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Understanding the Impact of K-12 Principals on African American Male Teachers' Educational Self-Efficacy

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Georgia State University

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The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chairperson, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty.

_____
Nicholas Sauers, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

_____   _____
Robert Hendrick, Ph.D.   Gregory Middleton, Ph.D.
Committee Member   Committee Member

_____
Date

_____
Jennifer Esposito, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Department of Educational Policy Studies

_____
Paul A. Alberto, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education and Human Development

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Sean Antonetti

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of this dissertation is:

Sean Paul Antonetti
30 Pryor St
Atlanta, GA 30303

The director of this dissertation is:

Dr. Nicholas Sauers
Department of Educational Policy Studies
College of Education and Human Development
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA 30303

CURRICULUM VITAE

		Sean Antonetti
ADDRESS:		30 Pryor St
		Atlanta, GA 30303

EDUCATION:

Ed.D.	2020	Georgia State University
		Educational Policy Studies
Masters Degree	2012	Georgia State University
		English Education
Bachelors Degree	2004	Georgia State University
		English Literature

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

2013- Present	Teacher Development Specialist/Professional Learning Clayton County Public Schools
2006-2013	Teacher/AP English Language Riverdale High School

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS:

Antonetti, S.P. (2018, September). Supporting Alternative Teacher Candidates.
   Principal Leadership, 19(1)

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

2013	Learning Forward
2010	National Council of Teachers' of English

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF K-12 PRINCIPALS ON AFRICAN AMERICAN

MALE TEACHERS' EDUCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY

by

Sean Antonetti

Under the Direction of Dr. Nicholas Sauers

ABSTRACT

Nationally, African American Male (AAM) teachers represent only 2% of new teachers, while also being the most significant number of teachers who leave the profession in their 3rd to 5th year in the classroom, when new teacher attrition is at its highest (Tio, 2018). For this reason, it was crucial to identify the practices that school leaders use to help retain their new AAM teachers. One strategy previously identified was to support AAM teacher's perceptions of their self-efficacy. Positive experiences or interactions can bolster a teacher's self-efficacy, while negative experiences decrease it. Drawing from Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory and Tschannen Moran and Hoy's (2001) work on teacher self-efficacy, this study explored the practices of school leaders that impacted the self-efficacy of AAM teachers who acquired their teaching certification through an alternative teacher preparation program, the Georgia Teacher Academy of Prepara-

tion and Pedagogy (GaTAPP). Qualitative data were collected from 11 elementary and secondary school teachers who were from 11 schools in an urban school district located in Georgia. The teachers selected for this study had received their teaching certification through the 2-year GaTAPP program, and they were in their 3rd to 5th year of teaching. Participants were asked to complete the Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's twelve item teacher self-efficacy survey instrument. Furthermore, data were collected through individual interviews as well as focus groups where the participants discussed the practices of their principals and assistant principals. These comments and opinions were transcribed then analyzed using NVivo. The results identified three practices that influenced the AAM teachers: (a) providing emotional support; (b) maintaining trust through leadership promotions; and (c) delivering consistent, constructive feedback. Accordingly, school leaders, educational leadership programs, and educational policy experts should emphasize these three practices in the national effort to retain African American Male teachers, particularly those teachers certified through an alternative teacher preparation program.

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF K-12 PRINCIPALS ON AFRICAN AMERICAN

MALE TEACHERS' EDUCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY

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Sean Antonetti

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the

Degree of

Doctor of Education

in

Educational Leadership

in

The Department of Educational Policy Studies

in

the College of Education and Human Development

Georgia State University

Atlanta, GA
2020

DEDICATION

I dedicate this to educators everywhere, who strive to make the world better, one child at a time.

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CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

Less than one in five U.S. public school teachers are individuals of color, while approximately half of all public school students are individuals of color (King, McIntosh, & Bell-Ellwanger, 2016). Within the same report, diversity at multiple points across the teacher pipeline, from post-secondary education, to traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation programs, is decreasing. In the 2015-2016 school year, 77 percent of teachers in public schools were women, with men making up 23 percent, and only two percent of all male teachers were African American (Goldring & Soheyla, 2017). While there has been growth with male teachers in the teaching workforce, overall, the numbers of African American Males (AAM) teaching in public schools are lower than for any other male minority group. These numbers are an important issue due to the number of minority students that will be entering public school over the next nine to ten years.

In the 2017-2018 school year 50.7 million students attended public elementary and secondary schools, and of those 24.4 million were white students, 13.6 million were Hispanic students, 8 million were African American (AA), 2.8 million were Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.5 million were American Indian and 1.5 million two or more races. It is projected that the number of White students in public schools will continue to decline through at least the fall of 2026, while the number of minority students will increase (McFarland et al., 2018). The implications of these numbers make it increasingly necessary also to have a more diverse teaching population, as students often identify with teachers who share their race and gender.

African American Male (AAM) teachers are a small population of the national teaching pool, but their impact is significant. The extant research shows that teachers that share the same

culture as the students they teach have a distinct advantage, as they can understand the students' backgrounds and empathize with their experiences (Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012). Language, living situations, and experiences with the world at large are a few ways that a teacher from the same subculture can connect to students. Having a similar background can not only allow a teacher to make a deeper connection than just educationally; it can also allow them to create instruction that is more suited to students and their background (Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2017).

Diverse teachers are needed to teach diverse students, and with the small number of AAMs in education, AAM students are deprived of an essential role for their growth as individuals. To help African American student's development of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and identity, it is imperative that they are exposed to role models who can empathize with them and give them guidance in a world mired in racism and bigotry (Cole, 1986). The exposure of AAM students to AAM teachers has lasting effects as they matriculate through their school careers by bolstering their sense of self-worth and motivating them to strive towards higher academic success (Villegas et al., 2012). Initiatives need to be created to recruit and retain more AAM teachers.

This study will reveal the ways Georgia public school K-12 school leaders can influence the self-efficacy of AAM teachers who have gained their initial certification through alternative teacher preparation programs. This group of teachers has received little examination in the extant literature, and my study will attempt to provide more information on this group of teachers. The study will fill a gap in the research on how school leaders can influence the perceptions of AAM teacher's self-efficacy and how school leaders can help to foster this group's self-efficacy as defined by Bandura (1977). That is, through confidence in their teaching abilities, teachers can create better outcomes for their students.

Research Questions

Two questions will guide the direction of this study on the perceptions of AAM alternatively certified teacher's self-efficacy, and the actions that school administrators can use to help support this group's self-efficacy:

1. What impact do the actions (or inactions) of leaders have on the self- efficacy of their AAM teachers?

2. What are the most effective leadership practices that foster self-efficacy in AAM teachers?

Review of the Literature

This review of the extant research focused on AAM teachers within their third to fifth year of teaching and *their perceptions* of their self-efficacy based on the actions of their school leader. The review started with teacher attrition in the U.S., then transitioned to alternative teacher program, teacher self-efficacy, then school leaders and effects on self-efficacy. Concluding the review was a search for alternatively certified teachers and self-efficacy. After an exhaustive review of the literature, no documents were found that focused on the school leader's effects on alternatively certified teachers. My study will contribute to educational leadership practices that aim to support new African American Male teachers, which could help to lower the high attrition numbers for this subgroup of teachers.

For this literature review, it is essential to discuss the differences between self- efficacy, and self-esteem, as these two concepts are commonly confused. *Self-efficacy* is a self-measured evaluative statement that is based on a person's ability to complete a task. It also is a self-evaluation that measures how well a person might do on a future task based on past successes and failures (Mitchell, 2011). *Self-esteem* is a judgment of how well one has succeeded in a task that is

given to them. A teacher might review an activity that they have given to their students and have a sense of self-esteem due to success or failure, while self-efficacy is how the teacher might do with their classroom management on the next day's instruction, based off of how they have done previously (Klassen et al., 2011). This distinction is vital for this study as a teacher's perceptions of their self-efficacy will be measured based on their limited experiences in a public school classroom. In summary, self-efficacy is a measure of confidence going into an event; Self-esteem is a judgment of how well one did.

Teacher attrition.

Nationally, 50% of new teachers leave the teaching profession within one to five years following their initial entry into the profession (Haj-Broussard et al., 2016; Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey, 2014; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). This number is higher for minority teachers, who tend to leave the teaching profession quicker than non-minority teachers (Ingersoll, May, & Collins, 2017). This number is consistent with African Americans who have matriculated through alternative teacher preparation programs. Research shows that African Americans were 25% more likely to leave their schools than other teachers who entered the teaching profession (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Studies show that the main reason why minority teachers leave the profession or move to different schools is job dissatisfaction (Ingersoll & May 2011). For African American teachers, job dissatisfaction included salary, lack of resources, worries about job security due to accountability measures, lack of classroom autonomy, and lack of collegial support. Additionally, nearly twice as many Black teachers as non-Black teachers strongly disagreed with the statement that the materials they needed to teach were readily available to them (e.g., textbooks, supplies, copy machines, etc.), which is a common problem in urban schools. (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Minority teachers overwhelmingly work in urban, hard to staff schools within high poverty and high minority communities, which are perceived as more challenging with less teacher self-empowerment and more significant challenges than non-urban schools (Razfar, 2011; Jacob, 2007; Papay, Bacher-Hicks, Page, & Marinell, 2017). Additionally, urban schools tend to have a lack of guidance and mentorship (Garza, Duchaine, & Reynosa, 2013), have higher teacher turnover, less parental involvement in the school, fewer veteran teachers, more classroom management issues, and frequently changing leadership (Kozol, 1991). The perceived difficulties of urban public schools, along with high teacher attrition, creates a smaller pool of qualified teachers from which to staff these schools.

Alternative teacher certification.

Alternative teacher certification programs were created to combat the high numbers of teachers leaving education (Mikulecky, Shkodriani, & Wilner, 2004). These alternative programs can provide a quicker, job-embedded pathway to teacher certification. Alternative teacher certification programs not supervised by an Institute of Higher Education (IHE) are the third most common way to certify teachers in the United States (Office of Postsecondary Education (ED), 2016). Although the other two pathways traditional certification programs and alternative preparation programs based at IHE's certify more teachers overall, they have seen a decline in enrollment in previous years while alternative preparation programs not based at IHE's have seen a 7 percent increase in enrollment from the 2011-12 school year to the 2012-13 school year (Office of Postsecondary Education (ED), 2016). Along with adding much-needed teachers to the teacher pool, alternative certification programs contribute a higher number of minority teachers, especially African American (AA) teachers, who are more likely to teach in urban schools due to need (Shen, 1998; Woods, 2016).

Alternatively certified teachers can experience higher levels of negative classroom behaviors, which cause stressors that reduce the effectiveness of any teacher, more so one that has just entered the profession (Schonfeld & Feinman, 2012). Alternatively certified teachers are essentially learning how to be educators through on-the-job training, as teachers of record during the day. While at night, they complete professional development either online or in person. Traditionally certified teachers complete their coursework ahead of their entry into the classroom, which is the key difference between alternative and traditional certification programs (Schonfeld & Feinman, 2012).

Though alternative certification programs help to staff more urban schools with more African Americans, this number is overwhelmingly female with AAM teachers constituting only 2 percent of the entire teaching population in the United States (Goldring & Soheyla, 2017). The number of African American students in public education nationally is rising. In contrast, the number of non-minority students shrinks (McFarland et al., 2018), so the importance of having a more proportionate number of teachers that match the race and gender diversity in public schools has grown tremendously. Research shows that students learn better when matched to a same-race teacher in the later elementary grades, and increases the likelihood that economically disadvantaged AAM students will graduate from high school and attend a four-year college (Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2017) as well as lower instances of exclusionary discipline (Lindsay & Hart, 2017), higher test scores (Egalite, Kisida, & Winters, 2015), and more representation in gifted programs (Grissom, Rodriguez, & Kern, 2017). For these reasons, it is clear that there is a critical need to provide AAM students with teachers that match their race to increase educational attainment and reduce potential discipline problems.

Teacher self-efficacy and the TSES.

Teacher self-efficacy has been researched thoroughly from when it was brought to the forefront in the late 1970s. Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977,1978, 1991,1994), based on social cognitive theory, focused on teachers being able to create outcomes in their students if the teachers had self-confidence in their teaching. Bandura's work grew from Rotter's (1966) research on the locus of control, which helped to create the theoretical base for Bandura's self-efficacy theory. Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy beliefs are (a) mastery experiences, (b) vicarious experiences, (c) verbal persuasion, and (d) emotional and physical states. These constructs were measured by a 30-item instrument with each item measured by a 9-point scale (1977, 1991). Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, and Hoy (1998) utilized Bandura's research and sought to figure out if they could create a teacher efficacy instrument that would measure a teacher's self-efficacy over a chosen time and within a specific context. Their measurement instrument, the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), focused on efficacy in instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). There are both 24 item and 12 item instruments. Tschannen et al. (1998) place vicarious experiences as the second most important source of self-efficacy and point out that "The more closely the observer identifies with the model, the stronger will be the impact on efficacy" (p.212).

In another study utilizing the TSES, Tschannen- Moran, and Hoy (2007) found that verbal persuasion was not as important in the development of a teacher's self-efficacy. Support from the teacher's community, which included other teachers and school administrators, helped to bolster their self-efficacy during the beginning of their teaching careers, which in turn allowed the novice teachers in the study to be more optimistic in their teaching practices. As the teachers be-

came more independent, verbal persuasion became less significant in sustaining a teacher's beliefs in their self-efficacy. In the context of the alternative teaching preparation program, if the teacher candidate does not have a connection to the model teacher, which is the mentor teacher, then the experience will not contribute actively to the novice teacher's sense of efficacy. Additionally, while in the alternative teaching program, verbal persuasion is an important way to affect the teacher's self-efficacy, but the effects grow less significant as the teacher moves away from being a novice.

        Pre-service teacher perceptions of self-efficacy.

        A large body of quantitative research exists that focuses on certified teacher's perceptions of their self-efficacy (Hancock & Scherff, 2010; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Lee et al., 2011) and pre-service teacher's self-efficacy perceptions (Colson et al., 2017, Jamil, Downer, & Pianta, 2012; Ma & Cavanagh, 2018). These studies focus on teachers either after they have matriculated through a traditional preparation program or at the very beginning stages in their pre-service.

        The Lee et al. (2011) quantitative study used the self-efficacy scale created by Tschannen and Hoy (2001) and did not directly observe the participants in the study. Their study includes demographic information regarding who was sent a questionnaire, but the information is not discussed in the results. They suggest that a study to examine teacher's self-efficacy over time will be an essential next step. Klassen and Chiu (2010) also conducted a quantitative study using practicing teachers in Canada like the Lee et al. study. Jamil, Downer, and Pianta's (2012) study focused on a pool of 509 pre-service teachers in their final year of a traditional teacher master's program at an IHE and focused on the personality and beliefs of the teachers on their level of

self-efficacy regarding their teaching practices. Again, this study did not complete a detailed breakdown of the demographic data to analyze the different subgroups.

Colson et al. (2017) also conducted a qualitative study on pre-service teachers and their perceptions of their self-efficacy over one year in student teaching. This study was conducted in the midwestern United States in a suburban school district. Like the previous studies, the Colson et al. (2017) study also utilized Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2001) Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale to show teacher's ratings of their self-efficacy. In this study, 144 undergraduate teaching candidates, in a year-long student teaching placement, completed the 24-question version of the Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy scale. This study compared the teachers in the year-long student teaching program to students, from the same university, who were in a traditional 16-week student teaching assignment. The teachers who took part in the year-long program reported higher levels of self-efficacy in the areas of behavior management than the students in the 16-week program. Though this study did not look specifically at alternatively certified teachers, nor African American male teachers, it does show that the teachers who were with the students the longest were more self-efficacious than those who weren't.

The studies above focused on current and pre-service teachers who had completed more clock hours in classrooms either during student-teaching or their time as certified teachers in the classroom. Whereas, teachers enrolled in alternative certification programs have no formal training in education and are put into the classroom as the teacher of record from day one of instruction. Hence, their clock hours of instruction are much lower. Due to the unique nature of alternatively prepared teachers, this specific group needs to be studied to gain an understanding of their perceptions of their self-efficacy.

Teacher self-efficacy and gender.

Looking specifically at self-efficacy and gender, the existing quantitative data provides mixed results regarding the self-efficacy levels of male teachers and female teachers in pre-service teaching roles or certified teaching roles (Mackay & Parkinson, 2010; Moalosi & Forcheh, 2015; Riggs, 1991). Of these studies, two used the Tschannen and Hoy (2001) teacher self-efficacy scale, one used a specific self-efficacy test for science teachers, the Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument (STEBI) and the last study utilized a non-specific survey. Two of the studies, Mackay and Parkinson (2010), and Moalosi and Forcheh (2015), were conducted in South Africa and Botswana, respectively, and showed that there were no significant gender differences regarding self-efficacy. Riggs' (1991) study did show a higher level of self-efficacy in pre-service and in-service elementary school teachers who teach science. Riggs' study showed that male teachers had a higher perceived level of self-efficacy in their science teaching. The study does point out that the lack of experience of female teachers in science education might be the reason for this result. None of the studies used any alternatively certified teachers, nor were racial demographics shared in the results.

Rushton's (2003) study on two pre-service AA female teachers completing their master's degrees, specializing in urban/multicultural education, in a southern urban environment shares similarity with Milner and Hoy's (2003) study regarding self-reflection and persistence, but adds that the participants' subsequent cognitive dissonance regarding the personalities and behaviors of the students they taught affected their perceptions. The shock and struggle both teachers experienced in their year of student teaching created a shift in their perceptions of education and classroom management, which they expressed through self-reflection and discussion. Both teacher's experience in the schools contradicted initial beliefs about inner-city schools, and they

changed their personalities and management styles to survive within the school setting. These two studies showed that time in the school affected the self-efficacy of the participants and mandated shifts in expectations and communication. Milner and Hoy's (2003) study focused on teacher's perceptions of their experiences through the participant's reflections, which indicated that they needed more preparation for the environment they were to teach within. Neither study discussed the influence of the school leader on their sense of self-efficacy, nor any actions that possibly influenced their self-efficacy

School leadership and teacher self-efficacy.

Nir and Kranot's (2006) study also used Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2001) Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale to look at school leaders and the influence that their leadership had on teacher self-efficacy. Their study found that school leaders indirectly influence teacher self-efficacy by creating positive experiences that range from pay raises to building upkeep such that overall satisfaction with entering the school building is created. Studies conducted in Iran, Serbia and Turkey also found direct correlations between instructional school leaders and collective teacher self-efficacy, but, like Nir and Kranot's study, the studies only found indirect evidence that individual teacher self-efficacy is affected by the school leader (Calik et al., 2012; Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016; Ninkovic & Kneževic Floric, 2018). These studies were all quantitative and conducted outside of the United States. Moreover, these studies provided limited demographic data of the areas in which the studies were conducted, as well as specific teacher demographics. While these studies showed indirect links between school leadership and individual teacher self-efficacy, Finnigan (2010, 2012), in two studies situated in Chicago public schools, found a direct link between school leadership and teacher motivation. Finnigan's (2010) qualitative study showed that specific aspects of trust, effective management, and respect were crucial

to the self-motivation of teachers. The teachers interviewed from the schools in the study discussed the effective practices of their leaders that motivated them to do better, specifically the leader's communication skills, delivery of constructive criticism, and overall non-threatening style of leadership. In this study, Finnigan used elements of self-efficacy in her definition of motivation theory.

In her quantitative study, Finnigan (2012) further utilized the self-efficacy theory in her explanation of teacher-principal trust and inclusive leadership. In summary, Finnigan's qualitative and quantitative studies showed how a school administrator's practice could affect a teacher's self-efficacy in the context of an urban school system. Both studies are similar to this investigation. However, they do not focus on the effects of the school administration on the specific sub-group of AAM teachers, nor teachers recently certified through an alternative teacher preparation program.

Sources of teacher self-efficacy.

While the previous studies focused on quantitative measures to gauge individual teacher self-efficacy and the effects of school leaders on individual teacher self-efficacy, qualitative studies attempt to understand the sources of self-efficacy for teachers. Little research exists on the perceptions of self-efficacy on pre-service teachers in urban environments, and only one study explored the lived experiences and perceptions of an African American female teacher's self-efficacy in an urban environment. Milner and Hoy's (2003) case study on the only veteran AA female teacher in a Midwest suburban high school focused on identifying and interpreting her sources of self-efficacy, specifically focused on persistence and stereotype threat that she experienced at the school. Although the study did not focus on a new teacher in an alternative certi-

fication program, Milner and Hoy found that self-reflective exercises were beneficial to bolstering the participant's persistence as well as, when shared, enlightening colleagues about matters concerning African Americans.

Cobham & Patton (2015) conducted qualitative research on the role of self-efficacy in African American female faculty as they perused tenure at their respective institutes of higher education. The study found that the participants relied heavily on their perceptions of their self-efficacy while they navigated the pathways to tenure in their respective institutes. The study also found that although the lack of African American colleagues and mentors was a present concern, they identified resources and aligned themselves with colleagues and people in power who would provide them the support they needed as they traversed the years to obtaining tenure. The study showed that reliance on one's perception of self-efficacy can help during times of stress and strife, which allows for the resilience needed to persevere. Although Cobham and Patton's study supports the research of self-efficacy, having the ability to help bolster a person's resolve and the need for relationships in support of their self-efficacy, it did not include AAMs or a large enough sample, only five participants.

Alternatively certified teachers and self-efficacy.

Two studies of self-efficacy exist concerning teachers in or recently out of alternative certification programs, but neither focuses on a demographic subgroup. Mitchell's (2011) study looks at special education teacher candidates in the Teach for America (TFA) program, a national alternative certification program, and indicated a decrease in teacher self-efficacy throughout a year in the program. Mitchell's study included only three male participants, and she suggests more study is needed in the developmental trajectory of alternatively prepared candidates. The study also does not specify where the candidates were placed and the demographics of the

students the candidates taught, but it is the first instance of a measure of the teacher candidate's self-efficacy concerning the preparation that they received from the alternative certification program. Mitchell concludes that more research needs to be conducted that investigates the quality of support provided by the program.

Anthony, Gimbert, Fultz, and Parker (2011) studied an alternative teacher certification program funded by the U.S. Department of Education through a Transition to Teaching grant, focusing on teacher self-efficacy in relation to coaching, during the first year of the program. Like Mitchell's (2011) study, Anthony et al.'s study lacks the specificity of the socio-economics of the schools and districts where the candidates were placed and the demographics of the participants. However, the study's findings show that the teachers in the alternative program had higher levels of self-efficacy than teachers who matriculate through traditional programs. Bandura (1977) states that teacher attrition is higher when teachers have a lower sense of self-efficacy, so those who matriculate through alternative programs might have a higher likelihood of staying in education than those who complete traditional programs which contradict previously mentioned studies. Neither of these two studies includes research on the school leader's effects on the teacher's perceptions of their self-efficacy, nor do they focus on gender or race.

Gap in the literature.

What these studies do not include are teachers who have received their certification through an alternative preparation program, at the time of their induction. Additionally, further study needs to be conducted on the specific sub-group of AAMs who complete these programs and their perceptions of their self-efficacy concerning their school leader's actions. Their perceptions of their self-efficacy, derived from the four sources of self-efficacy defined by Bandura

(1977) and influenced by their school leader's actions, is the gap that exists that can be filled by my study.

My study utilized the framework of teacher self-efficacy, introduced by Bandura (1977), validated by Gibson and Dembo (1984) and further studied by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998). A person's self-efficacy is their self-perception of their competence and not a direct measure of their level of competence (Bandura, 1977, Klassen, Tze, Betts, & Gordon, 2011; Tschannen-Moran et al. 1998). A person's self- assurance and perception of their abilities can determine whether they make good or inadequate use of their capabilities, resulting in a positive or negative outcome. Bandura clarifies that a person's perceived self-efficacy is a strong predictor of the person's behavior and can contribute to their overall capabilities. Self-efficacy has a positive effect on behavior and performance (1997).

Bandura (1977, 1986, 1997) suggests four sources of self-efficacy expectations: (a) mastery experiences, (b) physiological and emotional states, (c) vicarious experiences, and (d) social persuasion. Mastery experiences are postulated to be the most potent source of evidence of self-efficacy in that the perception of performance as success will raise a person's efficacy beliefs. In the classroom, a teacher who has successfully executed a teaching task will gain a higher sense of self-efficacy, giving them more belief in their abilities, which will translate into more confidence in their teaching abilities. If a teacher experiences failure, then their level of self-efficacy will fall.

In looking at a teacher's self-efficacy, the contextual factors in which a teacher is teaching are essential. Siwatu's (2011) study on traditionally certified preservice teacher's self-efficacy beliefs showed that the teachers who came from the program felt that they were more confident and prepared to teach in a suburban school than an urban school. Siwatu's study focused on

a majority of White American, female preservice teachers in the Midwest, who conducted their student teaching in majority suburban schools. Alternative preparation programs are based in urban and suburban areas alike.

Summary.

The research questions for this study are: "What impact do the actions (or inactions) of leaders have on the efficacy of their AAM teachers?" and "What are the most effective leadership practices that foster self-efficacy in AAM teachers?" Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy and the four major self-efficacy beliefs; (a) mastery experiences, (b) vicarious experiences, (c) verbal persuasion, and (d) emotional and physical states have a direct connection to the research question. Bandura's theory of self-efficacy will be the analytical framework from which to assess the perceptions of AAM teachers who have completed an alternative teaching certification program.

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CHAPTER TWO

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF K-12 PRINCIPALS ON AFRICAN AMERICAN

MALE TEACHERS' EDUCATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY

Teacher self-efficacy is an integral part of the growth of a teacher's belief in their teaching abilities. In his work with self-efficacy theory, Bandura (1977,1978, 1991,1994) identified four sources of self-efficacy: (a) mastery experiences, (b) vicarious experiences, (c) verbal persuasion, and (d) emotional arousal/physiological states. Using Bandura's theory, this study will attempt to find how the actions of school administrators affect the self-efficacy of a specific group of teachers, African American Male (AAM) teachers who have gained certification through an alternative certification program. The study will also attempt to identify the practices that have a positive effect on the self-efficacy of this sub-group.

AAM teachers represent the smallest subgroup that enters the teaching profession, but they account for the subgroup with the highest percentage of teachers who leave the profession within their first five years in the classroom (Goldring & Soheyla, 2017). The research shows that when economically disadvantaged African American (AA) students are exposed to AAM teachers, they do better in school; moreover, this exposure increases the likelihood of graduation from high school and entering a four-year college (Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2017). By using techniques that specifically support AAM teachers, it may be possible to slow their attrition rate; consequently, this will have a positive impact on the performance of African American students.

This chapter will introduce the methodology for this qualitative case study regarding the impact of actions of school leaders, principals, and assistant principals on the self-efficacy of (AAM) teachers who have gained certification through an alternative certification program. The

chapter will also identify specific practices that help to support the self-efficacy of AAM alternatively certified teachers. The research plan, including the methodology, study participants, procedures, and analysis method, are the primary components of this chapter. Completing the chapter will be the findings from the study, a discussion of the findings concerning the extant literature, the limitations of the research, and finally, the conclusion.

Purpose of the study.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the pedagogical practices of school administrators to see what effects they might have on the self- efficacy of AAM teachers who have gained certification through an alternative certification program. The study contributes to the literature specifically regarding how principals influence self-efficacy in this sub-group. The research provides information to school administrators regarding how to support AAM teachers to build their educational self-efficacy, which in turn will aid AAM teacher retention. The study will gather information regarding the impact of principals and others on AAM teachers in their third to fifth year of teaching, after graduating from a 2-year GaTAPP program.

The importance of African American teachers within the public school system has been researched and shown to have potential benefits for a diverse student body. Teachers' of color provide minority students with high-quality learning opportunities, encourage minority students to work harder and to achieve more, push for minority students to be tested for gifted services, and help to lower the disproportionate amount of discipline enacted upon minority students (Grissom, Kern, & Rodriguez, 2015). Students who work with educators who have similar social experiences perform better and focus more on learning-oriented behaviors, rather than discipline prone behaviors that remove minority children from the learning environment (Meier, 1984). Grissom, Rodriguez, and Kern (2017) also found that schools with larger populations of minority

teachers have lower dropout rates. Finally, African American children's exposure to African American teachers in the elementary grades will reduce the numbers of AA students who drop out of high school and helps AA students' aspirations for education beyond K-12 (Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2017).

While research has been conducted on discipline, access, and ability with a focus on minority students and AA educators in general, my study focuses on African American Male teachers and the importance of not only their representation in public schools but also their continued presents. Minorities make up about twenty percent of the teacher workforce, but only two percent of this twenty percent is AAMs (Ingersoll, May, & Collins, 2017). The extant research shows that African American teachers are integral to the development of African American students due to sharing certain dispositions and experiences that connect their identities (Brown, 2009, 2012; Gershenson et al., 2017; Pabon, 2016). The issue remains that not enough AAM teachers are entering the classroom, and those that do are leaving faster than any other subgroup in the initial three to five-year range (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011). My investigation focuses on those AAM teachers who have stayed in the classroom past the critical three-year point, the mark where a large number of teachers leave the teaching profession.

Existing research on teacher self-efficacy has examined self-efficacy in relation to teacher burnout and teacher effectiveness, mostly in specific content areas such as mathematics or school levels – elementary, middle, and high. In order to build on this research, the goal of my study was to analyze a teacher sub-group that has rarely been included in the broad research on self-efficacy; African American Male teachers. The research also aims to find actionable ways for school leaders to support this sub-group's self-efficacy, to aid in the retention of AAM teachers.

To help increase the number of teachers in the state of Georgia, the Georgia Academy of Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP) was created in 2001. The program provides various paths to clear renewable certification based on an assessment of the teacher candidate's credentials, experiences, knowledge, skills, and dispositions. GaTAPP is utilized by the State of Georgia to help reduce Georgia's teacher shortage. Various PSC-approved program providers throughout Georgia deliver the program. The program enables individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher (who meet eligibility requirements for the program) to transition into the teaching profession. The program paths equip transition teachers with the skills necessary for initial success in their classrooms.

The primary mission of GaTAPP is to reduce the number of teacher vacancies by preparing adults who have the academic content knowledge but lack the pedagogy training that occurs in a traditional teacher preparation program at an institute of higher education (IHE). Since GaTAPP candidates enter the classroom immediately after an initial summer essentials training course, their training must be concentrated and job-embedded so that they are learning on the job with the assistance of specialized training, coaches, mentors, and administrative professionals. It has been shown that in the state of Georgia, the GaTAPP program has certified more minority teachers than traditional programs at IHEs, as well as retaining more of this sub-group of teachers (Beck, 2017). Moreover, the program is designed for urban areas where there are high concentrations of minority students. For these reasons, the GaTAPP program is the best program to study due to its proven record of certifying and retaining more African American teachers. This dissertation will provide specific strategies that will aid educational professionals, specifically administrators, in developing the capabilities of their AAM GaTAPP Candidates.

Research questions.

The purpose of this study was to examine the behavioral effects that K-12 principals have on the promotion of educational self-efficacy of AAM teachers formerly enrolled in the GaTAPP program. It sought to specifically identify the factors that influenced teachers to remain in the schools in which they began teaching while enrolled in the GaTAPP program. Using the self-efficacy theory, this study attempted to identify how AAM teachers feel about their self-efficacy, what external factors have contributed to their self-efficacy, and how they have been supported as new teachers by the administration in the growth of their educational self-efficacy. The influence of educational leaders on the AAM alternatively certified teachers is the primary focus of the research. The two research questions that were utilized in order to accomplish this goal were:

1. What impact do the actions (or inactions) of leaders have on the self- efficacy of their AAM teachers?

2. What are the most effective leadership practices that foster self-efficacy in AAM teachers?

Significance of the study.

The recruitment and retention of public school teachers is a clear and present issue in K-12 public schools across the nation. Public schools in urban areas regularly serve higher numbers of minority students but are chronically understaffed. Additionally, research shows that African American students learn better from teachers that look like them, which helps to increase their graduation rates, reduce levels of discipline, and increase the numbers of students who attend four-year colleges and universities (Egalite, Kisida, & Winters, 2015; Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay & Hart, 2017; Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2017). Urban public schools are chronically understaffed

and have higher rates of teacher attrition, but they do employ more minority staff than suburban and rural schools (Ahram et al., 2011).

To help retain more African American teachers in schools, it is crucial to identify actions and practices that will help to support their self-efficacy, which may, in turn, help to retain them in their schools, especially hard-to-staff schools which are commonly found in urban areas. This study will help to provide school leaders, educational leadership programs, and teacher preparation programs with ways to support their African American teachers, specifically their AAM teachers who are certified through alternative certification programs.

Theoretical framework.

This study will utilize the framework of teacher self-efficacy, introduced by Bandura (1977), validated by Gibson and Dembo (1984) and further studied by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998). A person's self-efficacy is their self-perception of their competence and not a direct measure of their level of competence (Klassen, Tze, Betts, & Gordon, 2011; Tschannen-Moran et al. 1998). A person's self- assurance and perception of their abilities can determine whether they make good or poor use of their capabilities, resulting in a positive or negative outcome. Bandura clarifies that a person's perceived self-efficacy is a strong predictor of the person's behavior and can contribute to their overall capabilities.

Bandura (1977, 1986, 1997) suggests four sources of self-efficacy expectations: (a) mastery experiences, (b) physiological and emotional states, (c) vicarious experiences, and (d) social persuasion. Mastery experiences are postulated to be the most influential source of evidence of self-efficacy in that the perception of a performance as success will raise a person's efficacy beliefs. In the classroom, a teacher who has successfully executed a teaching task will gain a higher sense of self-efficacy, giving them more belief in their abilities, which will translate into more

confidence in their teaching abilities. If a teacher experiences failure, then their level of self-efficacy can decrease.

It is essential to discuss the differences between self- efficacy, and self-esteem, as the two concepts are commonly confused. Self-efficacy is a self-measured evaluative statement that is based on a person's ability to complete tasks. It also is a self-evaluation that measures how well a person might do on a future task based on past successes and failures (Mitchell, 2011). Self-esteem is a judgment of how well one has succeeded in a task that is given to them. A teacher might review an activity that they have given to their students and have their self-esteem influenced due to success or failure, while self-efficacy is how the teacher will operate with their classroom management, or instruction on the next day class meeting, based off of how they have done previously (Klassen et al., 2011). This distinction is important for this study as the measurement of the teacher's perceptions of their self-efficacy was based on their experiences in a public school classroom.

Methodology

This section begins with a thorough description and rationale for the study. It then describes the process used to identify the sample as well as a detailed description of the final sample. The section concludes with a comprehensive summary of the data collection and data analysis processes. This study originated from the need to understand how to retain AAM teachers in the public school system. Consequently, one aspect concerned principals, assistant principals, and district officials and their interactions with AAM teachers, while the primary focus was on AAM teachers. The information gathered from this study may help to decrease the rate of AAM teacher attrition during their third to fifth year of teaching, a critical time when most new teacher attrition occurs.

To gain as much information possible, I chose qualitative research and utilized Yin's (2018) case study methodology to design the research framework to conduct the study. Yin's framework is highly structured and allows for quantitative methods within the research design. For this study, a self-efficacy scale was used to identify the participant sample. Purposive sampling was used to identify the participants for this study. The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which will best enable an answer to the research questions. To collect data, interviews and focus groups were used with all of the participants. Audio recordings of the interviews and focus groups were uploaded to a transcription service, Temi, checked for errors, then uploaded to a data analysis program, NVivo. The data analysis was conducted in NVivo using open coding to identify emergent themes in the data.

Research design.

This study was conducted using qualitative research. Qualitative research focuses on the lived experiences of participants in natural situations, which allows for less contrived contexts (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Qualitative research is a systematic subjective approach used to describe life experiences and give them meaning while quantitative research is used to describe, test relationships, and examine cause and effect relationships (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Qualitative research provides descriptions of how people approach issues in research through human study (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). In qualitative research, the researcher is used as a key instrument as the collector of data from multiple sources (Yin, 2018), in my study, face-to-face interviews and focus groups were used to collect data.

Qualitative research uses fewer participants to more accurately analyze lived experiences, while quantitative research focuses on data from more significant numbers of participants

(Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006). To gather the perspectives of the participants in this study, qualitative research was the most appropriate research design because the study attempted to gain an in-depth perspective of the participants in their situations as 3-5th year teachers who received their initial certification through an alternative certification program.

Of the three qualitative approaches, narrative research, phenomenology, and case study, only one approach provided the framework needed to analyze the participant's perceptions of their self-efficacy thoroughly. Case study research best captures life details about a single individual and a specific group (Starman, 2013). Starman (2013) also says that a researcher must collect stories of the participant's life and arrange them into chronological order.

The most effective qualitative approach for the study was a case study due to the approach's ability to understand the contexts of individuals and communities in a bounded system over a period of time, using data collected from multiple sources of information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Yin (2018) defines a case study as "a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between a phenomenon and context are not clear and the researcher has little control over the phenomenon and context" (p.13). For educational research, a case study strives for an increasing particularization of description to "illuminate the complexity of the interactions involved in shaping actions to effect change and their consequences" (Elliott & Lukes, 2008).

This case study was a single instrumental study focused on the perspectives of an AAM alternatively certified teacher's self-efficacy. The participant's experiences and perspectives will add to the existing body of work on teachers and their perceptions of self-efficacy. This study will possibly help to affect change in alternative preparation programs, specifically in preparing

AAM teacher candidates. Moreover, it can guide school leader preparation programs to find better ways to help new school leaders encourage self-efficacy in their AAM teachers, reducing the high levels of attrition for this sub-group.

Yin's (2018) case study design was utilized for this qualitative study. Yin's design comprises four components: (a) the study's questions, (b) its propositions, (c) its units of analysis, (c) the logic linking the data to the propositions, and (d) clear criteria for the explanation of the study's findings (Yazan, 2015). He views the preparation of the design of the study as key and suggests that researchers only make minor corrections or changes in the research design only after data collection, if necessary (Yin, 2018). Yin's organized and highly structured design was important, as it permitted my study to be completed within the time limitations and allowed for different types of data to be included. Additionally, Yin discussed focus group data collection and how to conduct this type of interview process (Yin 2018)

My inquiry utilized a single instrumental qualitative case study design. The single instrumental case study design focuses on a single experiment, which becomes a critical test of a significant theory (Yin, 2018). Yin further discussed five rationales for a single instrumental case study; critical, unusual, common, revelatory, or longitudinal. Of the five, the rationale used for this study was critical, as it focused on an extreme case, in this instance, AAM males who have matriculated through a GaTAPP program. Additionally, the critical rational case study can confirm or extend an existing theory and help to clarify future studies within a theory or field (Yin, 2018). My study will contribute to the limited research on the impact that school administrators may have on the self-efficacy of AAM alternatively certified teachers. This information will help to extend the existing theory of educational self-efficacy to a specific subgroup, African American Male alternatively certified teachers, and by extension, all African American Male teachers.

As mentioned previously, Yin's case study design is highly structured. Yin utilizes five different components in his case study design: (a) a case study's questions, (b) the propositions of those questions, (c) the case in question, (d) the logic which links the data of the study to the propositions and (e) the criteria for interpreting the findings (2018). The construction of the two questions comes from the extant literature and consideration of current trends in the recruitment and retention of AAM teachers (Guarino et al., 2006).

Site selection.

The chosen site selection for this study was a Title 1 urban school district situated in the southeastern United States. Ingersoll and May (2011) found that AA teachers are more likely than white teachers to work in high-poverty, high minority urban schools. An urban school district is defined as an area outside of a main city and inside an urbanized area with a population of 250,000 or more (NCES, 2006). The district chosen for the study included 64 schools, including three dual-language schools, three arts-focused schools, and one open campus school. For this study, site selection was dependent on the participants chosen for the study. As such, seven middle schools, two elementary schools, and two high schools were selected for the study. Demographic data for the district can be found in Tables 1-5.

Table 1

Student Demographic Information of School District

Economically Disadvantaged (ED)	Students with Disability (SWD)	English Language Learners (ELL)	Student Mobility Rate	Free & Reduced Lunch Qualified Schools
43%	11%	15%	32.3%	100%
Total District Student Enrollment 2018 - 2019 School Year = 53,671				

Table 2

Student Race/Ethnicity

Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	Multi-racial	White
69%	22%	4%	3%	2%
Total District Student Enrollment 2018 - 2019 School Year = 53,671				

Table 3

Teacher Race/Ethnicity

Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	Multi-racial	White	Native American
76%	3.8%	3.7%	1%	14.5%	.1%
Total District Certified Teachers 2018 - 2019 School Year = 3,063					

Table 4

Teacher Gender

Female	Male
2,420 (79%)	643 (21%)
Total District Certified Teachers 2018 - 2019 School Year = 3,063	

Table 5

Average Years of Experience of District Teachers

Teacher Years of Experience (District)	
One or less	182 (6%)
1-10	1,431 (47%)
11-20	946 (31%)
21-30	409 (13%)
> 30	95 (3%)
Average	**12**

Propositions.

Regarding the propositions of the research questions, the study proposes that the promotion of positive sources of self-efficacy can help to retain AAM teachers past the critical 3-5-year mark (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011). The study also posits that specific actions can affect the self-efficacy of AAM teachers, in turn, either causing them to continue as teachers or to leave the teaching profession. The first question also posits that particular inactions can also affect the self-efficacy of AAM teachers, possibly leading them to leave the teaching profession. The second question proposes that the study has found specific leadership practices that will foster self-efficacy in AAM teachers. The propositions derived from the two research questions helped to drive the study.

The case.

Yin states that in identifying the case, the researcher must consider defining the actual case and bounding the case (Yin, 2018). Yin makes a clear distinction between the case definition and its bounds. He states that the research questions must identify the case to be studied; in this instance, AAM alternatively certified teachers in their 3rd to 5th year teaching in K-12 public school classrooms. This sub-group will be the case studied in the research, which connects directly to the research questions.

Case bounds.

Because the research questions clearly define the case definition and the bounds of the case, the additional clarifications of the case, the third step in Yin's (2018) design, are then able to be discussed. Yin suggests that the bounds of the case be explicit to strengthen the connection between the case, the research questions, and the propositions.

For the case used in this study, participants must be in their 3rd to 5th year of teaching after receiving their teaching certification through the 2-year GaTAPP program. While in the GaTAPP program, the teacher candidates are the teacher of record for their class, so these years count towards their years of teaching experience. They are not in a "student-teacher" phase. Participants from the study had to identify themselves as possessing high levels of self-efficacy by completing Tschannen-Moran's and Hoy's (2001) twelve item survey of teacher efficacy.

Participants.

The study focused on the impact that school administrators might have on a participant's self-efficacy one to three years after the GaTAPP program. In order for the researcher to capture information from multiple perceptions in multiple environments, the participants were selected from various school levels. Multiple perspectives on multiple school administrator's impacts on this sub-group's self-efficacy will make the data rich and the findings less specific to one grade band such as elementary (Grades 1-5), middle (Grades 6-8), or high (Grades 9-12).

Homogenous purposeful sampling was used to choose participants for the study. Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to study a particular subgroup of people that have similar knowledge of a specific area of research or a phenomenon, as well as having other characteristics in common such as gender and race (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To identify participants that shared the same knowledge and characteristics, I used data collected over a two-year period 2014-2016, which showed that there were 118 AAM teacher candidates in the GaTAPP program during that time.

To achieve data saturation, the number of participants must allow for no new information to be found by adding more numbers of people to a study (Saunders et al., 2018). For this study, 118 AAM teacher candidates had completed the GaTAPP program between 2014-2016, but only

fourteen of these fell within the three to five years of teaching experience defined by the study. The fourteen teachers were invited to participate, but only eleven completed the interview and the focus group experience. In addition to the considerations above, the purposeful sample for the study included these criteria:

- Participants in the study had matriculated through the GaTAPP program and were in their third to fifth year of teaching in the 2019-2020 school year.

- Participants had taught in the same school in which they entered the GaTAPP program.

- Participants were chosen from an urban school district located in the southeastern part of the United States

- Participants scored in the upper percentile in the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale

The first step in identifying teachers for the study was to identify the inclusion and exclusion criteria. In creating the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the participants in the study I was able to narrow my focus and assemble a sample that was homogenous to be used for the study. The inclusion criteria for the sample included African American Male full-time teachers who had gained their initial teacher certification through an alternative teacher certification program, in this case the GaTAPP program. Additionally, those chosen for the sample must be working at the same school site in-which they entered the GaTAPP program. They must be in their third to fifth year of teaching, which would mean that they completed the GaTAPP program (two years of teaching) and be in their third to fifth year without the GaTAPP supports. Finally, participants must show a high sense of self-efficacy as indicated by their score from a twelve-item scale survey.

The teachers chosen for the study represented the three different grade bands with seven teachers from middle schools (6th -8th Grade), two teachers from elementary schools (Kinder-garten-5th Grade), and two from high schools (9th-12th grade). Furthermore, two teachers taught non-content area courses on the middle school level, another two taught multiple subjects on the elementary level, and one teacher was a middle grades special education co-teacher assigned to various mathematics classrooms. To continue, three teachers taught middle school mathematics, two taught high school mathematics, and one teacher taught middle grades science. All teachers had leadership positions within their respective schools. A concise description of the participants is shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Demographic Information of Teacher Participants

Participant Name (Pseudonym)	Age	Years of Certified Experience *(After completion of Ga-TAPP)*	Grade Band	Subject Taught	Leadership Position within School
Mr. Rhodes	20-30	1	Middle	Music	Yes
Mr. Fowler	20-30	1	Elementary	K-5	Yes
Mr. Cowan	30-40	1	Elementary	K-5	Yes
Mr. Garner	30-40	1	Middle	Math	Yes
Mr. Turner	30-40	1	Middle	SpEd Math	Yes
Mr. Preston	20-30	1	Middle	Music	Yes
Mr. Park	20-30	1	Middle	Science	Yes
Mr. Lewis	40-50	2	High	Math	Yes
Mr. Walker	20-30	2	Middle	Math	Yes
Mr. Ellison	30-40	2	High	Math	Yes
Mr. Tower	20-30	3	Middle	Math	Yes

The chosen participants completed the program between the years 2014 to 2016 and re-ceived renewable certification. These participants had worked in the school district 1 to 3 years after they gained certification from the GaTAPP program. GaTAPP participants in the school district used for this study matriculate through the GaTAPP program for two years. After they

receive their initial teaching certification, they were then required to stay in the district for three years after their two years in the GaTAPP program. The teachers selected for the study were starting their 3rd to 5th year of teaching. This window of employment was necessary due to the high number of AAM teachers that leave the teaching profession during the 3-5 year time span (King, McIntosh, & Bell-Ellwanger, 2016). From this data, fourteen potential participants were chosen. The participants were chosen from the researcher's school district, yet the participants chosen were not supervised by the researcher or instructed by the researcher during their time in the program, or after they completed the program.

Next, from the fourteen potential participants, the researcher identified participants who had a high perception of educational self-efficacy; this was done by administering a teacher self-efficacy scale developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy created two teacher self-efficacy scales: a twenty-four item scale and a twelve-item scale. For this study, the twelve-item scale was used. The data from the scale was not used as a data collection method; instead, it was only used to identify former GaTAPP teachers who perceive themselves to have high levels of self-efficacy. Using this scale, the top fourteen potential candidates who scored highest on the self-efficacy scale were invited to participate in the study. As stated earlier, only eleven of these potential candidates completed the interview and focus group.

Yin's case study methodology allows surveys to be included in the sampling for the study. This information will not be part of the data collection, but just as an identifier of the self-efficacy of the potential participants in the study. A description of the participants is available in Table 6. To recruit participants that identified as having high levels of self-efficacy, the Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) twelve item self-efficacy scale was used. Scale surveys and surveys,

in general, are used to obtain information describing characteristics from a large sample of individuals of interest quickly (Ponto, 2015). For this study, it was necessary to use the scale survey on the participant sample to identify those teachers who had high levels of self-efficacy beliefs. The Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) survey has been in use for many years and is a valid and reliable instrument. A description of the data from the survey is available in Table 7.

Table 7

Total and Average Individual Efficacy Scores from Teacher Participants

Participant (Pseudonym)	Individual Teacher's Sense of Self Efficacy (highest score=108	Average Teacher Sense of Self Efficacy (6.5 or above equates to high self-efficacy)
Mr. Handler	106	8.83
Mr. Fowler	91	7.58
Mr. Cowan	84	7
Mr. Smith	100	8.3
Mr. Turner	89	7.41
Mr. Preston	92	7.6
Mr. Park	97	8.08
Mr. Lewis	84	7
Mr. Walker	88	7.3
Mr. Ellison	101	8.4
Mr. Tower	85	7.08

Data collection.

A hallmark of case study methodology is the use of multiple sources of evidence. Yin, Bateman, & Moore's (1985) analysis of case study methods found that case studies that use multiple sources of evidence are more effective and are of higher quality. Therefore, this study used a convergence of two sources of evidence for data triangulation to strengthen the validity of the case study (Yin, 2018). The two sources used for the study were semi-structured interviews and two focus groups. These two types of evidence increased the confidence that the case study provided accurate information regarding the event; in this case, the perception of teacher self-efficacy in AAM teachers.

Interviews were conducted individually with the eleven participants for one hour each. The interviews were conducted at the conclusion of August into the first two weeks of September of the 2019-2020 school year, to allow the participants time to establish their classrooms for the year. According to Yin (2018), interviews are two-fold for the researcher as it allows the researcher to follow their line of inquiry established in their case study protocol as well as sharing questions in an unbiased manner to help the line of inquiry. All interviews were conducted at a central location, and participants chose their interview time electronically, using Google Calendar. Eleven interview questions were prepared, and all were asked in each interview, along with follow up questions. All interviews were recorded on a voice memo on a smartphone as well as on a Sony digital recording device. To aid in the transcription of the interview files, I used the online transcription service, Temi, for an initial transcription. I then checked the transcription for accuracy by listening to the audio file of the interview and correcting the transcription document.

The questions for the study were developed with Bandura's (1978) theory of self-efficacy and the sources of self-efficacy. The four sources are: (a) performance experience, (b) vicarious experiences, (c) verbal persuasion, and (d) emotional/psychological arousal. Before writing the interview and focus group questions, I reviewed the literature about self-efficacy and teaching. I also reviewed the qualitative case studies that used Bandura's self-efficacy theoretical framework. My interview and case study questions were aligned with the four sources of self-efficacy. I then reviewed the research questions for the study and the questions from self-efficacy surveys. I used them to craft questions that would maximize the amount of information about self-efficacy that I could receive from the participants.

For the interviews, questions one, two, and five focused on the teacher's performance experience in the classroom. Questions three and four focused on vicarious experiences. Questions

six and seven related to emotional and physiological arousal, questions eight through ten related to verbal persuasion. Question eleven allowed the participant to share any other information that they felt helped their self-efficacy.

The final source of evidence was from two focus groups that were conducted at the end of September. These two focus groups were held at a central location. Berg (2009) defined a focus group as an interview style designed for small groups, and he further explained that by using this approach, the researcher might capture a discussion that carries consciousness, semi-consciousness, and unconscious psychological and socio-cultural characteristics.

Cyr (2016) discusses the importance of focus groups in the social sciences because it generates different units of analysis; it draws its benefits from the interaction between the sub-units of study, the participants. The focus group also allows for individual analysis in a different setting, allowing participants the opportunity to discuss issues more freely, possibly, also allowing group level consensus on a phenomenon (Cyr 2016), in this case, the building of self-efficacy.

The focus group incorporated all participants in the case study into two smaller groups of 5 and 6 people. Yin (2018) suggests that to obtain the views of a larger group of people, several smaller focus groups are necessary. By dividing the number of participants into smaller groups, all participants had a chance to have their voices heard. Yin (2018) warns against reflexivity in the focus group interview because the discussion might wander and create an unwanted influence on the inquiry. The focus group meetings were restricted to one hour, and the discussion centered on concerns reflected from the Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) self-efficacy scale: instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. The focus groups were conducted in the same location as the interviews, a large room that could easily hold the participants for each session. All conversations were recorded. The researcher transcribed the conversations

using the transcription service, Temi. Interviews, along with the focus groups, allowed for the triangulation of data.

The focus group questions were designed to align with the theoretical sources of self-efficacy. Questions one, two, four, and eight focused on performance experiences. Questions three, six, and eleven focused on vicarious experiences; Question six also supported verbal persuasion along with question five. Questions nine and ten focused on emotional and physiological arousal. Questions seven, eleven, and twelve were created for focus group participants to share stories about how administrators have affected their overall experiences, as well as to provide ideas for encouraging self-efficacy in other AAM teachers.

Data analysis.

To effectively analyze the data collected from participants, it was necessary to create an organized system in which the data could be scrutinized. For this study, I used the qualitative data analysis computer software package, NVivo, to assist in coding the transcripts from the interviews and the focus groups. Yin (2018) suggests for the researcher to "play" with the data by conducting an initial search for patterns for any connections that can be made between the data and the research questions. He then proposes that the researcher focuses on assigning various codes to the data which represent ideas and concepts of interest. I reviewed the codes that arose from an initial reading of the data, then I read through the codes, looking for connections and parallels amongst them. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). Thematic analysis of data is also highly flexible and provides rich and complex accounting of data.

After the interviews and focus groups were completed, I started the first step of my data analysis by transcribing the interview transcripts. To transcribe this data, I used an online transcription service called Temi. After all the data collected were transcribed, I edited the transcriptions for minor corrections and missed words. As I read through the data during this step, I wrote memos to help me understand possible developing connections between the transcripts as well as to document emerging preliminary codes and themes.

After this initial preliminary coding, I then uploaded the corrected transcripts from the interviews to the NVivo coding software. This electronic platform allowed me to "play" with my data and to more clearly see the frequency of certain words and terms, as well as to reevaluate the coding I had completed (Yin, 2018). As I moved through the reading of the transcripts of the interviews, I wrote in a coding memo document that I created in Google Docs. After each phase of analysis, I wrote down my interpretations of the data, as well as any trends or possible emerging themes. This memo document helped me to pick up quickly where I left off during the analysis, as well as helping to keep track of my thoughts. This process allowed me to create a general analytic strategy, which helped me to keep the focus of my research questions in my analysis (Yin, 2018).

The preliminary upload and analysis of the interview transcripts into the NVivo platform revealed thirty identifiable nodes. Nodes are collections of codes, about a specific theme or case (Min et al., 2017). Each node contained one to eighteen sub-nodes. Sub-nodes are connected to each of the overarching nodes and provide more detail about the node. After this initial analysis of the data, I followed Yin's (2018) strategy to read through each of the thirty nodes and sub-nodes to identify possible connections to the theoretical proposition that I used to create the research questions, as well as developing themes and recognizing relationships (p. 168).

As I went through the contents of the sub-nodes, I combined sub-nodes that aligned with the same topic. I also deleted sub-nodes that did not help to support the overarching node. Examples of deleted sub-nodes included Lexile level [reading level] and prior success in content. During this second phase of data analysis, I narrowed the nodes down to fifteen. I then reviewed each node and sub-node, moved sub-nodes to other nodes, and deleted some sub-nodes that did not support the emerging common patterns or themes within the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001). After this phase of analysis, I organized the fifteen nodes into three themes, which were supported by the sub-nodes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018): (a) detailed and constructive administrator feedback, (b) creating trust through providing leadership opportunities, and (c) focused emotional support. The analytic process I followed allowed me not only to identify the three themes but also to see the connection between the themes and the study research questions.

I then repeated the same process I used to analyze my interviews to analyze my two focus group transcripts. I transcribed the audio files using Temi, reviewed the transcripts for any errors, missed words, or any educational acronyms that would need to be spelled out.

After I checked the two focus group transcripts for errors, I then uploaded them to NVivo to begin the coding process, which followed the same steps as described for the interviews. During the refinement of my codes for the focus groups, I saw alignment with the three themes that I identified from the interview transcripts: (a) focused emotional support, (b) maintaining trust through providing leadership opportunities, and (c) positive and constructive administrator feedback. This study used interviews and focus groups, creating data triangulation, to help strengthen the construct validity of self-efficacy (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018).

The data analysis process I used allowed me to find themes within the data as well as analyze those emergent themes. I open coded the data in NVivo, refining, combining and deleting

nodes until thematic patterns developed that were pertinent to answering of my two research questions: "What impact do the actions or inactions of leaders have on the self-efficacy of their African American Male (AAM) Teachers?" and "What are the most effective practices that foster self-efficacy in AAM teachers." Triangulation of the interview and focus group data established the validity and reliability of the study data.

Findings

The aim of this study was to investigate the effects school administrators have on the self-efficacy of African American Male (AAM) teachers employed in an urban school district who have gained certification through an alternative certification program. The discoveries of this study support the extant research that focuses on the perceptions of traditionally certified teacher's self-efficacy (Hancock & Scherff, 2010; Jamil, Downer, & Pianta, 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Lee et al., 2011; Ma & Cavanagh, 2018; Rushton, 2013; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, and Hoy, 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2013). The findings from the study support and expand upon the limited research on alternatively prepared teachers (Mitchell, 2011; Anthony, Gimbert, Fultz, and Parker, 2011;).

Additionally, the findings from this study show a connection between the school leader's emotional competence and their ability to effectively influence the self-efficacy of their teachers (Sánchez-Núñez et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2016). The information culled from the focus groups, and the interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed. Through this data analysis, three themes materialized. The first theme found was the importance of the school leader being emotionally supportive of the teachers. The second theme that emerged was the maintaining of trust through the provision of leadership opportunities within the school building. The final theme that emerged from the data focused on the need for consistent, constructive feedback.

Emotional support.

In their extensive research on teacher self-efficacy, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) identify four primary sources of self-efficacy; (a) mastery experiences, (b) verbal persuasion, (c) vicarious experiences, and (c) physical and emotional states. The school administrators in this study were able to influence these sources of self- efficacy in the teacher participants by maintaining relationships with the participants, and by being aware of the emotional needs of the participants. Focus group participants shared the positive emotions experienced from the interactions with their administrators during the initial point of hire and how that initial interaction impacted them and inspired them. In the interviews, participants discussed how support from administrators (defined for this study as principals, assistant principals, and school-level academic coaches) helped them increase their self-efficacy in their job performance. These supports contributed to their levels of self-efficacy in the classroom and outside of the classroom.

Participants also shared the emotional support they received from their administrators and how that emotional support contributed positively to their instructional self-efficacy as well as their self-efficacy. Several participants shared the effects of the verbal and non-verbal praise they receive from their administrators, which causes a positive emotional response that creates the desire to continue to do their best work. Also, participants discussed the support they received from administrators explicitly related to issues found in urban schools.

In the one-on-one interviews and the two focus group meetings, participants spoke about their feelings, specifically their appreciation for the administrators who hired them. Many of the focus group participants shared their reverence for their administrators taking a perceived "risk" in hiring them, due to the participants being novices with no educational training entering the education profession through GaTAPP. Additionally, participants discussed how the emotional

support from their administrators keeps them in the school buildings that they first began teaching.

Mr. Garner, a middle school math teacher, shared the appreciation he holds for his principal, as Mr. Garner felt the principal took a chance on hiring him instead of a certified teacher.

But you know, my administrators, they gave me an opportunity when they didn't

have to, when they, I'm sure with some other certified teacher, that probably ap-

plied for my job. But it was like he's been in our building as a sub. He knows how

our culture so let's give him the opportunity. So, I'm grateful for that.

During a focus group meeting, a participant shared his story of when he had first met his school principal at a county job fair. He had entered the job fair, and because he was not a certified teacher, he was directed to the GaTAPP representative, who told him that he was overqualified for entry.

… I was like, you know, I really was, you know, I was down and I promise you

before I could get up to do this, Ms. C (principal) sent Ms. M (assistant principal)

over and Ms. M said, Hey, we noticed when you came in here, um, could you

come over here and speak with us over here… So, you know, I'm sitting here and

I'm interviewing, there are four of them on a panel…And they were, and they

were smiling…But she was like, you know, well we, we'll be getting in contact

with you a little later. Later, I remember them saying on the Intercom, you have

two minutes before the next interview comes. And I'm just sitting there in my

seat, and Ms. C, she's just like (gestures for him to come over) and I'm like "Me?"

and she's like, Yeah, come on. Come on. And she was like, I know we told you

we will call you later but we want to go ahead and hire you now. And she said,

man, we go hard. And she said, we're going to make sure you get everything that

you need.

The interview and focus group sessions, as well as observations by the researcher, reveal the participant's respect for the administrators who hired them. During another focus group meeting, a participant shared his reverence for his administrator. The participant had attempted the GACE test several times and finally passed, allowing him entry into the GaTAPP program and the status to be hired by a school.

I took the GACE Test for special ed and um, I passed the test and I'll never forget

when I got my scores cause I had to take the special ed test so many times. I took

one part about four times before I passed it… when I passed the test and I called

Dr. M (school principal) to let him know I passed that test He screamed louder

than I did about me passing, and got me an interview the next day. I got hired at

the school…Dr. Green sort of saved my life… yeah, he was, he's responsible for

me being in the county and doing what I'm doing if it had not been for him. Yeah.

Along with this excitement for being chosen for employment by their administration, the participants shared with equal enthusiasm how their administrators supported them not only pedagogically but also emotionally once they were in the classroom. In a one-on-one interview, when asked about how he feels Mr. Park, a middle school science teacher, discussed the positive influence that his administrators had on his emotional state while in his second year of education.

So that, those three (administration team) were really influential in just helping

me to know, helping me to forgive myself for my first year because I think that's

where a lot of first year teacher's kind of make their mistakes. That they think

they are going to come in and save the world and all that type of stuff. But after

that, you know, it was really good. It was really all inspiring and we kind of have,

like a real family knit type.

Middle school math teacher, Mr. Garner, shared similar sentiments to Mr. Park's when discussing his principal in a one-on-one interview. He spoke about his principal's verbal support and inspiring parent-like words of encouragement during some problematic interactions with the veteran teachers on his team. In his second year as a GaTAPP teacher and his third year in the classroom, Mr. Garner had some disagreements on assessing students and the use of specific instructional practices with other teachers. The veteran teachers did not give his suggestions much weight due to his being a new teacher, with a large personality. He attributes his ability to cope with the disagreements to his principal's supportive words.

> And, I received a lot of flak all the time and it's like you could, you could sense
>
> vibes, you know, when something is welcoming and when, something like, what's
>
> this force, like pushing against me, you know and why? And one thing that I al-
>
> ways loved about Ms. C (the Principal) was that, you know, in those trying times,
>
> she would always say, look, Mr. Tower we're not trying to change you. We just
>
> want you to be a better you. You know, cause I'm like doing, man, I, I'm not, I'm
>
> not like everybody else, you know, I, I'm quick to say it like I'm not like every-
>
> body you're seeing here, man, look, you know, we all have similarities. We all
>
> have the same goals, but my experiences and everything I've gone through makes
>
> me feel like I'm just totally different, you know.

In another middle school, Mr. Rhodes, a music teacher, discussed similar issues he had with the veteran teachers in his department regarding changes he wanted to make to the curriculum and the department's recruiting practices. Mr. Rhode's shares Mr. Garner's personality and

his department chair at the time did not want to make any changes. Mr. Rhodes's principal supported him through the issues, "…and so I came in my first year and I told her I wanted to do x,y, and z and she was like, go for it. And it (her support) hasn't changed." He also discussed the mother-son dynamic he has with his principal, "…she's actually acted like my mother figure. She's been there for a lot of stuff…she's had my back through everything, and she's been a great support," as well as disciplines him, "Now Rhodes, we need you to understand you have this thing called a teaching certificate. We have to have you do certain things."

This familial support dynamic was also evident in the focus group sessions. Participants shared how their administrators showed their appreciation for them through constant positive reinforcement, which was surprising to them.

> Um, but I will say the principal, uh, does help as far as like my self-esteem. She's very complimentary. I don't know if that's correct, but yeah, she, she, she always speaks highly about me and it's not, sometimes I'm always like surprised like me, like man, you talking about me, like, so, um, I think that helps me. It helps build my confidence.

Likewise, Mr. Walker, a middle school math teacher, also shared the steadfast nature of his administrator's supportive words of encouragement and his astonishment in his receipt of them.

> I kind of receive, sometimes I feel like more praise than what I should receive, you know, cause, and I think part of it is because of my positive attitude. Like, you know, my principal always, um, uh, speaks on how I, how I have such a positive attitude. And sometimes what seems like such stressful situations, I'm always

able to have a positive attitude. And, you know, he's always like always compli-

menting me on, you know, my attitude and you know, it kind of motivated me to

keep going cause he knows I'm human too, so, you know, he's like, you know,

hang in there Mr. Walker because everything is going to be alright…

Mr. Cowan, an elementary teacher, also discussed how his assistant principal gave him

constant praise as he grew in the K-5 classroom. GaTAPP elementary teachers learn the elemen-

tary content in professional development courses, which take place in the evening. The demands

on elementary teacher candidates in a GaTAPP program are high. The consistency in his assis-

tant principal's praise allowed him to have a positive relationship with her, which helped his con-

fidence in his teaching abilities as he learned how to be an elementary teacher while in the Ga-

TAPP program as well as in his third year of teaching.

…I've never received a negative comment from her. Um, you know, she's always

given positive comments…when she comes in (to his classroom) there of course

it's like, I don't even really miss a beat necessarily… So she's always been more

positive in a sense… if I do something wrong, I know she'll point it out… um, she

can deliver something that's negative, but it's put in a very different way where it's

just easy to follow through on. So that helped me.

Mr. Park, a middle school science teacher, also shared a moment in which his administra-

tor decided to offer him a contract when his recorded performance on observations was less than

stellar. His administrator overrode the ratings on the observation documents in her consideration

for continued employment, which created positive emotions in Mr. Park and gave him the emo-

tional support that he needed to grow in his teacher self-efficacy.

I'm looking at all those ones, I'm looking at all those twos, but my principal, she

signed off on, she said, you know what? He's doing great. I want him back for an-

other year. She said he's doing great. And to me…that kind of gave me that extra

kick to do better because I was like, if she's willing to take that chance on me or

they're willing not to give up on me, who am I to say, you know, this is hard.

Like, they see something in me. So obviously there's something there that I can do

and bring to the teacher profession.

Although the participants shared the emotional support that they have received from their

school administrators, during both focus group meetings, a surprising connection was made.

Both groups shared that while they receive some emotional support from their school administra-

tor, more would be welcome, if not needed. During focus group one, teachers shared how im-

portant it was that they had mentors that were the same race and gender. One participant shared

that an AAM mentor would be able to support him more.

So, you know, man, with having somebody who has been there, um, especially as

a black male, I don't think anybody could really mentor you better than another

male. And, you know, maybe I'm being biased or not, but the things that we go

through as a black man, you know, uh, I mean maybe black women could, you

know, uh, definitely relate, you know, um, a bit. But the things that we do as a

black man, we have so many strikes against us, just come out of the womb.

Another focus group participant shared that he had an AAM mentor and that the support

he received from him helped his mental and emotional health, "…it's super important that you

have somebody, to just either hold you accountable or just to vent. I think those things are important because that mentor for me helps me more mentally then the professional side of it. And that just keeps me on an even keel."

The focus group participants continued to discuss what they had experienced in their schools and continued to provide suggestions as to how they can best be supported.

I think what administration needs to understand this, that for male teachers, just in general, there is the teaching side to it, but they're so much more that is thrown on us that is kind of like, not even talked about, not even spoken of. So just doing something so far as check on and say, Hey, how are you doing? Maybe I can watch your class for a minute, take five, 10 minutes to yourself, just kind of sit, relax, get yourself and your thoughts because they'll do that for the female teachers. A female teacher has a bad day, they'd go check on her and be like, you know what, Ms. so and so. You ok, you all right? A male teacher has a bad day in his class. They'd be like, he'll get it together tomorrow or nobody checks on him. They'd be like, you know what, He's straight, he just had an off day. It's like I go through stuff too, like I need somebody to come say, know, Hey, I got your back. And things like that.

The emotional support of the teachers showed in the one-on-one interviews and the focus group sessions with the participants. School leaders in a variety of circumstances helped maintain relationships that helped to influence the participants of the study positively. These supportive relationships manifested from the initial point of hire, which created a sense of reverence for their hiring administrators. This connection continued into the classroom, where administrators

were aware of the emotional needs of their novice teachers and created familial-type relation-

ships with the participants. The administration capitalized on each interaction with the partici-

pants to support their self-efficacy by using giving words of encouragement and constant praise.

Maintaining trust through leadership opportunities.

A theme of leadership promotions appeared over and over in the interview and focus

group transcripts. One after another, participants shared the leadership positions their administra-

tors gave them after they gained their initial certification through their GaTAPP program. While

GaTAPP candidates are teacher candidates in the program, they are discouraged from taking any

leadership roles due to the rigorous demands of the program. While they are teacher candidates,

they are required to complete 50 practicum hours, complete a set course of professional develop-

ment courses, and they must reach proficiency in four areas of the Danielson Framework for

Teaching (Danielson, 2011).

School administrators initially show trust in a GaTAPP candidate by virtue of hiring

them. Administrators are one of the most important stakeholders in the GaTAPP candidate's suc-

cess, and, as such, the hiring of the candidate establishes the primary basis of trust (Grubbs,

2009). As the candidate matriculates through the program, the administrator plays a key role in

the growth of the candidate's pedagogical skill and teacher self-efficacy. After the completion of

the program, this study shows that through the proffering of leadership positions, that trust be-

tween the administrator and the certified teacher is maintained.

Mr. Rhodes, a middle school music teacher, is currently in his third year of teaching, his

first year since he gained teaching certification through the GaTAPP program. He shared, in a

one-on-one interview that his administration supported him throughout the GaTAPP program.

When he finished the program, he started receiving leadership positions, "So for me, they just,

they continuously pushed me and now that I've finished with the program (GaTAPP) they're throwing every bit of responsibility on me. Like now I'm department chair." Along with becoming the department chair, Mr. Rhodes discussed other positions of leadership his administration has given him, "They was like, you're the guy in the building that we go to when technology fails and now, we want you on the testing team." Mr. Rhode's administration also supported him in creating a magnet program at his school, of which he will lead.

> We got the magnet program approved, a brand-new budget and I'm the first middle school in the entire county to have an entire Mac lab built. They've already purchased and bought the Mac computers. They brought them in two weeks ago. The Mac computers are in my band room in the studio that they built. We put in a new floor; new paint job dropped in power sources. We're waiting on the furniture to come in now so we can install the entire lab.

During the focus group, one participant shared the leadership positions that he declined due to his responsibilities in the GaTAPP program that was given to him as soon as he completed the program and was able to take on more responsibility within the school.

> My school was trying to put me on some stuff in my very first year, um, which I had to mostly decline cause I was in TAPP uh, but, um, now I'm science lead, I'm a math ambassador. I'm a part of mindful leader, mindful mentors, uh, committee. I'm a part of the technology committee. Um, I think that's it.

When asked about how his administration influences his beliefs in his effectiveness in his classroom, middle school, math teacher, Mr. Tower responded that he initially shied away from

leadership positions. However, his principal pushed him to take on more leadership responsibilities due to her and the other administrator's trust in his abilities. This push allowed him to grow in self-efficacy.

> I noticed she (school principal) had a very positive impact on my growth and development and she, she wasn't scared to put me on a chopping block, you know, and it was ways that I could have responded. I could have responded like, oh no, I'm not ready and just, oh my God, I'm done. Like, forget all of this. (She said) Well, shoot, man, look, you're the man and we feel as though you're the man, but it's time for you to step up and be the man. And under her administration, I felt like I was really able to step up.

Mr. Tower also shared a moment when his administrator witnessed his interactions with managing a large crowd of students, and then the administrator promoted him to teacher leader.

> Mr. T, I think the time is right now. I just want to just recall this a moment when you didn't even say anything to the kids and they just separated like it was the red sea, you know? And uh, he was like, man, you have a real gift. And he was like, man, this is your school. This isn't our school this is your school. So, he's always encouraging me to do better and be better, you know? Um, as it relates to like my leadership, he's always asking me to do different things.

While some administrators used direct approaches to show trust in the participants by granting them leadership roles, one used an indirect method. In his third year in the classroom, the first year out of the GaTAPP program, Mr. Fowler's elementary principal used an indirect way of telling him that she promoted him to science lead for his school.

So basically, a colleague was asking me a science question and I was like, I'm not

sure you will have to ask Dr B. (School Principal). So, like we were all in the caf-

eteria. He walks over to Dr B and asks her, you know, what should I do? Blah,

blah, blah. And then she's like, Oh, you have to ask the science lead Mr. Fowler.

So, he literally walks right back to me and was like, yeah, you're the science lead.

Mr. Fowler's promotion helped to maintain the trust he had earned from his principal

during the GaTAPP program. His new position brought new responsibilities, and he had to adjust

to not only being proficient in his daily classroom tasks but now showing proficiency in his new

leadership role.

I have to make sure I'm doing everything right and then I'm in charge of science.

So, then I'm like, okay, well all these science resources that we have, I gotta make

sure that's right. And I make sure the lab is okay because if anybody has ques-

tions, they're going to be asking me.

In a focus group session, participants shared that once the administration knew of their

talents outside of the classroom and other areas of success, leadership positions, formal and in-

formal, were given to them due to the trust they had maintained with administration concerning

their proficiency in the classroom.

A matter of fact, I had a committee meeting before coming here that I, you know,

poked my head in and then left. But media, they realize I was a media person and

they were like, Hey, you know, you need to be on to media committee. They also

realize I'm good with technology. So that's like an informal designation. Um, it's

some other roles that, that have been kind of informally dropped in, you know,

dropped in my lap.

Another focus group participant shared a similar sentiment about being given leadership positions by his high school administration.

> I currently serve as the department chair for special education. I'm uh, head base-
> ball coach here at the school with leadership. Uh, when people see that you have
> qualities about you and you are effective at what you do, they will come to you
> and ask. My principal and assistant principal approached me about taking the de-
> partment head for special education.

Focus group participants also spoke of having leadership positions that move into the realm of an administrator.

> Um, last year I was on the data team. This year I'll go on the circle of support
> team and the school leadership community team. So, I've been on every possible
> committee since I've been at my school that you could possibly be on. I've done
> everything you could possibly do without being an extra administrator…

Another participant shared that he also is used in a disciplinarian role in his school, along with other responsibilities, "I help with the classroom management. I'm on the P.B.I.S. (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) Team. So, I do quite a few different things. Uh, I mean I even mediate if we have a fight." These school roles are important to the everyday running of the school building. Administration assigning these roles to these teachers is high praise and a show of trust towards the teachers.

As teacher confidence grew, participants began seeking out leadership roles instead of them being given to them. In a focus group meeting, a participant shared that he wanted to start a boys mentoring program in his school, along with other leadership possibilities, "Um, I'm actu-ally about to do this boys mentoring thing. Um, I've just got to figure out a schedule. I also have

band, that's the tough one right there. Um, I'm trying to be a technology liaison." In an interview,

Mr. Fowler discussed that he had started his own, small, mentoring program with the students in

his elementary school.

> One, one of the boys, he, he was just having behavioral issues and then one of the
>
> girls, she was just extremely talkative, and the girl is in my team. Like last year
>
> my team teacher, she's in her class now because she went back to second grade
>
> and the boy, I don't really know how our friendship started. Like its just he has a
>
> hard time with self-control, and I see myself in him as well because he's bright, he
>
> can do the work and he just has a hard time like controlling himself…. But I un-
>
> derstand that. But I also try to let him be mindful of what's going on. So, like they
>
> need to know why they're in trouble.

One focus group participant mentioned that he had to pull back from taking on roles of

leadership in the school as he had too many responsibilities that he was involved in with the

school. "Um, sometimes I have to tell myself, okay, I have too much cause I'm the eighth-grade

department chair testing coordinator, head football coach and grade level disciplinarian. So, it's a

lot." Other focus group participants concurred with this sentiment, showing that they understood

when to step back and learned their limitations, "you know, sometimes you have to scale the

plate (down) if you're going to be effective. And leadership is good to recognize your strength.

You also must know your limitations." Another participant of the focus group shared the same

feelings, "…sometimes, I got to learn, sometimes you got to say, "my plate is full." Finally, a

participant told the group about his want to lead, and he understands his limits. However, it was

vital to him to make sure his students received experiences outside of academics, even if it meant

he would be overtaxed.

But then the department chair was added. So, then I was like, I just gave up ten-

nis. I was the tennis coach. Coaching tennis. I just allowed someone else they can

take that role. I always said that if, you know, I told myself personally if no one

wanted to take that tennis coach position, I would definitely go back because I

didn't want these kids to be left without, you know, being able to get that experi-

ence, traveling, going, playing other schools and stuff like that. But, you know, I

was just kinda happy to give that up because there was just so much on my plate.

The showing of trust through promotions to leadership positions within the school build-

ing helped the participants understand their worth to the school and the field of education. Ad-

ministrator actions proved to benefit the growth of the participant's teacher self-efficacy by sup-

porting their understanding of their abilities while simultaneously boosting self-confidence. Ad-

ministrators showed that they knew their teaching staff's abilities by sometimes having to push

the participants, in overt and covert ways, into the leadership roles, even if the participant did not

feel fully ready for these roles.

Administrators capitalized on the talents of their teaching staff by strategically putting the

participants in areas in which they could succeed, which in turn created more self-efficacious

teachers. Due to these positions and the added responsibilities on the participants, they became

more self-aware of what they could and could not accomplish, which shows their thinking and

decision-making skills in understanding their limitations.

Consistent, constructive administrator feedback.

In the two years, a teacher candidate is in the GaTAPP program, they are subject to a

large amount of feedback on their teaching practices. GaTAPP faculty in the study district ob-

serve teacher candidates between four to six times a school semester and give formal and informal feedback on the teacher candidate's progress. The feedback is documented on an observation document and shared, usually face-to-face with the teacher candidate. All GaTAPP faculty in the study district obtain the Teacher Support and Coaching (TSC) endorsement on their professional teaching certificates to effectively support GaTAPP teacher candidates, as well as any teacher in the district that requires support.

The GaTAPP program also provides GaTAPP teacher candidates school-based mentors who must have also received the TSC endorsement on their teaching certificates. They are required to give feedback three times a semester officially. Four times a year, the GaTAPP faculty member, the teacher candidate, the school-based mentor, and a designated administrator meet to discuss the progress of the candidate and give feedback regarding areas of growth. Constant, constructive feedback delivered formally and informally has been shown to have a positive impact a teacher self-efficacy and allows them to make progress in their teaching performance (Akkuzu, 2014; Bandura 1986; Eather et al., 2019; Memduhoglu et al., 2017)

After teacher candidates receive their teaching certification, the GaTAPP faculty member and the school-based mentor cease their observation and feedback cycles, and the teacher receives feedback directly from the administration about their teaching progress. The change in the amount of feedback given to the teacher reduces significantly.

Because the participants received less regular feedback from multiple sources, the feedback that they did receive from their administration was prized and continued to affect their teacher self-efficacy. In his interview, middle school math teacher, Mr. Walker, shared the amount of feedback he receives from his administrators and how it reinforces his classroom instruction.

The biggest thing with administration I feel like is a positive feedback and I have

received quite a bit of positive feedback from administration and you know, any-

time you, you know, receive feedback from administration, it does kind of, you

know, boost your morale, you know, kind of makes, makes you feel like, you

know, you're doing your job, you know, you're doing the right thing. So, I would

say positive feedback has been the biggest, you know, just from maybe just obser-

vations. You know, I always made sure I read what they say about me and how I

can improve on some of the procedures and um, instructional routines that I have.

Mr. Turner, middle school math co-teacher, echoed Mr. Walker's statement in his inter-

view. He shared the positive feedback he has received, "Uh, you know, I don't know what other

people's experiences are, but they've always given me positive feedback. You know, it's never,

I've never felt like even our academic coaches, it's never been, um, something that is negative."

When asked how praise from administrators affects his effectiveness in the classroom,

Mr. Park shared that his administrators always gave positive, constructive praise in their observa-

tions even when things did not go as planned in his classroom while he was in the GaTAPP pro-

gram.

Um, back then? Yeah, I did. I did. They told me, um, they told me I had the most

positive attitude even when it was going completely wrong and it was like, that's

what a teacher wasn't supposed to do. You're supposed to look on the bright side

of everything. They was like, um, there's like his kids be up doing cartwheels off

the table, but Mr B.'s (assistant principal), like, you know what, It's gonna get bet-

ter tomorrow.

After he gained his certification from the GaTAPP program, Mr. Park continued to receive the same positive and constructive praise from his administration.

Heck yeah. Um, uh, in my, I've had a couple of them come through class and, um, they've been impressed. I get my kids to say, uh, some daily affirmations first before we even start class and they're like, that's amazing.

Elementary teacher, Mr. Cowan, shared that he had a difficult time adjusting to life in an elementary classroom during his time in the GaTAPP program. In his first year out of the GaTAPP program as a fully certified teacher, he received positive indirect feedback from his principal that helped to with his belief in his self-efficacy and teaching performance.

So, um, a couple of weeks ago she brought, um, a group of first grade teachers, um, by my classroom. And you know, and I didn't know why they were there but she brought them in there and she said, well, do you see, how do you see how there's so much light in this room and you see how this, is, you see how that is…I'm like, wait, is that for real? It almost validated you know what I'm doing and the hard work that, I'm you know, putting in and, you know, even something that simple that I say did more for, you know, my efficacy or, you know, just my whole overall feeling as a teacher than almost anything…

Mr. Fowler's elementary principal also helped grow his self-efficacy by her indirect feedback methods in a classroom observation during his first year as a certified teacher.

So, like she came in, she pulled up a desk to one of the groups and she's like talking to the students and I'm listening. I would ask questions and like she was impressed and then she went and got the academic coordinator. She was like, oh I just wanted to show you this lesson. Like so it's like, oh like wow. Like, so that

obviously made me feel good, but I don't know. I didn't, I didn't really think about

it like that. Like when I was doing the lesson I was just thinking like, oh this

would be cool.

Middle school band teacher, Mr. Preston, appreciated the specific feedback he receives

from his administration about his student performances. The specific feedback that he received

helped bolster his confidence in his abilities. In response to the interview question, "How does

your administration influence your beliefs in your effectiveness in the classroom?" he spoke

about the time leading up to a student performance.

I had administrators all around, like heavily involved in my success. They con-

stantly gave me tips. They even sat in for rehearsals, you know, um, you know,

tell me what I'm doing wrong, as well as how you told me what I'm doing right…

So up until the show, until the day of the show and when the show is over. And

they're like, you pulled that together…they critique because it's their job and that's

what they had to do in order to build me up. So, the praise was like, you deserve

that, you know, the critique is all right, we have to find something because we

want this to be the best, you know, most effective show or whatever. And the

praise, we know you can do it. And then at that, you know, at that point, well I

know I can do it. You know, I couldn't see the end of the tunnel, you know, start

off at the beginning I didn't think this was gonna happen and here we are. You

know, showtime curtains close. Great. I know I can do it.

Throughout the interviews and the focus groups, it became apparent that the elementary

and middle school participants received more feedback and praise from their administration than

the high school participants. The praise that the high school participants received was not as frequent and not as specific to the individual. Mr. Lewis, a high school math teacher, shared that he was more self-motivated, which he attributed to his years as a supervisor in the corporate world. This interview took place at the beginning of his second year as a certified teacher. Although he shared that he did not need administrator feedback, he did talk about one instance of receiving detailed feedback from an assistant principal who was leaving the school to take a principal position in another district. For reference, Mr. Lewis's interview was only partially recorded due to equipment malfunction. The interviewer recounted the rest of his responses to the interview questions. The transcript of the interview was then sent to Mr. Lewis for member checking.

Mr. Lewis discussed how he only really met with this assistant principal closer to the time where he was leaving the school. He stated that in the last month of the AP at the school, he met with the AP at least three times, talking about varying issues and concerns. He stated that if he had had that interaction with the administrator or any of the administration staff during his time in the school, that it would've been better for him. In these final meetings with the assistant principal, he gained a lot of insight and information regarding his growth in his position.

Mr. Ellison, a high school math teacher, also in his second year as a certified teacher, shared information during our interview about administrator feedback at the high school level. He does receive feedback, but he wished it was more specific to him.

> …telling me specifically why it would be helpful, but I don't get that type of feedback at all. It's very generic and I understand they have a lot of people that have to, you know, do evaluations on and its very time consuming and they might not necessarily have the time to be that thorough. But another sentence in the evaluation stating that I don't think that would take an exorbitant amount of time.

Later in our interview, Mr. Ellison was able to remember one piece of positive verbal feedback that he had received from an administrator while he was on his hall duty and the emotional response he experienced because of the feedback.

Everyone was supposed to be at their door, and I was the only one on the hall at their door. And you know, an administrator, you know said, "Mr. E, no one can ever tell you that you're not doing what you're supposed to be doing." I got that kind of praise and I ain't gonna lie, I felt good about that.

The feedback that the participants received from their administrators helped to continue to support the growth of their self-efficacy. The participants from all the schools received some form of feedback from their administrators that helped in their teaching performance and their growth as self-efficacious educators. The two high school participants received less feedback from their administrators, but it still impacted their self-efficacy in a positive manner

Discussion

The purpose of the qualitative study was to investigate the specific practices of school administrators that help to support the teacher self-efficacy of AAM teachers who have matriculated through an alternative certification program. This section includes a discussion of the theoretical framework used for this study as well as the study findings in relation to the extant literature on teacher self-efficacy and administrator support of teacher self-efficacy. The practices identified from the answers to the research questions will help administrators to more effectively support the self-efficacy of their AAM alternatively certified teachers.

The analysis of the study data collected from the participant interviews and two focus group meetings revealed three themes that provide information in reference to effective actions and practices of school leaders that help to maintain, promote, and foster self-efficacy in AAM

teachers: (a) emotional teacher support, (b) exhibiting trust through providing leadership opportunities, and (c) consistent, constructive administrator feedback. Factors in all three of the identified themes relate to both research questions. These factors will help contribute to the school administrator's efforts to create a climate and culture that will result in the growth of the self-efficacy of AAM teachers.

Participants routinely stated that the emotional supports that positively influenced their teacher self-efficacy were verbal supports from their administrators that helped to alleviate intense emotions associated with being a novice teacher. Another administrator action found across the data was verbal, emotional support that reflected the relationships the administrators had formed with the participants. In some cases, the support was almost parental in nature, especially with the younger participants. The triangulation of data from the interviews and focus groups revealed these actions.

The theme, emotional teacher support, corresponds to the extant literature that indicates that the emotional needs of teachers must be addressed to increase teacher self-efficacy (Beatty, 2000; Carver, 2003; Hargreaves, 1998; Lambersky, 2016; Marzano, Waters, and McNulty, 2005). Hargreaves (1998) discusses the need for school administrators to have an emotional understanding and sensitivity of their teachers as they experience the day-to-day interactions with students, colleagues, parents, and others. This emotional understanding works to help teachers during stressful times, which can affect their self-efficacy. During an interview, Mr. Park, a middle school science teacher, discussed a tense moment when he did not respond well to an unruly student in his class. Mr. Park shared the steps the assistant principal took to attend to his emotional needs "Yeah, I think I was gone. They said, you know what, Mr. Park, you look like you need to take a half a day. Just go home, reset your mind, come back tomorrow. We'll talk about

what happened." By allowing his teacher to leave the building to reflect on an unfortunate inci-

dent, the administrator tended to the emotional needs of his teacher.

Mr. Park's administrator helped not only to address his emotions at this time of stress, but

it also helped to support the supportive school culture that allowed for action, allowing time to

reflect and recuperate, to transpire. Carver (2003) found that creating a school culture that allows

for open sharing of concerns and feelings, as well as the showing of genuine care and concern by

administrators, is important in support of novice teachers. The administrator's allowance of Mr.

Park to "reset his mind" shows the genuine concern he had for Mr. Park's emotional state.

In her study on the emotions of educational leadership, Beatty (2000) found that school

administrators that are proficient at managing their teacher's emotions, as well as their own reac-

tions to their teacher's emotions, are an essential part of leadership. Mr. Turner, middle school

special education co-teacher, spoke about how his administration made sure to make him feel a

part of his school culture when he felt like an outsider due to his role as a special education co-

teacher, "I felt like going in some rooms, like an outsider…but now I do feel a part of the culture

here. I do feel valued; you know… I even got teacher of the month." Mr. Turner's administration

moved to help him feel a part of the school, which led to him being picked as a teacher of the

month. The emotional support and the social support of the administrators caused Mr. Turner to

be more positive about his position, which led to success in his role as a co-teacher.

 The emphasis on the recognition of teacher success and teacher emotions is consistent

with the literature. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) found that the praising of achieve-

ments by administrators is an important factor in the support of the emotions of teachers and is

associated with maintaining emotionally supportive school environments. Recognizing the work

of teachers that is performed in the school building helps teachers' emotional states, which leads

to higher levels of self-efficacy. Many participants discussed the awards and achievements they had received from their school administration. During one of the focus groups, a participant shared a moment when he received an award from his principal.

> Like, I take pride when they appreciate it (his accomplishments). And uh, so like I got like an ABCD award, which they give one out like every month for teachers that they noticed doing something above or beyond the call of duty. So, like I got mine, I hung mine up… I haven't seen anybody else hang theirs up cause it's just, it's just like a piece of paper. But to me it's just like a reminder, like keep doing what you're doing. And they (administrators) might not say anything but they see it. Do you know what I'm saying? So, I'm doing something right.

Lambersky's (2016) research on the impact of principals on their teacher's morale and self-efficacy discusses the importance of the principal knowing when to give feedback and when just to listen and be empathetic. The study points out that teachers feel supported when they see genuine and authentic attempts for the principal to understand them as individuals. In a focus group meeting, a participant shared the way his principal spoke with him on a personal level, which helped to understand her more, which buoyed his self-efficacy.

> And then after school, uh, when we'd be on bus duty, we would just sit there and converse back and forth. So, I got to know her past the principal and just really got to know her as a person. And then when I got to know her as a person, I understood why she wanted certain things a certain way.

Surprisingly, the participants in focus groups identified additional areas of emotional support that they say would be very welcome to all of them, emotional support that equals the support that is given to the female teachers in the school building. They shared that female teachers

get more support than they do because they are expected not to be as emotional as their female counterparts.

> I think the biggest thing that administrators can do is to just check on us every
>
> now and again, just come and ask, are we okay? Because I think the, the stereo-
>
> type or the stigma is, is that if I put a man in this classroom, he's going to be able
>
> to crack the whip. The kids are going to behave, they're going to jump in line,
>
> they're going to do their work, they're gonna do all this other type of stuff, but we
>
> go through a lot of the same things that the other teachers go through, but because
>
> we're looked at as the black man, they just assumed that we got it together.

This information was very surprising and showed an area in which school administrators should be more aware.

The emotional support of the participants was an important factor in how their administrators supported their teacher's self-efficacy. The verbal supports, sometimes familial in nature, from the administrators, helped the participants deal with their emotional and physiological state, a source of self-efficacy, during stressful situations that could affect their overall self-efficacy.

The second theme that emerged from the data was showing trust through leadership opportunities. This theme aligns with previous literature on the trust between the school leaders and the teachers. Trust is central to creating mutual respect and strong personal relationships (Finnigan, 2010; Finnigan, 2012; Finnigan et al., 2013; Liu & Hallinger, 2018; Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016). Finnigan's (2010, 2012, 2013) work in urban, low performing schools provides a definition of trust that will be used throughout this section. She defines trust as "the interplay among respect, competence, personal regard, and integrity—reduces uncertainty and vulnerability in contexts involving external pressures and demands" (Finnigan, 2010). Finnigan's definition

aligns with the data from this study regarding study participants sharing the feelings of competence, personal regard, and respect that were created by their promotions to leadership roles within their schools.

Administrators who support the promotion of their teachers into leadership positions create trust between them and the teacher while also supporting the teacher's beliefs in their self-efficacy. Mr. Tower shared his hesitance in stepping into a leadership position, but he believed that the push from his school administration helped him move forward in his growth.

> So, he's always encouraging me to do better and be better, you know? Um, as it relates to like my leadership, he's always asking me to do different things. I really shy away from leadership for the simple fact that I can teach kids. I didn't come to it to teach adults. And I mean just with the growth that I have now, I don't really mind teaching other adults. So, I was just promoted to the teacher lead for my team.

The encouragement from his administration to take on the leadership role transmitted the regard for Mr. Tower's abilities and reduced his hesitancy in stepping into leadership roles.

Mehdinezhad and Mansouri (2016) found that principal trust and commitment shown through direct and indirect methods have a positive impact on a teacher's performance and self-efficacy. Mr. Fowler discussed how his elementary principal showed her trust in him by indirect methods in naming him as science lead for his school.

> A colleague was asking me a science question and I was like, I'm not sure you will have to ask Dr B (School Principal) He walks over to Dr B and asks her, you know, what should I do? And then she's like, Oh, you have to ask the science lead Mr Fowler.

The principal used an indirect method because she understands Mr. Fowler and his preference to show his science abilities through leadership. After the promotion, Mr. Fowler took to his new position well, and the new responsibility helped support his self-efficacy.

Finnigan's (2012) study found that effective management and mutual respect were actions that created trust between teachers and building leaders. Mr. Smith discussed his plans to move into educational leadership with his principal, so his principal created multiple opportunities to gain experience in leadership within the school "He knows my goals and he's put me in position to attain that goal. Um, I'm a grade level chair, I'm on the leadership committee, the data committee, the circle of support committee, every possible leadership committee in the school… I'm a part of." The respect Mr. Smith gave to his principal by sharing his goals and ambitions, as well as his principal showing respect and trust for Mr. Smith's abilities, allowed him to thrive within the school.

In the act of promotion to leadership, the school leaders were able to not only capitalize on the skills of the participants, but they were also able to create a trust relationship with them as well. These promotions not only helped the candidates establish a new position within their school, it also helped to fortify their feeling of competence in their self-efficacy. Positive performance experiences are another source of self-efficacy, and in orchestrating these promotions, the school leaders were supporting these teachers. In Mr. Smith's case, it has helped to move him closer to his goal of becoming a school leader.

The final theme to emerge from the data was positive, constructive administrator feedback. This theme connects to the existing literature on how establishing strong lines of communication along with constructive feedback from school leadership positively affects teacher's self-efficacy. (Calik et al., 2012; Carver, 2003 Goldhaber, 2007; Kass, 2013; Nir & Kranot, 2006;

Sehgal et al., 2017). These studies found that positive, constructive, regular feedback, and open, two-way communication were contributing factors to teacher's high levels of self-efficacy. The participants from this study all shared information that supports the findings of the existing literature.

All study participants agreed that consistent feedback from their administrators helped to build their self-efficacy. They communicated that feedback given by administrators must also be constructive and positive, whether it be informal feedback or formal, documented feedback such as that on a TKES evaluation. Consistent feedback is a significant part of the GaTAPP program, and once a teacher candidate gains their teaching certification, the amount of feedback drops significantly. By attempting to sustain this amount of feedback, the school leaders not only continued the practices set forth by the GaTAPP program but also they were effectively supporting the self-efficacy of the participants.

Sehgal et al. (2017) found that positive feedback can alter a teacher's perception of their competence. In his interview, Mr. Cowan shared information about his assistant principal's consistency in her delivery of instructional feedback after her observations, "…she was just a lot more genuine, a lot more even, so she can deliver something that's negative, but it's put in a very different way where it's just a lot easier to follow through on. So that helped me." His assistant principal's ability to give constructive criticism allowed him to be able to change practices, which in turn helped him grow in teaching self-efficacy. Positive communication facilitated the delivery of information that could come across negatively.

In her study, Kass (2013) observed that school administrators who created strong lines of communication and gave positive feedback in the classroom and outside of the classroom were able to promote high levels of self-efficacy in their teachers, which in turn increased their teacher

retention. Mr. Preston's administration regularly sat in on his band rehearsals to give him constructive feedback on his progress, "I had administrators all around, like heavily involved in my success. They constantly gave me tips. Um, they even sat in for rehearsals, to, you know, tell me what I'm doing wrong, as well as…what I'm doing right."

In his interview, high school teacher Mr. Ellison shared that detailed feedback from his administrators was missing. Although he had faith in his abilities as a teacher and has a high sense of self-efficacy, he would still like to hear formal and informal feedback that is detailed and not vague.

It's very generic and I understand they have a lot of people that have to, you know, do evaluations on and its very time consuming and they might not necessarily have the time to be that thorough. But another sentence in the evaluation stating that I don't think that would take an exorbitant amount of time, if you were truly aware and understanding of why you even said that I had good classroom management.

Verbal persuasion, a source of self-efficacy, provided through the consistent, positive feedback provided by the school leaders, supported the self-efficacy of the participants. This constant encouragement in the participant's abilities helped them to continue their pedagogical growth as new teachers while also creating a climate of continued growth.

Limitations

This study provided AAM teachers the opportunity to share how their school leader's actions affected their perceptions of their self-efficacy as well as illustrate effective practices that supported their self-efficacy. While the findings of the research study helped to expand the literature on self-efficacy, limitations of the study were present. This dissertation utilized a large urban

Title 1 school district, but the study only involved eleven participants based in eleven out of sixty-five viable campuses. The teachers that participated in the study taught at different grade bands, which did not allow for a grade-specific focus.

To lend more credibility to this study, a mixed-method approach could be used. A survey sent out to all AAM former GaTAPP candidates in the state of Georgia would offer more evidence to strengthen the data that was collected with the qualitative research

Also, the number of teachers available for the study was reduced due to the low numbers of AAM teachers who stayed in the school where they received their initial teaching certification. Of the eleven teacher interviews conducted, two interviews were shorter than the other nine. Also, in another interview, the recording device failed about twenty minutes into the interview. The remainder of that interview was recalled from notes and memory. I did use member checking with the teacher in the interview to make sure that I did not recollect anything incorrectly.

All the teachers in the study matriculated through a GaTAPP program in which I am on the faculty. Although none of the teachers chosen for the study were directly supported by me, I did have indirect interactions due to my teaching GaTAPP professional development courses. This proximity to some of the participants could have negatively affected this study.

To limit any biases from intruding into the study, I used Temi to transcribe my interview and focus group recordings. I also used member checking for one of the interviews. I tried to avoid participant bias in the data collection by crafting open-ended, engaging questions, phrased in a manner that worked to allow the participants to feel comfortable sharing their stories. Although I worked to limit any biases, I cannot be sure if any participant bias was present during the one-on-one interviews or the focus groups.

Implications

A review of the literature found that administrator support for teacher self-efficacy has a

positive effect on the AAM teacher's self-efficacy (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Jamil et al., 2012;

Ninkovic & Kneževic Floric, 2018; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Want et al., 2018). Addi-

tionally, the research found that practices such as emotional support, creating trust through lead-

ership, and providing positive and constructive feedback are actions that directly affect AAM

teacher's self-efficacy (Beatty, 2000; Calik et al., 2012; Carver, 2003; Finnigan, 2010; Finnigan,

2012; Finnigan et al., 2013; Goldhaber, 2007; Hargreaves, 1998; Kass, 2013; Lambersky, 2016;

Liu & Hallinger, 2018; Marzano, Waters and McNulty, 2005 Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016;

Nir & Kranot, 2006; Sehgal et al., 2017).

This research study contributes to the extant literature on self-efficacy. The research

study found implications for K-12 school administrators, school administrator preparation pro-

grams, alternative teacher preparation programs, and teacher induction programs as they consider

ways to implement practices that support new teachers, alternatively certified teachers, and

teachers teaching in the three to five-year range. In creating a school culture and climate that

supports and elevates the self-efficacy of the teachers in their building, school leaders must stra-

tegically plan for an incorporation of various techniques to reach their teachers, including the

small population of AAM teachers.

Educational leadership programs.

Leadership programs in IHEs would benefit from the study results by incorporating elements of the results into their educational leadership programs. For example, a program that includes coursework in diverse societies, including students and teachers, would benefit from the information in this study. Information such as emotional support and focused feedback included in leadership program coursework would help to prepare aspiring school leaders to support their AAM alternatively certified teachers. This information might not be limited to just AAM alternatively certified teachers as AAM traditionally certified teachers could also benefit from leaders who are better prepared to support the specific self-efficacy needs of AAMs.

Alternative teacher certification programs.

Alternative teacher certification programs such as the GaTAPP program, Teach for America, the New York Teaching Fellows, and the many more programs across the United States can use this study to shape their cohorts of new teachers. As stated earlier in this section, alternative teacher certification programs place many minority teachers in hard-to-staff, urban schools. These programs would benefit from the findings in this study by creating cohorts of AAM teachers. These cohorts could meet periodically to discuss emotional issues that stem from being AAM in urban school classrooms. A cohort model could potentially help retain AAM teachers who feel isolated by bringing them into a community of people that are experiencing the same issues. These vicarious experiences would help to maintain or increase their teacher self-efficacy.

Educational policymakers.

Education policymakers can use this research to craft legislation that allows for more mental health experts such as teacher counselors whose focus would be regular check-ins with all

school staff to support teacher's emotional needs that would, in turn, support their self-efficacy. This policy would not just focus on AAM teachers but all teachers, especially teachers in urban areas. Urban students experience various issues, and teachers are attuned to the emotional well-being of their students. Shouldering the intensity of student experiences and trauma is a difficult load for teachers to deal with, and school systems across the country are ill-prepared to deal with these issues. Drafting legislation that would divert funds to these additional school counselors would help to alleviate emotional issues that arise from these situations.

The dissertation study findings show several practices that are important to supporting the self-efficacy of AAM teachers: (a) emotional support, (b) maintaining trust through leadership opportunities, and (c) constructive and positive feedback. School leaders should consider these practices as they work to support and retain their AAM teachers. Principals could seek out professional development in the areas of social-emotional leadership, effective assessment, and communication skills to help them in their work to effectively promote the self-efficacy of the AAM teachers. They can then teach and monitor the other teacher leaders in the buildings, as well as school mentors, to ensure that effective practices are being used daily.

The findings from this research show that school administrators that do not work to promote their AAM teacher self-efficacy run the risk of having this important group of educators decrease their self-efficacy, which may lead to AAM teacher attrition. Consequently, implementing these changes may help to support and possibly increase the self-efficacy of this teacher demographic.

Although the participants in this study all indicated that they had a high level of self-efficacy, they all identified an area in which they could use even more support. Participants in this study noted that the support of their emotional health during stressful situations is important to

their self-efficacy growth. These teachers also indicated that an increase in the amount of emotional support they currently receive would be welcome. The emotional support of AAM teachers is an area of research that has not been explored, and future research in this area could help to contribute to this field of study, which could help to alleviate the attrition rate of AAM teachers from the educational field.

The participants in this study shared that these supports from administration helped them to maintain their level of self-efficacy, and in most cases, pushed them to levels of leadership within their buildings. All participants had one or more leadership positions within their respective schools. These promotions to leadership positions helped elevate the levels of self-efficacy in all the participants, but it also made them cognizant of when they were being given too much to do. Future research in leadership positions and teacher burnout could illustrate how multiple leadership positions may or may not contribute to teacher burnout.

Conclusions

Teacher attrition has been a problem in education for many years. Nationally, 50% of new teachers leave the teaching profession within one to five years, and the number is even higher for minority teachers, especially AAMs who leave the profession at a higher rate than all sub-groups combined. (Haj-Broussard et al., 2016; Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey, 2014; Ingersoll, May, & Collins, 2017; (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Minority teachers are more likely to work in urban school systems, which bring perceived and real difficulties (Jacob, 2007; Papay, Bacher-Hicks, Page, & Marinell, 2017). To combat minority teacher attrition and supply qualified teachers to schools, alternative certification programs were created (Mikulecky, Shkodriani, & Wilner, 2004). In Georgia, the GaTAPP program was created to support understaffed schools with alternatively certified teachers. High concentrations of GaTAPP teacher candidates teach in urban metropolitan areas due to the lack of qualified teachers. Alternative preparation programs also

provide more minority teachers than traditional programs, especially African American teachers (Shen, 1998; Woods, 2016).

The GaTAPP program provides high levels of support to the teacher candidates during the two years they are in the program, which helps to raise their levels of teacher self-efficacy. As they matriculate out of the program, they lose the additional support and become more independent. AAM alternatively certified teacher attrition rate is like the attrition rate of traditionally certified teachers, which is high. In order to slow this attrition, it was important to identify actions that could help to maintain AAM self-efficacy, to keep them in the education profession.

This study examined several actions, and their effects on AAM alternatively certified teachers that could help other school leaders to support and promote their AAM alternatively certified teachers. Through personal interviews and focus groups with AAM alternatively certified teachers in an urban school district in their third to fifth year teaching, data analysis identified three areas of support that could help to keep AAM alternatively certified teachers in the classroom: (a) emotional support, (b) maintaining trust through leadership opportunities, and (c) positive and constructive feedback.

This study aligned with the literature on teacher self-efficacy and how the promotion of high self-efficacy by school administrators helps to keep teachers in the education profession. The data collected from the participants in this study showed that the participant's perceptions of their self-efficacy were positively influenced by the actions of their school administrators.

The study also extended the extant literature by showing that there is a focused need to support AAM alternatively certified teacher's emotional needs. Work in this area could be important in finding new ways to support AAM teachers, whether they be alternatively or tradition-

ally certified. Educational leader programs could benefit by adding training that deals specifi-
cally with this type of support, which could help school leaders retain more of their AAM teach-
ers.

School leaders also might consider attending emotional intelligence professional develop-
ment seminars to help support the AAM teachers that are currently in their school. The
knowledge obtained from professional development on emotional intelligence could help school
leaders understand the importance of this type of support to all of their teachers, especially AAM
teachers, who are commonly used as authoritarian disciplinarians within school buildings
(Brockenbrough, 2015). A situation that was shared in the first focus group meeting illustrates
this point.

> I can be in the middle of teaching a lesson. I hear six or seven knocks on my door,
>
> boom, boom, boom! Mr. Wilson, Mr. Wilson, they fighting! So I got to put my
>
> cape on, go right down the hall, separate them, take them to the office while, and
>
> get this, now nobody's checking on my class now, but I got to come get your kids
>
> to the office, sit them down, tell me what happened, fill the write-up out. Then
>
> come back and calm down my class, who are apparently in the hallway filming
>
> everything…

In conducting this study to find out effective practices that will positively influence AAM
alternatively certified teachers, several practices emerged: (a) emotional support, (b) maintaining
trust through leadership opportunities, and (c) positive and constructive feedback. From the par-
ticipant responses, it is apparent that these practices will help to support AAM alternatively certi-
fied teachers, and they should be considered when creating and implementing educational leader-
ship programs. In concluding this study, one quote from Mr. Smith stood out as illustrating why

AAM teachers are needed in the classroom. If the above practices are implemented, more AAM male teachers like him may stay in the classroom.

>Me and my collaborative teacher we constantly, every day, our classes are right next to each other. Every morning we come sit, just bouncing ideas. It's more of a brotherhood than just a colleague. Cause we, we, we talk about stuff, you know, we talk about life, not just education, we're black men. So, we see some of the same stuff. We have some of the same dilemmas, the same issue. So just being able to be around other black men in a professional positive setting, when the social stereotype for us is so negative, you know it and giving our students, the opportunity to see that, that means more to me than anything. For them to be able to see people who look like them being a positive image.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Informed Consent Form

Georgia State University Department of Education and
Human Development
Informed Consent

Title: Understanding the Impact of K-12 Principals on African American Male Teachers'
Educational Self-Efficacy

Principal Investigator: Dr. Nicholas Sauers

Student Principal Investigator: Sean Antonetti

I. Purpose: You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to explore the impact of principals on African American Male Teachers' Self-Efficacy. You are invited to participate because you are an African American male teacher who completed teacher certification through a GaTAPP program. A total of 10 participants will be recruited for this study.

Participation will take up to 2 hours of your time.

II. Procedures: If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed, individually, in a single session for an hour, and in a focus group with other participants for an hour. In the interview, you will be asked questions about your experiences teaching, your experiences with the growth of your teaching confidence, and how your administrator has contributed to the growth of your teaching abilities. In the focus group, you will be asked questions regarding your experiences in the growth of your teaching confidence and abilities. All interviews and the focus groups will be audio-recorded and later transcribed.

III. Risks: In this study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life.

IV. Benefits: This study is not designed to benefit the research participant. This study will hopefully provide stakeholders, policymakers, and administrators a look at the experiences that grow teacher efficacy of black male teachers' experience in the classroom. This study may give policymakers insight into recruiting and retaining more black male teachers in the classroom.

VI. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Participation in research is voluntary. Signing this document means you are giving the researcher permission to record the interview and use information gathered from it for the proposed study. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may refuse to answer questions or stop the interview(s) at any time.

VII. Confidentiality: Your records will be kept private to the extent allowed by law. The following people and entities will have access to the information you provide:

- Dr. Nicholas Sauers and Sean Antonetti
- GSU Institutional Review Board
- Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP)

We will be the only people who have access to the information you provide. I will use a pseudonym rather than your name on study records. The information you provide, including the recordings, will be stored on a personal hard drive and secured in a locked drawer in my home office. Your consent forms will be stored separately in a locked cabinet in my home. Your recording(s), from the interview and focus group, will be kept for five years after it is collected and will be destroyed thereafter. Your name and other facts that may identify you will not appear when we present this study or publish its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally. All participants should not reveal what will be discussed in the focus group. Please be aware that I do not have complete control of the confidentiality of the data.

VIII. IRB and Investigator(s) Contact Information: The IRB at Georgia State University reviews all research that involves human participants. You can contact the IRB if you would like to

speak to someone who is not involved directly with the study. You can contact the IRB for questions, concerns, problems, information, input, or questions about your rights as a research participant. You can also contact the IRB for questions about the study or your part in the study, and for questions, concerns, or complaints about the study. Contact the IRB at 404-413-3500 or irb@gsu.edu. Additionally, you can contact the Student Investigator, Sean Antonetti at (404) 317-5809 or santonetti1@student.gsu.edu or the Principal Investigator, Dr. Nicholas Sauers, at (712)330-3493 or nsauers@gsu.edu for questions, concerns, problems, information, input, or questions about your rights as a research participant. You can also contact the Student Investigator or the Principal Investigator for questions about the study or your part in the study, and for questions, concerns, or complaints about the study.

IX. Copy of Consent Form to Participant: You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research and be audio recorded, please sign below.

_____
Printed Name of Participant

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

_____   _____
Principal Investigator or Researcher Obtaining Consent   Date

APPENDIX B

Focus Group Questions

All questions focus on participants' beliefs of self-efficacy, how they feel about their self-efficacy, external factors that have contributed to their self-efficacy, and how they have been supported as new teachers in their growth of their self-efficacy. Questions for the focus group are aligned with Bandura's (1977) four sources of self-efficacy beliefs; mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and emotional and physical states.

Focus Group Questions

1. Please tell us your name, what you teach, and how many years you have been teaching.

2. Think back to your first year of teaching, did you feel as if you were impacting students' academic lives? Why or why not?

3. Tell us about the first time you experienced success in your classroom. What contributed to this success? How did success make you feel?

4. How does your administrator support your sense of effectiveness in the classroom?

5. What impacts your effectiveness in your teaching? Observing proficient teaching? Receiving verbal praise from your students? Receiving verbal praise from your administrator? Positive growth in student achievement?

6. What actions from your administrator make you feel the growth in your teaching effectiveness? Why?

7. How do your personality characteristics impact your level of effectiveness in the classroom?

8. Why have you continued teaching in the same school?

9. How has your administrator assisted you in dealing with stressors in the classroom?

10. How do you deal with stressful situations in your classroom? With students? With peers?

11. Is there anyone in your building who you feel is a model teacher? Why? What would you like to emulate from this teacher to incorporate into your teaching?

12. Is there anything else you would like to discuss about your growth in your self-efficacy?

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions

All questions focus on participants' beliefs of self-efficacy, how they feel about their self-efficacy, external factors that have contributed to their self-efficacy, and how they have been supported as new teachers in their growth of their self-efficacy. Questions for the interview are aligned with Bandura's (1977) four sources of self-efficacy beliefs; mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and emotional and physical states.

Interview Questions

1. How long have you been teaching?

2. What aspect of a student's education do you feel that you have the most impact? Why?

3. Do you feel that other teachers influence your own beliefs in your effectiveness in the classroom? Your administrator?

4. In what ways does your administrator influence your beliefs in your effectiveness in the classroom?

5. What convinces you to stay in the teaching profession? Why?

6. When in the classroom, how do you manage stress? Do these tactics help you feel more effective in the moment?

7. Out of the classroom, how do you manage stress? How successful are these tactics in relieving stress in the moment?

8. Do you receive praise from your administrator? How often? How does this affect the feeling of your effectiveness in the classroom?

9. Do you think your administrator recognize your successes in your classroom? How?

10. Do other teachers have a positive influence on your effectiveness in the classroom? Your administrator?

11. Is there anything else you would like to discuss about your growth in your self-efficacy?

APPENDIX D

Data Collection Schedule

Participant Number and Pseudonym		Interview Date and Time		Time Elapsed	Focus Group Number
1	F. Rhodes	8/29/19	5:00 P.M.	46:00	Group 1
2	B. Fowler	9/13/19	3:30 P.M.	53:00	Group 2
3	E. Cowan	8/30/19	4:00 P.M.	47:00	Group 2
4	F. Smith	9/11/19	5:00 P.M.	71:00	Group 1
5	G. Turner	8/30/19	2:30 P.M.	70:00	Group 2
6	T, Preston	8/26/19	3:00 P.M.	30:00	Group 1
7	C. Park	9/4/19	5:00 P.M.	30:00	Group 1
8	R. Lewis	8/29/19	5:00 P.M.	30:00*	Group 2
9	S. Walker	8/26/19	5:00 P.M.	30:00	Group 1
10	F. Ellison	9/19/19	1:50 P.M.	55:00	Group 2
11	B. Tower	8/28/19	4:00 P.M.	50:00	Group 1
Total Time				512.00 (8.5 hours)	

Recording device stopped at the 15:00 minute mark. Remaining 15:00 minutes was the researcher recounting the interview.

Focus Groups	Date and Time Elapsed	
Group 1	10/2/19	84:00
Group2	10/3/19	72:00
Total Time		156:00 Minutes (2.6 hours)

APPENDIX E

Teacher Efficacy Scale (Twelve Question Short Form) *

This scale was delivered electronically through Google Forms. The developers of the scale are Megan Tschannen-Moran from the College of William and Mary and Anita Woolfolk Hoy, from Ohio State University.

Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale

Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below. Your answers are confidential.
* Required

1. Name *

_____

2. 1. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom? *

	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	A Great Deal

*In Hoy, W.K. & Woolfolk, A.E. (1993). Teachers' sense of self-efficacy and the organizational health of schools. The Elementary School Journal 93, 356-372

3. 2. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work? *

	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	A Great Deal

4. 3. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in schoolwork? *

	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	A Great Deal

5. 4. How much can you do to help your students value learning? *

	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	A Great Deal

6. 5. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students? *

	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	A Great Deal

7. 6. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules? *

	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	A Great Deal

8. 7. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy? *

	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	A Great Deal

9. 8. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students *

	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	A Great Deal

10. 9. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies? *

	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	A Great Deal

11.   10. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are *

	Nothing	Very Little	Some Influence	Quite A Bit	A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3) (4)	(5) (6)	(7) (8) (9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	A Great Deal

12.   11. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school? *

	Nothing	Very Little	Some Influence	Quite A Bit	A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3) (4)	(5) (6)	(7) (8) (9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	A Great Deal

13.   12. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom? *

	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Nothing	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	A Great Deal