectives. Enomoto and Kramer suggest leaders work through these conflicts by examining peoples' beliefs and consider the consequences of each action they take.

Chapter Summary

The literature review supported a need for examining the teachers' experience in reform and to compare the administrators' view of the teachers' experience in reform. The content of this literature review demonstrates the barriers for teachers in change, and the need to engage teachers in change. Today's teachers are experiencing a constantly changing educational landscape, complicated by demands from policy makers and administrators. Researchers showed that teachers are frustrated and need to be included in administrator's decision-making regarding reform. Because the existing research lacks educational theoretical frameworks, a qualitative study employing Brookfield's (1995) theory of critical reflection, Bolman and Deal's (2008) four organizational frames combined with Kotter's (1996) change stages, and Enomoto and Kramer's (2007) sources of ethics adds depth and a richness to the literature that is absent.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study, anchored by Brookfield's (1995) critical reflection lenses, Bolman and Deal's (2008) four frames and Kotter's (1996) eight change steps, as well as Enomoto and Kramer's (2007) analysis of ethical tensions, allowed elementary teachers to share their experiences with educational change. A qualitative study allowed me to hear the richness of teachers' experiences and to tell the "real" story behind their motivations, fears, and desires in change. "Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). This study also provided insight into administrators' experiences in guiding teachers through change as well as their assumptions about teachers moving through reform. Using a case study method allowed me to illuminate teachers' stories of change that took place in a system bounded by time and location. The information garnered will be useful to administrators and policy makers for their future decision making regarding the implementation of new reforms.

In the following section, I describe my research design that includes my rationale for study, sources of data, interviews, method of data collection and analysis methods. I also provide the components of theoretical frameworks used in the study: Bolman and Deal's (2008) four frames, Kotter's (1996) change theory and Enomoto and Kramer's (2007) sources of ethical tensions. Lastly I outline the limitations, validity, generalizability and ethics considered in the study.

Research Design

In order to capture the experiences of elementary teachers, I chose the qualitative method of a case study. Compared to a study of a working culture or ethnography, Creswell (2013)

notes that through a case study the researcher will "explore a real-life, contemporary bounded system over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (p. 97). In addition, a case study can reveal information other methods cannot. "A case study might be selected for its very uniqueness, for what it can reveal about a phenomenon, knowledge to which we would not otherwise have access" (Merriam, 2009, p. 46). Because this study focused on illuminating the voices of teachers in order to engage them in reform, I chose a case study method to capture their thoughts and feelings about a topic in which they might never be consulted.

Rationale

My case is bounded or defined by the phenomenon of educational reform experienced by the elementary teachers of the Southwestern School District. A school district functions as an institution, or what is a "bounded system, a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries" (Merriam, 2009, p. 40), and served well as a qualitative case.   Merriam (2009) states, the boundedness of a case study is determined by "whether there is a limit to the number of people involved" (p. 41), and those people are particularly involved in an instance of some specific process. Hence, interviewing elementary teachers from the same district that are experiencing the same phenomenon of reform initiatives deemed my qualitative choice an appropriate case study. A case study allowed me, the researcher, to examine several underlying issues regarding current change in education through interviews of teachers and leaders, a comparison of teachers' perceptions and administrators' perceptions of change as well as an analysis of teachers' experiences with reform efforts. Results from this study will be useful to administrators and educational leaders in preparing teachers for future educational reform.

Data Collection

In order to focus on the learners' experiences, I utilized semi-structured interviews to collect data for my case study during the summer of 2013. "The interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world," (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 103)**.** I chose to interview teachers in the summer based on my own experiences as a teacher. Due to the nine month structure of the current school system in the Southwestern School District in Minnesota, both teachers and administrators are more accessible in the summer, and perhaps a bit more relaxed after having time off. Knowing that teachers were more likely to relinquish time to be interviewed in the summer, I was able to spend more time listening, coding and following up on interviews. The descriptive data I received helped illuminate the voices and experiences of teachers experiencing reform. As I listened and recorded teachers' stories, I wrote observer notes and comments. This kind of data collection and its timing allowed for follow up interviews or emails as needed to clarify data bits, themes or summative marginal codes. In addition, interviews in this format provided me with "rich, 'thick' description" (Merriam, 2009, p.43) of the phenomenon of educational reform experienced by teachers in my study.

My sample selection for data collection was a nonprobability purposive sampling. The most common form of nonprobability sampling, purposive sampling assumes "the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned," (Merriam, 2009, p.71). I chose to sample teachers from three elementary schools in my district with a variety of experiences, and obtained district permission from the district's curriculum director in order to do so (see Appendix A). I collected my data through teacher and administrator interviews. Interviewing administrators and teachers

provided me with triangulation in the data. Triangulation involves using multiple sources of

data, comparing and cross-checking the data, and then employing follow up interviews as

needed. "In triangulation, researchers make use of multiple and different sources, methods,

investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence" (Ely et al., as cited in Creswell,

2013, p. 251). I taped and transcribed each interview as well as took summative notes to ensure

that everything shared was preserved for analysis.

   Participants/Sources. This qualitative case study examined 14 elementary teachers'

perceptions of educational reform. In addition, the study includes the perceptions of three

administrators from the respective teachers' buildings and one district office administrator, in

order to examine and compare teachers and administrators experiences with change. Both

teachers and administrators described their motivations, desires and fears regarding educational

change.

   I conducted a purposive sampling of 14 teachers from three elementary buildings to

discover their perceptions and reflections on educational reform in order to illuminate their

voices in a critical reflection of their practice. Interviewees possessed varying years of

experience, differing grade level experiences and topics, and represented both genders, male and

female. See Appendix E for the traits of participants.

   In order to encourage participation I emailed the three principals in each building

describing my study and communicated the district's approval of this project. I also asked them

for volunteers for this study. Second, after receiving names of volunteers for the study from each

administrator, I contacted each participant via email to confirm their interest and have them sign

the appropriate forms for permission to use their data in the study. In the email I attached the

interview questions for them to reflect upon ahead of time. I asked them to reflect upon their

experiences in teaching as well as their experiences with educational reform (see Appendix B).

After receiving about eight volunteers, I telephoned a colleague from each of the three buildings

and asked them to recommend approximately two to three people they knew who might be

willing to participate. Through this strategy I gained about four more participants. I then

contacted those potential participants by email. Lastly, I used a snowballing sampling technique.

I identified a few participants from a school in which I had very few volunteers and asked them

to identify other potential interviewees. This technique filled all of my expected 15 elementary

teacher interviews save one.

My participant count totaled 14 teachers and three administrators. In addition, I was

purposely searching for interviewees who fell on a perceptual continuum of change. In other

words, I tried to find teachers who perceived themselves on a continuum of change from not

willing, to completely willing to change. I also sought participants with a range of teaching

experiences both in years and subjects (tenure and nontenured) who represented both genders,

male and female, within my district to ensure a balance in my sampling. All of these interviewee

traits were necessary in providing me with rich, thick descriptions of the past and present stages

in educational reform.

Interviews. To illuminate the stories reflecting the experiences of teachers, I utilized a

semi-**s**tructured interview format. According to Merriam (2009), "semi-structured interviews

contain flexible questions, are guided by a list of questions developed by the author, have no

predetermined order or wording and usually require specific data from respondents" (p. 89). My

questions allowed teachers to share their teaching histories, their current teaching status, their

experiences with educational change and their suggestions for the implementation of future

changes. All interviews lasted between 45 minutes and an hour and were digitally audio

recorded. One interviewee's session lasted about 15 minutes so s/he could meet a previously

scheduled appointment afterwards (see Appendix C for the interview questions). I conducted

most of my interviews during the summer months and a couple in the fall during after school

hours. For the convenience of the interviewee, all interviews were conducted either off-site at a

local coffee shop or on-site in a teacher's classroom or principal's office. Based on my pilot

study research involving three interviewees, I found richer data when including teachers of

different gender, from different buildings, of different ages and years of experience. A

qualitative case study provided me a more holistic picture of the data from the interviews.

It addition, it was imperative I had a large enough sample to help reduce bias as the

researcher; I am an "insider" or teacher in the district. I chose three buildings in my district in

which I had not directly worked. My goal was to obtain at least four to five volunteers from each

building. While I was familiar with most of my interviewees, I did not work in their buildings.

This was done to build trust and allow for comfortability for teachers in telling their stories.

Creswell (2013) describes this familiarity in an epistemological assumption through qualitative

research, "Conducting a qualitative study means that researchers try to get as close as possible to

the participants being studied" (p. 20). Creswell stressed the importance of conducting studies in

the field where participants live and work in order to gain knowledge of their experiences. Even

though I knew most of these interviewees, assuring their anonymity and the confidentiality of

their data was key to their participation.

In order to communicate the purpose, goals and logistics of the study, I provided

participants with several pieces of information. I provided all participants, the teachers and

administrators, with a consent form outlining the goals and risks of the study (see Appendix C).

In addition, I made clear the confidentiality aspects of the study as well as the protection of their

identity, including the use of pseudonyms. This was done through written and verbal

communication. I also offered participants the option to choose not to answer certain questions

if they wished. Ultimately, no one chose to skip questions or declined having their answers

included in the data. To protect the anonymity of participants, I used pseudonyms on all forms

and I kept the hard copies of signed consents, data collection forms and transcripts in binders that

were locked in my office when not in use.

I recorded each interview with a digital recorder and hired a transcriber who then

transcribed all notes into a Word document. The transcriber also signed the required

confidentiality agreement (see Appendix F). During and after each interview I took notes or

memos in the margins and reflected on the interview as a whole in the form of observer

comments. The transcriber sent the transcripts through a digital dropbox and I printed them out,

three hole punched them and stored them in a binder for analysis.

Data Analysis

In this qualitative study, I followed data interpretation and analysis in the vein of Bogdan

and Biklen (2007). "Data interpretation refers to developing ideas about your findings," whereas

"analysis involves working with the data, organizing them, breaking them down into manageable

units, coding them, synthesizing them, and searching for patterns" (p. 159). My data analysis

began during the interview process. While listening to the first few interviews, themes from the

teachers and administrators started to emerge. For example, many of the first interviewees I

spoke with shared a desire to be a teacher since childhood. After my first few interviews I

recognized this sentiment being repeated and becoming a theme. This theme inspired me to add

a question to the original interview list that would draw out teachers' reasons for choosing

education. Creswell (2013) describes data analysis in qualitative research consisting of

"preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables or a discussion" (p. 180). In the following section I describe the process I used for writing memos and codes.

Memos. During and after interviews I wrote memos and observer comments to myself to solidify the details of each teacher's and administrator's story. I also completed a written summary at the end of teacher interview, giving myself an overall description of each interview for future reference. In the analysis of the data, I examined my memos and observer comments and reread my summative interview notes on each interviewee. In reading the transcriptions, I highlighted key messages emerging from the data and messages that repeated throughout the data. Writing memos helped me to clarify the data and solidify ideas about what the data might be revealing. "Writing successive memos throughout the research process keeps you involved in the analysis and helps you to increase the level of abstraction of your ideas. Certain codes stand out and take form as theoretical categories" (Charmaz, 2010, p. 72). As I read each of my memos and transcriptions, patterns began to emerge.

Coding. While assembling the transcriptions in a binder, I organized each interviewee by years of experience in case this arrangement might indicate a trend in the data and provide me with an organizational schema. Next, I implemented line by line coding in the margins of each transcription and created "buckets" or themes of data. "The main categorizing strategy in qualitative research is coding" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 96). Line-by-line coding means naming each line of written data (Glaser in Charmaz, 2010, p. 50). Through the process of coding, I explored the data to determine concepts in common among the interviews as well as emerging themes. I arranged the themes into categories or buckets of data, facilitating a comparison between things

that "aided me in the development of theoretical concepts" (Maxwell, p. 96). This comparison or connection using relationships translated into focused coding or putting significant bits of data into categories (Charmaz, 2010). Through this process in the vein of Charmaz (2010), I was able to shape, reshape and refine my analysis.

      Interpretation. In an analysis of the data, I attempted to extract a larger meaning from the themes and subthemes. Creswell states, "Interpretation involves making sense of the data, the 'lessons learned,' as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985)" (p.187). In order to arrive at a larger meaning, I looked for commonalities, differences and parallels between the teachers' comments, consistent messages in teachers' comments, and then compared and contrasted them within the administrators' data. I also conducted a comparison or cross-check of common themes that were parallel to teachers and administrators and then in contrast, themes that conflicted. Themes in qualitative research, as defined by Creswell (2013), are "broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea" (p. 186). I aggregated codes to form common ideas in the data such as: desires of teachers, motivations, and fears or frustrations of teachers.

      Creswell then suggests putting the themes into "families" and creating subthemes based on segments of the data. I eventually arrived at a set of themes that resulted in the sub categories for Chapter Four on Understanding the Teachers and for Chapter Five on the Effects of Reform on School Relationships. My intent in Chapter Four was to understand and then illuminate the voices of teachers. Each theme reflects an interpretation of the data or a defined relationship between the themes and the subthemes. For example, the first theme in Chapter Four included subthemes of *care, making a difference*, and a *sense of identity*. Ultimately these subthemes supported the theme of *they come with passion.* The second theme of *reform is an ethical matter*

to teachers reflects the struggles teachers experience in leveraging their *high expectations*, their *duties versus desires*, and the district's treatment of *children as data*. Lastly, the third theme of *reform challenges their sense of competency and wisdom* summarizes an elementary teacher's *need for proof* a strategy works, trust in their own *intuition,* and wisdom comes from their *lived experiences.* Chapter Five's themes and subthemes of administrative assumptions of *teachers' power, their directions are clear,* and *teachers' voices are important and included,* reveal the intricacies of reform on school relationships, from the impact on teachers in change to the assumptions principals make regarding teachers' actions and the consequences of these on children. Both chapters' themes led me to outline recommendations for administrators and policy makers in future reforms and for future study on educational reform. Lastly, I applied innovative theoretical frameworks to the data to develop an in-depth analysis of the issues of reform.

Use of the theoretical frameworks in analysis. Analysis of the data was aided by the use of the conceptual categories from the afore-described theories. In addition to utilizing Brookfield's (1995) critical reflection lenses, I employed other innovative frameworks in an analysis of the findings. I did not anticipate using Bolman and Deal (2008) initially, but as the data unfolded, the characteristics in the frames they described illuminated my data and gave me a framework for analysis. Likewise, Enomoto and Kramer (2007), aided the analysis in helping me to understand that it was not just stubbornness that led to teacher resistance. Something deeper existed in the data, and through Enomoto and Kramer I was able to identify the ethical tensions that developed for teachers. Lastly, in utilizing Kotter's (1996) change stages with Bolman and Deal's organizational frames, I leveraged the actions of the administrators with the

resulting outcomes from teachers in analysis. These three frameworks allowed me to explore an innovative view from which to analyze the data.

Validity and Ethics

In the following sections, I will describe how I addressed and ensured validity and generalizability for my study. I also discuss my considerations of ethics and confidentiality in this study.

Validity and generalizability. Validity in qualitative research "refers to the notion that an idea is well grounded and well supported", (Creswell, 2013, p.259). Creswell outlines several strategies to ensure validation: prolonged engagement, peer review, clarifying researcher bias, rich thick description and triangulation (pp. 250-252). Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Creswell, 2013) propose techniques such as prolonged engagement in the field and triangulation of data as well to reinforce validity.

My strategies for ensuring validation included prolonged engagement in the field, the triangulation of data, the clarification of researcher bias, and rich thick description. Since I have been teaching in the district for over 20 years I see my engagement in the field as prolonged. I know the district, its policies and its inner workings well. Due to the recent implementation of initiatives in my district, I felt confident that interviewing teachers from the elementary level provided me with relevant data on their experiences with recent educational change. My triangulation design included interviewing teachers of different ages, of different genders, at different buildings and with different years of experience, as well as some administrators who supervise them.

Generalizability refers to "whether the findings of a particular study hold up beyond the specific research subjects, and the setting involved" (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007, p. 36). In

utilizing rich, thick description I provided data to support the themes arising from the study. I

anticipate implications for educational change from this study may apply to educational

institutions as a whole but will leave it to the readers to find the connections within their own

settings. In addition, "The intent in qualitative research is not to generalize the information …

but to elucidate the particular, the specific" (Pinnegar & Daynes in Creswell, 2013, p. 157).

Ethics and confidentiality. All participants were treated under the ethical guidelines in

accordance with the University of St. Thomas' Institutional Review Board (IRB). In order to

conduct the study I obtained consent from the district director of teachers and from individual

building principals. In addition I provided a consent form to voluntary interview participants.

This study had minimal risks, including the discovery of participant participation by other

coworkers and the principal. I shared these risks with the participants, and used pseudonyms for

all proper nouns/names within the study; therefore, participation in the study remained

anonymous.

The records of this study will remain confidential. In any sort of report I publish, I will

omit information that will make it possible to identify participants in any way. The types of

records I generated included recordings, personal notes, transcripts and analysis in order to

complete my dissertation research. My dissertation chair and committee read and reviewed the

analysis. Upon review and publication, I destroyed hard copies of data and analysis summaries,

and I erased and deleted digital recordings from my recorder and digital dropbox after

transcription.

Role of the researcher. Limitations in my research exist due to my own bias in the field,

but by using a purposive sampling, participants were recommended by colleagues rather than

chosen by me from three schools in which I have not taught. I reassured the participants that all

notes, recordings, transcriptions and information will be kept confidential and that the responses will not affect our relationship as district colleagues.

As noted above, through memos and observer comments I worked to "continually confront" my own opinions, assumptions, and prejudices with the data (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). Qualitative research inherently carries philosophical assumptions and interpretive frameworks. "Whether we are aware of it or not, we always bring certain beliefs and philosophical assumptions to our research," (Creswell, 2013, p.15). I articulated and acknowledged these assumptions in my memos and comments to heighten my awareness of them.

Certainly my experiences, beliefs and values influence the research. Creswell acknowledges the difficulties in becoming aware of these assumptions. In my research, I openly discussed values shaping my work and acknowledged that my research is value-laden and biases are present. To address bias in my data collection and to be sure I heard my participants' voices correctly, I sent copies of each participant's responses in the transcripts for their review. Once summative marginal codes of each transcript were established, I sent a copy of those as well to each interviewee to validate and ensure my understanding of their stories. In my research I also acknowledged that my insider status would bring some understanding of the overall phenomenon of educational change. Maxwell (2005) states that "separating your research from other aspects of your life cuts you from a major source of insights, hypotheses, and validity checks" (p. 38). Therefore, my role as an elementary teacher of over twenty years affects this research.

Chapter Summary

In chapter three I presented my methodology for research. Within this methodology section, I presented my research design which included a rationale for a case study approach,

methods of data collection and data analysis. In the section on data analysis I presented and described my use of innovative theoretical frameworks by Brookfield (1995), Bolman and Deal (2008) with Kotter (1996), and Enomoto and Kramer (2007). Lastly I presented the validity, generalizability, ethics, and confidentiality considered in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: UNDERSTANDING THE TEACHERS: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Joe has a passion for teaching. He changed his original career plan from sports to become a teacher. Several events and people in his life influenced the way he views children. "For me, I just like being around the kids. I think there's nothing more gratifying than being around kids and I always had that passion." Joe headed back to college to obtain his master's degree in education, enabling him to lead children. He notes that teaching is rewarding. "When you get that recognition from parents and the kids that they are making progress, I just think that's the best feeling in the world."

The teacher above describes his gratification in teaching. A teachers' passion lies at the heart of teaching. The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the voices of teachers and answer the question, how can administrators and legislators engage teachers as key players in reform? This chapter presents the focused findings and themes in understanding the teachers, obtained from semi-structured interviews of elementary teachers and administrators from three different buildings in a Minnesota suburban school district. In addition, it includes an analysis of the data of each theme using several theoretical frameworks. Each section is described in the following paragraph.

Findings

In this chapter, I will discuss three main themes from the data: teachers come to the profession with passion, reform is an ethical matter to teachers, and reform challenges their sense of competency and wisdom. To support the first theme, I provide the storyline of teachers' passions for teaching through: an ethic of care, a desire to make a difference, an innate sense of their identity, and care as curriculum. In the analysis section of the first theme, I utilize literature

by Bottema et al. (2011), Berg (2012), Day et al. (2005), as well as Zin et al. (2007), to interpret

teacher passion. Next, I describe the issues of reform as an ethical matter to teachers in the high

expectations they hold of themselves and their students as an ethical struggle between duties and

desires, and the consideration of children as data. In this section, Enomoto and Kramer's (2007)

theory of ethical tensions provide a lens to examine reform as an ethical matter. Last, I illustrate

how reform challenges a teacher's sense of competency and wisdom. In the analysis section,

Bandura's theory of agency (1989), and Brand's (2009) essay on exhausted teachers provide a

lens to view the impact of reform on teacher competence.

They Come with Passion

Classroom teachers possess a passionate love of teaching and a care for children.

According to Webster's Dictionary, the word 'passion' has several origins and definitions

including: "a strong feeling of enthusiasm or excitement for something or about doing

something, a strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object, or concept."

As I interviewed each teacher, I found passion in their eyes and voices. Two of the teachers I

interviewed displayed tears in their eyes while describing why they became a teacher and their

love of children. In this section I outline examples of teachers' passions as exhibited by an ethic

of care, a desire to make a difference, and in their identities as a teacher.

Ethic of care. Feminists developed a normative ethical theory called an ethic of care.

This kind of care compares the ethics of justice and responsibility to an ethics of building

relationships and response. Noddings (1997) emphasized the ethic of care as a moral purpose of

schools, as distinct from the purely academic purpose stressed by policy makers. "In direct

opposition to the current emphasis on academic standards, a national curriculum, and national

testing, I have argued that our main educational aim should be to encourage the growth of

competent, caring, loving, and lovable people" (p. 1). Teachers possess a desire to care for, and encourage caring in children.

My first research question asked teachers to reveal their story of becoming a teacher. Most of them responded with stories of a former teacher who inspired them, or of a family member who modeled an ethic of care and a love of learning. Tuscarora, for example, lived in a family that espoused strong values for education. Her family taught her the importance and value of learning through family trips and projects. A teacher, however, inspired her career choice. "I always wanted to be a teacher like Mrs. Smith. She was so supportive." The concept of support is critical to the ethic of care and to how Tuscarora approaches her work:

I really believe in the concept of the whole child….the opportunity to shape a child's development as a learner…as a member of a community…and as an individual. They are learning how to get along with other people; they're learning about themselves in the world.

Noddings (2002) noted that this feminine theory of ethical care comes from modeling, practice, and dialogue. "All people want to be cared for…, and we learn to care-about, through our experience of being cared-for" (p. 11). Teachers emphasized that teaching students how to get along with each other and how to be good citizens of the world is important. Yet teachers possess the responsibility in teaching subject matter and raising certain prescribed test scores for students as well. This ethic of care embodies a desire of teachers and creates an ethical tension between the duties and desires of teachers.

When asked what she enjoys about teaching, Ann described what she loves about kids: the joy in their eyes when they figure out a problem, the funny things they say, and the moment they become a fluent reader and recognize it. Ann also acknowledged the importance of care

and safety in her room. "When they come back to visit and they walk in the room and you can see on their face like, 'Oh, liked it here- I felt good in this room, I felt safe in this room, I had fun in this room.' That to me is what teaching is about and why I do it, I guess." In speaking of her school children, Ann articulated her level of concern and care for them in very passionate tones.

> If you don't love kids, you shouldn't do it. That's the bottom line. And you have to love them for everything, not just that they're growing academically but really who they are as a person. I just think that's really, really important.

Every interviewee I spoke with indicated a love or a concern for children and a desire to care for them. An ethic of care scaffolds the teaching profession. According to the teachers I interviewed, caring for children is of utmost importance and central to their understanding of their vocation as a teacher.

Care as curriculum. During two parts of the interview, teachers indicated a strong theme of care as an instructional part of their day. In question one, I asked interviewees why they became a teacher. Within the first 35 lines (or first page) of the transcript, every single interviewee indicated that working with kids was the best part of teaching. William said, "It's always about the kids." Kelly also stated, "I really like helping kids." The focus of almost every interview started or ended, with kids. Mary added, "I've always enjoyed working with children." Not one of them mentioned teaching a typical content area such as social studies, math or science as their first reason for or enjoyment of teaching.

Many teachers also mentioned caring for children, creating relationships in the classroom, and teaching children how to care for each other. Nala talked about teaching kids how to be good citizens, "Just how to teach kids to interact with one another, how to cooperate, how to be respectful, responsible, safe. Just the general things that make you good people." She

also expressed how important it was to make time in her day for teaching good citizenship. Jane outlined her own love of learning, creating and leading children through adventures. "I like diving into something and going deep with kids, getting them so excited that it's leaving the classroom and they're talking about it at home, making connections with kids, like building relationships." William summed it up by saying, "What's good about teaching is the kids." In the data I found teachers' beliefs in the care and connections with kids so prominent that these beliefs must materialize in an unwritten curriculum.

In another segment of the interview the theme of care as curriculum surfaced. In question seven I asked them how they defined "best practices" in teaching. Many of the respondents were not able to answer the question at first, or were not sure what I meant by the question. Administrators use the term "best practices" to describe the newest pedagogical practices in education producing the most success, such as hands-on mathematics, and inquiry-based science. I expected the interviewees to mention the newest trends or initiatives we were conducting in our district. To my surprise, many teachers could not identify or iterate our district's best practices. For example, one teacher responded, "I saw that question and I was thinking, 'What is that?'" At least she indicated an honesty in admitting her uncertainty. Other teachers spoke off-the-cuff, such as Jim when he reflected, "I think my best practice stems from what I learned as a student and then constantly trying to retool things. There's a little something called Pinterest, you've probably heard of it."

In this part of the interviews, teachers again referred to taking care of children's needs as curriculum, rather than answering that best practices revolve around the official curriculum of the content areas such as math, science and reading. Most teachers answered this question using students' needs as their focus. For example, Joe said, "Best practice to me is knowing your

students, knowing what their strengths and weaknesses are and being able to hit those needs."

Jane's first response to this question included content standards, but she quickly defaulted to

children's needs.

> Right now, that would be it hits standards. I just feel like that's the driving thing under
>
> my teaching right now. I don't want to just be teaching for teaching's sake because every
>
> minute of the kids' day counts and it should be something a child needs to have. With
>
> that, though, you need team building. Ok. I lost the question. What was it? Ok. So best
>
> practices. Most bang for your buck, you're hitting a lot of different children's needs.
>
> Engagement is huge, so a lot of engagement and whatever.

It is clear Jane feels the curriculum should be based on a child's needs and that team building, or

building relationships is key in order for the teaching of content to be successful. According to

the data, teachers feel best practices should meet the needs of students.

Making a difference. Teachers join the profession with a desire to make a difference in

the world and possess a passionate about it. Chris, who has been teaching for many years,

recalls her beginnings in education. In reflecting on how she made the transition from the

business world to education, she realized she did not want to be a "paper pusher for some

business." When she realized she wanted to be a teacher, it was truly a revelation. She saw a

commercial for being a teacher and thought, "Ahhhh, I want to do something that makes a

difference." Nala followed the same reflective process during college. The topic of engineering

originally drew Nala into the math and sciences, but when she found she could make a difference

by working with the Boys and Girls Clubs, she changed her mind. "And I was like, I wonder if

everyone can do this? So I felt like I was making a difference and then I decided that maybe I

should pursue this [education] and my whole direction [in college] just flipped over."

In describing why they went into teaching, most teachers and administrators used passionate words such as "love," "excitement," "enthusiasm," and "feelings." Olivia, an administrator and former teacher, explained her love of teaching and leading, "I just love the whole aspect of working with kids and their futures and what a difference we make." Mary shared what really makes teaching worthwhile for her.

> I think I like seeing them learning something new and just the excitement that they have to find out about stuff and making a connection with them and helping them grow for the nine months that we have them and seeing what kind of person they start as and then what they end at and hope that they are their best personal self in all things and that's fun, to see what we've been working with them for a long time and then something all of a sudden clicks and you're like, 'Oh, finally they get it.' That's what I like about [teaching].

Being a teacher inherently brings meaning into the lives of the teachers. Teachers feel they possess a strong ability to make a positive difference in the lives of their students and in the world.

An innate sense of self/identity. Many of the teachers I interviewed knew their identities were a great fit for the job. Without hesitation, Katie stated, "I just always knew I wanted to be a teacher." Several teachers expressed that teaching was the only profession they ever desired. "I don't think I've ever thought of anything other than teaching from day one" was Mary's comment. Many of the teachers I interviewed knew their skills and inner confidence matched teaching. Joe enjoyed coaching students before becoming a teacher. Katie babysat and took on other "typical" teacher roles before she became a professional.

As an elementary teacher, my life played out the same way and my beliefs in making a difference align with my interviewees. I have been "playing school" since I was in second grade.

Somehow I felt being a teacher was an innate extension of my inner being. Other teachers

indicated the same notion. After considering another profession, Jane noted, "It was like divine

intervention because it has been a great fit for me." Sue also felt the same assuredness about the

purpose in her life as a teacher. "I've never looked back, never regretted it, and never wanted to

do anything different."   Finally, I think Ann said it most passionately in our interview,

> I knew from when I was eight that was all I wanted to do. I just…it was like it was what
>
> I was made to do. I'm going to get teary. It was just…I couldn't think of doing anything
>
> else to be honest. I just love kids.

Teachers come to the profession with a passion for teaching children and learning. Their ethic of

care and desire to make a difference supports this passion. In addition, teachers indicated such a

strong desire of care for children that it perhaps represents the unofficial or hidden curriculum in

a typical teaching day. Lastly, many teachers shared that the desire to work with or teach

children began early in their lives and that teaching is a great fit for their own identity.

Analysis of Passion Brought to Teaching

Teachers' identity as educators and their passion stems from values and memories built

early in their lives. Bottema et al. (2011) and Berg (2012) support the concept of teachers'

beliefs and passions in how they care for children. Bottema et al. (2011) note, "Teachers' ideas

about good teaching tend to be mainly rooted in their own educational experiences and

memories, which are context based and generally rather unstructured." The teachers in this study

remembered the context in which important teachers in their lives influenced how they teach

today. William described a teacher who had an impact on him still today. "I guess my fourth

grade teacher. She is the one who kind of opened the door for me to think that this can be a fun

job, you can enjoy your time with the kids." Nala similarly remembered a favorite science

teacher. "Mr. D just hooked me into science and from then on I have excelled in that area and find it fascinating. I love teaching science." Many of the teachers in my data hold close or emulate the modeling and inspiration from their childhood teachers to their own practices today.

In addition, many teachers' memories of school as a child created a foundation for this care and compassion. Berg (2012) noted that teacher beliefs are engrained from experience as a student themselves. "Teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning have become ingrained through years of schooling when they were students" (p. 21). Joe recalled his favorite elementary teacher's support. "He made me feel special and he challenged me to do things that I didn't think that I was capable of doing. He was always just there for me." Many of the teachers in my data recalled the manner in which teachers cared for them, motivated them and inspired them. Tuscarora's favorite teacher was her piano teacher because "she was supportive, inspirational, wanted me to improve and do my best." Sue recalled wanting to be like her second grade teacher. "I had a really good second grade teacher role model. She had time for everyone." Using the lens of teacher beliefs of and experiences with care in analysis, care as curriculum takes priority for a teacher over the typical elementary content.

Day et al.'s (2005) research on teacher identity and the challenges of sustaining teacher commitment, reinforced theories that prove teachers' commitment stems from their own personal values and identity as a teaching professional. Day et al. surmised that under the governmental management of change and reform agendas, there was no evidence that teachers' identities are valued. These identities refer to the values teachers possess regarding principles of care, student learning and achievement. Day et al.'s study concluded, however, teachers possess "Core values-based identities which relate to strongly held purposes and principles of care and commitment to pupils' learning and achievement" which transcend agendas of imposed change

(p. 575). This research confirms their finding: teachers are passionate about their jobs and

committed to the care and achievement of children.

In the data, teachers desired time to build up relationships and provide an "ethic of care"

or what is a "hidden curriculum" for children. Not only is time an issue for teachers, but it is an

ethical matter. Teachers felt caring for students was their number one priority and reform steals

time from this. Reform punctuates teachers' high expectations of themselves and children, the

struggle between their duties of the job and desires for children, and their consideration of

children as data. The power of reform and the politics behind reform becomes the wedge

between teachers and their jobs in caring for the whole child. In applying the theories of social

and emotional learning (SEL), researchers agree with teachers.

In the literature, several researchers support the desire of teachers to apply an ethic of

care in their professions for children. Based on the research of Zins et al. (2007), social and

emotional learning supports success socially and academically in school. "Intrinsically, schools

are social places and learning is a social process" (Zins et al., 2007, p. 191). They acknowledged

that students do not learn alone but in collaboration with their teachers, their peers, and with the

support of their families. Zins et al. recommend leaders implement a Social and Emotional

Learning (SEL) program in their schools to enhance overall learning. "Social and emotional

education involves teaching children to be self- aware, socially cognizant, able to make

responsible decisions, and competent in self-management and relationship-management skills so

as to foster their academic success." Coincidently, this research provides a good match for

teachers as mentioned either directly or indirectly in the data. Teachers indicated a desire to care

for children and the aforementioned literature examined a social and emotional curriculum that

could provide a structure for this care and the data to support it.

Reform is an Ethical Matter to Teachers

Dewey (1906) proposed the notion that education serves as a moral principle with teachers as the harbingers of a moral or ethical duty to create capable citizens for society.

In so far as the methods used are those that appeal to the active and constructive powers, permitting the child to give out and thus to serve; in so far as the curriculum is so selected and organized as to provide the material for affording the child a consciousness of the world in which he has to play a part, and the demands he has to meet; so far as these ends are met, the school is organized on an ethical basis. (Dewey, p. 26)

As Dewey described, teachers in my data possess a strong work ethic for themselves and their students. Many of the teachers I interviewed indicated a modeling of this ethic by their families or teachers. Teachers also possess a strong sense of how children learn best and how teaching should look. Hence, reform, or a change in teaching, affects a teacher's sense of ethics and teaching habits. In this section I present data supporting the theme that reform is an ethical matter to teachers due to the high expectations they hold of themselves, the ethical dilemma of duties versus desires in the job, and the treatment of children as numbers or data.

High Expectations. In examining the data, I found teachers possess high expectations of themselves as well as the children in their classroom. Whether these expectations were self-imposed, or modeled for them, most teachers also indicated a strong work ethic driving these expectations. Martha recalled the strong work ethic her family set and modeled for her as a child.

My parents were both really hard workers and so it's just always been, when I had my first job it was you show up. You're supposed to be there at eight, so you show up at 7:45. You're always there and that's expected. You always do more than what you're

asked to do and when you're at work you do what the boss tells you to do. My dad, he's

very well-respected by the people that he knows and they call him with questions. I

always wanted to be that person, that some would come to me.

Martha continued to explain the way her parents modeled a work ethic for her influenced

the way she teaches and governs her classroom. "I guess I kind of expect that from my

kids. So I run kind of a tight ship in my classroom. From the beginning, I want to build

that respect with them but then also have fun." Joe indicated that coaching students

influenced his teaching style. "I would like to say I have a fair, direct, and firm type of

teaching style. I have been told I run a tight ship. I don't really feel like I do but I don't

let them get away with anything." The references to a tight ship by both of these teachers

illustrates high expectations for themselves as well as their students.

Kelly also narrated the high expectations instilled from her family and for her

students. "School was very, very important for my family. I was forced to go to college.

I think that pressure to perform was…you didn't have a choice." Kelly spoke

passionately about the skills everyone possesses. She believes that no student is a failure.

"I hold my students to a higher expectation than most people would think because I know

they can do it." High expectations for themselves and their students in and outside of the

classroom contribute to a strong work ethic for teachers.

Teachers in Minnesota acknowledge that ethical behavior is a part of the job. Under

Minnesota State Statute 8700.7500, or Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers, teachers must

follow an obligation of adhering to a set of principles defining their professional conduct. This

ethical code seeps into the descriptions for job openings/posts. In a recent online job opening

description of an elementary math teaching position, one of the criteria noted the candidate

"demonstrates evidence of ethical behavior and sound judgment and serves as a positive role model in the school environment" (Indeed, 2013). A strong work ethic modeled by others and/or the ethic imposed by the state of Minnesota, supports high expectations for teachers and their students.

Torn between duty and desires. Federal and state administrations create policy that dictates the missions of public school systems. Local public school administrators interpret these policies and then outline the corresponding duties for teachers. Overall duties for teachers include delivering curriculum, managing behavior, assessing students and collecting data, analyzing data to improve instruction, and modeling and teaching good citizenship. Combined with the ethical rules set by the state and policies school districts put into place, teachers need to follow many rules. Many of the teachers in this study described themselves as rule followers. As Martha stated, "I'm just going to do what I'm told." The teachers in my interviews revealed an understanding of the power administrators possess in directing the implementation of teaching duties, yet their own desires and "gut instincts" sometimes interfered with this process.

Reform imposes a change in the plans of teachers and creates a dilemma for a teacher in deciding how to balance the duties of being a teacher with the desires of caring for children. In the data, I found a conflict between teachers' desires and duties for children. Among the desires articulated by the teachers were a time for play, collaboration, safety, connections, and engagement/excitement. On the other hand, teachers indicated a duty to administer tests and support children in raising their scores as dictated by state and federal mandates. This tension between ethical systems of duty and desires (deontology and utilitarianism) was present for many teachers.

For example, Chris' desire to be creative in her teaching and let children "play" conflicted with her duties to assess her children. "It's always about the test and you really can't be creative about how you teach." In reflecting on the new teacher evaluation program implemented by the district, Chris also worried about her desire to collaborate and share good ideas versus competing to do well on an evaluation form. "I worry a little bit about the Q-comp coming up and how that's going to take some of the collaboration [away] if people are feeling that they're going to compete for those test scores against each other." Chris described her concerns about an alternative pay system requiring extra work that would take away time from other duties.

Nala also worried about balancing her desire to take care of children with her duty to teach academic content. "We're forgetting that these [kids] are people and that we're just trying so hard to just fill them with knowledge versus getting to know their souls and their minds and their personalities and their little stories. I feel like that's getting pushed aside." As an elementary teacher, Nala possesses a strong concern for teaching her students about building character and community. "I think we need to make sure we provide time for that. I feel that community building is getting lost and that is kind of a frustrating piece for me because we just need to cram them with knowledge so they can pass a test."

Finally, Sue, one of the interviewees who seemed excited about change and willing to try new things, also indicated a frustration in balancing duties and desires. In working with reform Sue indicated, "As long as I just keep giving them quality education and keep changing and keep researching and finding new and better ways to get them there I will." On the other hand, Sue's desire to encourage a love of learning in students versus getting the top test score is more important. "Let's let them have fun on the way too and enjoy that love for learning so they want

to continue learning and not be like, 'Ok, it's just about my test score.'" Illustrated below are additional comments from teachers articulating the recurring themes of desires for children, and among them are meeting children's needs and creating engagement or excitement in students. In addition, at least half of the teachers mentioned creating a sense of connection and establishing relationships as a desire for their classroom.

Although their language varied slightly, the voices of teachers revealed a hidden curriculum. Common desires for children and the comments from teachers supporting them were:

- Kids first/meeting their needs: "I am putting the kids first, whatever they're needing" (Nala). "Ultimately it's about the kids" (Sue). "What they need is what they're getting" (Martha). "Are they getting what they need?" (Joe). "It starts with looking at the kids and trying to meet their needs" (Mary). "Every minute of the kids' day counts and it should be something a child needs" (Jane).

- Connectedness/relationships with kids: "Who knows them as a child?" (Ann). "You make connections, you help build the common principles together" (William). "My teaching is all about relationships with the kids" (Chris). "I like…making connections with kids, like building relationships" (Jane). "I like connecting with them individually" (Joe). "I like…making a connection with them and helping then grow" (Mary). "We do a morning meeting each day for that connection" (Nala).

- Engagement/excitement from kids: "The kids were engaged and you wanted to be there because the kids wanted to be there" (Katie). "You hope that your words will come out right to excite the kids" (Jane). "Now they're engaged again. They're just excited to learn" (Martha).

The last theme reflects teachers' desires in protecting children while building relationships.

- Safety (emotional) /protection for kids: "School is the safest place for them" (Jane). "I wanted to make sure that kids feel protected in the classroom" (Joe). "I try to make them feel safe and comfortable and they can feel free to participate and feel safe about whatever they say" (Chris).

These four common subthemes lie at the heart of an "unofficial" curriculum; a curriculum no one really talks about but is important and full of care, fun and compassion. "My teaching is all about relationships with the kids. I try to make them feel safe and comfortable and they can feel free to participate and feel safe about whatever they say," said Chris. Joe added, "That's my biggest thing in my classroom that I let the parents and kids know right away that when they come into my classroom they are going to be safe."

Teachers also desire school be fun for themselves and for children; ultimately fostering a love of learning. Kelly noted, "I like learning and I like the process of seeing kids grow through my learning and their learning, so that combined piece I think is just really fun." William reflected, "So how do you make a classroom more enjoyable for kids? You make connections, you help build the common principles together." Perhaps a part of the hidden curriculum includes a "chapter" on a love of learning? Underlying this theme of fun and engagement in the data is a desire of teachers to foster habits of a love of learning in children that will serve them for the rest of their lives. As outliers in the data, I found teachers also worried about earning a positive evaluation for themselves and also their duty to ensure good test scores from their children. Teachers wrestle with the ethics of children as data.

Children as data. When asked about their frustrations in teaching, teachers reflected on many aspects of the job. In the data, I found testing to be a prominent theme with teachers worrying about the consideration of children as numbers or data, instead of a whole child. Tuscarora spoke vehemently about her frustration with testing. "The focus has shifted from the child to the data. Children are numbers-they're test scores now, and it absolutely appalls me, angers me and is what is driving me from education." State and federal tests require teachers to compare children from the same year to children of the same age in a different year. In addition, norms for children of the same age continue to change, forcing teachers to work harder in moving kids to higher levels of rigor and content than ever before. "I see us moving more towards being data driven and so concerned about test scores and getting these kids to this level and this level and this level, and it wasn't, I remember, when I first started back in 2003" (Sue). Teachers recognize a shift in teaching since mandated testing began nation-wide.

A pressure to perform creates more stress for a teacher who feels like the unofficial curriculum, or caring for children, is getting pushed further aside. Ann described the stress she feels in preparing kids for standardized tests. "The tests are stressful, you know, for us to prepare for that and get kids ready. That's very frustrating. I feel like it's not the best thing for kids, I feel like it's not fair to them all the testing that we do." In addition, each time a student takes a mandated test, the score reflects their current frame of mind from that particular day. "It seems to be all about the test and teaching to the test and a test score on one day and not all of the progress they've made all year and the growth that you've seen," Chris noted. Chris continues to reflect on the duties of testing and the desire to enjoy school. "I hate how it's really not that fun to teach anymore. It's always about the test." Not only does reform represent an

ethical dilemma to teachers, but it challenges their lived experience; the innate sense that there

are important life skill building lessons they are being forced to eliminate.

Analysis of Reform is an Ethical Matter

In the previous section I presented data supporting the theme that reform is an ethical

matter to teachers due to their own high expectations, the ethical tensions between the duties and

their desires in the job, and the treatment of children as data. In this section I will analyze these

themes using Enomoto and Kramer's (2007) sources of ethical tensions, particularly

deontological or duties-based ethics, and utilitarian or desires-based ethics.

Enomoto and Kramer (2007). Enomoto and Kramer (2007) outline four schools of

ethical theory and note the common conflict between duties and desires in the area of education.

In deontological or *duties based ethics*, authorities, such as religious or government, outline the

duties of the citizen to the group or what a good person is "responsible for doing in society"

(p.20). The duties of an employee are often spelled out in job descriptions and are reflected in

the administrative assignment of roles and responsibilities of a teacher. Duties are also defined

by internal factors when these roles are interpreted by teachers. The interpretation of testing as a

duty creates pressure and a struggle for teachers in many ways. At the same time, some duties

(such as the responsibility to teach good citizenship noted above in the job description for a math

instructor) inspire the teachers to prioritize elements of their teaching to meet that responsibility.

Several teachers expressed a frustration in the competition that precipitates from testing.

If the duties are what good citizens do for a society as a group, how does competition affect what

is good for each individual of the group? Chris commented, "I worry a little bit about the Q-

comp (teacher evaluation system) coming up and how that's going to take away maybe some of

the collaboration if people are feeling that they are going to compete for those test scores against

each other." Teachers desire collaboration and creativity in their work for themselves and for the success of their students. Testing and the preparation of testing appears to undermine this. Martha noted, "There is some competition within the district between buildings but also within each building, and that makes me uneasy because I want it to be a career where you can share [ideas] with other people…and it [the idea] may just happen to work with those kids better." Rather than having a sense of common goals and a shared vision in developing the children, a sense of competition for job security creates another ethical tension as most teachers desire job security as well as successful for students.

Several of the teachers in my interviews referred to their duties in engaging in reform, particularly testing, in a negative or off-color fashion. "Unfortunately the only measure we really have is those stupid MAP scores," (Chris). Teachers know they are ultimately responsible for how students score on a mandated test. Joe summarized, "I need to make sure that they're getting everything they need to take their standardized tests." Tuscarora added, "I feel like the testing mania is a black cloud over everything we do." In addition, teachers struggle with the dilemma of spending time in readying students for the test or in preparing paperwork involved in reform, with the time they should be spending on caring for children. Ann noted, "I think it's the amount of time that it's [reform] taking away from any curriculum. Anything we're doing to get ready for our classes." Testing challenges the teachers' desires to spend quality time on other elements of their job.

Enomoto and Kramer (2007) describe their second source of ethical theory as *desires-based (or utilitarian) ethics*. This term refers to the things we generally desire and want. This ethic is also known as ends-based ethics. Thus, our desires as teachers tend to be based on "what is good for most people most of the time;" otherwise called the desired end (p. 21). Many

teachers desire an individual connection with students, yet preparing a classroom of 25 to 30

students for standardized tests illustrates the limitations of this ethical theory. If teachers are to

serve "society as a whole" (p. 28) in a utilitarian system preparing students with different needs,

but are forced to use the same standardized measure of a deontological system, how does a

teacher meet their desired end? Enomoto and Kramer contrast duties with desires using the

NCLB laws as an example. They illustrate the duties of teachers required through this act as

meeting the "minimum standards of learning" which include content standards and testing.

However, in teachers, the "desire to comfort and provide safety (for children) may come first,

thus conflicting directly with the duty to meet academic standards" (p. 29). In the data, teachers

struggled with these ethical dilemmas.

      Teachers struggle. Many of the teachers I interviewed confirmed this struggle between

desires and duties in the amount of time reform consumes. "It stresses out my colleagues and so

they don't have much time for what they need to do and it has chased a few of the very, very

best" (Jim). In addition to the time consumed by testing, teachers worry about the time used to

implement new initiatives such as the new teacher evaluation system.

> I think, the amount of time that it's taking away from any curriculum…anything we're
>
> doing to get ready for our classes, emailing parents back. It feels like a huge amount of
>
> work that they're giving to us but they aren't taking anything away. (Ann)

Teachers feel an ethical responsibility toward children and in order to do so, must take time

planning for them. William indicated his frustration in the lack of time to do his job properly.

"What frustrates me about teaching is it is a job that takes time…for me to feel like I do my job

properly to help the kids." He noted he has to extend his work day into his family time at night.

"I feel if I don't take that other time out of my life at home, then I'm not prepared to help them

move forward." William's quote illustrates that in addition to the tension between desires and duties within the school day that the ethical tensions continue as duties for school compete with duties at home for time and attention. Enomoto and Kramer's (2007) theory of ethics and the tensions based on duties-based ethics versus desires-based ethics, provides a partial explanation in for teachers' struggles with educational reform. For teachers the tensions amount to an ethical struggle.

Reform Challenges their Sense of Competence, their Wisdom

In the data, many teachers noted frustration with educational reform in the areas of time management, a focus on testing, and the struggle between duties versus desires. Linking these frustrations to a teachers' identity and agency, reform ultimately challenges teachers' sense of competence or wisdom. Most teachers pride themselves on being collaborative, creative lesson designers and good caretakers of children. In addition, years of experience in the classroom provide teachers with wisdom regarding the inner workings of the minds and hearts of children. When administrators implement a reform, an initiative, or a change, it challenges all of these respective aspects of a teacher. In the following section, I will discuss the ways teachers rely on their own wisdom in dealing with reform; teachers look for proof that a new strategy works, they trust their own intuition as to what and how a reform should be implemented; and they default to their own lived experiences in decision making.

Need for proof. In the data teachers expressed a need for proof or reassurance from administrators that not only was a reform needed, but once a reform was implemented, it would stay around awhile. Teachers know they put a lot of work and passion into the lessons they create and want to make sure that the needed or mandated changes are worthwhile and are not just a temporary trend. Several teachers, including Martha, desired proof that an initiative would

last. "I need a little confirmation that it [the initiative] maybe is going to be around for a while.

So, if I do put all this time and energy into it…do I have time to tweak things so that I could

make it work?" Teachers see reform come and go and continue to need validation for their

efforts. Sue acknowledges her skepticism. "I don't know, a trend is a trend and it only lasts for

so long so I think it's better to find something that has worked and you just keep perpetuating

that." Reform forces a teacher to delineate his/her time and energy between what appear to be

trends, and lasting curriculum.

In the data, many of the teachers indicated a need for proof that a reform works. I asked

teachers what they would need in order to try a new reform. Kelly responded, "It depends on

how it is presented to me. I'm not just going to jump on any bandwagon that's coming around, I

want to see the success rate and data before I make decisions on how things are done." Jane also

indicated a need for proof of success. "Then maybe they need to tell me why they're doing this.

They need to show me other success stories." Chris added the need for proof that the change

would work. "I felt like things at Prairie Elementary were going really well and I didn't really

know why we needed to change something that was going well without proof that this was going

to make things better." In implementing a new initiative that needs extra technological support,

Chris wonders if it will be worth the effort. "I'm just not convinced it's going to help our test

scores that much or whatever, and to try and do it without all of the technology that we need."

With the pressures of mandated testing in reform, proof a program works reassures teachers their

energies are not in vain. Proof and teacher buy in reduces the risks in trying something new as

well as the repercussions of low test scores.

Teacher intuition. I found teachers rely on their own sense of what works with children.

Whether it comes from training at the college level, an innate sense of care for children, or years

of experience, teachers tend to rely on their "gut" in decision making. For example, during

lessons, teachers get immediate feedback on how well children are comprehending and can

adjust as needed. Sue noted, "You get a sense almost immediately. Within five minutes either

they're all into it and raising their hands or they're sitting back like, looking out the window. So

you really have to know your audience." Sue continued to describe her teaching style as planned

and prepared, but with an added whim of an idea if the timing is right. "I just go with my gut."

Nala also revealed a preparedness in teaching, but a desire to be spontaneous. "You have to go

with the flow and trust your gut and you can get an objective met pretty much every day."

Several other teachers indicated a sense of knowing what is right for their students. After several

decades of teaching, Jim simply stated, "I know what works." Intuition helps teachers meet

students' needs.

Teacher intuition also plays a role in evaluating students. An assessment of students

takes various forms such as a paper and pencil test, a teacher's observation, or a summative

evaluation of several months of learning. Tuscarora described how she uses her teacher intuition

in predicting a student's performance. "I think there is an awful lot of intuition that goes into a

teacher's evaluation of students. You know, I kind of do this little game with myself before the

kids take their MAP tests in the spring. I kind of rank them in order and my list is almost always

dead on-within a couple." A teacher who pays attention to each student's scores and has

established strong relationships with them knows approximately where they will fall on an

assessment scale. They do not need additional testing to know how their students are doing.

They already know. Therefore, in asking teachers to make reforms, the presentation of needing

change must take into account the reality of teacher intuition and build upon it. Without such

considerations, many of them default to their prior successes with students or to their old ways of doing things.

  Lived experiences. From the data, I garnered several facts about elementary teachers' lived experiences and their reactions to reform. When administrators brought reform to the table, teachers tended to question the intentions of the reform and compared it against their own lived experiences. In the section that follows I discuss how teachers drew from their lived experiences in resistance to the challenges of reform.

  Reform changes a teacher's plan, often times counter-intuitively. For example, teachers indicated they may be resistant, or their colleagues may be resistant to change because it contradicted their success. Joe commented about his wife, also a teacher, who said, "I've been doing this for 10 years and I have it set. I'm getting good scores so why change something that's working?" After a period of time, the lived experience becomes a way of doing things, an accepted cultural norm. One teacher noted her colleagues approach to change. "I think our school and our teachers have always said, 'We don't need to do much if our test scores aren't changing.' So they try to stay the course as long as they can until something comes in and really pushes us." Teachers rely on their successful lived experiences to create future plans.

  Reform also challenged teachers' memories of a more creative, successful time. Sue recalled how creative and fun her first years of teaching were because she and her colleagues had to invent the curriculum themselves and did so largely based on their experience and intuition:

   They [administrators] didn't give us anything. We didn't even have the

   curriculum map or anything. They just said, 'Here's some math books.' We were

   constantly changing things up and doing different things. So that was when we

   had a lot of fun and…We made changes all the time and we were going on

absolutely nothing. We went off the seat of our pants and it went ok. It was fun

doing all those different things and then not having to go 'check, check, check'-

you know, crossing things off the list. I liked having that freedom.

Chris also recalled an earlier time in her career when they experimented with change and they

were successful. "We decided…to do some experimenting. We did some multi-aging in math

and the kids loved it and we loved it. It was really exciting and we had proof that it worked and

that it was a good thing, so it felt right." Chris' lived experience validates the impact teachers

could have on change if given the freedom to use their intuition.

Teachers' passions for learning and teaching continue to support their intuition,

providing proof and creating a foundation for their collective wisdom. In turn, their

successful lived experiences validate their work (See Figure 2). In other words, their need for

proof, their intuition and their lived experiences comprise teacher wisdom and

build competence. Reform challenges this cycle by neglecting teacher wisdom; the exclusion of

teacher intuition, the invalidation of their lived experiences and the denial of

a teacher's need for proof.

Figure 2. Model of the Components of Teachers' Wisdom
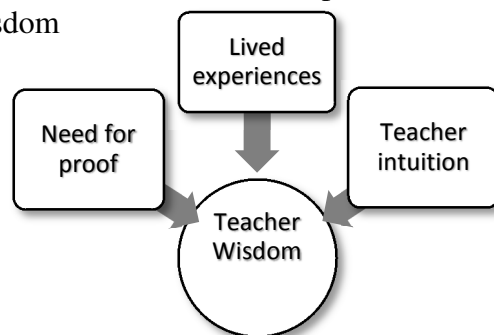
Figure 2. In understanding the teacher, this model shows variables from the data influencing a teacher's wisdom.

Analysis of Reform Challenges Teachers' Wisdom

In the previous section I presented ways in which reform challenges teachers' wisdom and competence. Their need for proof, a reliance on their own intuition, and their lived experiences all contribute to an overall sense of wisdom and competence. Bandura's social cognitive theory of human agency (1989), as well as research in the literature by Priestley et al. (2012) and Brand (2009) provide lenses to analyze the effect of reform on teachers' feelings of agency and competency.

Bandura's theory (1989) of agency. Bandura, a social cognitive theorist, explains that in order to understand human agency, one must understand efficacy. Self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. This belief is the mechanism for developing individual and collective agency. Agency is "the capacity to exercise control over one's own thought processes, motivation, and action" (Bandura, 1989, p. 1175). Teachers desire mastery of their curriculum and their pedagogical practices. Mastery then builds their sense of competence, efficacy and agency. Reform or educational change, challenges teachers' sense of efficacy and Bandura's theory encapsulates this.

> Among the mechanisms of personal agency, none is more central or pervasive than people's beliefs in their capability to exercise some measure of control over their own functioning and over environmental events (Bandura, 1997). Efficacy beliefs are the foundation of human agency. Unless people believe they can produce desired results and forestall detrimental ones by their actions, they have little incentive to act or to persevere in the face of difficulties. (Bandura, 2001, p. 11)

Bandura's theory also explains why humans avoid situations if they feel little efficacy and agency in the situation. For the teachers in this study experiencing change through reform,

Bandura's theory speaks to the reasons teachers trust their own intuition and seek proof. Teachers' wisdom builds efficacy and agency, and if policy undermines this set of beliefs teachers will have little incentive to act or embrace new changes.

In the literature, Priestley et al.'s (2012) research posed the question, "To what extent can teachers achieve agency under decades of educational policy change?" Specifically, they argued there is a low capacity for agency in terms of curriculum development facing the regime of "prescriptive national curricula," and perhaps these methods. In other words, how can teachers conduct agency when policy makers hold the power of mandating reform? Reform, composed of mandated national and state curriculum and new initiatives, challenges the agency teachers possess for change.

Challenges to teachers. In my interviews, teachers spoke of the challenges to their own efficacy and agency in many aspects of their job. In this section I discuss several areas of challenge reform poses for teachers, including planning, mastery of curriculum and competency. Research by Brand (2009) helps illustrate the impact of reform on teachers and why the challenges exist.

Several of the teachers mentioned they like to be planned and organized. Chris noted that reform challenges her ability to be planned. "Change is hard for me. I think it is for a lot of people. I like to plan, you know, and have a plan, and when change happens unexpectedly, it takes me a little while to adjust to that." Martha felt similarly in her preparation of lessons for kids. "I plan the whole thing out so I know what I'm doing exactly every day. I don't like those unexpected things…but if all possible, I'd like it to go how it's on paper." Besides a desire for good planning and organization, teachers desire mastery of their curriculum and pedagogy. Constant change in reform disrupts this mastery.

Teacher agency is fueled by a desire for mastery of their curriculum and is countered with their desire to avoid failure. Reform challenges this desire. Chris noted, "We can't get good at something because they keep changing little bits." When asked what he needed to implement change, Joe indicated some front-load training to avoid failure. "That's hard for me because I don't want to fail. I want to make sure, I mean my responsibility to the kids (is important)…so if I'm guessing and checking too often, are the kids really getting what they need then?"

Constant reform also challenges their expectations and their sense of competency. Joe expressed his frustration with change. "The constant change too is a little hard. Maybe there's just too many pockets [initiatives] going on at once to be able to do it all in one year." s Martha noted a desire to do well, to be competent. "I'm kind of a perfectionist and if it's not done the right way or the best way, then I'm frustrated so I think I need to do more and therefore I create more work for myself." Joe also admitted his perfectionism. "I put all of this work into trying to make sure I do it perfect because I'm a perfectionist and then it just kind of fizzles away and then the next year it's something else. I've got to make sure it's perfect and I'm the best at it." In the research by Brand (2009), music teachers described themselves as "exhausted from educational reform," and that "educational reform is formulated and imposed by government bureaucracies in which music teachers' view are generally forgotten and their professional wisdom is not respected," (pp. 87-88). Reform ignores teacher agency, competence and wisdom. This research validates the frustration teachers feel from reforms that ignore their wisdom.

Overall, reform challenges teachers' sense of competency, wisdom and agency. Through their need for proof, their own intuition and lived experiences, teachers develop this wisdom. In the literature, Bandura's theory of agency (1989), Priestley et al.'s research on agency (2012)

and Brand's (2009) essay on teacher exhaustion in reform illustrate how reform impacts teachers' ability to engage in reform.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed three main themes in understanding the teacher: teachers come to the job with passion, reform is an ethical matter to teachers and reform challenges their sense of competence and wisdom. I organized each theme into subcategories and included a section of analysis within each.

Using the data collected, I presented subcategories within each theme. In terms of passion, I identified three consistent areas of concern: teachers possess a strong ethic of care for students; teachers are committed to make a difference in their jobs; and teachers felt a strong affinity with teaching as part of their identity early in their lives. In the analysis section, I utilized the studies of several authors (Bottema, 2011; Berg, 2012; & Day et al., 2005; Zin et al., 2007) as lenses in which to view teacher passion.

In terms of reform as an ethical matter to teachers, I discovered teachers possess high expectations for themselves and their students; they are torn between duties and desires on the job; and they fear a tendency to treat children as data. In the analysis section, using Enomoto and Kramer's (2007) theory on ethical tensions, I proposed that teachers feel reform takes away time from their desires for children and this builds ethical tensions between their duties and desires as teachers. I applied ethical theories of a deontological, or duties based ethic, versus a utilitarian or desires based ethic as a lens to understand the tensions.

Finally, in terms of reform challenging teachers' sense of competence and wisdom, I outlined three subcategories representing these challenges: the need for proof of reform's success; a tendency to trust teacher intuition; and a foundation of lived experiences. In the

analysis section I presented the conflict between teachers' lived experiences and the ability to be

agents of change using Bandura's theory of agency (1989), and Priestley et al.'s (2012) and

Brand's (2009) studies on teachers exhausted in reform.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE IMPACT OF REFORM ON SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS:

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Ted is an administrator in the Southwest School District. He shared his view on the role

he plays in the district. "Fortunately we're living in a time where resources are plentiful

and it's not about 'Do I have enough resources?' but it's about selecting things that are

really good. That's a new learning and a new way of planning and teaching and now

instead of just being a dispenser of information, you really need to be, kind of a miner of

what's good. You have to model this. You can't just say, 'This is what you should do.'

That's part of the challenge that I think we have, because of the lack of time for

reflection, for planning, for just thinking, dreaming."

As part of this qualitative study, discovering the administrator's perspective in reform

was a necessary element in answering the question, how do administrators and legislators engage

teachers as key players in reform? This chapter presents the findings obtained from three semi-

structured interviews of elementary administrators in a Minnesota suburban school district. I

will also compare the findings from the teachers with the administrators to create a triangulation

of the data. This comparison, with an analysis of the data using literature from Priestley et al.

(2012) and Bandura (1989) on teacher agency, elements of Brookfield's (1995) critical

reflection, and Bolman's and Deal's (2006*) Reframing Organizations* and Kotter's (1996)

change theory, will shed light on the assumptions and misperceptions of the district's leaders

with teachers in change. Ultimately, reform impacts the relationships between administrators,

teachers and students.

Findings

In this chapter, I illustrate the common themes in the data between administrators and teachers. I begin with the parallel desires and frustrations both groups possess and lead into the contradictions and assumptions between them. Overall, I outline three themes from teachers in experiencing the impact of reform on their school relationships and the underlying assumptions made by administrators. These themes from the data include: reform and initiatives are cyclical, issues of time exist, and administrators fail to include teachers in big decisions. In supporting the first theme of cyclical reform I list assumptions and beliefs of teachers in the repetition of reform. Secondly, I examine the notion that teachers always use time as an excuse for neglecting change when in reality, other reasons exist. Lastly, in including teachers in big decision making I present the assumptions that teachers have power, administrators' messages are clear, and teachers' voices are important.

Parallel Desires and Frustrations

In setting the stage for an examination of administrator's perceptions, I felt it important to illustrate the parallel themes in the responses of administrators and teachers. The administrators I interviewed all began their careers in the classroom and possessed similar desires and frustrations as their staff members. Both teachers and administrators discussed frustrations with the changes, and both desire good things for children.

Both parties admit change is overwhelming. Principal Olivia shared, "Sometimes it's the speed that we're doing them" in reference to helping teachers through change initiatives. When asked why she thinks teachers resist change, she responded with the element of speed and lack of training. "I think sometimes it is so fast, sometimes maybe there is not enough time and training and support. I think people just, they get kind of turned off." Whereas Principal Olivia

discussed the issues of speed and lack of training are overwhelming, for Jane and Joe the issues

with change were more about constant change and the lack of input on the part of teachers. Jane

and Joe remarked how difficult the constant speed of change makes them feel. "The constant

change is a little hard," Joe remarked. Jane also alluded to receiving change instead of initiating

the change. "I kind of have to take what's been handed down to me and go with it and create it

on the fly which doesn't feel real good as a teacher right now."

Regardless of their frustrations, both teachers and administrators want what is best for

kids. "We want to all be shining stars. We want our kids to do really, really, well in everything

they do," Principal Olivia remarked when empathizing with teachers in change. Embedded in

this overall desire is a teacher's need to enhance the skills children should possess. In Chapter

Four I referred to these skills as a "hidden curriculum" of care. In other words, teachers desire to

focus on the nurturing of students' qualities that are not measured on a state mandated test. Even

Principal Kevin commented on the hidden curriculum. "The reality is that we want kids to be

well-rounded students. They want to be critical thinkers, problem solvers, and all those kinds of

things. [These are] some things that you can't test, and that's what we're about." Teacher Ann

describes these elements of hidden curriculum in her desire to provide safety for students so they

can adequately learn. "In order to really do their best learning they have to feel safe. They have

to feel like they can take risks and they feel like they belong."

Contradictions and Assumptions

While administrators and teachers experience the same frustrations and desires, conflicts

and/or sets of contradictions emerge. In the data I found three main themes articulating the

differences between administrators and teachers which undoubtedly impact school relationships

and successful school change. In addition, administrators' responses to teachers' frustration

appear in assumptions below. Brookfield outlines assumptions as, "the taken-for-granted beliefs about the world and our place within it that seem so obvious to us as not to need stating explicitly" (p. 2). Assumptions give meaning to our actions and beliefs. Becoming aware of these assumptions that frame our decision making and actions becomes a challenge during difficult and/or busy times. Educational reform provides a backdrop where teachers and leaders feel "pinched" in their decision making.

Noting that not all assumptions stem from the same source, Brookfield (1995) outlines three types of assumptions; paradigmatic, prescriptive, and casual. Paradigmatic assumptions are the basic structures we use to make sense of the world and order it into categories. Prescriptive assumptions are rooted in what we think ought to be happening in a given situation. In education, prescriptive assumptions define how teachers should behave, what good education should look like, and what obligations leaders, teachers and students owe each other. Casual assumptions help us understand "how the parts of the world work and the conditions or causes under which processes can be changed" (p. 3). For example, district leaders assume that implementing a process, such as an initiative, will improve learning and excite teachers. Lastly, Brookfield defines hegemonic assumptions (see Chapter Three) and asserts that teachers embrace teaching assumptions as what is good and true, yet the paradigmatic ideas about "good teaching" may actually be harmful and constraining. Emerging from the data are frustrations from teachers with: the cycle of initiatives, issues of time, and the lack of administrator's inclusion of teachers' voices in the true decision-making elements of reform.

Cycle/pendulum swing. Teachers recognize that educational trends come and go. They spend numerous hours planning and implementing new trends, only to have them cast aside by administrators in the wake of the next reform. Ann acknowledged this cycle, "When I look over

the years in education, there are cycles and they come and go." Teachers tire of putting their heart and soul into something temporary. "So whatever trend you're on, by the time everybody's in on the one trend, one foot is already beyond that trend window and on to the next," remarked William, a lead teacher. Tuscarora, having experienced many trend cycles in education over the years, expressed her frustration with mandated testing and she had hoped it would pass like other trends. "You know I'd kind of hoped to see that pendulum swing back [from mandated testing] and I don't see that right now." She also notes the political mayhem accompanying some of the trends and this makes her hesitant to try new ones. "There have been so many initiatives that have been discarded on the trash heap of educational initiatives now discredited. I am really guarded. I've been there, done that."

Many teachers recognize the cycle and limited staying power of reform. Teacher Ann recalls a pendulum swing in project based learning. "There are cycles and they come and go. I don't know if that [project based education] has cycled back yet because I feel like that's where I started, but then all this testing kind of came in and that has gone by the wayside." Several teachers acknowledged the impact of mandated testing on cycling reform. Chris acknowledged the district's current trend in personalizing education. Personalized learning, as defined in the district, is a strategy used by teachers to provide lessons that allows students to make choices in how they learn the material and at what pace they learn the material. Chris admits to putting in less effort knowing that this trend will probably be replaced with something else. "The more I get into it, it's just the cynical me that realizes it just seems really trendy. And this too shall pass."

Lastly, Tuscarora admits she is exhausted from reform.

I don't know if I can stay in education. This is, it's exhausting and it doesn't feel like I'm

settled. I feel like I'm walking on sand all the time. You know, we never stay in a trend

long enough to perfect it and that's a problem.

Tuscarora's admission relays a powerful message to administrators and policy makers. Even

though she loves teaching and caring for children, she feels exhausted. Comparing education to

walking on sand provides an image of constant movement, constant instability. Tuscarora

considers the constant changing of educational trends and initiatives as sand; a metaphor that

reflects the lack of a solid foundation upon which to base her teaching. Effort spent, time

consumed and the staying power of trends affect teachers' ability/inability to implement change.

These elements ultimately affect teachers' relationships in education.

     Administrative assumptions of teachers and change cycles. Administrators see the

results of change initiatives and base their assumptions about teachers on teachers' actions or on

the absence of them. Principal Kevin admitted his staff was a little behind in adopting the

newest trends in the district. His perception of the veteran teachers in his building leaned toward

the view that teachers were either ignoring the change or were unwilling to change. He told a

story of the lack of technology use by his veteran teachers and their hesitation in implementing

personalizing learning. Teacher Jane admitted hearing some of her veteran staff members

acknowledge the pendulum swing and quotes them as saying, "We're not going to jump on.

We'll just stay here and see if anybody notices and close our doors." Not wanting to confront

them, Jane let them ignore the changes but found ways to bring up the successes of her students

to them at later moments. She felt that leading by example was the best way to bring about

change. Jane added that there appeared to be no consequences for the teachers ignoring the

changes; or at least none she had witnessed. The effect of the pendulum swing on teachers does

not necessarily reflect an unwillingness to change, but a refusal to change repeatedly. Teachers

report they become exhausted in constantly changing reform because they want to be good at

what they do, and this takes effort and time. Chris, a veteran teacher at a different building,

admitted she would change but wants to do it well and in a catch twenty-two, cannot do it well if

the trends keep changing. Are administrators really understanding why teachers resist reform?

Issues of time. Lack of time becomes the common casual response when teachers hear

of a new initiative coming down the road. Outwardly, this appears to be their quick reason for

the lack of implementing new initiatives (e.g. the adoption of a new science curriculum, or the

newest technologies, etc.). However, when I asked teachers to tell longer stories about change

and initiatives, time did not surface as the most common response in my data. Teachers

responded with the hidden curriculum of taking care of children as their top priority, which takes

away time from other content and initiatives. I believe there is a difference between their

perceptions of time and the real story behind their responses. When asked what they needed in

order to accommodate change, teachers' common responses was time to teach children the

important aspects of being a good person. Nala, a primary teacher narrates these important traits.

> We need to teach kids how to interact with one another, how to cooperate, how to be
>
> respectful, responsible and safe. Just the general things that make good people. And I
>
> know that people think the family should be instilling that, but I don't know how much
>
> they get to work on that in a new group setting. It's just with their small immediate
>
> families because lives are so busy. I think we need to make sure we provide time for that.

Nala's story explains how a teacher's job is more complex than just teaching content. Teachers

are responsible for teaching much more than content; they are accountable for managing

behavior so children cannot only learn academic content but social responsibility; how to be responsible citizens. The need for time, according to teachers, is more complex.

In the data, teachers also mentioned a need for time to do other things related to their profession. Many of the teachers indicated a need for time in getting good at a trend. Tuscarora admits, "I don't feel like I can do any of them well. I can't embrace or do justice to one more new idea no matter how great it seems. I am overwhelmed, drowning in new initiatives." Teachers pride themselves in doing school well. Nala adds, "It's like every year there is something new and it's really hard to become an expert on a style or philosophy or approach within that time frame."

Other teachers admitted to not having time for family or other personal matters because their school children come first. William remarked, "….to do my job properly to help the kids, I feel if I don't take that other time out of my life at home, then I'm not prepared to help them move forward." Ann quotes one of her colleague's frustrations with time and the addition of a new teacher evaluation commitment.

'I don't even get time to sit at my desk. I don't even eat lunch. Where do I put one more thing, one more form I have to fill out, more time commitment I have to do? Where do I come up with the time in my day? I don't even have time to exercise. I don't have a personal life because I am doing so much school work at home already.'

Nala also finds frustration in the balance between family life and school life. "I'm worried that teachers are going to burn out. I'm usually a go-getter, buy in, and hop on the train, put in my extra-hours person. But I have two young kids so I have to balance things better." Lastly, Katie, a former special education teacher remarks on why she changed positions in her building. "I couldn't do the paperwork because it just took away from all the meaningful lessons that I

planned and the individualized learning, and I couldn't do it. All of the work that doesn't really affect kids bogs you down and you didn't get time to do really great lessons." Administrators, on the other hand, see time for teachers differently.

Administrative assumptions of time. In anticipation of teachers' complaints of the lack of time to implement initiatives, administrators settle in to the notion "There will be no more time, so don't ask for it." Principal Olivia acknowledges the lack of time and focuses on the school day hours instead. "If we just take a look at what we can control within our day, within our time, I think then we're a little bit healthier people and we're more efficient and we can do better things for kids." In the interview she spoke to the idea of mandated testing being out of our control so everyone just needs to do the best they can, but the underlying message is "be efficient" and "just do it." Olivia's assumption that teaching can be done in a six hour day lacks a recognition of, and an honoring of the overtime teachers invest, as well as the frustrations teachers experience day to day with change and the limits of time.

Administrators make an assumption teachers do not need more time. Or, they ask the question, if teachers need more time, for what would they use it? Ted reveals a bit of a contradiction in his views on a principal's need for time versus a teacher's need for time. He acknowledges principals need more time to "experience things, plan things" (as referenced in the quote at the beginning of this chapter) because they spend a great deal of time on managing details and information. Yet Ted wonders for what purpose teachers need time. "I don't think it's about how much time do you need, but I think the question is what you need to be successful because if you ask about time, there won't be enough." Ted's dismissal of a need for time neglects the real story behind what teachers really desire and reveals a different set of priorities.

For Ted, the priority is successful testing whereas for teachers the priority is the development of their students, not the testing.

Failure of administrators to engage and support teachers. A final contradiction in the data emerged between administrators and teachers in the inclusion of teachers' voices in decision making as well as support for their struggles with reform. I present some assumptions administrators make regarding teacher engagement and support (point), and how the assumptions differ from the messages teachers "hear" or experience (counterpoint). In the data I found contradictions between the administrators' ideas and teachers' understandings in the subthemes of teacher power, clear directions or intentions of support, and importance of teacher voices. In other words, while administrators assume teachers have power and feel supported, many comments in the teacher interview data prove otherwise.

Administrator's assumption one- teachers have power. Principals desire a relationship with their staff. They also acknowledge teachers' talents in the teaching of children, and their power in the decisions of the school. Kevin realizes his staff have talents to contribute, and tries to highlight and honor them in celebration during the week. "So in honoring the past, you've got to get those teachers that don't want to take the step [to change] recognized…and make sure they feel supported." He also recognized that the leadership before him allowed staff very little autonomy, which is now what he wishes to employ. Teachers in his building, however, find the openness of autonomy a bit vague when looking to him for directions as a leader. Kevin stated, "One of the things that I value most here, quite honestly is the teacher/administrative collaboration and trust, I think that is here." In some areas, however, staff indicated a sense of distrust and a lack of support in his leadership.

Olivia gushed genuinely when she spoke about her love of children and the hard work of her staff. "I just love the whole aspect of working with kids and their future and what a difference we make. If teachers only knew how much power they have." Olivia's comment speaks to the power teachers have in influencing children, but in influencing change, teachers feel they have very little power. Overall Olivia's strategies in helping staff through change involve support, constant dialogue and taking small steps. In constant dialogue Olivia feels she will be able to listen to her staff better and provide the support they need. Only until recently did teachers believe she was really listening.

Teachers feel a lack of trust. In general, teachers do not feel they have power, instead, they have felt a lack of trust from their administrators. Through the actions of their administrators, or in dialogue, teachers leave meetings confused about the level of freedom and power they possess. For example, Nala wanted to ask administrators in her building about the use of technology. She felt aghast at her administrator's actions when new iPads were purchased and teachers were unable to take them home for exploration. "Why didn't you trust us to take the technology home? We allow first graders to use them, why not adults?"

Then, the school's PTO purchased an iPad for each teacher and Nala claims this action changed the way teachers' teach. "Now all the teachers have it and the teaching has changed significantly and I'm like, 'Why did it take so long?'" Most recently her building tried a new reading initiative and her administrator allowed them to try new ideas. Nala appreciated the new trust level her principal seemed to convey in recent initiative implementation. "Like, you actually think I can figure out a good avenue for teaching these children based on my education and my experiences? Thank you. Like where before it was, 'Nope, you're a robot, you will just relay information in this same way.' "

In another example, Jane wants her building administrator to trust the work she is doing with kids. She also desires trust from the district as a whole. "The people delivering the new wave [of change]. Where did it come from? Why are we doing it? I want the people who work with me…to trust." She told the story of a leader who distrusts her motives. She feels like she has been "thrown under the bus" and cannot move forward without support. Constant change in reform from policy makers and administrators also sends her the message she cannot be trusted. "That's a lot of work I put into that change and now you're saying you don't like it, you're wondering about it, so you didn't trust me in the beginning to make the change but you want me to?"

Lastly, many teachers feel a lack of trust in their abilities as a teacher through mandated testing. Sue, a teacher of 14 years, talked about how overwhelming staff meetings are when her administrator presents the data from state mandated tests. She feels frustrated when test scores of children from different grade levels and different buildings are used to compare teachers to each other. She desires trust from her administrators in doing the best she can to get children to where they need to be academically. "I think I'm a pretty good teacher and I know how to get my kids there, but put some faith and trust in me that I will." Administrators believe staff have power and a mutual sense of trust exists. Many teachers however, feel this is not the case. They feel they are constantly on trial, or must prove themselves, which increases their sense of stress as well as ethical tension in how they spend their time.

Administrator's assumption two- directions and the intentions of administrators are clear. Administrators utilize different methods of communication and support for their staff. Kevin outlined his methods for relaying information to his staff. "We have conversations through staff meetings, or PLCs (personal learning communities) but if there is something I can

just send out in an email let me do it that way versus bringing everybody together…just to save their time." Kevin's intentions show that he wants to support his staff. "I hope I'm saying what I deliver on." In moving teachers through change Kevin acknowledged that sometimes he has to have the tough conversations with staff. For those that are nervous about change, he offers support. "I just want the teachers to feel so supported because it's all about the kids. It's about student growth and development and learning." Teachers are good at following the rules; they want to know what to do and sometimes how to do it, but Kevin wants his staff to use their own autonomy and figure it out. "Well, you're the teacher, go do it." While Kevin perceives he is empowering staff and granting autonomy, teachers expressed frustration in their perception of his directions. In the data, a few of the teachers at his school reflected on the ambiguousness of his leadership in which they desired for clearer directions and more guidance in initiatives.

Olivia's approach in guiding teachers through change appears more prescriptive. Her message includes more dialogue through weekly staff meetings and taking smaller steps. With the current changes in initiatives she believes everyone is on the same page, yet she is not sure her staff is ready. In comparing her building to other buildings in the district and all of the new strategies they are trying, she feels a bit daunted. "I don't think people are quite ready and we need to bring parent groups along." On the one hand, she tries to honor the passion and beliefs her staff have about certain elements they teach, but on the other, she notes these elements are outdated and need to be thrown out. In one example she noted a teacher's desire to give the same book project she had been using for 14 years. "I think change is incremental but sometimes you have to say, 'This is it. Nope, you can't do that anymore.'" Olivia also acknowledges the speed and intensity in which change happens in the district. "I think sometimes it is so fast and sometimes maybe there is not enough time, training and support." In

her delivery of the message or through her actions, some staff members find her messages mixed.

Mixed messages. In the data, many teachers felt administrators communicated mixed or unclear messages regarding change and initiative implementation. Ann describes the most recent roll out of initiatives as confusing. "It was very ambiguous. It was extremely stressful on the teachers who tend to be pretty task driven and rule followers. I'll do what you want me to do and I'll do it the best that I can but I need to know what it is you want me to do." Even a lead teacher, or the teacher who serves as an assistant to the principal, confided the same thing. "But their message hasn't been a clear 'This is what we're doing" yet message. It's so hard for buildings to find a place in that message without knowing what the message is. How am I supposed to help a kid be part of a group when there's no group identity to join?" (William) In addition, teachers feel the fear of the unknown. "There's just a lot of that rumor mill running around that you just don't know what's coming." (Jane)

In addition, teachers feel like administrators suggest they take a risk and try new things with students, yet the fear of not making good test scores looms above them. Principal Kevin commented that risk taking is accepted. "When you think about a child, you don't want to fail, but that failure is ok or take the risk and try it." Principals try to communicate an acceptance of failure but teachers continue to remain suspicious. "They talked about 'epic failure' and all this kind of stuff and we don't feel like we can do that." (Chris) Joe also indicated a desire to try something new but worries about taking the risk because ultimately he is still responsible for students' test scores. Tuscarora confided her fear of being evaluated for the first time after many years. She also wonders how she can try new strategies if her salary or status depends on an evaluation.

With the implementation of new initiatives, teachers also feel a sense of being lost. Ann describes this confusion. "I think we all walked away with a ton of questions. We didn't know what they really wanted us to get from it [a workshop day on personalized learning]." She also acknowledged her desire to do her job well. Ann continued to describe how the administration rolled out a new initiative and her staff's reaction to the lack of direction. "It's just unfolding without a whole lot of direction. I can see our administrator wants to try to make things work…but we're all sort of fumbling in the dark,". Ann added that the ambiguity of the workshop created a perceived stress for teachers, "who tend to be pretty task driven and rule followers." Do administrators realize their messages are unclear?

Administrator's assumption three- the importance of teachers' voices. A final assumption outlined in the data shows administrators feel inclusive of teacher voices in their decision making, whereas teachers feel like they are not being heard. Principal Kevin mentions implementing casual after school discussions and snack times to encourage more teacher involvement, as well as finding out and highlighting teachers' strengths to help initiate some of the change. "It's all about the collaborative conversation and then getting them [teachers] to talk." What he neglects to mention clearly in the interview is how he will include teacher input in his decision-making regarding the larger issues at stake.

Principal Olivia also mentions inviting teachers to weekly discussion meetings and giving them lots of supports regarding tasks such as online grading and assessments. She also narrated an example of how she asked staff for feedback. "Ok, here's a draft, what do you think?" One day staff members came to her with a request for technology. After much ado about iPads, Olivia listened to her staff and made sure each teacher received one. According to Nala, as previously mentioned, this step changed the way teachers teach in her building. Olivia feels that

asking her staff for help engages teachers in change. "I think you have to ask them. 'Help me tweak this.' And sometimes they'll give me an idea." She admits that maybe the listening doesn't happen right away. "'Well, we can't really do that right now because this is how that fit with whatever.' So then they may think that you aren't really listening but you are it's just that it has to kind of all fit with the mission." According to teachers, being included in decision making is key. Are administrators really engaging teachers in decision making regarding the big issues in change?

An honoring of teachers' opinions. Finally, many teachers felt administrators neglected to include their opinions in important decision making. Chris felt her voice was absent in a decision recently made regarding the implementation of a new initiative in her building. "When we talked about changes this year, the administration said, 'We're not going to change anything, we're doing great!' and then all of a sudden it was subtly like, 'Oh I guess we are going to do this and this.' Like it was kind of our decision but it wasn't really our decision." Chris' comment hints at the fact this administrator may have been overruled in the changes occurring in her building this year. Do administrators realize they may be blamed for changes implemented above their rank?

In reference to the latest implementation of professional learning communities (PLCs), Ann expressed frustration in her administrator's lack of staff inclusion in the overall PLC goal. Ann felt the goal seemed out of context with other building goals staff members had set. So suddenly this new PLC goal, handed down from the state, was supposed to "fit" in with what they were already doing. "Why do we need to make it fit when we know what we need to work on? Why don't we have a say?" "We weren't a part of making the goals and I think teachers may have appreciated being a part of that." Teachers acknowledged a need for teacher input and

a need for proof, whether it included their own, or from their peers. Martha explained her need

for proof from teachers' voices. "It is helpful to have people in the classroom who are doing it

every single day to be on some of those committees and it [reform] not always coming from the

top down." She explained how a reading strategy worked in her room after she had heard

colleagues had tried it successfully in their rooms. Mary also indicated a need for proof that a

reform or strategy works. "It needs to have some input from people to say if it's even possible to

do it." She also desires administrators' trust and patience. In trying out a new multiage

configuration at her school, Mary wants her leader's support. "We don't know if we're going to

like it. Let us play. Let us see what we can do." When asked if she would give her district

leaders some feedback, Sue replied, "I'd be honored because that means they really value your

opinion." So what are administrators doing now? Are administrators consulting the experts in

their buildings when it comes to big decision making?

Analysis

In this chapter I presented the findings of administrators in moving teachers through

change and compared their answers with teachers in identifying their assumptions and beliefs. In

the following section I will use theory from the literature by Priestley et al (2012), with

Bandura's (1989) theory of agency, Brookfield's (1995) recognition of hegemonic assumptions,

and lastly, Bolman and Deal's (2008) organizational frames and Kotter's change theory in

analysis to better understand the impact of reform on school relationships between

administrators, teachers, and children.

Priestley et al. (2012) and Bandura (1989) on Teacher Agency

Under all of these assumptions principals may view teachers as unwilling to

change, when in fact, they are making changes as they are able. According to the literature by

Priestley (2012) and Bandura (1989, p. 1178) on teacher agency, teachers implement changes of which they feel capable. "People tend to avoid activities and situations they believe exceed their coping capabilities, but they readily undertake challenging activities and select social environments they judge themselves capable of handling." Throughout the data, teachers indicated a willingness to change as long as they had time to learn it, implement it, and do it well. Chris sums it up by saying, "Make sure that teachers have what they need in order to do it well, otherwise it's not going to go well and people are going to be frustrated and mad and they're not going to want to do it." How can administrators better prepare teachers so they feel ready to take on change?

In addition, teachers will modify tasks to fit their own needs and capabilities. According to a study on teachers experiencing reform by Priestley et al. (2012), "Teachers position themselves politically in relation to change policy," (p. 193). Aligned with Bandura's theory of human agency (1989), Priestley et al. found teachers have the ability to "mediate policy through a process of iterative refraction" which means teachers alter policy as an exercise of their human agency. So, "policy mutates as it migrates from one setting to the next," (p. 193). What this means for administrators is teachers adapt and change policy to fit their needs. William articulates this agency with a teacher's way of knowing what children need. "I would follow the rules. I would do what my boss tells me to do. So, what is the end result they want? But if I could come up with a different way to be more efficient, a way that would make more sense….do what is best for kids... ." Sue also desires to follow the district guidelines, but to include the students' interests in content exploration. "Yeah, you have to follow a set of curriculum guidelines but you can always wiggle around that." With the knowledge that

teachers adapt policies to fit their needs, would principals take teachers' opinions and wisdom into consideration when making decisions regarding reform?

Brookfield's (1995) Recognition of Hegemonic Assumptions

In defining critical reflection, Brookfield (1995) outlines several types of assumptions involved in the process (see Chapter Three). Going further, Brookfield identifies critical reflection as an illumination of power. "An awareness of how the dynamics of power permeate all educational processes helps us realize that forces present in the wider society always intrude into the classroom" (p. 9). He illustrates the pervasiveness of power and the oppressive dimensions to teaching practices that appear neutral or even positive. Described as "hegemonic" as proposed by the work of Antonio Gramsci, it is the process by which people see things as working for their own good when in reality they are constructed and communicated by "powerful minority interests to protect the status quo that serves those interests" (p. 15). Power affects every organization, every culture and individual. Brookfield outlines hegemonic assumptions as "those that we think are in our own best interests but that have actually been designed by more powerful others to work against us in the long term" (p. 15).

Thus, examples of hegemonic powers exist in what Brookfield calls a "sense of calling" (p. 15). Several teachers in my study recalled teaching was something they had always wanted to do, or felt a "calling" to teaching. Jane admitted she had considered other professions but felt teaching was a much better fit for her. This sense of calling or vocation is accompanied by larger size classrooms, extra committees on which to serve, and more tasks and initiatives to embrace. "Teachers who take the idea of vocation as the organizing concept for their professional lives may start to think of any day on which they don't come home exhausted as a day wasted" (p. 16). Many teachers in my data, including Tuscarora and Ann, indicated a sense

of fatigue in trying to do "one more thing" in their professional day and feeling "piled on". Thus,

in what seems to be a mutually agreeable vision of what teaching should be, the idea of vocation

becomes a hegemonic concept, one teachers embrace but one that ultimately works against their

own best interests.

Lastly, Brookfield outlines another hegemonic assumption of administrators and teachers

through the notion of "We Meet Everyone's Needs" (p. 20). Administrators will often justify

what they do or have done by saying they're meeting the community's, parent's or student's

needs. Both teachers and administrators in my data indicated school was "all about the kids".

Some of the stories shared by principals indicated otherwise. Principal Kevin, in particular, used

economic terms in justifying the community's needs for a unique school with phrases like "buy-

in" from parents, and how he had to "sell" them on the idea, when in actuality he was pushing

his own agenda for his brand of elementary school. Brookfield recognizes this assumption as

serving "the interests of those who believe that education can be understood and practiced as a

capitalist economic system" (p. 21). When viewed in this vein, education becomes a business in

keeping the customer happy. When administrators are busy keeping policy makers or parents

happy, what happens to meeting the needs of teachers?

Bolman and Deal's Organizational Frames (2008)

In their work on *Reframing Organizations*, Bolman and Deal developed four frameworks,

or lenses with which to view an organizations' structure based on managerial wisdom and social

science knowledge. In examining the data, I believe the Southwestern School District

administrators operate and conduct reform through a structural and political frame, whereas their

staff desire solutions in change through more of a human resources and symbolic frame. In

addition, Kotter's eight stages of change aligned and reframed (p. 395) with Bolman and Deal

support this analysis.

      Structural frame. The structural lens provides an organizational schema on which many

groups rely. The origin of the structural frame works on the premise of "maximum efficiency of

its workers, a hierarchy of offices, a set of rules governing performance, and a fixed division of

labor" (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 48). Clearly a school district shows evidence of this type of

frame. Under national and state policies, such as the No Child Left Behind Act led by the Bush

Administration, school districts work under a "blueprint for officially sanctioned expectations

and exchanges among internal players and external constituencies," (p. 50). Administrators and

teachers represent the internal players while families and community members represent external

constituencies. The data revealed an example of this when Principal Kevin utilized a buying and

selling metaphor in reference to his job in convincing families to attend his elementary school.

"So we sold and marketed this place based on a couple things. But just getting the right people

on the bus that can try different things and then help sell [is important]." He illustrates how the

image of his school has changed over the years and how he as principal has laid out a new

structure for it. Both he and Principal Olivia outlined the way they deliver staff meetings, handle

new ideas and make decisions. As discussed in previous chapters, the teachers in my data desire

structure and organization. According to Bolman and Deal (2008) however, an organization's

structure "both enhances and constrains what an organization can accomplish" (p. 50).

      Piled on. Bolman and Deal (2008) illustrate the rigidity a structural frame imposes. "It

has a negative impact if it gets in our way, buries us in red tape, or makes it too easy for

management to control us," (p. 51). In regards to reform, teachers in the data indicated a sense

of feeling overwhelmed, as if everything is being "piled on" them. Issues from reform appear to

be creating fractures in the foundation or structural design of this organization. Tuscarora, a

veteran teacher, commented, "Sometimes I feel like we just pile on more and more and more. I

feel like I am bending under the burden of too many things being piled on at one time." Ann

indicated a similar sentiment. She described how, after over twenty years of teaching, she felt

overwhelmed. "Now they've just piled on a lot more change on us than they ever have at one

given time." Overall, the structural frame looks beyond individuals to examine the "architecture

of work". It considers an organization's "goals, strategies, technology, people and

environment," (p. 69). In understanding the impact of reform on school relationships, perhaps

administrators should view their teachers in something other than a structural frame.

       Political frame. Looking through a political frame lens, organizations are groups

composed of individuals with differences in a world of scarce or strict resources, putting power

and conflict at the center of decision making. In examining the data from Bolman and Deal's

(2008) political frame, communication regarding goals, structure and policies should emerge

from "an ongoing process of bargaining and negotiation among major interest groups," (p. 209).

In this paper, I make the assumption that teachers belong to a major interest group. The

administrators' responses in my data indicated some, to very little involvement in decision

making by teachers. Both Kevin and Olivia shared how they structure staff meetings to involve

teachers, and Ted indicated a similar system for principal meetings, but none of them articulated

the specifics of including teacher voices in decision making. In reverse, several teachers felt

bargaining, negotiation, communication and/or decisions excluded them.

       Lack of collaboration. In the data, teachers indicated a need for, and an enjoyment of

collaboration. When asked how administrators could help them through change, Tuscarora

indicated a need for support and collaboration. "Administration should help teachers develop

skills in a supportive and not punitive way and provide focus and help teams develop and reach

common goals. I recommend they prioritize, plan, pilot and prepare." Tuscarora expects

organization from her leaders and as a teacher, expects this of her students. In several teacher's

views, administrators do not appear organized. As mentioned previously, teachers hear mixed

messages from their administrators. Politically, reform impacts the relationship between

administrators and teachers through a lack of communication and collaboration. Tuscarora tied

politics and a lack of teacher voice in decision making together. "I think teacher's opinions

should direct the course of new initiatives. I think values and goals have to direct education, not

politics."

Perhaps administrators are too busy for so many changes? Even Administrator Olivia

shared her feelings of being overwhelmed by mandates of change and a desire for support. "We

need the district's support." Her response to the many changes reform imposes in a short period

of time included taking small steps and allowing staff to do the best they could in the time the

hours a school day provides.

Symbolic frame. Bolman and Deal's (2008) Symbolic frame illuminates and interprets

the issues of the belief and meaning of things, seeing life as figurative. In this case, the rituals,

ceremonies and myths associated with change in the Southwestern School District reveal the

story behind the story. As mentioned above, Tuscarora felt that values should direct education.

Myths support an organization's values. While Principal Kevin plunges forward with his "sell"

strategies and new ways of learning, teachers are feeling confused, pushed and overwhelmed.

While Principal Olivia creates a myth of "doing what we can in the time we have" teachers are

feeling left out of decision making and mutual respect. A few years ago district administrators

rolled out a theme of "Imagine" to characterize the new initiatives. This theme represents

changes in teaching, academic content, the acquisition of technology in classrooms and bilingual programs. What was probably meant to be the symbolic vision of the district's future impacts the relationship between teachers, administrators and students.

Bolman and Deal (2008) include metaphors as an important part of the symbolic frame. Metaphors capture subtle themes describing an agency, or its way of doing business. In general, teachers used very negative metaphors in the data when describing change. Jane used metaphors in describing the frustration she felt last year with her principal and taking a risk with the new changes. "So why would you move forward because they could really crush all the work you're doing or they could throw you under the bus if it all goes wrong." Clearly Jane lacks a feeling of safety and support with her principal. Kelly describes the reforms in terms of a band wagon. "I'm not just going to jump on any bandwagon that's coming around. I want to see the success rate and the data before I make decisions on how things are done." Teachers used similar metaphors in describing the speed and intensity of the changes occurring in the district. Metaphors from teachers expressing their frustrations are listed below:

- Thrown at us
- Rocking many boats
- Piled on
- Slamming me with things
- Baby step myself into it
- Drowning in initiatives
- Fumbling in the dark
- Walking on sand
- Like a black cloud over everything

Metaphors compact complicated issues into understandable images. In the data teachers used metaphors to describe complicated issues, and in turn, complicated feelings regarding change

and reform.

Lastly, Bolman and Deal (2008) include rituals and ceremonies as an important part of the symbolic frame for organizations. With any significant change, two conflicting symbolic responses may occur; first, "to keep things as they were" and second "to ignore the loss and plunge into the future," (p. 390). In the interviews I asked principals how they tried to engage teachers from these two groups. Olivia and Kevin responded that a ritual of "dialogue" was the key to moving teachers forward in change. Currently the Southwestern School District teachers are experiencing a rapid series of changes.

In the data, teachers expressed the loss of time with their students due to this change. "I need time… to do my job properly to help the kids," (William). Bolman and Deal (2008) recognize that loss is a by-product of change or improvement and that grieving can be overlooked. "As change accelerates, executives and employees get caught in endless cycles of unresolved grief," (p. 390). Several teachers noted a frustration in adding "one more thing" to their day. In wondering what more they can add, they imply a sense of loss or an asking of the question, "What am I giving up?" Bolman and Deal suggest leaders provide symbolic rituals, ceremonies or celebrations to help ease the sense of loss felt by members in an organization. If rituals and ceremonies provide scripts for facing calamity and celebrating success, what are administrator's doing to reduce the stress and the unresolved grief teachers feel during change?

Human resource frame. Finally, Bolman and Deal (2008) focus on the fit between human needs and an organization's requirements in their human resource frame. They stress the relationships and interactions of people in organizations as key elements of this frame. From the data in Chapters Four and Five, it is evident reform impacts the relationships between and needs of, administrators, teachers and children. In examining the needs of teachers I found several

themes, a need to be creative and collaborative, a need to engage students, a need to build

relationships with students and a need for trust and professionalism in their careers. In alignment

with the human resource frame, I found the theme of teaching kids to care for one another

prevalent in the data. "Just how to teach kids to interact with each other. I think we need to make

sure that we provide time for that," (Nala).

Administrators indicated needs of buy-in from their constituents, dialogue with their

teachers, and time to interface between the policy makers and their staff members. It appears the

some of the needs of teachers and administrators are at odds. Bolman and Deal (2008) warn

leaders to avoid neglecting the human resource frame. "In other words, change agents fail when

they rely mostly on reason and structure while neglecting human, political and symbolic

elements," (p. 394). Kotter (as cited in Bolman and Deal, 2008) introduces eight stages to assist

change agents in weaving the frames together with each stage to create successful change.

Kotter's change stages. Bolman and Deal (2008) apply John Kotter's eight change

stages to their four organizational frames to illustrate strategies a change agent might make to

implement successful change initiatives. They outline Kotter's eight stages found in change

initiatives: (1) Creating a sense of urgency; (2) Pulling together a guiding team; (3) Creating an

uplifting vision and strategy; (4) Communicating the vision and strategy; (5) Removing

obstacles, or empowering people to move; (6) Producing visible symbols of progress through

victories; (7) Sticking with the process and refusing to quit; and (8) Nurturing and shaping a new

culture to support innovative ways. Bolman and Deal note, "Every situation and change effort is

unique. Creative change agents can use the ideas to stimulate thinking and spur imagination as

they develop an approach that fits local circumstances" (p. 396).

In this case, several aspects of the district's initiatives are failing due to a lack of implementation of change strategies by administrators. Administrators had a sense of urgency (Kotter's stage one) but tended to neglect the human resource and symbolic frames. Kotter suggests involving people throughout the organization and soliciting input. Both Olivia and Kevin involved people in discussions but did not solicit input from teachers in creating the change, nor did they create a sense of urgency in their staff. Secondly, administrators in this case felt their directions and guidance were clear and that they were engaging teachers through communication. Many teachers in the data however, expressed a frustration with the lack of support in change and a lack of clear communication in change. In stage four, Kotter suggests leaders do several things in each frame to enhance communication, such as creating structures to support the change process. More reframing of Kotter's change stages will be discussed in Chapter Six in the recommendations section.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented the findings of three semi-structured interviews with administrators and compared them with data from the teachers in understanding the impacts of change on school relationships between the two parties. Between the teachers and administrators I identified a common thread of caring for children and then outlined three main themes that provided contradictions between administrators' assumptions and teachers' beliefs: reform comes in cycles or a pendulum swing, issues of time become excuses, and administrators fail to engage teachers in big decision making. Within the last point I illustrated three subthemes supporting a lack of engagement using the assumptions of teachers have power, directions are clear, and teachers' voices are important. In analyzing the data, I utilized Priestley et al.'s (2012) and Bandura's (1989) literature on agency and Brookfield's (1995) recognition of hegemonic

assumptions to compare administrator and teacher assumptions as well as Bolman and Deal's

(2008) four organizational frames and Kotter's (1996) change stages in illuminating the impact

of reform on district relationships and its organizational schema. Overall, administrators and

teachers possess the same desires for children, yet indicate different needs in working through

change.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the research questions, findings, and analysis as well as conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for future study. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine and illuminate the experiences of 14 elementary teachers and three elementary administrators in the throes of educational reform. I interviewed teachers with varying years of experience and elementary education subject area expertise to extract the stories of teachers' frustrations in an era of rapidly changing educational programming. Through semi-structured interviews, teachers and administrators described their motivations, fears, and desires in teaching and leading. In addition, this study provided insight into the administrator's assumptions about teachers and the parallel and contrasting desires between administrators and teachers.

This study addressed the following research questions: (1) What factors inhibited or enhanced teachers' ability and/or desire to implement educational reform? and (2) What do administrators and policy makers need to hear from teachers in implementing the next reforms? The study provided teachers the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings on the joys and frustrations of teaching and to offer suggestions about educational reform to administrators.

Interview data analysis pointed toward two summative themes: Understanding the elementary teacher and the impacts of reform on school relationships. Within the former theme, three subthemes emerged that illustrate teachers' difficulty in embracing reform: teachers come to the profession with a passion for teaching and children, teachers perceive reform as an ethical matter, and reform challenges teachers' senses of competence and wisdom. Conversely, the factors that enhanced teachers' abilities to embrace reform included teachers' desires to collaborate, build relationships, and make a difference in students' lives.

In Chapter Five, administrators provided their knowledge on reform and their perceptions about teachers in reform. Tensions between administrators and teachers articulated as: teachers see reform as a repeated cycle and tend to wait to adjust until the next reform comes (whereas administrators think teachers simply ignore or reject the changes), administrators dismiss time issues (whereas teachers emphasize a need for time in reform), and administrators fail to engage teachers in reform (whereas teachers would like to be engaged in reform). All of these tensions inhibit teachers' ability to embrace reform. Relevant literature includes theory supporting these findings.

Chapter Four analyzed literature in support of the theme, understanding the teacher. This analysis included Enomoto and Kramer's (2007) theory of ethical tensions and Bandura's (1989) theory of human agency. Chapter Five examined theories relating to the theme, the impact of reform on school relationships. These theories included Priestley et al. (2012) and Bandura (1989) on teacher agency, Brookfield's (1995) critical reflection and assumptions, Bolman and Deal's (2008) reframing organization, and Kotter's (1996) eight change stages. Consideration of themes encouraging or inhibiting teacher reform with respect to relevant academic theory points toward three main conclusions and three actionable recommendations.

Conclusions

Based on my guiding research questions and the corresponding data and analyses, I draw three main conclusions. The factors inhibiting teachers from embracing reform include: (1) Reform forces teachers to negotiate the time they spend in teaching and caring for children; (2) School change will be difficult if teachers feel overwhelmed and struggle with reform; and (3) Administrators make assumptions about teachers that sabotage school relationships. This last conclusion reveals the unintended consequences stemming from assumptions from

administrators which inhibits their ability to form good relationships with teachers in order to

move forward in successful change. Administrators and policy makers need to know the

personal and professional ways teachers struggle with reform. In this section I describe each

conclusion.

Reform Causes Teachers to Negotiate Time

The first conclusion summarizes a key finding from Chapters Four and Five; time is an

issue for teachers. Not only do teachers feel that reform is an ethical matter, but they also felt it

took time away from them, particularly, time to do everyday tasks, time at home with families,

and time to care for children. Once the school day starts, children and teachers are wrapped in a

tightly scheduled day of organizational chores, attending to students' needs, academic content,

and administrative tasks. In the data, teachers indicated that every time a reform is implemented,

this tightly scheduled day has to be restructured. One teacher summarized her colleagues'

feelings of a lack of time, "Where do I put one more thing? How do I find more time in my

day?"

In addition, teachers felt initiatives took away time from planning, creativity, and

reflection. Another teacher said, "We can barely come up for air and there's no time to be really

thoughtful and planful about how we're going to implement this into our teaching." A few

teachers also indicated a lack of time with families at home at night. In order to do a good job,

William felt it was important to get work done at night so he could meet his students' needs

during the day. Finally, many teachers revealed a concern of a lack of time to care for children.

This concern becomes an ethical dilemma for teachers. Ann wondered if all of the changes were

good for students. "I…do question if that really is the best thing for kids. Emotionally what is

that doing to them? Who knows them as a child?" Teachers expressed frustrations with the lack

of time in teaching a "hidden curriculum" or ethic of care for children. Teachers will embrace

reform if their concerns are included in the negotiation of time.

Change will be Difficult if Teachers Struggle with Reform or Feel Overwhelmed

The second conclusion garnered from the data is school change will be difficult if

teachers have to constantly struggle with the contradictions between their lived experiences and

the new priorities educational change and reform create. Teacher preparation programs at

universities prepare teachers in the pedagogy and curriculum background of teaching. But it is

the day-to-day, on-the-job work teachers do that builds a foundation of wisdom and sense of

competence; in other words, their lived experience centers their expertise. In the data teachers

indicated an intuitive sense of knowing students well. One teacher referred to her own lived

experience of knowing how students will score on a test before they even finished. "I think

there's an awful lot of intuition that goes into a teacher's evaluation of students." Reform

challenges this lived experience.

Standardized testing reform counteracts this wisdom by mandating tests in a one-size-

fits-all format that is, outside of the teachers' control. Secondly, many teachers acknowledged

the cyclical (pendulum) effect of reform in having experienced some of the changes before.

What appear to teachers as rapid and recycled changes become teachers' reasons for adopting

only small bits of the change, or ignoring the change, and waiting for the next one to arrive.

After years of experience, teachers know what strategies work for kids and which do not. In

addition, teachers in the data felt slighted by administrators when a change was made that

countered their wisdom. For example, one teacher felt unsupported by her administrator when

she applied a change in the way she knew was best for children, "So you didn't trust me in the

beginning to make the change, but now you want me to?" And another teacher expressed a

gratefulness for being trusted by her administrator, "You actually think I can figure out a good

avenue for teaching these children based on my education and experiences? Thank you!"

Overall, teachers feel they know what is best for students. Teachers are more likely to embrace

change if their struggle is acknowledged and their lived experience validated.

Administrative Assumptions Sabotage Relationships

Chapter Five's key findings regarding the assumptions of administrators support the last

conclusion from the data; administrators' perceptions and assumptions disrupt the

communication and trust between themselves and their teachers, ultimately sabotaging school

relationships. Not only do these assumptions affect relationships, but they undermine the

success of a reform or initiative. Administrators indicated desires for children similar to

teachers, however, in their desires for staff the data revealed some assumptions.

While teachers indicated reform takes away time from their everyday tasks,

administrators revealed that they thought time was a non-issue, or perhaps a futile one to

undertake. When one administrator said "What is it they need time for?" the implication became

"Teachers do not need more time" or "I cannot give them more time." One of the other

principals indicated she/he views time as something "we can control within our day, within our

time." This comment means teachers and administrators only have a limited amount of time in a

school day and must work within that time frame. Teachers have control over how they spend

their time. Based on the data from teachers, this statement neglects a recognition of the time

teachers devote to schoolwork outside the normal school day or the pressure they feel when new

reforms are required of them. In addition, a key finding from Chapter Four showed teachers

possess high expectations for themselves and their students. The notion of "control within our

day" limits the possibilities and expectations of teachers in their desire to fulfill their duties.

Lastly, the assumptions outlined in Chapter Five showed administrators believe teachers have power, their directions are clear and that they value the voices of the teachers. From the data in Chapter Four and Five, key findings illustrated to the contrary. Teachers indicated a desire to be included in decision making, a need for clear and guiding directions as well as the need for autonomy and trust.

At the heart of elementary school lies relationships and connections. Administratively-led changes and initiatives in the Southwestern School District created disconnects between the leaders, staff and their students. Reform initiatives including the emphasis on test scores, utilizing technology in the classroom, and personalizing learning for students, has overwhelmed teachers and compromised their ability to care for children. To address these issues, I integrate the analyses and theory into a set of recommendations in the following section. I also provide suggestions for future research within the topic of reform and elementary education.

Recommendations

Ultimately schools need to evolve to meet the needs of a changing society. Since change is never easy, it is crucial for administrators and policy makers to understand the issues of teachers and the important elements of change theory in order to plan for future change. To answer the latter part of my research questions: what factors enhance teachers' ability to embrace reform, and what do administrators and policy makers need to know, I feel it is critical for administrators and policy makers to consider the following recommendations: (1) Provide teachers clarity and validation; (2) Conduct critical conversations in the negotiation of time for teachers' adjustment to reform, and time for teachers' care of children in reform; and (3) Include teachers' voices by providing them a seat at the table. Throughout these recommendations, I infuse elements of change theory from Bolman and Deal (2008), Brookfield (1995) and Kotter

(1996) and translate them into lessons (see Figure 3) for administrators and policy makers in

reform. A more extensive chart applying all eight of Kotter's stages appears in Appendix G.

Educational leaders should consider these recommendations when planning and implementing

their next level of reforms.

Figure 3. Lawrence's Translated Lessons in Reform

Provide Clarity and Validation	Conduct critical conversations on the negotiation of time	Provide a seat at the table
Align reform with the district's vision	Honor teachers' ethic of care	Include teachers in decision making regarding reform
Communicate end goals	Examine and challenge old structures	Support and validate teachers' lived experience/wisdom
Validate teachers' lived experience	Honor loss with rituals	Support and guide teacher agency

Figure 3. This model combines several of Kotter's (1996) change stages and the findings in
Chapters Four and Five as translated lessons in reform.

Provide Clarity and Validation

In order to better communicate reform with teachers, I recommend district leaders align

reform with the district's mission and purpose in order to provide clarity and validation. In other

words, reform alone is not an uplifting vision. Historically, reform imposed standardized testing

to hold schools accountable. Using the vision of "improving test scores" alone for teachers is not

an effective method. Creating a more motivating vision will promote more buy-in from teachers.

I recommend administrators utilize the third change step as outlined by Kotter (1995) in

communicating the vision and strategy often. Kotter recommends a vision that provides real

guidance, is focused and easy to communicate, and is a touchstone for making decisions (2012).

Administrators need to better align their goals and communicate them often so teachers feel

supported and "in the know" about their organization's intentions.

In this case, for teachers who have not even opened the boxes of curriculum after five

years, there was clearly no compelling reason to do so. To restructure one's work and re-order

one's priorities demands a vision that makes work meaningful and energizes the teachers to do it.

If it is just another pendulum swing of reform and teachers are tired, it is easy for them to make

the decision to "close their doors and hope no one notices." Teachers need a hopeful, uplifting

vision in order to change, not one that broadcasts poor test scores.

Administrators also need to make clear their end goals. Teachers in the data came away

from meetings about reform initiatives feeling un-empowered, and unclear about the district's

rationale for decisions regarding initiatives. Teaching pedagogy requires teachers to

communicate objectives to their students. Ironically, leaders do not follow suit. In addition,

administrators should convey transparency; teachers need to know the destination, or end goal.

In their theory on change and reframing organizations, Bolman and Deal (2008) stress the

articulation of leadership. "Effective leaders help articulate a vision, set standards for

performance, and create focus and direction" (p. 345). Several teachers felt that directions and

goals given by administrators were not clear, thus a clear guiding vision and communicated end-

goal that is aligned with district initiatives is warranted.

In addition, teachers need a vision and communication that confirms and validates their

lived experience. In the data I found contradictory messages between the assumptions of

administrators and the experiences of teachers. Administrators assumed teachers heard their

messages and understood them. In order for change to occur, teachers need a validation of their

own lived experiences. Specifically teachers need to hear administrators' messages over and over; they need to experience the message in the deeds of the leader and others, and they need to witness symbols or examples of change working. I applying Kotter's (1996) fourth change stage, administrators need to communicate the vision and strategies through words, deeds and symbols. Leaders can honor teachers' lived experiences by sharing examples of changes teachers make in the classroom every day.

Leaders should also honor teachers' lived experience by including teacher voices and agency in change. Communication is both in the giving of the message and in the recognition it was received. Without the latter, principals' beliefs that teacher voices matter, will remain a matter of principle rather than practice. The same is true of teacher agency. Teachers must believe their communication makes a difference. Thus, conducting conversations about teaching in change is critical. Brookfield (1995) acknowledged that critical conversations about teaching need to take place. In order to communicate a clear vision, good conversations take time and require a breaking of old culture patterns which create competition and a "privatization" of knowledge. Teachers experienced this sense of privatization in not knowing what the destination or end-goals were of the districts' initiatives. Administrators and teachers continue to feel a sense of competition regarding the practices and collective knowledge individual school staff possess. Competition is further addressed in the section on future study.

Conduct Critical Conversations in the Negotiation of Time

In the data, teachers desired time to build up relationships and provide an "ethic of care" or what is a "hidden curriculum" for children. Findings in Chapter Four included the subtheme of *Reform is an Ethical Matter* to teachers. Not only is time an issue for teachers, but it is an ethical matter. Teachers felt caring for students was their number one priority and reform steals

time from this. I recommend leaders have critical conversations with teachers about time,

schedules, and adjusting to the element of loss in reform with teachers.

Currently, leaders have very little time to observe teachers in the classroom, much less

have time for critically reflective conversations regarding change (Brookfield, 1995).

Curriculum directors need to examine and challenge the old structures that define a principal's

current job. Time for principal-teacher critical conversations is needed in order to break the

assumptions administrators' possess about teachers' resistance to change. In addition,

administrators' assumptions about communication proved contradictory; teachers cannot

embrace change because they do not understand the end-goals of reform, and they do not have

ownership in decision making.

Time for a teacher is a commodity, not bought or sold, but traded or negotiated on a daily

basis, even from moment to moment. In the context of a teacher's ethical sense regarding

children's needs, there is never enough time. Thus, time is negotiated. Eventually, teachers give

up on important elements such as a more hands-on pedagogy approach, or a lesson on

citizenship, because some days are all about survival. As a day progresses, teachers make quick

decisions while leveraging what might be the most ethical, logistical or reasonable outcome.

With demands from parents, administrators, and policy makers, combined with the time

constraints of the school paradigm, teachers often make decisions in survival mode. Hence, in

order to meet teachers' ethical needs and desires, time (and perhaps roles and budgets) must be

critically discussed.

Based on change theory, Kotter (1996) emphasizes that new practices must grow deep

roots in order to be firmly planted in a new culture. In a district that continually introduces new

change, deep roots are hard to grow. I recommend policy makers and district leaders create a

new culture driven by teachers. In considering future reforms, leaders need to ask, "What would teachers really want?" and not assume the worst. To translate Kotter's eighth stage, I recommend leaders feed teachers' collaborative and creative spirits in building a new teacher-driven culture. A teacher-driven culture includes changing the paradigm of "time," celebrating the future by rewarding and recognizing teachers' talents, and mourning the past by allowing teachers time to grieve the loss of old ways. The paradigm of time can change for schools if administrators negotiate schedules and allow teachers ownership in decision making. New schedules could allow more flexibility in: the ability of teachers to leave the classroom to attend conferences, to observe their peers' lessons, to collaborate with colleagues during the school day, to share positions with other teachers and other administrators, and to not only attend trainings on new strategies, but to have time to practice them in an "internship" fashion. Administrators' duties and schedules could change in response to this paradigm shift, allowing them more time to connect with their staff and build better relationships.

Lastly, teachers' frustration with reform revealed a sense of loss; a loss of time with children, a loss of time with staff and in a loss of time to perform daily tasks. A continuous cycle of reform induces in teachers a continuous cycle of loss and grief. I recommend leaders allow teachers time for grieving. In order to do this, leaders must celebrate teachers' past and future accomplishments and celebrate the transitions in change. I believe applying theoretical strategies such as Bolman and Deal's (2008) and Kotter's (1996) provision of rituals in the form of grief in transition and in celebrations, would provide time for reflection, and time for acknowledging past heroes. Transition rituals assist people in letting go of the past and moving into the future.

Provide Teachers a Seat at the Table

While the district is good at inviting teachers to serve on committees and attend trainings, most decision making occurs at the building level, involves logistical decisions, and does not influence reform. I recommend policy makers and district leaders include teachers on the committees involved in decision making regarding reform. From the data and theory in analysis, both Kotter (1996) and Bandura (1989) provide a foundation for my conclusion.

Kotter's (1995) second change stage is applicable here: in pulling together a guiding team. The team should include "influential people" and not those following the traditional systemic hierarchy (2012). In this case the team should represent the key stakeholders, including teachers at every reform level including district, state and national arenas. As a key stakeholder, teachers possess the intuition and day to day knowledge of children that could make a difference in decision-making. By including teachers in decision making regarding reform, leaders validate teachers' wisdom and teachers' lived experiences. In addition, the inclusion of teachers in this manner by administrators send a message to communities that teachers' voices are consulted and valued.

When asked if they were interested in being consulted on change, several teachers indicated a sense of flattery at being invited to make decisions for reform at the district level, yet others reflected on the limits of their agency to do so. Bandura's theory of agency (1989) claims that environmental factors influence human agency. Reform and leadership are such factors. Bandura recognized agency as the capacity to exercise control over one's own thought processes, motivation, and actions. In this case, teachers' sense of agency is compromised by reform. Thus, if teachers feel a lack of success or agency in reform, they tend to not embrace reform. In order to build success, I recommend leaders study change theory and include teachers in a

guiding team that actually makes decisions regarding reform. Leaders should honor agency by

reframing or reducing environmental factors influencing their agency, such as time, power in

decision making, and power in creating curriculum. Building agency in teachers supports the

overall human capacity of the organization. This strategy could change teachers from the

recipients of reform to the change agents in reform.

Summary

Failure to engage teachers as agents of change has led to resistance, failed reform, and a

disruption of relationships between administrators and teachers. The teachers in this study

provided insights on how to reshape reform efforts by engaging them and honoring their input.

To enhance teachers' ability to embrace reform, I recommend educational leaders: (1) Provide

clarity and validation; (2) Provide critical conversations on the negotiation of time; and (3)

Include teachers' voices by providing them a seat at the table in decision making. I believe

administrators can provide clarity by aligning the district's vision with reform efforts, by

communicating district and building end goals, and by validating teachers' experiences.

Administrators can negotiate time by examining and challenging old structures, honoring loss

with rituals and honoring teachers' ethic of care. Lastly, administrators should provide teachers

a seat at the table. By including teachers' voices in big decision making regarding reform,

supporting their wisdom, and increasing their ability to embrace reform by supporting their

agency, administrators would send a powerful message to the community and key stakeholders

in education. Ultimately these steps would create a school environment that is teacher-driven. I

believe a teacher-driven culture would allow teachers to do what they came to the profession to

do; teach.

Administrators in this case however, through their assumptions, have neglected to engage teachers in reform by overlooking their most valuable resource; the passions and wisdom of teachers. In engaging teachers in change, administrators can utilize this valuable resource for initiating, implementing and evaluating reform. In addition, policy makers would benefit from the talents teachers possess by engaging them in future policies for educational reform.

Future Study

The purpose of this study was to illuminate the elementary teachers' voices in reform in order to better understand their experiences. Specifically, I sought to identify the factors that enhance or deter teachers from embracing change. Through this study I desired to identify key messages that administrators and policy makers should hear in engaging teachers in reform. As a result of the findings and analysis, understanding the impact of reform on the relationships between teachers and administrators as well as the concerns of teachers in providing a curriculum of care for children is crucial for policy makers and administrators in their implementation of future reforms.

This study was conducted in a moderately sized suburban school district in the Midwest. Due to the limitations of this study, further research should include a larger, more diverse sampling of teachers and leaders from a variety of districts to include the voices of more urban and more rural educators in order to better understand the impact of reform. A cross-comparison of districts may also provide a broader scope for data versus a case study of one district. More studies like this across the United States would assist in the illumination of and empowerment of teachers' voices to impact reform at the state and national levels.

In this study, a sub-theme of safety emerged from the data. The teachers felt a strong sense of duty to protect students and keep them safe, both physically, emotionally and/or

psychologically. The question remains, if reform continues to emphasize high stakes testing,

what effect does testing have on students' emotional well-being? Further research should

include a more intense examination of students' emotional safety in reform. The teaching

profession would benefit from the study of emotional safety from testing both on teachers and on

students.

Lastly, in the data teachers and administrators hinted at competition, both in mandated

testing reforms and in overall initiatives implemented by the district. Future study could include

an examination of perceived elements of competition between teachers, classes, schools and

districts as a result of mandated testing and various initiatives in reform. Questions remaining

include: Does reform create competition and if so, what kinds? In what ways does competition

affect students, teachers and staff? And lastly, what are the implications from competition for

public school systems?

Chapter Summary

In Chapter Six I drew conclusions regarding the significance and analyses of the findings

and provided recommendations for policy makers and leaders in education. I described the

following conclusions: (1) Reform forces teachers to negotiate the time they spend in teaching

and caring for children; (2) School change will be difficult if teachers feel overwhelmed and

struggle with reform; and (3) Administrators make assumptions that sabotage school

relationships. Since school change is inevitable and will be difficult, I recommend leaders

examine change theory and follow these translated lessons in reform: (1) Provide teachers clarity

and validation; (2) Provide critical conversations for the negotiation of time for adjustment to

reform, and time for the care of children in reform; and (3) Include teachers' voices by providing

them a seat at the table.

To better engage teachers in change, administrators and policy makers should consider these actionable recommendations. In addition, policymakers should consider these recommendations to improve the implementation of future educational policies at both the state and national levels. Lastly, I provided suggestions for future research in the area of educational reform and engaging teachers in change.

Closing Reflections

Through this journey I discovered some of the real concerns and feelings on reform from the colleagues in my district and for this I am grateful. Lengthier than the typical hallway chat, I found the critical conversations I conducted with teachers very gratifying. More conversations like this need to take place. A public school teacher today has a very intense job. In nine months a teacher works hard to provide a young person with the things s/he needs to become a successful citizen of the future. The job demands much and ultimately provides a teacher with the simplest of, yet powerful, rewards; a smile, a hug, and the knowledge s/he has made an impact on the world in some way.

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Appendix A

District Approval Letter
(District 112 letterhead here)

May, 2013
Mr. Curriculum Director
K-12 Curriculum Coordinator
Western Chestnut County School District234
23 Paver Dr.
Nowhere, MN #####

Dear First Name,

Thank you for your inquiry on your research study during your coursework at the University of St. Thomas. I am pleased to confirm that you have the support of District 234 in surveying our elementary teachers and several administrators on the topic of educational reform.

I understand your study is a mixed mode of research, both quantitative and qualitative, that will invite our staff to participate in an anonymous survey and interview. The staff will have the opportunity to participate or decline the survey. I am happy to allow our employees to receive the survey via email, phone or in their classrooms or offices in our district. I appreciate that you will implement appropriate measures to protect the confidentiality of all participants and that all reports and presentations will protect the confidentiality of the research participants as well as our district.

I understand that you will not proceed with your research until you have obtained the approval of your qualitative research professor and the Institutional Review Board at the university. I also understand that your research project is a part of your clinical research paper which may be published and presented in a public forum.

I do not anticipate any direct benefit or risk to our district or to our participating staff. However, I certainly believe that there will be indirect benefits from your research in that you will be adding to the knowledge base in the field of education in an important area of study receiving attention from administrators and researchers but not from teachers directly.

I want to restate my support and wish you good luck in your educational endeavor. Please let me know how I can help you in facilitating the survey.

Sincerely,

Mr. Curriculum Director
K-12 Curriculum Coordinator

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Elementary Teacher

Pseudonym: _____   School: _____

Years of Teaching Experience: _____   Years of Teaching in the District:_____

Gender: _____

Possible Research Questions:

General questions to elicit a story
1. What is good about teaching? What do you enjoy about your practice?
2. What frustrates you about the practice of teaching?

Questions about a teacher's autobiography
3. What experiences in your life might have influenced your teaching style?
4. What biases toward certain teaching practices or beliefs might you have as a result of your past experiences?
5. How might your past experiences have influenced how you view and teach children?

Questions about best practices & reform initiatives
6. What is your initial response to the latest trends in education? What are they?
7. How do you define best practices? What are they?
8. Looking to the future, what might lead you to try new things?
9. When you hear about initiatives, what are your impressions (new initiatives ISD 234)?
10. What would make these initiatives easier for you? What is it like to be hit by waves of reform? (enhance/inhibit)
11. Be specific- walk me through how over time, you have responded to school changes/initiatives? Tell the story of then and now (attitude toward, actions, beliefs)
12. What advice would you give to administrators in implementing the next wave/trend in education? Would you like a say in what or how it is implemented? What would that look like?

Questions about students and colleagues' views
13. What do you think your students would say about all of the educational changes happening in our district? Have you ever surveyed them about your teaching practices and/or the changes occurring in education?
14. What do your colleagues say about the educational changes? Do you have discussions with your colleagues about your own teaching practices? If so, what do they involve? If not, why not?

Appendix B *(continued)*

Interview Questions

Curriculum Administrator/Policy Maker or Implementer

Questions for Curriculum Administrator/Policy Maker
1. What was the vision behind the new district initiatives? Where did they come from?
2. What was the role of principals in delivering these?
3. What challenges do you think principals face in this delivery? What challenges do you think teachers face?
4. What do see the role of the teacher being in educational reform? How do you involve your teachers?

Interview Questions
Principals
Questions for principals
1. How did you receive the new initiatives?
2. What is your role in delivering these to staff?
3. What are the challenges in this process?
4. What do you see the role of the teacher being in educational reform? How do you involve teachers?
5. How could teachers help you in this process?

Appendix C

CONSENT FORM
UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

Educational Change Study
(#######-#)

I am conducting a study on: *elementary teachers' and administrators' perceptions and reflections of educational change or reform.* I invite you to participate in this research. You were selected as a possible participant because *you administer or teach elementary school and belong to a district implementing new initiatives.* Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: *Student, in supervision under Dr. Delightful, through the University of St. Thomas.*

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is: to understand the voices of the teacher with an audience of policy makers and school leaders to help them successfully implement change.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things: *answer questions on a short paper survey regarding your role in the district as well as answer questions during a taped conversation (lasting approximately 60 minutes) regarding your experiences, feelings and thoughts about educational reform.*

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The study has minimal risks. First your reflections may be published in a dissertation and used as data for future research. Second, your responses may be read by others in the district but all responses will be anonymous to minimize any professional risks.

The direct benefits you will receive for participating are: acquiring new knowledge regarding teachers or the validation of previous knowledge of teachers' perceptions of educational change that may be applied to the future success of the administration and of teachers in District 234.

Compensation:

There will be no compensation for the participants.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept confidential. In any sort of report I publish, I will not include information that will make it possible to identify you in any way. The types of records I will create include *recordings, transcripts, master lists, computer record, and analysis summaries. Only I and the chair of my dissertation at the University of St. Thomas will view, and analyze the raw data. All data records will be destroyed when final research is published.*

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with District 234 or the University of St. Thomas. Should you decide to withdraw data collected about you, your data may or may not be used. You are also free to skip any questions I may ask.

Contacts and Questions

My name is *First, Last*. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact me at ###-###-####. You may also contact my instructor, Dr. Delightful, at ###-###-####. The University of St. Thomas Institutional Review Board can be reached at ###-###-#### with any questions or concerns you may have.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent to participate in the study. I am at least 18 years of age.

_____   _____
Signature of Study Participant   **Date**

_____
Print Name of Study Participant

_____   _____
Signature of Researcher   **Date**

_____   _____
Signature of Instructor   **Date**

Appendix D

Email Descriptions Sent to Principals and Colleagues

Email script to principals regarding teacher interviews:

"Dear District 234 Elementary Principals,

I am currently working on my Ed. D in Educational Leadership through the University of St. Thomas and request your assistance in a research study. My project involves surveying elementary teachers regarding their perceptions of and experiences with educational reform. I realize this is a very busy time for you and your staff as they work hard to successfully finish the year with students. I am going to email some close colleagues in your building and have them suggest about 5-6 participants for me to contact regarding this study. My work has been approved by the district office and I will attach that letter for your review."

With appreciation,
Angie Lawrence, (School Name)

Email Script to Teacher Participants:

Invitation:
"Dear Fellow Elementary Teachers,

As your year winds down to a close, I would appreciate your consideration in assisting me with my research for my dissertation as an Ed. doctoral student at the University of St. Thomas. My project involves studying the perceptions and experiences of elementary teachers with educational reform. I am interested in what areas you feel are important to be considered in teacher evaluation. My project is solely based on graduate work for my dissertation. If you are interested, we would set up a quick interview (approximately 60 minutes) at a time and location that is convenient for you. All responses would be kept confidential and every assurance would be made to maximize anonymity and minimize any risks of response recognition.

I realize this is a busy time for everyone and appreciate your efforts.
If you are interested, please email or call me by _____"

Sincerely,
Angie Lawrence (School Name)
Cell Phone
School Phone

Appendix D (continued)

Email script to the specific principals for interview purposes:

"Dear District 234 Elementary Principals,

I am currently working on my Ed. D in Educational Leadership through the University of St. Thomas and request your assistance in a research study for my dissertation. My project involves surveying elementary teachers regarding their perceptions of and experiences with educational reform. I would also like to interview you regarding your perceptions and experiences with reform and what the challenges are in assisting teachers along the way. I realize this is a very busy time for you and your staff as they work hard to successfully finish the year with students. My work has been approved by the district office and I will attach that letter for your review.

If you are interested, we would set up an interview (approximately 60 minutes) at a time and location that is convenient for you. All responses would be kept confidential and every assurance would be made to maximize anonymity and minimize any risks of response recognition.

I realize this is a busy time for everyone and appreciate your efforts.
If you are interested, please email or call me by _____ "

With appreciation,

Angie Lawrence, (School Name)
Cell Phone
School Phone

Appendix E

List of Participants

Participant	School	Years of Teaching/Leading	Gender
1 Teacher	A	4	M
2 Teacher	B	7	F
3 Teacher	A	11	F
4 Teacher	A	13	F
5 Teacher	C	13	F
6 Teacher	B	14	F
7 Teacher	C	14	F
8 Teacher	C	15	F
9 Teacher	A	15	F
10 Teacher	B	19	M
11 Teacher	B	20	F
12 Teacher	C	23	F
13 Teacher	B	35	F
14 Teacher	A	35	M
15 Administrator	C	10	M
16 Administrator	D	12	M
17 Administrator	A	18	F

Note: Participants and schools are labeled as letters and numbers to maintain anonymity.

Appendix F

Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement

Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate in the study. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

Project Name	Educational Change	IRB Tracking Number	######-#

Agreement	
I agree to transcribe data for this study. I agree that I will:	
1	Keep all research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the information in any form or format (e.g. disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the researcher who is the primary investigator of this study.
2	Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while in my possession. This includes: • using closed headphones when transcribing audio taped interviews • keeping all transcript documents and digitized interviews in computer password-protected files • closing any transcription programs and documents when temporarily away from the computer • keeping any printed transcripts in a secure location such as a locked file cabinet • permanently deleting any e-mail communication containing the data
3	Give all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the primary investigator when I have completed the research tasks.
4	Erase or destroy all research information in any form or format that is not returnable to the primary investigator (e.g., information stored on my computer hard drive) upon completion of the research tasks.

Statement of Consent	By checking the electronic signature box, I am stating that I understand what is being asked of me and I agree to the terms listed above.		
Signature of Transcriber ☒ *Check to sign electronically*		Date	
Print Name of Transcriber	MD, 4/23/2013		
		Date	

Signature of Researcher ☒ *Check to sign electronically**			
Print Name of Researcher	AL, 4/23/2013		

*Electronic signatures certify that:

The signatory agrees that he or she is aware of the polities on research involving participants of the University of St. Thomas and will safeguard the rights, dignity and privacy of all participants.

- The information provided in this form is true and accurate.
- The principal investigator will seek and obtain prior approval from the UST IRB office for any substantive modification in the proposal, including but not limited to changes in cooperating investigators/agencies as well as changes in procedures.
- Unexpected or otherwise significant adverse events in the course of this study which may affect the risks and benefits to participation will be reported in writing to the UST IRB office and to the subjects.
- The research will not be initiated and subjects cannot be recruited until <u>final approval</u> is granted.

Appendix G

Kotter's (1996) Eight Change Steps and Lawrence's Translated Lessons in Reform.

Kotter's Eight Change Stages	Lawrence's Translated Lessons for Reform
1. Create a sense of urgency	Honor the ethical foundations of teachers' dilemmas in reform
2. Pull together a guiding team	Engage teachers in the decision making of reform
3. Create an uplifting vision and strategy	Align reform with a building or district's guiding purpose and mission
4. Communicate the vision and strategy often through words, deeds and symbols	Honor teachers' lived experience through a Human Resource and Symbolic Frame
5. Remove obstacles and empower people	Break mental models and recognize teachers' passions
6. Produce visible symbols of progress through victories	Honor teachers' accomplishments and wisdom
7. Stick with the process and refuse to quit	Honor teachers' time by sticking to an initiative
8. Shape a new culture to support new ways	Feed teachers' collaborative and creative spirits