INTEGRATING EXPERIENCE: SUPPORTING TEACHERS AS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CO-FACILITATORS IN THEIR COLLABORATIVE WORK TO DESIGN, ENACT, AND INTEGRATE THE LESSONS OF EXPERIENCE WITHIN CLASSROOM CURRICULA

by

Joseph V. Weinstein-Sears

A dissertation submitted to Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

Baltimore, Maryland

July 2022

Abstract

Teachers at an independent, sectarian school had growing concerns and needs related to the design, enactment, and curricular integration of an extensive 6-12 experiential learning (EL) program. In their roles as EL co-facilitators and leaders, these teachers recognized that EL programing (i.e., field trips, outdoor adventure education, service learning, etc.) should represent meaningful, student-centered learning, but they were worried that there was a disconnect between the themes and goals of the EL program and the actual integration of those themes and goals within classroom curricula. The author's review of the literature highlighted the defining features of meaningful EL, and a needs assessment study underscored the contextual issues and opportunities for improvement. These findings led the author to explore literature related to effective professional development in order to conduct a collaborative program evaluation over eight months that studied ongoing efforts to improve the school's EL program writ large. The findings of this study informed principles related this ongoing integrative work, including the importance of visionary leadership, continued training for chaperones as EL co-facilitators, and a focus on purposeful planning in collaboration.

Keywords: Experiential education, experiential learning, professional development, curricular integration, educational travel, program evaluation

Primary Reader and Advisor: Honorine Nocon

Secondary Readers: Henry Smith and Laura Quaynor

Acknowledgements

This dissertation represents the culmination of almost a decade of learning and growth for me as a graduate student and as an aspiring scholar-practitioner. This dissertation also represents the collective love, support, and encouragement from many individuals—a few of whom I would like to acknowledge here.

Firstly, I would like to thank my doctoral committee. I am grateful for Laura Quaynor's attention to detail and our conversations around critical thinking education. Henry Smith's constant encouragement to do better and think bigger pushed me in exactly the right ways. And without my advisor, Honorine Nocon, I would have been utterly lost. Honorine, thank you for your patience, your positivity, and your generosity in sharing your wealth of experience and insight.

Secondly, I would like to thank my colleagues at Kaplan Academy. I am now in my ninth year as a member of this community, and without their participation, questions, and support, I would have not reached this point. Anything of value contained herein I dedicate to my peers and fellow educators, and to our collective effort to "Define the Difference."

Thirdly, I would like to thank my children, Jeremy and Eden. Over the last three years especially, I know that I have not been as present as I would have liked to be – stuck behind my laptop for many hours on end. Nevertheless, you never made me feel guilty for pursuing this dream of mine. Thank you for your hugs, your smiles, and all the cheerleading along the way. I love you both so very much.

Finally, I would like to thank my "besheret" partner, my best friend and loving spouse, Alyssa Weinstein-Sears. Alyssa knows only too well the cost of pursuing a doctoral degree, and your grace and support over the last few years have been overwhelming. You continue to make

me a better educator, a better leader, and a better person. Thank you for your listening ear, your tough love, your willingness to give me the time to write, and your undying support. Every day I am so grateful that we "followed the magic." I love you.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Executive Summary

A growing number of schools prioritize experiential learning (EL) as a mode of pedagogy and practice. EL includes place-based learning, field trips, outdoor adventure education (OAE), and service-learning (Alon & Tal, 2016; Ateşkan & Lane, 2016; Furco, 1996; Michie, 1998; Neill & Dias, 2001; Powers, 2004; Tal et al., 2005). In "learning by doing" (Dewey, 1938), EL educators seek to make learning more meaningful for students.

In most schools, teachers serve as the primary chaperones on school field trips and during educational travel. Indeed, in many cases, teachers-as-chaperones actually function as EL facilitators (Anderson & Zhang, 2003; Bogler, 2001; Tal & Morag, 2009; Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). To be truly effective in such a role, teachers need training, and most never receive it. The benefits of having trained, prepared EL facilitators include more thoughtful learning experiences, increased student engagement (Ateşkan & Lane, 2016; Tal & Morag, 2009), and more student empowerment (Tal et al., 2014).

Problem of Practice

The context of this study is an independent, 6-12 Jewish day school in a large city in the American Southwest: Kaplan Academy[1] (hereafter referred to as "Kaplan"). The EL program at this school is extensive and includes multiple grade level trips per year. These trips include OAE experiences, service-learning opportunities, and culturally thematic experiences. Teachers and school leaders at Kaplan serve as trip chaperones and facilitators, and in recent years, have expressed growing concerns about the EL program writ large. These concerns included time

---

[1] "Kaplan Academy" is a pseudonym.

spent on these trips (over two-and-half weeks total time away from school, in some cases) and

resources allocated (close to 10% of Kaplan's operating budget each year).

Factors Contributing to Problem of Practice

Initially, based on anecdotal conversations, I assumed that these growing concerns from

teachers and leaders were based on a lack of knowledge of EL theory, best practices, and value

to student learning. Additionally, I hypothesized that teachers may lack a strong sense of self-

efficacy vis-à-vis their roles as EL facilitators.

Employing ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1976; Neal & Neal, 2013), two

models were developed to illustrate the contributing factors to this problem of practice. In a

nested model of systems, following Bronfenbrenner (1976), the environment of the teacher as the

focal individual was described. This model indicated that there might be a variety of contributing

systemic factors shaping a teacher's experience and perception of serving as an EL facilitator,

including other teachers, administrators, school budget and funding, the school's vision and

mission, and professional development (PD). This nested model was compared to a networked

model, following Neal & Neal's (2013) approach. This model illustrated the web of relationships

that impact a teacher's self-perception of their role as EL facilitator.

In these two models, four important focuses, related to teachers' experiences, became

apparent: a teacher's role as EL facilitator, teacher training and preparation, teacher perceptions

and concerns, and a teacher's relationship to visionary leadership and support. These areas were

the focus of a literature review that would later inform a needs assessment at Kaplan.

The literature indicated that a teacher's role as an EL facilitator can occur in many

different settings. EL facilitators also wield a certain degree of power, and in practice, this power

dynamic means that the teacher is the gatekeeper for meaningful student learning experiences

(Brown, 2002). How teachers facilitate EL opportunities varies, and Stan (2009) described the most effective strategy of EL facilitation as a part-of-the-team approach. Vernon and Seaman (2012) agreed with this finding and argued for a negotiated, collaborative relationship between teachers-as-EL-facilitators and student participants. Teachers also tend to perceive this unique role in terms of risk, and those more comfortable with risk were better able to empower students through EL facilitation (Stan & Humberstone, 2011).

Most teachers receive no pre-service training related to EL (Ateşkan & Lane, 2016), and many studies emphasized the need for this kind of prior experience (Anderson et al., 2006; Griffin & Symington, 1997; Tal, 2004; Tal & Morag, 2009; Tal, Levin-Peled, & Levy, 2019). Where teachers are given collaborative training and PD related to EL facilitation, they are better able to integrate classroom content, lead with confidence, and employ EL theory and best practices (Ateşkan & Lane, 2016).

The way that a teacher performs as an EL facilitator is influenced by their perceptions and concerns (Anderson & Zhang, 2003; Anderson et al., 2006; Ateşkan & Lane, 2016; Michie, 1998; Storksdiek, 2001). According to the literature, often teachers are unclear about EL facilitation roles and responsibilities (Anderson & Zhang, 2003), and need to experience the benefit of EL for their own growth and development (Sibthorp et al, 2015).

School leadership is instrumental to the success of any school initiative, and the most effective forms of leadership in the EL context are typically collaborative and informal (Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). Leaders have the unique ability to facilitate targeted PD (Zhang & Brundrett, 2010), to articulate the school's vision for individual programs (Boerema, 2006), and provide needed administrative support for teachers as EL facilitators (Tal et al., 2019).

Context and Background for Program Evaluation Study

Following a literature review, a concept map was created to illustrate the contributing factors related to the problem of practice. This map informed a needs assessment study designed and implemented at Kaplan. This study addressed four research questions and served to gather data in four related areas: how teachers understand and define EL at Kaplan, what concerns teachers have related to EL, how teacher perceive their level of preparation as EL facilitators, and how teachers view leadership and support given by administrators related to EL programming.

This mixed method needs assessment study included a survey instrument and participant interviews. Data analysis revealed that EL is in fact an integral part of Kaplan's educational program. Importantly, teachers indicated that they understood the value of EL for student learning, while also demonstrating basic knowledge of EL theory and best practices. Teachers' primary concerns were related to the efficacy of the EL program overall and the need for more curricular integration. Specifically, participants in this study stressed three major needs: the need for vision and values related to EL at Kaplan, the need for more planning and intentionality, and the need for strong leadership to facilitate PD in EL best practices. Based on the needs assessment, a literature review was conducted to explore research on PD related to EL design and facilitation. Additionally, this literature review examined studies for evidence of curricular integration of EL themes and goals.

Theoretical Framework

The literature review was informed by Guskey's (1986) model of the process of teacher change and Kolb's (1984) EL theory. According to Guskey (1986), for PD to be meaningful to teachers, they need to see evidence of student learning outcomes. This finding aligned with those

in the needs assessment study, where Kaplan's teachers expressed their desire for training and better integration in order to positively impact student learning. Teachers are also pragmatic about PD and are often looking for information and strategies that they can put into immediate use (Guskey, 2002).

Kolb's (1984) seminal research on EL theory underscored the iterative, four-stage cycle of learning by doing. In particular, Kolb (1984) stressed the need for reflection as a key component of EL activities. Effective PD related to EL should model pedagogical strategies that are being asked of teachers as EL facilitators.

The literature review highlighted characteristics of effective PD, which can be defined as sustained, collaborative, best done in context, and focused on student learning outcomes (Avalos, 2011; Borko et al, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Furman Shaharabani & Tal, 2017; Penuel et al., 2007; Wayne et al., 2008; Yoon et al., 2007). This review focused on the impact of PD on teacher learning (Fishman et al., 2003), on student learning (Yoon et al., 2007), and on teacher collaboration (Stoll et al., 2006). Moreover, PD that is long-term and sustained over time is more favorably perceived by teachers and better overall for students (Taitelbaum et al., 2008).

Examples of PD that support EL were also reviewed. In training teachers to facilitate EL, PD can play an important role in giving positive first impressions (Girvan et al., 2016), cultivating reflective practice (Mathew et al., 2017; Stoll et al., 2006), and reinforcing the value of first-hand experience (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). In a study that compared inexperienced teachersas-EL-facilitators to experienced ones, the researchers found that teachers with prior experience in EL facilitation practiced strategies that were more student-oriented (Tal

& Argaman, 2005). Consequently, these teachers were able to create more meaningful learning experiences for students in the long run (Tal & Argaman, 2005).

Following this literature review, a collaborative program evaluation (Worthen, 1990) was proposed to study ongoing improvement efforts related to EL programming at Kaplan. In the form of action research, this study would both support and evaluate the design, enactment, and curricular integration by teachers as EL facilitators.

Research Design & Methodology

Informed by the research, this program evaluation study was designed to detect teacher engagement in EL design and enactment before, during, and after PD, document the integration of EL themes (emphasized on school trips) within classroom curricula and in alignment with Kaplan's mission, and collect resources and analyze strategies for other teachers to emulate as part of the scale-up effort to improve EL at Kaplan in the future. Specifically, this study would address research questions related to process and outcomes. These research questions are listed below:

RQ1. To what extent was the evaluation implemented with fidelity as planned?

RQ2. In what ways did participants respond to the evaluation?

RQ3. In what ways did participants as co-designers perceive the quality of delivery of the EL improvement program?

RQ4. What changes, if any, to classroom curricula were made by participants, and were these changes consistent with EL theory as emphasized in the PD and/or reflective of Kaplan's vision for EL programing?

RQ5. What resources, if any, were produced by teachers to facilitate EL integration into classroom curricula?

RQ6. What principles for curricular integration emerged from the program evaluation that support the effort to improve the EL program writ large at Kaplan?

Nine participants were partners in this collaborative program evaluation. Notably, one of the participants was the new senior level administrator tasked with overseeing EL at Kaplan. Following a logic model plan, data were collected over the course of eight months during the 2021-2022 school year. The original plan had to be amended due to contextual changes because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the spirit of the original plan was honored, and this study represented over 25 hours of participant engagement. Participants in this study taught 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students, and traveled on corresponding grade level trips during the spring semester. These week-long trips were informed by grade level thematic questions and were staffed by Kaplan teachers as EL co-facilitators.

Data collected during this mixed methods study was both quantitative and qualitative, and included field notes from observations, responses to survey instruments, interviews, and artifacts. These data were analyzed in relation to three major constructs: teacher responsiveness to PD, curriculum and resource design, and best practices for curricular integration of EL. The analysis of minimal secondary data also informed this study. In following member check protocols (Murphey & Falout, 2010), this collaborative evaluation was perceived by participants as action research.

Analysis of data was ongoing and included descriptive statistics of quantitative results. Qualitative data were analyzed for emergent codes and specific utterances were tallied for frequency. Observations were interpreted using a modified framework originally developed by Tal et al. (2014) that included three components: planning, pedagogy, and activity. Specific observations were then organized by subcomponents.

Findings and Discussion

Integrated findings from this evaluation study were organized by research question. Despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the study was implemented with fidelity. Participants generally responded positively to this study and emphasized their desire for more positive collaboration with colleagues, such as they experienced in this evaluation. This study was able to document specific cases of changes to classroom curricula and evidence of integrative efforts made by teachers. Some participants created resources related to the goals of this study, including lesson plans, unique EL student materials, and presentations.

Three principles for curricular integration emerged because of this study: the need for ongoing leadership and vision, the need for ongoing targeted PD, and the need for collaborative, purposeful planning. These principles were in line with needs identified by teachers earlier in the needs assessment study.

The findings of this study clearly indicate that in hiring a senior level administrator to oversee EL, Kaplan was able provide the leadership and support it needed to continue meaningful improvements to the EL program. This administrator facilitated processes that yielded the creation of grade level thematic questions and pillars of practice for EL at Kaplan. This visionary leader also implemented sustained PD around EL design and enactment, most in partnership with a nationally recognized EL organization.

The ongoing improvement work continues to be most effective when it is collaborative, and this collaboration is what teachers at Kaplan are looking for. Such collaboration is centered around purposeful planning, where activities, lessons, and trips are intentionality designed and integrated within classrooms.

Conclusions and Implications

This study documented short-term and intermediate outcomes. Short term outcomes included participants' increased knowledge of EL as a theoretical concept, participants' increased knowledge of EL curricular integration strategies, and measurable changes in participants' sense of self-efficacy related to EL improvement and integration efforts. Intermediate outcomes included finding evidence of integrated lessons and themes of EL trips within classroom curricula, and a PD presentation for faculty related to EL.

Overall, this collaborative evaluation study was meaningful for Kaplan teachers and leaders. It served as a model for future improvement work and underscored remaining needs and effective strategies. Implications for other similar schools include reinforcing the idea that visionary leadership in EL is effective in moving the needle toward progress, that training and first-hand experience for teachers as EL facilitators is critical, and that curricular integration of EL relies on purposeful planning. This planning should focus on front-loading experiences for students, scalable resources, contextual experiences for students and teachers, and opportunities for post-experience student reflection.

Integrating Experience: Supporting Teachers as Experiential Learning Co-Facilitators in their Collaborative Work to Design, Enact, and Integrate the Lessons of Experience within Classroom Curricula

Chapter 1

Experiential learning (EL) plays a significant role in the 21st century school experience. Since the foundational work of Dewey, "learning by doing" has been a hallmark of progressive American education (Dewey, 1938; Kloss, 2018). Piaget, too, in his work related to students and intrinsic motivation, noted that children learn best actively (Piaget, 1964; Wadsworth, 1978). EL takes many forms, including place-based learning, field trips, outdoor learning, outdoor adventure education (OAE), and service-learning (Alon & Tal, 2016; Ateşkan & Lane, 2016; Furco, 1996; Michie, 1998; Neill & Dias, 2001; Powers, 2004; Tal et al., 2005). These EL activities and programs are premised on the belief that cultivating student motivation and positive self-concept requires active, experiential participation by students. Though there is some debate about the relationship between student motivation and academic achievement, the correlation is decidedly a positive one (Affum-Osei, 2014; Tella, 2007). Kolb and Kolb (2009) have also demonstrated that EL supports student meta-cognition. On a deeper level, EL provides fertile ground for the realization of more meaningful goals, such as the development of character (Neill & Dias, 2001; Sibthorp et al., 2015), critical thinking skills (Jakubowski, 2003; Odom et al., 2014), and a concern for justice (Furco, 1996).

EL facilitators, who are most often teachers, are critical to the efficacy of EL initiatives (Anderson et al., 2006; Brown, 2002; Griffin & Symington, 1997; Stan, 2009; Vernon, 2016). In many cases, teachers are responsible for leading EL experiences and must manage logistics, budgets, and curriculum (Anderson & Zhang, 2003; Bogler, 2001; Tal & Morag, 2009; Zhang &

Brundrett, 2010). When EL facilitators are not properly trained or supported, their perceptions and practice are impacted (Brackenburg et al., 1994; Griffin & Symington, 1997; Stan, 2009; Stan & Humberstone, 2011; Storksdieck, 2001). Teachers often have real concerns about EL, including anxiety related to preparation (Storksdieck, 2001), risk (Stan & Humberstone, 2011), finding class coverage during their absence (Mitchie, 1998), costs (Anderson & Zhang, 2003), and meaningful student learning (Tal et al., 2005).

In contrast, when facilitators are prepared and empowered, the benefits of EL for students are clear. An empowered EL facilitator is confident (Anderson et al., 2006), reflective (Tal & Morag, 2009), and able to embody a variety of facilitative roles (Thomas, 2010). Benefits of empowered EL facilitators for students include enhanced understanding (Anderson et al., 2006), student empowerment (Tal et al., 2014), engaged learning in natural environments (Ateşkan & Lane, 2016; Tal & Morag, 2009), and the development of positive attitudes about self and community (Furco, 1996). Part of EL facilitator preparation must include a thorough understanding of EL theory and best practices (Brown, 2002; Neill & Dias, 2001; Rea, 2009; Sibthorp et al., 2015).

Problem of Practice

Independent schools have a unique degree of freedom (Boerema, 2006; Decoux & Holdaway, 1999; Shakeel & DeAngelis, 2017) and resources (Davies & Davies, 2014; Pizarro Milan & Davies, 2017) to prioritize and support EL. Kaplan Academy (hereafter referred to as "Kaplan")[1], a progressive, 6-12 Jewish day school in a large city in the American Southwest, has made EL a hallmark of its mission and curriculum. In fact, school leaders—including myself— have devoted a significant portion of Kaplan's operating budget (about 10%) to the funding of this EL program. Generally speaking, EL at Kaplan closely aligns with the definition of informal

11

learning, i.e., learning that is open-ended, experiential, social and primarily driven by student choice (Griffin & Symington, 1997; Rea, 2009; Tal et al., 2014; Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). Kaplan's commitment to EL is exemplified by numerous field trips, weekend retreats, outdoor adventure trips, service-learning trips, cross-cultural exchange programs, and other extracurricular activities. Nevertheless, anecdotal evidence from my day-to day practice at Kaplan suggested to me that teachers at Kaplan had growing concerns related to the purpose of the EL program and its relevance and alignment to classroom learning.

Teachers at Kaplan act as both EL leaders and co-facilitators. Those teachers who serve as EL leaders at Kaplan are responsible for planning, managing, and reviewing individual trips and activities. All teachers at Kaplan are also EL co-facilitators and are contractually required to travel two to three times a year with students. Some teachers travel more frequently than this. On these trips, teachers-as-EL-facilitators are required to collaborate with other teachers, share supervisory duties, participate in EL opportunities with students, and co-lead reflective activities.

Originally, it seemed to me that despite their frequent engagement with EL, many teachers at Kaplan struggled to articulate why the EL curriculum existed and what student learning outcomes it supported. Some teachers, however, did seem to have a better understanding of EL at Kaplan. These teachers believed that, ideally, EL should cultivate student growth and maturity, reinforce critical thinking skills, and facilitate the development of a social justice mindset.

In my previous informal conversations with teachers, few knew that EL is discussed in Kaplan's student handbook. There it states that Kaplan's EL curriculum contributes to making education meaningful and relevant to young learners because it inspires strong character, self-motivation, confidence, and positive risk-taking. In the school's philosophy of education,

published on the official website, EL is defined as action, reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis. The school's specific goals and objectives for each trip and experience are inconsistent, however, and may change from year to year, depending on who is in-charge of planning and organizing each EL trip.

Consequently, in recent years, a growing number of teachers at Kaplan began to express concerns about the EL program as it stood, with some calling for significant cutbacks, both in time spent and in resources allocated. Among the concerns teachers expressed were excessive time commitments, strained financial support, poor curricular alignment, lack of adequate preparation, and negligible overall student impact. Early on, I wondered if these teacher concerns might have been exacerbated by a general lack of knowledge related to EL theory and best practices and also by a misunderstanding of the themes and goals of Kapan's EL curriculum writ large.

Theoretical Framework

The framework that aligns most usefully in grounding and delineating the scope of this dissertation study is ecological systems theory (EST). As originally articulated by Bronfenbrenner (1976), and later adapted and expanded by Neal & Neal (2013), EST has two related yet distinct approaches that allowed me to describe competing and complementary factors related to the perceived need of teachers to understand the theory, practice, and learning benefits of EL.

EST: A Nested Approach

Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) were clear about the centrality of experience in a systems approach to understanding human learning and development. These experiences

crystalize in "the realm of feelings—anticipations, forebodings, hopes, doubts, or personal beliefs" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 796). These feelings

> apply to activities in which we engage… [and] are emotionally loaded… A significant
> body of research evidence indicates that such positive and negative subjective forces,
> evolving in the past, can also contribute in powerful ways to shaping the course of
> development in the future. (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, pp. 796-797)

Bronfenbrenner and Morris's (2006) person-process-context-time model similarly grounds the forces of proximal processes (i.e., reciprocal interactions) in human development to the active experiences of the focal individual, where meaningful engagement in EL actually takes place.

Bronfenbrenner (1976) invoked a nested model of systems to describe the environment of the learner (p. 5). Though the nested model has its limitations, its value lies in categorizing successive levels of context that impact the focal individual. While the focal individual in EST models is typically the student or child (Bronfenbrenner, 1976), in the context of my problem of practice the focal individual is the teacher-as-EL-facilitator. Teachers, like students, are still very much learners. Just as surrounding environments influence students, teachers also experience their roles in the context of interactions with students, colleagues, administrators, and parents with elements specific to those proximal interactions. These relationships, i.e., teacher to student, or administrator to teacher, are microsystems in an EST model. One relevant example might be the relationships teachers have with field or museum trip guides, where they share reciprocal feelings of accomplishment and concern related to their facilitation of EL. Tal et al. (2014) highlighted such teacher-guide collaboration in a qualitative study on exemplary EL practices in Israel. After analyzing 62 field trips of students in grades 4-8, and conducting observations and interviews with participants, they found that effective teachers were actively involved in

planning and negotiation with guides, both acting as EL gatekeepers and mediators (Tal et al., 2014).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1976), the mesosystem is a "system of microsystems" (p. 6). In this case, the mesosystem represents multiple interacting microsystems; for example, when the interactions between administrators and parents influence a teacher's relationship with an administrator. When parents express concerns about EL programing to administrators, those concerns can shape decisions and directives issued by administrators toward teachers. Similarly, how administrators direct and coach their teachers impacts how teachers relate to each other and students in EL contexts (Zhang & Brundrett, 2010).

The exosystem represents both formal and informal social systems that fundamentally delineate educational (or, experiential) opportunities for the focal individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1976). In the case of EL, factors included in the exosystem might be school budget and funding, school vision and mission, curriculum related to EL, professional development, and pre-service teacher education. Teachers are impacted by all these factors, and rarely have the ability to shape the consequential decisions or parameters determined at the exosystem level.

The macrosystem is a broad institutional and societal network of cultures and subcultures (Bronfenbrenner, 1976). Within this system, teacher perceptions and concerns related to EL design, enactment, and curricular alignment include their beliefs about what school is and means, generational characteristics and influencers, and social perceptions related to college readiness. Teachers, as members of society, may hold underlying beliefs about what constitutes an effective or normal education, and these beliefs may not include concepts, strategies, and practices best suited to EL.

Rea (2008), in a qualitative study on outdoor EL, found that teachers sometimes struggle to facilitate effective informal activities because they approach the experience too much like the formalized schooling they are accustomed to. A researcher in the United Kingdom, Rea (2008) criticized a governmental mandate on outdoor learning that attempted to overly formalize what is essentially informal learning. Participants in his study included children and teachers at a residential outdoor learning center in England. Rea (2008) gathered and analyzed ethnographic data, including lesson plans, publicity materials, written policies, interviews, site visits and observations, and informal conversations. He concluded that the government's formalization of outdoor learning encouraged outdoor education centers to become increasingly similar to schools (Rea, 2008, p. 48). Rea (2008) found this especially problematic, as he argues that the power of outdoor learning lies in its informality.

Teachers, like their students, also belong to particular demographic generations that may have unique or differing outlooks on EL. Hunter-Jones (2012) studied learner engagement with EL in three generations: X, Y, and Z. Specifically, she analyzed ethnographic data gathered between 1991 and 2010 to draw conclusions about generational impacts on EL. Using a formal learning log, Hunter-Jones (2012) gathered unstructured information on learner outcomes related to seven unique experiential learning projects. Among her findings, Hunter-Jones (2012) noted that a learner's ability to benefit from EL may depend on their generational affiliation, and often, learners may be insufficiently equipped to know what to look for in EL. Hunter-Jones' (2012) findings demonstrated a sliding scale of learner engagement in experiential learning for each successive generation. In particular, she described Generation Y as more individualistic, formulaic, and competitive. Many teachers today are Generation Y and, as such, may be threatened by the informality and unpredictability of EL projects (Hunter-Jones, 2012).

Finally, the chronosystem encompasses the passage of time and any attendant changes or consistencies that the focal individual experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). In the problem of teacher perceptions and concerns related to EL design, enactment, and curricular alignment, the chronosystem relates to how teachers become increasingly familiar with EL over time, take on (or are given) greater responsibilities in planning and leadership, and develop a global perspective of the institutional EL curriculum in toto. Since the inception of the EL program at Kaplan almost 20 years ago, school leaders have modified, reorganized, and articulated the EL curriculum in a variety of ways over time.

Beginning with the focal individual, the nested EST model articulated above is useful in visualizing concentric levels of context around the teacher-as-EL-facilitator. This model is illustrated in Figure 1 below. In the diagram, I have expanded each system, or level of context, to include a list of relevant elements, and represented the chronosystem as a dotted line along which the focal individual moves in time.

Figure 1

Problem of Practice: Nested Model

WEINSTEIN-SEARS, 2020
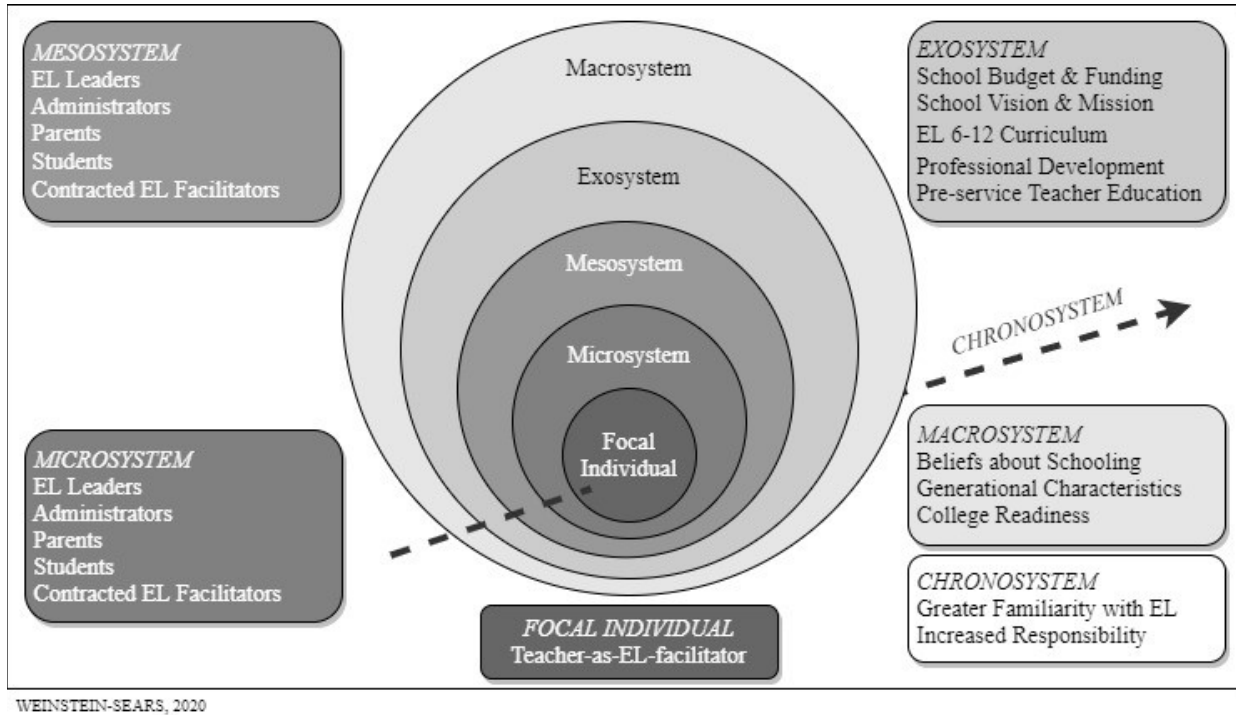
EST: A Networked Approach

In a more recent development to EST, Neal and Neal (2013) questioned Bronfenbrenner's (1976) nested model, arguing that networked systems better illustrate the relationships and influencing elements of environments surrounding the focal individual. The strength of the networked model lies in its ability to illustrate relationships between different microsystems. Interactions between microsystems form a separate mesosystem of relationships and their associated elements. In my context, teachers relate to a number of important EL stakeholders in a variety of microsystem relationships. Teachers-as-EL-facilitators interact with students, parents, administrators, trip leaders, and contracted EL facilitators. This web of relationships constitutes the mesosystem, and a networked EST model is helpful in conceptualizing and analyzing these interactions.

As mentioned earlier, some teachers in my context also serve as EL trip leaders. Both teachers-as-facilitators and teachers-as-EL-leaders are influenced by their level of training and preparation, their roles as EL facilitators, and their perceptions and concerns about EL. In addition, teachers-as-EL-leaders have a unique working relationship with school administrators vis-à-vis budgeting, logistical planning, and accountability. Furthermore, teachers-as-EL-leaders are influenced by their own concept of leadership, especially as it relates to developing and implementing PD related to EL for their colleagues.

Not all stakeholders in this mesosystem relate to each other, as is made clear in Figure 2 below, though teachers relate to all stakeholders in some way. Figure 2 illustrates the most relevant factors that relate to teachers-as-EL-facilitators, and those that relate to teachers-as-EL-leaders. I will examine these emergent factors in light of the literature in the section that follows.

Figure 2

Problem of Practice: Networked Model
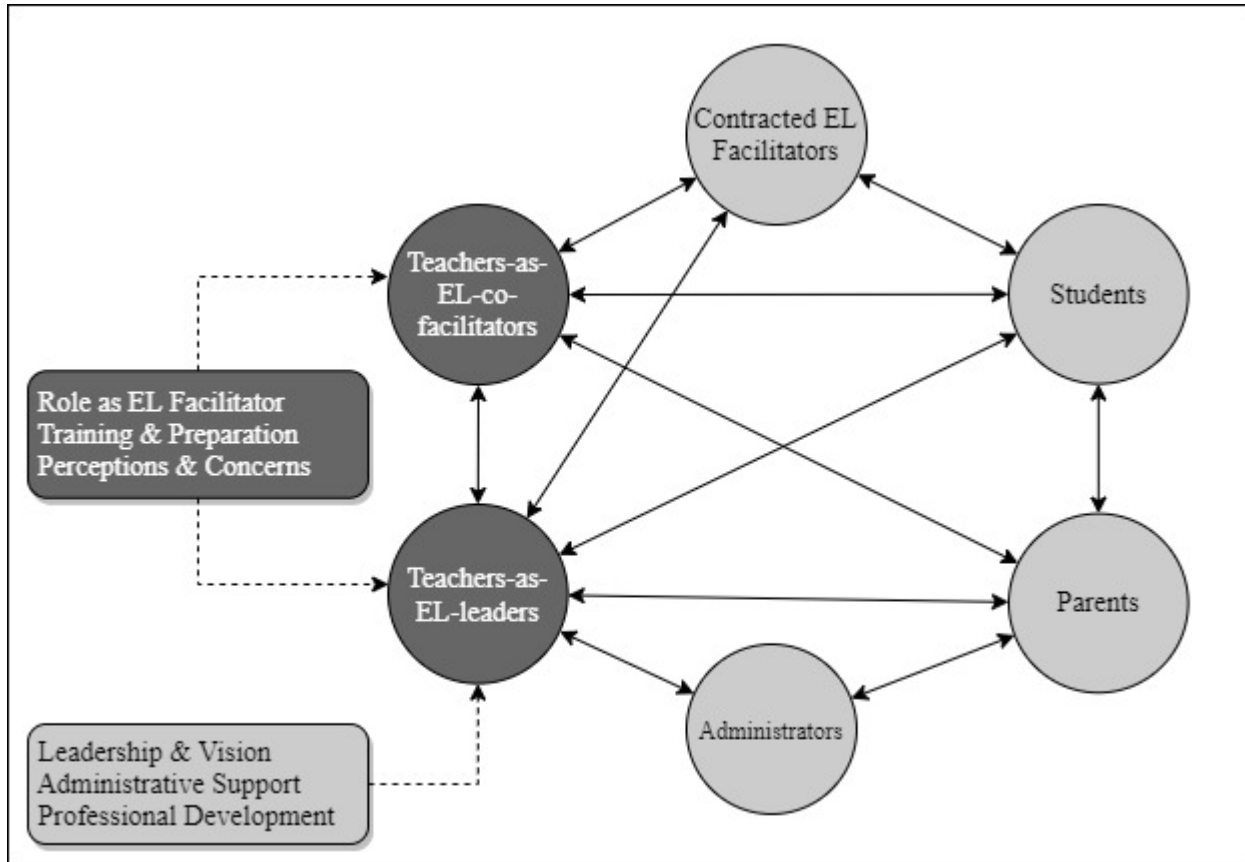
WEINSTEIN-SEARS, 2021

Literature Review

The literature on EL is extensive. Educator, philosopher, and progressive reformer John Dewey was perhaps the first to articulate a vision for EL in contrast to traditional pedagogies of his day. In *Experience and Education*, Dewey (1938) described "progressive education as a plan of learning by experience [emphasis added]" (p. 26). In discussing the role of the teacher, he wrote that "when education is based upon experience and educative [sic] experience is seen to be a social process, the situation changes radically… The teacher loses the position of external boss or dictator but takes on that of leader of group activities" (Dewey, 1938, p. 58). Dewey (1938)

believed that the teacher is an active participant in EL and occupies a unique position of agency and responsibility in framing the interactions, activities, and communication experienced by participants.

Role as EL Facilitator

At the nexus of the EST model is the focal individual, which in this case is the teacher-as-EL-facilitator. As mentioned earlier, while only some teachers in my context serve as EL-leaders, all teachers at Kaplan are expected to act as EL facilitators. This facilitation role happens in a variety of settings, many of which may be novel and unfamiliar to Kaplan's teachers. Teachers must therefore apprehend their roles as EL facilitators as those with "a peculiar [i.e., special] responsibility" (Dewey, 1938, p. 58).

A qualitative study by Brown (2002) highlighted the special power dynamics that EL facilitators must consider. Participants in Brown's study included nine teenage students and one group facilitator on an outdoor adventure trip from an independent boys' school in Australia. Brown (2002) analyzed a group discussion in the round, conducted on a riverbank prior to a canoeing activity. His analysis focused on facilitator-student power dynamics. He discovered that the way students participated in EL (i.e., initiation-response-evaluation) was shaped by the leader, who he described as a gatekeeper (Brown, 2002). Initiation-response-evaluation is, of course, a traditional approach to teacher discourse, typically employed in formal education (Brown, 2002). Brown (2002) defined the role of gatekeeper as central, in that it created and limited opportunities for discussion, evaluation of student contributions, and production of shared knowledge.

Stan (2009) extended the study above when she examined the role of facilitators in outdoor learning activities by deconstructing their interactions and strategies with students. Her

research was conducted at an outdoor learning center in rural England and involved 14 different school groups. Each group consisted of pupils aged six to 12 years old that were accompanied by two teacher chaperones, who often facilitated group activities. Group activities included problem-solving exercises, orienteering, and on-site cleaning work.

Employing an ethnographic approach, Stan (2009) grouped her findings into three thematic categories: the detached facilitation approach, the controlling facilitation approach, and the part-of-the-team facilitation approach. Stan (2009) summarized the main characteristics of each approach to facilitation and discovered that the first two approaches negatively impacted student learning. Conversely, the part-of-the-team approach contributed to overall learning efficacy, as these teachers demonstrated balanced levels of involvement in the activities and high levels of flexibility and investment in the learning process (Stan, 2009). When facilitators placed themselves inside the group, they fostered a learning environment where participants felt affirmed and free to be themselves (Stan, 2009).

Similarly, in their phenomenological study, Vernon and Seaman (2012) utilized an in-depth interview approach to gather information from five veteran OAE participants. This information included data related to their life histories, details from various experiences, and reflections of meaning related to EL in the outdoors. The authors' analysis emphasized that the role of facilitator as perceived by the participants is intrinsically collaborative and participatory, where co-instruction is best described as a negotiated relationship (Vernon & Seaman, 2012).

In a qualitative study conducted in a residential outdoor learning center in the United Kingdom, Stan and Humberstone (2011) observed 16 different visiting groups with students of primary school age (six to 10 years old). These observations were conducted in three phases, where small groups of school children stayed at the outdoor center for two and a half days at a

time. The authors collected ethnographic data, including notes kept in fieldwork diaries and transcriptions of semi-structured interviews of participants.

In their analysis of the data, Stan and Humberstone (2011) demonstrated that teachers must be comfortable with a certain amount of risk that is associated with EL. They found that when teachers took a controlling approach to facilitating activities in order to manage the perceived risks (e.g., falling, getting hurt, getting lost, threat of litigation, etc.) their approach tended to result in the disempowerment of the students. Most teachers who were concerned about perceived risks were focused on students' physical safety. Interestingly, Stan and Humberstone (2011) noted that most teachers they observed had no prior training or experience in outdoor education. Stan and Humberstone suggested there may be causation between the participants' lack of experience with this type of EL, and the perceptions and concerns expressed by teachers in this study.

Teacher Training & Preparation

Teacher training and preparation are essential to the effective implementation of EL (Anderson et al., 2006; Griffin & Symington, 1997; Tal, 2004; Tal & Morag, 2009; Tal, Levin-Peled, & Levy, 2019). In a seminal study on teachers and field trips, Michie (1998) specifically identified the need for greater teacher preparation and training. In a series of interviews with 28 science educators, Michie (1998) employed an interpretivist methodology to draw conclusions about the influences on teachers who plan field trips. Among the most important factors he identified, Michie (1998) highlighted class size, budgetary concerns, administrative support, and training and professional development. Twenty years later, Ateşkan and Lane (2016) cited research demonstrating the continuation of this need, i.e., most pre-service teachers are not given training on how to plan or utilize field trips. Importantly, in their interviews with 32 pre-service

biology teachers in Turkey, the authors found that most respondents strongly agreed that their pre-service training positively impacted their own planning and preparation of field trips (Ateşkan & Lane, 2016).

Numerous studies, especially those by Tal (2004; 2005; 2009; 2014; 2019) further underscore the importance of prior, pre-service experience to the efficacy of EL. The purpose of this experience-based training is two-fold, both to encourage a paradigm shift in the teacher's conceptual framework (Tal, 2004) and to provide the pedagogical wherewithal to successfully implement EL (Griffin & Symington, 1997). Moreover, when pre-service teachers do receive EL training, their overall confidence in EL and in EL facilitation are boosted.

In a qualitative study, Tal (2004) analyzed the action research project of one of her pre-service teachers within the context of an environmental education course (taught by Tal). This pre-service teacher designed a field trip experience to learn about the wetlands of Israel's Hula Valley for two groups of undergraduate students: one experimental group (11 pre-service science teachers) and one control group (13 pre-service teachers in other areas). Using an interpretative research methodology, the author reviewed data gathered from field notes, observations, interviews, and participant questionnaires. Both the author and the pre-service teacher who designed the study were especially interested in how participants' views changed before and after the field trip to the wetlands. The study demonstrated a dramatic "paradigm shift" that took place for most participants in the experimental group, where their "naive conceptions" about wetlands were challenged through direct experience (Tal, 2004, p. 136-137). Additionally, the focus pre-service teacher herself came away from the experience more motivated and equipped to effectively make use of similar EL activities with her own students in the future. According to Tal (2004), this pre-service teacher's project empowered her as an environmental educator.

Anderson et al. (2006) also studied the impact of field trip practicum experiences on pre-service teachers. More specifically, the authors wanted to understand the importance of this experience on pre-service teachers' pedagogy and beliefs about teaching and learning. Their qualitative study was conducted in a local aquarium in Canada over a three-week period. The authors gathered data from focus group discussions (both video-recorded and transcribed), written reflective pieces, and field observations. In their analysis of the data, Anderson et al. (2006) demonstrated that participation in the field trip practicum encouraged the development of a "holistic view of teaching" in these pre-service teachers (p. 351). Moreover, an unexpected finding by the authors highlighted the value of the cohort model, which helped participants develop their skills in collaborative modalities of teaching (Anderson et al, 2006).

In a related study (referenced earlier), Ateşkan and Lane (2016) examined the impact of pre-service training and field trip experience on current teachers who were alumni of Bilkent University in Turkey. Informed by research on the benefits and challenges of field trips, pre-service teacher preparation programs, and field trip confidence building, the authors sought to investigate how persistent the effects of pre-service training were on their recent teacher graduates. Ateşkan and Lane (2016) collected quantitative data through an online survey, where participants answered Likert scale questions related to teaching experience, field trip confidence levels and pre-service preparation. The authors found that all participants agreed that the integration of field trip preparation in pre-service education was important. Specifically, the participants cited preparation related to curriculum integration and methods of teaching critical thinking (Ateşkan & Lane, 2016). The authors also identified a strong correlation between these pre-service experiences and a high level of confidence felt by teachers. Where teachers in their

study felt less prepared and confident was in areas related to logistics, transportation, and budgeting (Ateşkan & Lane, 2016).

As referenced above, another factor highlighted in this literature was how educators perceive and practice alignment of EL with school curricula. In a mixed-methods study on teacher perceptions of field-trip planning and implementation, Anderson and Zhang (2003) surveyed 93 teachers who participated in a museum field trip. They utilized a three-item questionnaire and followed up with interviews and group discussions. In discussing key factors influencing the overall success of field trips, Anderson and Zhang (2003) found that teachers identified pre-planning/pre-lessons (33% of participants) and curriculum fit (22% of participants) as the most determinant of EL efficacy. Surprisingly, however, they discovered that "few teachers reported capitalizing on the field-trip experiences when back in the classroom, nor within the curriculum frameworks that were the justification for the field trip" (Anderson & Zhang, 2003, p. 8).

As evidenced in the aforementioned study, teachers may demonstrate a discontinuity between articulated philosophy and pedagogical practice. Though the authors indicate that most teachers in their study consider field trips to be highly valuable educational experiences, they clearly do make full use of those experiences when planning or implementing classroom curricula. In part, this may be explained by the fact that these teachers indicated that they believed the museum they visited was responsible (in part or in whole) to provide at-venue and post-visit activities. This suggests that teachers may struggle to understand and demonstrate how an EL program supports classroom learning because they believe they are not responsible for facilitating that alignment.

Perceptions & Concerns

A teacher's understanding of EL is associated with their perceptions and concerns (Anderson & Zhang, 2003; Anderson et al., 2006; Ateşkan & Lane, 2016; Michie, 1998; Storksdiek, 2001). As described earlier in this chapter, Michie (1998) originally documented this correlation, tying teachers' feelings of disillusionment with EL to their lack of training and administrative support. Anderson and Zhang (2003) identified discrepancies in teachers' beliefs and practices related to EL. In a mixed methods study, they found that a third of teachers expressed their belief that museums were fully responsible for planning at-venue and post-visit experiences, when museum leaders thought otherwise (Anderson & Zhang, 2003). Moreover, though teachers reported that curriculum fit was the most important factor to planning and implementing a field trip, their pedagogical practices in the classroom did not align with these beliefs (Anderson & Zhang, 2003).

In a similar study (referenced earlier), Anderson et al. (2006) found that only 23% of teachers reported that a successful field trip was one that connected to classroom curriculum, despite the fact that a majority of teachers believed that connecting to classroom curriculum was a primary motivation for the field trip in the first place. After analyzing their findings, these authors articulated four major implications, among which was communicating and collaborating with teachers prior to field trip experiences. Anderson et al. (2006) stressed that providing teachers-as-EL-facilitators with experience-specific training may have a direct impact on their perceptions and concerns related to field trips. According to the authors, the success of field trip experiences depends on "expectations, prior knowledge, and most importantly, teachers' prior attitudes toward the setting of the field trip" (Anderson et al., 2006, p. 381).

Teachers, understandably, are also concerned about student learning in the EL context, and this concern may impact teachers' overall effectiveness. Numerous studies have demonstrated that EL can foster student interest, goalsetting, self-regulation, meta-cognition, resilience, and empathy (Furco, 1996; Jakubowski, 2003; Kolb & Kolb, 2009; Neill & Dias, 2001). Nevertheless, teachers may not be aware of these connections, and that lack of understanding can impact their perceptions and concerns about EL.

A quantitative study by Sibthorp et al. (2015) examined the impact of OAE (outdoor adventure education) experiences on the capacity to regulate interest and goal direction (as a reminder, OAE experiences are…). Literature on experiential self-regulation formed the theoretical framework for the comparison of two quantitative studies by the authors. Participants in these studies included 47 college-age students enrolled in three OAE courses, and 77 college-age students enrolled in courses at the National Outdoor Leadership School in Wyoming. In their first study, the authors utilized a modified version of the Experience Sampling Method to measure interest and goal-relevance. In their second study, they used the Personal Responsibility Orientation Self-Direction Learning Scale to collect data on four aspects of self-directed learning: initiative, control, self-efficacy, and motivation (Sibthorp et al., 2015). Both studies demonstrated greater optimal engagement and SDL growth for participants enrolled in OAE, and a measurable positive impact on participants' perceptions of what is possible in a learning environment (Sibthorp et al, 2015).

Leadership, Vision & Support

In addition to an absence of teacher training, the ways in which teachers struggle to understand and/or facilitate EL may indicate institutional problems vis-à-vis school leadership and mission articulation (Boerema, 2006). Leadership includes both cultural (e.g., vision, design,

strategy, coaching, etc.) and structural (e.g., funding, logistics, training, etc.) aspects (Decoux & Holdaway, 1999; Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). In my context, leaders responsible for EL include school administrators, contracted EL facilitators (i.e., non-school personnel), and teachers-as-EL-leaders.

Zhang and Brundrett (2010) examined the perceptions and roles of school leaders in facilitating experiential leadership learning. Collecting qualitative data from 34 leaders in 18 different schools in England, the authors noted that effective EL leadership was informal and collaborative (Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). Their methods included semi-structured interviews over a period of five months. Among their findings and recommendations, the authors stressed that to be effective, school leaders should support their head teachers. The authors believed that head teachers, with the support of school leaders, must be able to analyze and understand their local context in order to establish good working relationships with their staff. Furthermore, according to the authors, effective school leaders utilize and participate in practitioner research (Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). A deficit in the use of research by practitioners (i.e., teachers and/or leaders failing to utilize and create peer-reviewed scholarship), as cited by Zhang and Brundrett (2010), is a well-known problem in education (Williams & Coles, 2017).

School administrators have the unique ability to shape the school's vision for teachers, inspiring them to collaborate and ground pedagogy in best practices (Zhang & Brundrett, 2010). Vision and mission, especially, must be articulated in order to be fully realized (Boerema, 2006). How teachers are led influences their performance, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction (Bogler, 2001). In the EL context, trip or program leaders (whether they be teacher leaders or contracted leaders) can shape teachers-as-EL-facilitators' perceptions of their roles, responsibilities, and

successes (Bogler, 2001; Tal & Morag, 2009). This influence is often accomplished through targeted PD designed to support teachers prior to EL trips and experiences.

Tal et al. (2019) studied the impact of PD on teachers' views of inquiry-based learning in outdoor environments. Inquiry-based learning, much like project-based learning, is shaped by student choice and often experiential in its approach (Tal et al., 2019). The authors of this study developed three inquiry-based PD activities, designed to challenge teachers' views of inquiry and enable them to experience and practice inquiry contexts, questions and methodologies. Four facilitators, including two co-authors of the study, led PD for 44 science teachers over two consecutive years. The authors demonstrated that teachers who participated in these PD opportunities were far more likely to develop complex views of inquiry-based learning, from 34% before the PD, to 70% after the PD (Tal, et al, 2019, p. 9). Additionally, even though most teachers recognized the value of teamwork before participating in the study, few were able to provide cogent explanations. After the PD, most teachers (86%) were able to articulate the specific benefits of collaboration in the EL context.

Interventions, such as those implemented by Anderson et al. (2006), Tal and Morag (2009), and Ateşkan and Lane (2016), point to specific strategies designed to better support teachers-as-EL-facilitators, and thereby implement a more meaningful EL curriculum. Tal et al. (2014) studied exemplary practices in field trips, categorizing their research findings according to three variables used to determine a program's efficacy: context, pedagogy, and content. This qualitative study focused on five field trips carried out in different outdoor settings in Israel, including a mountainside, two nature parks, a historical monument, and an archeological site (i.e., context). In their analysis of data collected from 62 field trips, the authors defined high quality practices as those that included activity and action, teacher involvement, use of the

environment, and the use of the field trip as a social learning opportunity (i.e., pedagogy and content). As those broadly responsible for successful EL enactment, school leaders should focus on PD for teachers that is related to such high quality practices, such as those listed above.

Concept Map

In the literature review above, utilizing an EST framework (nested and networked), I highlighted three major underlying factors related to the teacher's role as EL facilitator: 1) training and preparation, 2) perceptions and concerns, and 3) leadership, vision, and support. The first and last factors are inputs that shape the role of teacher-as-EL-facilitator, while the second factor is bidirectional and co-influential. When a teacher is empowered in their role as an EL facilitator, their perceptions about EL may change and their concerns may be mitigated to a degree. Furthermore, they are more likely to engage in EL design and enactment in meaningful ways. Doing so creates a positive feedback loop, reinforcing and strengthening a teacher's role as EL facilitator. Teachers-as-EL-facilitators who are empowered in this way are better able to facilitate the integration of EL themes and goals within classroom curricula, while also demonstrating alignment to the school's mission. These relationships and outcomes are illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Problem of Practice: Concept Map
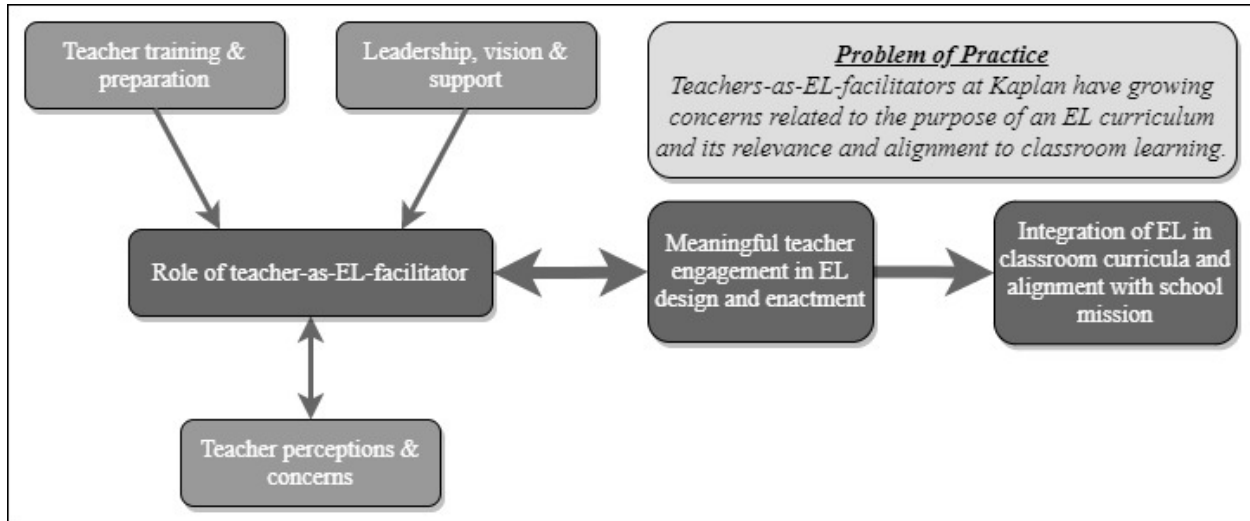
WEINSTEIN-SEARS, 2021

Summary and Rationale

Though scholarship supports the notion that EL positively impacts student learning, some teachers may struggle to understand and articulate its benefits (Anderson & Zhang, 2003; Kolb & Kolb, 2009; Michie, 1998; Stan, 2009; Tal & Morag, 2006). Others may express concerns about the enactment and/or efficacy of EL (Michie, 1998; Stan & Humberstone, 2011). Where this is true, this struggle by teachers may be explained by a lack of training and preparation (Ateşkan & Lane, 2016), inconsistent or non-existent leadership support (Zhang & Brundrett, 2006), and/or counterproductive teacher perceptions and concerns (Anderson & Zhang, 2003).

Following this literature review, I believed that teachers' hesitancy to facilitate and expand Kaplan's EL program might be reflective of their concerns related to curricular integration of EL program themes and goals. To determine the accuracy of this assumption, I designed a mixed methods needs assessment study to investigate possible contributing factors to Kaplan's teachers' growing needs and concerns related to EL design, enactment, and curricular

integration. The findings from this study would guide my decision about where best to intervene.

I recognized that teacher beliefs and concerns were not likely to change quickly, nor could

"productive" beliefs be necessarily mandated. It could be that institutional paradigm shifts,

where applicable, might turn out to be the long-term goal. Training and PD for teachers, on the

other hand, would be actionable in my context with a small measure of support. Therefore, I

determined to assess teacher needs for training and PD that had the potential to reduce teacher

EL hesitancy and potentially increase engagement. My needs assessment study is the focus of

Chapter 2.

Chapter 2

The previous chapter provided an outline of experiential learning (EL) as a concept, i.e., active, informal learning through direct experience. It defined my problem of practice as one of teacher perceptions and concerns related to EL design, enactment, and curricular alignment. Based on my own experience and previous conversations, I believed that teachers at Kaplan struggled to articulate and act on connections between EL and classroom learning. Based on the literature review in Chapter 1, it seemed to me that these teacher concerns might be attributable to three actionable factors: training and preparation, perceptions and concerns, and leadership, vision, and support. In setting out a theoretical framework, I utilized ecological systems theory (EST) to identify relationships between these factors, and thereby developed a conceptual framework for an exploratory needs assessment study.

In this chapter, I explore the many ways in which my problem of practice has played out at Kaplan by collecting empirical data from teachers. After describing the context, I articulate the purpose of the needs assessment study, including my research questions. I also explain my methodological approach to data collection and analysis—including a review of my chosen instruments—and then discuss key findings and implications. This analysis and discussion clarify and slightly modify the problem of teacher perceptions and concerns related to EL design, enactment, and curricular integration, while also providing the impetus for a second literature review in Chapter 3 related to proposed program evaluation study.

Background and Researcher Positionality

Some three years before this study, Kaplan's Head of School formed a Committee on EL to evaluate the school's EL program and to make recommendations for improvement to the senior leadership team. At that time, I was a mid-level school administrator and a classroom

teacher, and I was asked to serve on this committee. Among the list of recommendations that we submitted to the senior leadership team in 2019 was one calling for a new administrative position to spearhead proposed improvements to the EL program. In the spring of 2020, as I was designing my needs assessment study, the school hired a Director of Experiential Education (DoEE) to start in the fall of 2020.

At the same time, I was also promoted into a senior level administrative position—Head of Upper School—at Kaplan by the Head of School. This new position began immediately, and I assumed the responsibilities of the role in the late spring of 2020. I immediately reached out to the new DoEE, to share the goals of my research and she was eager to partner with me. It is important to note that at that time, the DoEE reported to the Academic Dean (and not to me) and served as a mid-level administrator and part-time classroom teacher. From the outset, I shared my theoretical framework, methodology, findings, and conclusions with the DoEE, and we spoke often about our common desire to improve EL at Kaplan.

Context

As discussed in Chapter 1, Kaplan was an independent, progressive Jewish day school in the American Southwest. During the 2019-2020 academic year, there were 547 students enrolled in grades six through 12. The teaching staff was made up of 59 professionals from a variety of backgrounds. The administrative staff included 15 people (including myself), with responsibilities over budgets, logistics, teacher supervision, and curriculum development. My needs assessment study was directed primarily at teachers who had experience facilitating and facilitating EL at Kaplan.

Purpose of Study

Following a review of relevant literature (Chapter 1), I developed a conceptual framework that identified three contributing factors related to teachers-as-EL-facilitators' understanding, enactment, and curricular integration of EL: 1) training and preparation, 2) perceptions and concerns, and 3) leadership, vision, and support. I designed my needs assessment study to investigate these factors in my context at Kaplan. In particular, I sought answers to the following research questions:

RQ1. How do teachers understand and define EL in general and in my context?

RQ2. What concerns do teachers have about EL in my context?

RQ3. How do teachers perceive their level of preparation for and roles as EL co-facilitators?

RQ4. To what degree do teachers perceive administrative leadership and support as important to the success of EL in my context?

Method

In this section, I provide an account of the methods used to explore my research questions. I include details on participants, measures and instrumentation, and procedure, which includes methods of data collection and data analysis.

Participants

As mentioned in Chapter 1, all teachers in my context are required to participate in EL, including field trips and one week-long trip in either the winter (outdoor adventure) or spring (cultural/service-learning). Some teachers serve as trip planners and leaders, though most

participate primarily as chaperones. As in the previous chapter, I will continue to refer to these teachers-as-chaperones as EL facilitators.

In soliciting participation for my needs assessment study, I invited all teachers at Kaplan to participate by email. I sent the email to an all faculty and staff list serve that included all Kaplan faculty and staff members (147 total recipients). Of the 59 total teaching faculty included on the e-mail list serve, 36 individuals completed the survey. This sample included teachers in both the middle and upper schools, and all participants indicated that they had participated in EL activities at Kaplan. Of these 36 participants (n=36), 34 (94%) were teachers and two (6%) were teacher-administrators. (Some faculty members at Kaplan serve as both classroom teachers and mid-level school administrators.)

Though seven senior level administrators also participated in the survey, I chose not to include their responses in my data analysis, as my focus was exclusively on teacher perceptions or and concerns about EL. The administrators' responses were distinct and interesting, especially in ways that they differed from those of teachers. However, as these findings were beyond the scope of this investigation, I decided to reserve these data for future study.

Six people agreed to participate in follow up interviews by Zoom. These participants contacted the DoEE (as an honest broker) directly, who then sent the names of willing volunteers to me by email. Only five people were able to attend these Zoom interviews, as one volunteer had schedule conflicts and was unable to reschedule a time to meet. All interview participants were teachers, and two people had experience leading grade-level EL trips at Kaplan.

Measures & Instrumentation

Constructs

I designed measures and instrumentation to explore the three constructs that were identified in Chapter 1: 1) training and preparation, 2) perceptions and concerns, and 3) leadership, vision, and support. As indicated previously, teacher perceptions and concerns may be shaped by personal beliefs, concerns about student learning outcomes, and administrative support. Of particular interest to me were teacher beliefs related to teacher knowledge of EL theory and best practices, as well as teacher perceptions of the role of teacher-as-EL-facilitator. Multiple studies have demonstrated that teacher preparation and training shapes the method and efficacy of EL (Ateşkan & Lane, 2016; Furman Shaharabani & Tal, 2017; Tal & Morag, 2009). Similarly, the way teachers as EL facilitators are led and supported by administrators and/or EL leaders impacts overall outcomes. Theses constructs were explored in more depth as part of my needs assessment study.

Survey Instrument

Originally, I had planned to conduct an ethnographic needs assessment study, observing and documenting EL at Kaplan in real-time. In so doing, my approach would be similar to studies by Tal, Bamberger, and Morag (2005), Anderson, Lawson, and Mayer-Smith (2006), Stan and Humberstone (2011), Vernon (2015), and others. However, as I was designing my needs assessment study, the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic led to Kaplan's closure of in-person classes and cancellation of all EL in-person trips and activities. Given these circumstances, I decided instead to gather data remotely by way of an online survey instrument and interviews by Zoom. The use of a survey instrument was inspired by Anderson et al. (2006), Ateşkan & Lane (2016), Michie (1998), and others.

In May and June of 2020, I sent an anonymous, Google Forms survey to all teachers in my context. I designed the survey items myself, with items intended to provide data on my four research questions. At the beginning of the survey, I included a statement of purpose, described the format, and noted the survey's confidentiality. Part I of the survey included two preliminary questions, requesting the participant's role (teacher and/or administrator) and their experience with EL at Kaplan and in the past. (For the purpose of this study, I would only analyze data collected from self-identified teachers.)

Part II of the survey included 15 Likert scale items related to EL in my context. Inspired by research by Ateşkan & Lane (2016), and grounded in my own experiences at Kaplan, I created items that aligned with the three factors mentioned earlier: training and preparation (questions 9, 10, & 13), leadership vision and support (questions 1, 6, 7, 8, & 12), and teacher perceptions and concerns (questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 14, & 15). In Part III of the survey, I included four short, open-ended response questions to complement the quantitative data collected in Part II. (The full list of questions on the survey are included in Appendix A.)

Interviews

Employing a research method similar to that of Storksdiek (2001) and Stan and Humberstone (2011), I also conducted semi-structured, open-ended interviews with teachers in order to gain a deeper understanding of the survey data. I used question prompts that I created myself to begin each interview. From there, my conversations with teachers continued organically. Initial structured questions that I used included:

- Is experiential learning a concept you are familiar with?

- What is required of you as an experiential learning co-facilitator?

- What has been your experience of experiential learning at this school?

I have included the full list of question prompts that I used during these interviews in Appendix B.

Procedure

Participant Selection Process

Participants were directly recruited by me by e-mail using an "All Faculty" list serve. I was not able to see who opened or read my invitation email. In the email, I explained the purpose of my research and included a link to the survey instrument. In the first question on the survey, I asked participants to identify their role at the school, i.e., either "teacher" or "administrator." As I indicated earlier, for this needs assessment study I would focus exclusively on teachers' responses. I therefore eliminated participants from the study who identified solely as "administrator." 36 participants remained, where 34 participants identified as "teacher" and two participants identified as "teacher" and "administrator."

In the same email, I requested volunteers for one-on-one and focus group Zoom interviews to be scheduled later. I directed all interview volunteers to contact the Kaplan's DoEE directly by email. This administrator collected these emails, and randomly selected participants for my interviews. She then sent these names to me in order to schedule meetings by Zoom. I am not aware of how many volunteers contacted the DoEE. Though I am a division adminstrator and many participants would report to me within the organization, the use of the DoEE as an honest broker mitigated potential adverse power dynamics at play in this needs assessment study.

Data Collection Methods

I collected quantitative data for this needs assessment study from the survey instrument created by me using Google Forms and shared by e-mail with participants. Responses were

recorded over a 10-day period, between May 27, 2020 and June 5, 2020. I sent two reminder emails to all faculty during this time as well. I kept the data collected on Google Forms confidential and de-identified, and I stored all data electronically on Google Sheets within my personal Google Drive account. I collected qualitative data from open-ended survey questions on the same survey (see Appendix A).

Interviews with teachers took place on July 1-2, 2020. I conducted these interviews using the Zoom video conferencing platform, and stored audio recordings electronically. I began each interview by reviewing institutional review board (IRB) protocols verbally. I emailed each participant a copy of the consent form and then used the screen-sharing function to review the contents of the form, before asking for their verbal consent. After receiving this verbal consent, I initiated each conversation by using questions from Appendix B. Conversations lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. I conducted one one-on-one interview (with one participant, INT 1) and two group interviews (with two each, or four total group interview participants, INT 2 and INT 3).

Data Analysis

After collecting data (both quantitative and qualitative), I compared my findings following a mixed methods approach. This integrative approach involved organizing, analyzing, and presenting these data.

Quantitative Data. I manually recorded data collected from the Likert scale items (on Google Forms) to a Google Sheets spreadsheet, where I was able to run calculations and make comparisons. I analyzed responses (n=36) with descriptive statistics, including means, medians, modes, and ranges (see Table 1 below). I also labeled each question with its corresponding construct and organized the table accordingly.

Table 1

Needs Assessment Survey: Likert Scale Items

Q. #	Construct	Likert Scale Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
9	Training & Preparation	Teachers receive regular training related to experiential learning.	1.7	1	1	3
10	Training & Preparation	I have prior experience (i.e., before coming to this school) as an experiential learning facilitator (or co-facilitator).	2.4	1	1	4
13	Training & Preparation	My teacher training included practice related to the implementation of experiential learning.	2	1	1	4
1	Leadership Vision & Support	Experiential learning is important to the mission of my school.	4.9	5	5	1
6	Leadership Vision & Support	Administrators provide an important visionary role as it relates to experiential learning.	3.7	4	4,5	4
7	Leadership Vision & Support	Administrators are primarily responsible for the logistical details related to experiential learning.	2.4	2	4,5	4
8	Leadership Vision & Support	Teachers at this school are well supported in their planning of experiential learning activities.	4.1	4	4	4
12	Leadership Vision & Support	I feel supported by the administration and leadership to successfully implement experience learning activities.	4	4	5	4
2	Teacher Perceptions & Concerns	Experiential learning at my school supports character development in students.	4.6	5	5	3
3	Teacher Perceptions & Concerns	Experiential learning at my school supports critical thinking in students.	4.2	4	4	3
4	Teacher Perceptions & Concerns	Experiential learning at my school supports the development of a social justice mindset in students.	4.2	4	5	3
5	Teacher Perceptions & Concerns	Experiential learning encourages student learning and growth.	4.6	5	5	2
11	Teacher Perceptions & Concerns	Experiential learning supports my classroom curriculum in meaningful ways.	3.4	4	5	4
14	Teacher Perceptions & Concerns	I feel confident as an experiential learning co-facilitator on school trips.	4.4	5	5	3
15	Teacher Perceptions & Concerns	My experience(s) as an EL co-facilitator on field trips, retreats, winter trips, and/or spring trips has been positive and meaningful to me.	4.7	5	5	2

Note: 1= false, 2 = somewhat false, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat true, 5 = true

Qualitative Data. Following Hseih and Shannon (2005), I employed both conventional and direct methods in my qualitative analysis of the open-ended survey questions and interview transcripts. I chose to begin with a conventional approach, looking for emergent (inductive)

category development. I felt it was important to get an overall and neutral sense of the data before applying directed methods. I imported data from the open-ended response questions from Google Forms to Google Sheets, using the automatic import function.

As I read through each open-ended response, I highlighted key concepts and ideas, and labeled each with emergent codes. After reviewing the frequency of each code, I grouped each code under a major theme. I have illustrated this method in Table 2 below, where I have grouped emergent codes (related to the definition of EL) to a theme ("Outside the Classroom").

Table 2

Coding open-ended responses for themes: Sample

Theme	Emergent Codes	Open-ended Response
Outside the Classroom	doing, outside	Learning by doing, usually outside of the classroom.
Outside the Classroom	outside, real world	Taking learning out of the walls and into the world deepens understanding, offers real life vision, and makes meaning tangible.
Outside the Classroom	active, outside, relationships	Having a meaningful educational experience through activities or interpersonal interactions outside of the classroom that leads to an increased depth of knowledge or understanding of a particular concept or idea. It can also be utilized to build interpersonal relationships and character.

As for the one-on-one and group interviews, I met remotely with five teachers in total, over the course of three separate Zoom interviews. My participants were all upper school teachers, and had a variety of experiences related EL at Kaplan. All participants had experience facilitating EL at Kaplan, and only two participants had prior training in EL. The teachers that I interviewed taught in a variety of subject areas, including social sciences, mathematics, world languages, and Judaics (i.e., the study of Jewish cultural, spiritual, and ethical traditions). For clarity, I have numbered these teachers one through five (1-5).

After obtaining consent from my participants, I made audio recordings of each interview utilizing Zoom's auto-record feature. I then imported these m4a audio recordings to Otter AI, an online program that auto-transcribed each file. On Otter AI, I identified each speaker and made minor formatting changes for clarity. Once complete, I downloaded each transcript in a DOCX format to my computer. Next, I reviewed each file and deidentified the data and deleted my utterances and those of the DoEE (who was also present for these interviews, at my invitation). I also deleted utterances that were not directly related to my questions (e.g., pleasantries, personal requests, etc.) and those that were essentially unintelligible fragments. Finally, I uploaded the transcripts to Google Docs, and then to Google Sheets for line-by-line analysis and review.

Similar to the approach that I took in analyzing data from the open-ended responses, my first read of the interview transcripts employed a conventional approach (Hseih & Shannon, 2005). I coded inductive (emergent) ideas and grouped those codes according to themes. My second pass over the data employed a directed method to qualitative analysis, where I validated my conceptual framework (Hseiah & Shannon, 2005). In the previous chapter, I established that three factors influenced teachers understanding and perception of EL: training and preparation, perceptions and concerns, and leadership, vision, and support. With these a priori themes in mind, I examined each transcript looking for examples of these indicators.

Findings

Quantitative Findings

When grouped by corresponding constructs, the quantitative data collected from the survey evidenced clear trends. To distinguish affirmative belief in an idea or concept, I grouped responses in both the "somewhat true" and "true" categories. To distinguish disagreement with an idea or concept, I grouped responses in both the "somewhat false" and "false" categories.

Training & Preparation

On the questions related to EL training and preparation, there was a clear trend. Most teachers indicated that they had little to no pre-service training (72%) or prior experience with EL (72%) before coming to Kaplan. At Kaplan, most teachers responded that they did not receive regular training related to EL (78%).

Perceptions & Concerns

As for the purpose of EL at Kaplan, most teachers expressed belief in the idea that EL supports critical thinking (86%), character development (94%), and the development of a social justice mindset (86%). Furthermore, most teachers agreed that EL supports overall student learning and growth (97%). As for their own comfort with EL, 86% of teachers responded that they felt confident as an EL facilitator. At the same time, only 53% of teachers indicated that EL supported their classroom curriculum in meaningful ways.

Leadership, Vision, & Support

All teachers expressed belief that EL was essential to the mission of the school. Some teachers believed that administrators played an important visionary role (61%). Participants answered similarly that they felt supported by administrators in the planning (61%) and implementation of EL (69%). Interestingly, only 28% of teachers believed that administrators were primarily responsible for the logistical details related to EL at Kaplan.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative findings from this study were comprised of data gathered from the survey (SVY) and in the interviews (INT 1, INT 2, INT 3). In my analysis of the data, I found that both

quantitative and qualitative datasets complemented each other, and therefore I chose to blend these findings in this section.

As mentioned earlier, teachers at Kaplan were fairly unified in their understanding of EL as a concept. Respondents to the survey defined EL as learning that takes place outside the classroom (56%), learning that is transformational for students (14%), and learning that is fundamentally kinesthetic (12%). One teacher put it this way: "I would say [that] experiential education is learning that happens outside of the four walls of a classroom, generally by doing stuff, and by talking about the stuff that's being done" (INT 1). Addressing the transformational nature of EL, another teacher shared that "it's all about the experience of getting out of your comfort zone, which I think is how people grow and learn" (INT 2).

Most respondents to the survey described EL at Kaplan as trips and travel (61%), while others defined EL more abstractly as experiences that are meaningful for students (19%) or learning that is focused on building community (8%). One respondent described a particular set of experiences in the 8th grade year that illustrated these values:

> Standing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, we solidify our bonds and years of learning at Kaplan with a closing friendship circle, giving a tangible moment of unity. Participating in a theatrical performance of "The Diary of Anne Frank," the 8th grade shares an experience of literature. This experience is echoed in our field trip to the local Holocaust Museum, where we concentrated our time on diaries of people who had experienced genocide. Nothing equals these kind of learning experiences. (SVY)

The value of shared experience was important for many teachers at Kaplan. One teacher remarked, "I think that the community building component of experiential learning is probably the most significant part of the... experience right now—as we do it in practice, in reality" (INT

1). Interviewees emphasized trips and travel as the venue for these experiences as well. Participants mentioned outdoor trips, culture trips, international experiences, field trips, visits to museums, club meetings, Advisory (i.e., homeroom) activities, and community service projects as relevant examples.

The value of EL to students was another clear trend, where respondents described EL as fundamentally meaningful and transformational. Many teachers used the Hebrew phrase *tikkun olam* (i.e., Heb. "repairing the world") to articulate one of the core values of EL at Kaplan. Others described the school's "Ten Commitments" as an underlying philosophy supported by EL. These commitments are signed by students each year, and include values related to respect, tolerance, and concern for others. One interviewee underscored this value when they shared their perspective as facilitator and trip leader over several years:

> I think [the purpose of this trip] was very clear when I started at Kaplan. And it shifted, depending upon what city we would go to. Some years we'd go to San Francisco, because that just made more sense. Other years, we'd go to Los Angeles because that made more sense. And we always had the idea of social action as the underlying theme for the 10th grade class in particular with that trip. And we would always have a community service component regardless of what city in California we were in. And if we were in San Francisco, we would especially connect with the Chicano movement, the LGBTQ+ movement, the community civil rights movements that happened there in Haight-Ashbury, the hippie stuff, and free healthcare and all that. And there were some years where I thought, well, we really hit it on the head. Because right after we had that discussion, we went and visited a homeless shelter and saw how a California homeless shelter deals with that community... And there's a lot to compare and contrast and connect

47

with who you are and how you can give back to the world. And I think it was always an eye-opening experience for the kids being from a whole other state. (INT 2)

Significantly, most respondents on the survey identified at least one of the values associated with EL at Kaplan (described in Chapter 1): social justice (13 participants), character development (13 participants), and critical thinking (4 participants). Though I was concerned that these directed questions may have influenced related responses on the survey, similar findings in my later interviews with teachers mitigated this potential limitation.

All the teachers that I interviewed discussed the role of the EL facilitator at Kaplan, and as evidenced in the quantitative data, most teachers described their experience as positive and meaningful. A teacher who had worked at Kaplan for over a decade and participated in numerous EL opportunities, shared their own experience:

> Overall it's certainly been net positive for me. Just having different experiences with the students outside the classroom is certainly a plus. In terms of the actual facilitating, um, it's a little weird. You know, being a teacher, we—and I'm just speaking about the spring trips—basically get an itinerary the week before, and, you know, we have our assignments. So there's not a lot of, you know, creating a plan or really knowing what's going on before we even... get there really. So it is hard to facilitate in that sort of way. But I think program overall is fantastic and has a lot of great goals (INT 2).

Among concerns related to EL, teachers who participated in the survey cited lack of curricular alignment (19%), missed opportunities for meaningful learning (19%), the need for greater leadership and support (14%), the needs for greater planning and intentionality (11%), and the lack of training and preparation (8%). Taken together, concerns related to student learning outcomes (i.e., lack of curricular alignment, missed opportunities for learning, need for

48

intentionality) represent half (50%) of the participants' responses. One survey respondent connected these concerns in a response that was echoed by others:

> "[EL at Kaplan] could be better/more thoughtfully integrated and coordinated with formal curriculum. At present, the connections between the formal and experiential curriculum seem to mostly be the product of teacher initiative to select and align formal instruction with experiential education programming. The alignment is better at some grade levels than others. The 7th and 8th grade curricula seem to be more tightly aligned with their travel programs. In the high school, it is unclear how the outdoor trips tie into on-campus learning, and there is a lot of potential, perhaps unrealized, in the culture *tiyulim* [trips]" (SVY).

Interestingly, 14% of survey respondents had no concerns about the EL program as it was at Kaplan.

All interview participants shared concerns related to the efficacy of EL, and most elaborated on the trends referenced earlier. Most shared that they were concerned that EL at Kaplan is not as meaningful for students as it could be. These participants also referenced the importance of aligning EL to the institutional vision, connecting and supporting school values, and the need for greater planning and intentionality. Leadership and support represented an important trend as well. One survey respondent referenced the recent addition of the DoEE to the Kaplan team : "With all that teachers have to do on a day to day basis, the planning of activities can sometimes feel thrown together... Having a dedicated person [i.e., the new DoEE] to oversee the experiential learning program will hopefully yield some new and exciting ideas for content and experiences" (SVY). Four of the five teachers that I interviewed also discussed issues related

to need for greater leadership and support, including financial support. One teacher in commenting on their role as a trip leader, shared frustrations related to compensation:

> I do feel super upset that we have some teachers in the past and maybe still who are supposed to be planning culture trips and are not getting appropriate stipends. I wish the school would just say, look, you get [some] amount of money assigned to you because you do this trip. And I think that might go back to whatever conversation we're going to be having about cultivating facilitators at school. (INT 2)

Discussion

It was clear from this needs assessment study that EL plays a pivotal role in the educational experience at Kaplan. Though initially, I had assumed that teachers did not understand the purpose of EL, these findings indicated otherwise. Teachers, in fact, did recognize the importance of EL both to student engagement in learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2009; Sibthorp et al., 2015), and to the progressive mission of Kaplan. Furthermore, teachers were able to define EL as a concept and agreed that EL supports Kaplan's institutional vision for character development, critical thinking, and the development of a social justice mindset. Most importantly, teachers understood that they have agency and responsibility in making EL meaningful for students (Brown, 2002; Dewey, 1938; Stan, 2009). According to this needs assessment study, teachers' primary concerns vis-a-vis EL at Kaplan related to the efficacy of its implementation and the overall relevance to student learning. Essentially, this needs assessment strongly suggests that it was because teachers care so much about EL at Kaplan that they wanted to see it better supported and improved.

Vision & Values

Many teachers discussed the need for a clear vision for EL at Kaplan, and one that is tied to institutional and community values. One teacher wrote, "Sometimes (not always) the message is lost on the kids. I think in some cases we need to do a better job of making the mission (the "why") clear to the students" (SVY). One teacher elaborated on this concern, sharing insights gleaned from over a decade working at Kaplan:

> I don't think [the vision for EL is] written. It's, you know, sadly because of the structure of the programs that we've put in place—the kind of the assumptions that people have about that, or their intuition about what those programs are supposed to be, or the tradition of what those programs are and what they're supposed to look like, as they've been passed from one [trip] coordinator to another... You know, every time you have to offer curriculum to somebody... some things get kept, and some things get changed, or lost. (INT 1)

According to this teacher, as EL trips are passed from one teacher leader to the next, in the absence of an articulated vision or formalized goals and objectives, the fundamental nature of each trip changes. This teacher believes that such programmatic drift is detrimental to the overall experience of EL at Kaplan, and often represents a loss.

Planning & Intentionality

Teachers understood that for EL to be truly meaningful for students, trips and other off-campus experiences must be designed and planned with intentionality. This kind of planning takes time and structure and is often haphazard at best at Kaplan. One teacher summarized their own understanding and experience of this reality:

51

I think depending on what trip you are, it goes back to the planning. What is our end

goal? Do we need to worry about having everybody go to New York [i.e., the 11th grade

cultural trip], and some people, some of our teachers never having used a Metro card? It

sounds silly, but maybe you take five minutes in your training before New York... let's

look at the subway lines, let's learn about what happens when you get lost... and if that

just means an overall general training of each trip for, you know, an hour or two before

we start planning or after we plan the activities or even during that process. I think that's

it's a pretty critical piece. Because most the time it's just one person coordinating... maybe

we need to spend a little bit more elaboration walking through [the experience]. (INT 3)

Not only did this teacher describe their experience on a trip that lacked sufficient preparation, but

they also referenced a concept that was discussed in the previous chapter: teacher attitudes

toward risk. As referenced earlier, Stan and Humberstone (2011) demonstrated that how

teachers-as-EL-facilitators manage risk in a given EL context will impact their general

perceptions of that experience. For this teacher, part of the reason that planning and intentionality

are important to the design of EL trips at Kaplan is to make those experiences more safe for

students.

Some teachers who participated in the needs assessment study also emphasized the lack

of intentionality in aligning EL with classroom learning. According to the literature review,

teachers consistently recognize the importance of EL to student learning, but when those

experiences are disconnected from classroom curriculum (Anderson & Zhang, 2003; Anderson et

al., 2006), teachers may experience frustration. As one teacher put it, "I wished the experiential

learning curriculum was clearly articulated school wide and the connections between grade

levels emphasized" (SVY). Another teacher remarked bluntly, "[EL] does not tie into classes or

directly impact beyond the trip" (SVY). As mentioned earlier, though teachers often recognize the value of EL, they are less likely to plan or enact pre-/post-experience activities that would positively impact overall efficacy (Anderson et al., 2006; Storksdieck, 2001; Tal et al., 2005).

Leadership & Professional Development

Some teachers recognized that to be successful, EL at Kaplan was in need of focused leadership. As discussed in Chapter 1, effective leadership can shape teachers' self-efficacy and overall performance (Bogler, 2001). Many teachers expressed relief and excitement that Kaplan had recently hired a new DoEE. According to teachers, in addition to articulating the vision for EL, the DoEE should also be responsible for planning targeted trainings and professional development (PD) opportunities for teachers. In their responses, they demonstrated their understanding that training and PD can positively impact EL, which is consistent with the literature (Anderson & Zhang, 2003; Ateşkan & Lane, 2016; Michie, 1998; Tal, 2004; Tal & Morag, 2009; Tal, Levin-Peled, & Levy, 2019). One teacher shared these sentiments in detail:

I do know that some teachers aren't as comfortable with the more emotional components of these trips and talking about certain subjects with kids. And I think that's part of why we started to diminish the amount of meetings we had [in] Advisory [i.e. homeroom] groups... I remember hearing often [from] teachers, even in big meetings... saying that they didn't personally feel that they were equipped with the right tools to talk about emotional things with their students, or whatever it was that felt not so academic. But I think we need to find a way for everybody to feel comfortable with that sort of thing because that's always going to be a component of our experiential learning, right? That is whole-child education. You can't educate a whole kid without talking about who they are emotionally, mentally--related to their wellness. So I think maybe more professional

development opportunities that get people comfortable... with the notion of having those

kinds of conversations, allowing them to become more skillful at it or just comfortable

period. (INT 3)

This teacher clearly identified the need for training and preparation at Kaplan, especially related

to social-emotional learning in EL contexts. As discussed earlier, teachers-as-EL-facilitators

often function as gatekeepers to students' critical thinking and emotional growth during these

experiences (Brown, 2002; Stan, 2009). Furthermore, what this teacher articulated is another

type of perceived risk, i.e., the fear of mishandling a serious emotional conversation with a

student. How teachers-as-EL-facilitators perceive risk will impact both their own perceptions and

experiences, as well as overall student learning (Stan & Humberstone, 2011).

Conclusions and Implications

According to the findings of this needs assessment study, teachers at Kaplan did not need

to be told that EL represents meaningful student learning. These findings did indicate, however,

that there was a need for targeted PD related to EL design, enactment, and curricular integration

at Kaplan. In spite of the fact that EL has always been such a significant part of the "Kaplan

Difference," most teachers indicated that they had little to no related training or practice.

Specifically, according to this study, Kaplan teachers expressed a need for PD focused on how to

integrate classroom curricula with EL programming and better effectuate meaningful student

learning. They also indicated that they needed visionary leadership to design, guide and support

this PD. Teachers clearly recognized these needs at Kaplan, and based on their responses in the

needs assessment, I anticipated that they would be receptive to any future PD related to EL.

Based on the conclusions from this needs assessment study, in Chapter 3 I review

literature related to effective PD that supports teachers in the design and facilitation of EL. I also

analyze studies where PD participants identify meaningful EL pedagogies, demonstrate best EL

practices, and integrate EL themes and goals into classroom curricula. The literature review in

Chapter 3 ultimately informs the design of my proposed program evaluation, which is discussed

in more detail in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3

In the previous chapter, I described my needs assessment study, reviewed significant findings, and discussed important implications. Though originally I believed that teachers at Kaplan struggled to understand and demonstrate how an experiential learning (EL) program supported the school's mission, the findings of my needs assessment indicated that teachers do in fact comprehend the purpose and value of EL for students. They also believe that EL has potential to support Kaplan's core values. According to my participants, Kaplan's EL program is in need of improvements related to experience design, enactment, and curricular integration.

Teachers at Kaplan ascribed the problem articulated above to a number of contributing factors, including the need for visionary leadership, the lack of intentionality in planning and facilitation, and the need for additional training and professional development (PD) related to EL. Many teachers were glad that during the period of my needs assessment study, Kaplan addressed the leadership issue by hiring a Director of Experiential Education (DoEE). This new administrator's primary task was to systematically facilitate evaluative and improvement efforts related to the EL program at Kaplan. Significantly, a majority of teachers who participated in the needs assessment indicated that they had little to no training or practice with EL, and many stressed the importance of targeted PD to fully realize the potential of EL trips. Many teachers described these EL activities and trips as missed opportunities for student learning.

In this chapter, I provide a literature review of studies related to effective PD, and examine research done on PD designed to support EL in particular. To guide this effort, I referenced a theoretical framework informed by Guskey's (1986) model of teacher change and his work on meaningful PD, and also informed by Kolb's (1984) EL theory.

Theoretical Framework

My theoretical framework for this literature review was influenced by the work of two researchers: Thomas Guskey and David Kolb. Guskey's (1986) model of the process of teacher change is a useful tool in defining and describing effective PD, while also identifying signs of teacher engagement and growth. Kolb's (1984) EL theory and related concepts such as the Kolb cycle have influenced studies on EL for over thirty years. The work of both researchers served to frame my literature review and subsequent collaborative program evaluation design in Chapter 4.

Guskey's (1986) Model of the Process of Teacher Change

According to Guskey (2002), PD programs are "systematic efforts to bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students" (p. 381). It was Guskey (1986) who pointed out that in order for PD to be effective, program leaders must take into account teacher motivations and the process of teacher growth (i.e., teacher learning). Teachers tend to be pragmatic about PD and expect to come away from a training with concrete, practical ideas related to instruction (Fullon & Miles, 1992).

For most teachers, PD is a means to enhancing student learning outcomes: "What attracts teachers to professional development... is their belief that it will expand their knowledge and skills, contribute to their growth, and enhance their effectiveness with students" (Guskey, 2002, p. 382). This concurs with the findings of my needs assessment study where a majority of teachers indicated that student learning was their primary concern, and that EL-related training and PD were a necessary remedy. Guskey (1986) stressed that it is important to capitalize on teacher motivations when designing PD programs. Kaplan's teachers are motivated to enhance student learning through making better use of EL activities and trips.

In addition to focusing on teacher motivation, Guskey (2002) also emphasized that effective PD should take into account teachers' perceptions of PD together with the process of their growth: "the crucial point is that it is not the professional development per se, but the experience of successful implementation that changes teachers' attitudes and beliefs" (Guskey, 2002, p. 383). As with teacher motivation, Guskey (1986) found that for teachers to experience a change in their attitudes and beliefs—and to demonstrate engagement—teachers must see evidence of improvements in student learning. In his model of the process of teacher change, Guskey (1986) captured this reality by describing a causal relationship between teacher professional growth and student learning outcomes.

Guskey's (1986) model is a valuable framework for assessing the efficacy of any PD and will be particularly helpful in my own context. According to my findings, teachers at Kaplan seemed to understand that what was missing from the EL program was both attention to and evidence of student learning. Were they to see such evidence, in all likelihood, their other concerns regarding EL might be mitigated as well. Student learning, then, is the linchpin of any meaningful PD designed to support EL.

Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory

Learning experientially has been the subject of a great deal of research, and Kolb (1984) has been a leading voice in this body of research. Kolb (1984) described his experiential learning theory (ELT) as a cycle where a learner learns how to learn. Within this four-stage cycle, learners experience concrete realities, reflect on what they have observed, conceptualize experiences abstractly, and engage in active experimentation. According to ELT, learners grasp and transform their experiences through an iterative process. Though this model is not without its

critics, Kolb's (1984) thinking about EL continues to be relevant to contemporary research (Girvan et al., 2016).

Teacher learning is no different in this regard from student learning. Any PD related to EL should take the teacher's learning into account as well. Following Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009), Furman-Shaharabani and Tal (2016) recognized that "teaching in ways one has not experienced is almost impossible" (p. 1032). To some extent, the intentionality and curricular alignment that Kaplan's teachers were looking for should be within their power to execute. With the right training and preparation, following Guskey's (1986) model of teacher change, PD designed with EL theory in mind may help teachers-as-EL-facilitators to design and enact meaningful EL for students, as well as integrate the themes and goals of the EL program within their classroom curricula.

Program Evaluation Literature Review

This literature review is organized in two sections. In the first section, I address and review characteristics that define effective PD. In the second section, I cite examples of effective PD related to EL, with a focus on each authors' methodology. I also discuss relevant studies throughout and do so within the framework of seminal theories, including Guskey's (1986) model of the process of teacher change and Kolb's (1984) ELT. Finally, I consider these studies in light of what is feasible at Kaplan and consistent with program improvement.

Characteristics of Effective Professional Development

Borko (2004) discussed the state of PD at the turn of the millennium and emphasized at that time that PD "currently available to teachers [was] woefully inadequate" (p. 3). Nearly a decade later, her appraisal of the situation in the United States had changed little (Borko et al., 2010). Its potential limitations notwithstanding, a great deal of research has been conducted in

recent decades on what defines effective PD (Avalos, 2011; Penuel et al., 2007; Wayne et al., 2008).

There is widespread agreement that high-quality teacher professional learning is long-term, collaborative, contextual, and focused on students' learning (Avalos, 2011; Borko et al, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Furman Shaharabani & Tal, 2017; Penuel et al., 2007; Wayne et al., 2008; Yoon et al., 2007). Over the last three decades, there has been a significant shift in attitudes about teacher learning and PD, where "one shot workshops" are now generally regarded as ineffective (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Wayne et al., 2008). In their meta-analysis, Wayne et al. (2008) studied current research on PD. Though they found consensus around what defines effective PD, they found little evidence of specific features typical to PD that directly impacts student achievement. Nevertheless, it did appear to Wayne et al. (2008) that effective PD is typically sustained and intensive, and it may be more meaningful when administered more frequently. Avalos (2011), too, in her analysis of multiple recent studies on PD, found that effective programs are ongoing and sustainable over time, and should "provide the opportunity for teachers to engage in cycles of experimentation and reflection" (p. 550).

In another meta-analysis of contemporary studies related to effective PD, Borko et al. (2010) sought to define and describe high-quality PD in theory and in practice. These authors compared six general studies, selected by them to represent leading research in the field and span a long period of time. Borko et al. (2010) pointed out that more often than not, teachers "are being asked to teach in ways substantially different from how they were taught or how they learned to teach" (p. 550). Consequently, the authors found that it is important that PD programs include the modeling of instructional strategies with active engagement of teachers. They also highlighted professional collaboration as a central focus of meaningful PD and stressed that PD

should be designed with long-term sustainability in mind. Borko et al. (2010) stressed that with intentionality, PD can have a positive impact on teacher learning and motivation. Finally, the authors acknowledged that clearly PD should focus on student learning outcomes, but that a significant limitation of their study (and many others) was that they were not able to provide evidence of student learning to support claims of PD effectiveness.

Focus on Teacher Learning

According to Borko (2004), in order to understand teacher learning, one must take into account "both the individual teacher-learners and the social systems in which they are participants" (p. 4). PD is increasingly associated with constructivist and situative theories, where teacher learning is grounded in classroom practice (Borko et al., 2010). Wayne et al. (2008) found that effective PD should be designed with two theories in mind: the theory of instruction, and the theory of teacher change (Wayne et al., 2008).

Avalos (2011), in her review of journal publications over a 10-year period, synthesized the literature on PD around themes: professional learning, facilitation and collaboration, factors influencing PD, and effectiveness of PD. She focused on nine comparative studies in particular, finding that meaningful teacher learning is reflective, contextual, complex, and collaborative (Avalos, 2011). One of the articles that Avalos (2011) reviewed was a study by O'Sullivan (2002), where action research was a significant strategy employed by teachers engaged in reflective improvement cycles as part of in-service education and training. The action research cycle has been practiced and defined by many, including Elliot (1991) who describes this cycle as having four steps: planning, action, monitoring, and reflection. O'Sullivan (2002) found that by engaging teachers in active learning and reflection of their own learning, she was able to document observed improvements in teaching practices. Relatedly, according to Avalos (2011),

effective PD is fundamentally transformational, where teachers are "learning how to learn" (p. 10). This focus on reflective, transformational teacher change aligns with Guskey's (2002) model of the process of teacher change.

Fishman et al. (2003) explored the impact of PD on teacher learning. In their model of teacher learning, they focused on changes in a teacher's knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes, which in turn impact the acquisition of new pedagogic skills and processes (Fishman et al., 2003). These authors employed an iterative methodology to study the efficacy of PD related to systematic science education reform in the Detroit Public Schools. Participants included over 40 middle school science teachers from two public schools over a 2-year period. Following each PD session, the researchers collected data using a survey-based instrument, focus-group interviews, and observation notes focused on teacher participation and engagement. They followed up with classroom observations of teachers, where they looked, in particular, for evidence of enactment. In their analysis of the data, the researchers found evidence of "substantial improvement in both teacher learning and subsequent student performance" (Fishman et al., 2003, p. 655). Though their findings were compelling, Fishman et al. (2003) acknowledged that more research was needed over the long-term and in different contexts to better understand teacher and student learning related to PD.

Following Fishman et al. (2003) and Borko (2004), Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) studied meaningful teacher learning using a mixed methods approach. They too emphasized that PD which positively impacts student learning is sustained, coherent, and focused (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). The authors compared approaches to PD in two schools, where one school followed the old paradigm and the other, the new paradigm. In the first school, 9th grade students were achieving low scores in mathematics. To address this

concern, the principal brought in experts for a two-day PD on teaching strategies related to math instruction. This traditional, expensive singular workshop approach was ineffective in the long run. Though most teachers indicated during post-PD interviews that they would use content and strategies in the coming weeks, when they gathered again some months later, most teachers admitted that they had done little with the material.

In contrast, at the second school in Darling-Hammond and Richardson's (2009) study, both the principal and the teachers approached professional learning quite differently. After a majority of low-income students was found to be at below-average reading levels, teachers at an elementary school met monthly with two institutional coaches and six trained teacher-leaders throughout the year. Furthermore, the principal redesigned the school schedule to allow teachers to meet together once a week in professional learning communities (PLCs). Teachers spent an hour together each week, sometimes receiving help from coaches and outside consultants. Using inquiry cycles to guide their conversations, these teachers posed problems of pedagogy and practice, and solved them together. By the next year, low-income student achievement in reading had dramatically improved. According to the researchers, this improvement was due in large part to the sustained, collaborative approach to PD. This study supports similar studies that have stressed the importance of PD sustainability and collaboration (Avalos, 2011; Wayne et al., 2008).

James and McCormick (2009) studied teacher learning through a project called Learning How to Learn in Classrooms, Schools, and Networks (LHTL). From 2001 to 2005, the LHTL project team worked in both primary and secondary schools in England to analyze practices associated with the process of teacher learning. Their methodology involved collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data, including surveys, performance data from national

databases, video recordings of classroom instruction, observations, and interviews. For this study, the researchers videotaped 27 lessons as part of field observations of 41 teachers from 20 different schools over a four-year period. They also surveyed over 1200 teachers from 32 schools, collecting data on teaching practices and values. According to the authors, learning autonomy is defined as learners taking responsibility for their learning by developing strategies independently and collaboratively (James & McCormick, 2009).

Following their study, James and McCormick (2009) proposed a logic model of linked factors, where students' academic achievement was corollary to teachers' beliefs about learning. Interestingly, their model differs from Guskey's (1986) discussed earlier, in that Guskey (1986) wrote that student learning is directly influenced by teacher attitudes and beliefs, and not the other way around. When teachers see evidence of student learning, according to Guskey (1986), they are motivated to grow and change. James and McCormick (2009) also found that teachers' beliefs about learning influenced their practices related to assessment for student learning. Most significantly, the authors found that teachers whose classroom practices were most effective were able to articulate the underlying principles of learning associated with those practices. Having a working knowledge of these underlying learning principles allowed effective teachers to apprehend the spirit of the authentic assessment for learning, rather than simply the "letter" of best practices (James & McCormick, 2009).

As discussed earlier, Avalos (2011) found a number of factors that contribute to effective PD, including teachers' feelings of self-efficacy. In her meta-analysis, she referenced multiple studies that demonstrated a correlation between these feelings of self-efficacy and the degree to which PD meets teachers' needs and expectations, i.e., PD that feels close to home appears to be more effective in the long run (Avalos, 2011). Avalos (2011) stressed that teachers are both the

subjects and the objects of professional learning and development and are at the center of this complex process of growth.

Focus on Student Learning

Student learning and achievement constitute a major aim of all PD (Avalos, 2011; Borko et al., 2010; Guskey, 2002; Penuel et al., 2007; Stoll et al., 2006; Wayne et al., 2008; Van Driel & Berry, 2012; Yoon et al., 2007). In his model of the process of teacher change, Guskey (1986) argued that teachers' attitudes and beliefs were most profoundly influenced by measurable and observable changes in student learning outcomes. Indeed, Guskey (2002) has stated that for most teachers, "becoming a better teacher means enhancing student learning outcomes" (p. 382).

Following Borko (2004), Yoon et al. (2007) prepared a report on the influence of teacher PD on student achievement. In their meta-analysis of over 1,300 studies, these authors identified three steps that link PD to student learning. First, PD "enhances teacher knowledge and skills" (Yoon et al., 2007, p. 4). Second, teachers' pedagogical practices are influenced by better knowledge and skills. Third, this kind of improved teaching will have a positive impact on student achievement. These findings notwithstanding, Yoon et al. (2007) acknowledged that it is extremely difficult to demonstrate empirically that PD impacts student achievement. In order to do so, researchers must follow a rigorous research design, adhere to high fidelity of implementation, and utilize appropriate measures and analytic models (Yoon et al., 2007). Of the 1,300 studies that Yoon et al. (2007) analyzed, only nine met these rigorous standards.

One study that Yoon et al. (2007) highlighted was an empirical study by Tienken and Achilles (2003). Five fourth grade teachers and their students participated in this study. Of these five teachers, two teachers participated in targeted PD training and three did not. Due to the small sample size, the authors employed a mixed methods approach in their design and analysis.

They interviewed all participants, conducted classroom observations, and compared written student responses. Ultimately, they found that the students of trained teachers demonstrated measurable positive differences in achievement when compared to students whose teachers were not trained (Tienken & Achilles, 2003).

Van Driel and Berry (2012) argued that PD designed to support student achievement should train teachers to understand how students learn specific subject matter. These authors noted that research has demonstrated the complex nature of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and that its development through PD is specific to individual teachers, topics, and situations. Expert teachers are flexible and demonstrate PCK in a variety of ways in a variety of settings. Following Borko et al. (2010), these authors argued that training related to PCK should be based on constructivist and situative theories, and not behavioral ones. Moreover, their research implied that PD designed to support teachers' PCK "should be organized in ways that closely align to the teachers' professional practice and include opportunities to enact certain (innovative) instructional strategies and materials to reflect, individually and collectively, on their experiences" (Van Driel & Berry, 2012, p. 27).

Focus on Collaboration

Collaboration is one of the defining features of effective PD (Borko et al., 2010; Forte & Flores, 2014; Furman Shaharabani & Tal, 2017; Penuel et al., 2007; Stoll et al., 2006). Specifically, PD that involves collective learning and problem solving in community can be both supportive and encouraging to teachers (Borko et al., 2010). Again, Guskey's (1986) focus on teachers' attitudes and beliefs as a motivating factor for their growth is relevant, as effective, collaborative PD should be designed accordingly. In discussing continuing professional

development Kennedy (2011) argued that "good relationships are... fundamental to providing conditions for effective learning" (p. 26).

In their review of literature on PD, Stoll et al. (2006) found that across multiple studies collaborative PLCs have demonstrated "considerable promise for capacity building for sustainable improvement" (p. 221). To structure this literature review, the authors sought to answer broad questions surrounding the nature, processes, development, and evaluation of PLCs. They defined PLCs as groups of educators sharing and engaging critically in conversations surrounding their teaching practice (Stoll et al., 2006). Among characteristics that make PLCs effective, the authors listed shared vision and values, collective responsibility, reflective professional inquiry, and collaboration (Stoll et al., 2006).

Van Driel and Berry (2012) were more nuanced in their assessment of PLCs, arguing that based on recent critical studies "there are reasons to be skeptical about the effects of PLCs" (p. 26). In particular, these authors stressed that too many PLCs lack an emphasis on building teachers' content knowledge. Bausmith and Barry (2011), too, pointed out that though PLCs may be necessary for effective education reform, without an emphasis on PCK, PLCs may be "insufficient for meeting the new… state standards" (p. 175).

Though they may not always be effective, PLCs are nevertheless collaborative spaces for teachers. In a mixed methods study, Forte and Flores (2014) investigated the relationship between teacher collaboration and teacher PD. Utilizing a multi-phased approach, these researchers conducted interviews, administered questionnaires, and collected reflective essays. Participants in their study included 80 teachers who responded to the questionnaire (phase 1), 11 heads of departments who were interviewed (phase 2), and 10 additional teachers who received training (phase 3). Though this study included findings from the first two phases only, the

authors discovered that though teachers widely recognized the value of collaboration, teachers reported that such collaboration was often hampered by organizational and structural limitations such as time, space, and training. Teachers in this study also pointed to leadership as a key factor in creating and sustaining authentic collaborative learning cultures (Forte & Flores, 2014).

Focus on Sustainability

According to Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009), PD for teachers that positively impacts student learning is "sustained, coherent, and intense" (p. 48). As mentioned earlier, there is general agreement that the one-shot workshop approach is rarely meaningful or effective. Effective PD is an ongoing process where teachers are continually adapting what they learn to fit their context (Forte & Flores, 2014; Girvan et al., 2016; Kennedy, 2011; Stoll et al., 2007). Yoon et al. (2007) showed that PD of at least 14 hours or more demonstrated a net positive impact on student learning, while substantive PD (of 49 hours or more) showed an even greater impact on achievement.

Taitelbaum et al. (2008) studied the impact of a continuing professional development program on chemistry teachers in Israel. The authors analyzed qualitative data, including videotaped classroom-laboratory observations, participant interviews, and teacher-generated portfolios. They found that as a result of the continuing professional development, most teachers transitioned from teacher-centered pedagogical approaches to those that were more student-centered. The authors also found that most teachers expressed greater self-confidence as a result of the continuing professional development (Taitelbaum et al., 2008). Most importantly, Taitelbaum et al. (2008) stressed that "involving teachers in a reflective-type process accompanied with continuous support and scaffolding can promote the necessary professional development to include both content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge" (p. 613). It is

important to note that this study focused on the science classroom only, and the authors acknowledged that further research in other contexts was needed to better understand continuing professional development.

Building on the work of Taitelbaum et al. (2008) and others, Furman Shaharabani and Tal (2017) found that there was little empirical research on the long-term impacts and sustainability of PD programs. In a qualitative study to address this need, they collected data related to teachers' current practices that was connected to past PD. Using a retrospective approach, these researchers interviewed 27 science teachers, seeking to ascertain the value of PD and training teachers had received 10 years before. They also analyzed documents and classroom artifacts and used this information to inform what teachers shared in the interviews. The authors found that some teachers could be described as leaders (i.e., those who demonstrated advanced implementation) and others as followers (i.e., those who demonstrated limited implementation). Of the teachers who demonstrated successful implementation of past PD, all had adopted new instructional strategies (that had been modeled in the PD) and practiced innovation and adaptation in the following years. This kind of active experimentation is consistent with Kolb's (1984) ELT and the cycle of experiential learning. Ultimately, Furman Shaharabani and Tal (2017) argued that "usability of the innovations over a long period of time manifests the effectiveness of [PD]" (p. 1050). In other words, effective PD is that which is useable and sustainable in the long term.

Examples of Effective Professional Development Supporting Experiential Learning

From the literature reviewed above, the evidence is clear that effective PD should address teacher learning in practice (Borko et al, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; James & McCormick, 2009), with student learning as its goal (Avalos, 2011; Guskey, 2002; Van Driel &

Berry, 2012; Wayne et al., 2008). Effective PD is also collaborative (Borko et al., 2010), and must be designed to be sustainable (Furman Shaharabani & Tal, 2017). In the examples reviewed in the section below, I show that effective PD has a role to play in shaping a teachers' first impressions of EL. I also highlight the importance of experiential PD that supports reflective practice. Finally, I demonstrate the relevance of experience in EL to teachers (versus inexperience) and emphasize the ways that PD can positively shape that experience for teachers.

First Impressions

Though most will agree that effective EL PD should include active, experiential learning by teachers, Girvan et al. (2016) argued that "the initial introduction of new ideas and practices are still presented to teachers using traditional approaches" (p. 130). To address this reality, they introduced a three-phased approach to the introduction of teacher PD that was shaped by EL theory. According to the authors, and following Kolb (1984), EL is a process of authentic change, where learners experience, reflect, think, and act (Girvan et al., 2016). The concept of authentic change, too, aligns with Guskey's (1986) work surrounding teacher growth.

In the context of educational reform in Ireland, Girvan et al. (2016) studied teachers' perceptions of an experiential PD designed to introduce new methods of teaching. Significantly, their continuing PD model includes an observation of student learning by teachers at the outset of the program. This follows Guskey (1986), who identified positive student learning outcomes as a key motivator influencing teacher change. In addition to this observation, Girvan et al. (2016) prioritized the participation of teachers in the learning itself, where teachers experienced similar activities to those planned for students. The final stage of the continuing professional development included a phase of practicing design-action-reflection.

Participants in this qualitative study included 38 teachers from 12 schools in Ireland. The study itself took place over the course of one academic year, and in the context of national curriculum reform. In particular, this curriculum reform in Ireland involved a new emphasis on 21st century skills, including skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaborative learning, and learning through technology (Girvan et al, 2016). The authors conducted classroom observations and interviews with teachers, collecting data on the impact of the continuing professional development to teachers' pedagogical practice.

In their analysis of the data, the authors found that the most important theme to emerge was "the perceived change in the role of the teacher in the classroom (Girvan et al., 2016, p. 134). Many teachers, as a result of the continuing professional development, transitioned from seeing themselves as the sole transmitters of content to facilitators of collaborative, autonomous student learning. Though initially many teachers were concerned about the inherently disruptive nature of an experiential, student-directed approach to learning, after seeing positive student learning outcomes at the beginning of the CPD, those concerns were put to rest. Similarly, by participating in the learning model themselves, teachers experienced "support and encouragement" to employ the new approach in their own classrooms (Girvan et al., 2016, p. 136). This study indicates that PD which is designed to intentionally practice and demonstrate EL has the ability to make a positive first impression on teachers.

Reflective Practice

Experience alone does not result in authentic learning (Loughran, 2002; Tal, 2010). Reflection is essential to the efficacy of PD, in particular (Girvan et al., 2016; Mathew et al., 2017; Stoll et al., 2006), and EL more specifically (Kolb, 1984). Indeed, one of the cycles of ELT is described as reflective observation (Kolb, 1984).

In a review of anecdotal evidence, Loughran (2002) noted that authentic reflection helps teachers "better understand what they know and do as they develop their knowledge of practice through reconsidering what they learn in practice" (p. 34). He also drew a line of distinction between genuine reflection and rationalization, which is often misconstrued as reflection. Effective reflection is "learning through experience," where possibilities are considered and acted upon in a continuous cycle of teacher growth (Loughran, 2002).

In a qualitative study by Mathew et al. (2017), the researchers collected data related to the reflective experiences of student teachers and their perceived value. Participants in this study included 13 students enrolled in a two-year educational training program at a university in India. The authors analyzed data they gathered from a questionnaire administered to these pre-service teachers, as well as private journal entries maintained by each participant. The findings of this study indicated that particular strategies were especially valuable to these students: 1) reflective journals and diaries, 2) collaborative learning, 3) audio or video recordings of lessons, 4) specific feedback from instructors, 5) peer observations, 6) feedback from students about their experiences, and 7) action research (Mathew et al., 2017). They concluded that genuine reflective practice—defined by the authors as a kind of action research—is cyclical, multimodal, and fundamentally related to teacher professional growth (Mathew et al., 2017).

In an exploratory study that focused on action research by pre-service teachers, Tal (2010) found that structured reflection following EL activities contributed positively to their knowledge and learning. The author analyzed student reflection sheets and knowledge questionnaires from 75 individuals who were enrolled in her environmental education classes. According to her findings, critical reflection is the cornerstone of pedagogical transformation and change, and many students that participated in this study were grateful "to experience powerful

methods that they [could] use in their future teaching" (Tal, 2010, p. 274). It bears repeating that Kolb (1984) described such a cycle in his own research related to EL.

Value of Experience

The value of first-hand experience in best practices related to EL for teachers cannot be overstated (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). Tal and Argaman (2005), two researchers from Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, conducted a qualitative study to investigate teachers' perceptions of mentoring student inquiry projects, where the value of experience was evidenced. In Israel, 12th grade students who wish to enroll in university level science programs are required to complete inquiry projects as part of the national matriculation examination process. As the authors described in their theoretical background, following the definition of others in the field, "inquiry" refers to student learning that is active, independent, focused on problem-solving, and fundamentally experiential (Girvan et al., 2016; Taitelbaum et al., 2008; Tal & Argaman, 2005). Their study included 15 teacher participants, who were enrolled in an intensive PD course conducted by the authors and designed to support science educators in mentoring students completing these inquiry projects. Among other things, their PD course involved critical reading, laboratory exploration, water and soil testing (i.e., "field work"), and field trips to natural settings (Tal & Argaman, 2005).

Over two years, Tal and Argaman (2005) met regularly with participants in the PD program, and gathered data from observations, interviews, and survey questionnaires. They analyzed the data in three stages, utilizing inductive methods and checking validity by way of methodological triangulation. Their findings highlighted aspects of the mentoring process, including skills, teacher involvement, mentoring styles, and difficulties faced by teachers (Tal & Argman, 2005). When they compared inexperienced teachers to experienced teachers, Tal and

Argaman (2005) found that inexperienced teachers "faced many more challenges in learning the content and acquiring the necessary skills for conducting inquiry projects in their classrooms" (p. 386). Moreover, inexperienced teachers practiced more "teacher-oriented" mentoring, while experienced teachers practiced more "student-oriented" mentoring (Tal & Argaman, 2005). Inexperienced teachers, too, were less equipped to effectively mentor their students. Experienced teachers, by contrast, had greater content knowledge and ability to meet the various cognitive needs of their students. Tal and Argaman (2005) concluded that "teachers who wish to develop students, who are self-regulated learners, have to adopt a collaborative, non-directive mentoring approach" (p. 389). Effective PD should therefore emphasize these experiential strategies.

The value of the types of learning experiences described above is twofold for teachers. First, these experiences are valuable because they allow teachers to practice methods and skills they will actually use. Second, and perhaps most importantly, the value of these experiences for teachers lies within each experience itself. Teachers experience personal and professional growth as a result of participating in what is essentially a Kolb (1984) cycle. As the Tal and Argaman (2005) pointed out, this net positive reality underscores the value of experiential training for educators, and pre-service teachers in particular.

Conclusions

Following the literature review above, effective PD treats teachers as learners and must be focused on student learning and achievement. Furthermore, effective PD can be defined by professional collaboration, long-term sustainability, and may often be designed as action research. PD necessarily shapes a teacher's first impressions of new teaching methods, and as such, should be designed to positively impact a teacher's attitudes and beliefs. Reflective practice is an important feature of effective PD, and PD design should be iterative, intentional,

and authentic. Finally, when PD is executed successfully, it is experiential by nature, giving teachers the valuable experience needed to inform and inspire best practices.

Inspired by this literature review, I proposed a program evaluation which is described in the next chapter. This program evaluation study was designed to both support and evaluate an ongoing design, enactment, and curricular integration program related to EL themes and goals at Kaplan. From the perspective of my participants, this study was designed to be structured as an action research project, whereby I involved teachers in the collaborative co-design, enactment, and evaluation of the evolving EL program. Finally, my approach to this evaluation study aligned with Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory and referenced Guskey's (1986) model of the process of teacher change in its implementation.

Chapter 4

Informed by the literature surrounding meaningful and effective professional development (PD) and referencing a theoretical framework that includes Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory (ELT) and Guskey's (1986) model of teacher change and his related research on PD, I proposed a program evaluation through which I would both support and study teachers' collaborative, integrative design of curricula that reinforced themes and goals of grade-level EL programing. I expected this collaborative evaluation to positively impact the overall efficacy of the EL program at Kaplan Academy (hereafter referred to as "Kaplan") as well as contribute to content curricula. Based on my needs assessment study (in Chapter 2), I anticipated that the study would be well-received by participants and other stakeholders at the school. Ultimately, I hoped that my findings would be scalable and would support ongoing program improvement efforts related to EL currently underway at Kaplan.

Background

As discussed in Chapter 1, Kaplan has a well-established reputation as a school that places a high premium on EL trips and activities. Over the course of the 2020-2021 academic year, the Committee on EL continued to meet and was chaired by the newly hired Director of Experiential Education (DoEE). This committee included the Head of School, Division Heads (including myself), mid-level administrators, and selected classroom teachers. Meeting three times over the course of the year, committee members worked to identify, evaluate, and discuss improvements to the EL program. By the spring of 2021, the committee developed guiding thematic questions for each grade-level's EL programming. These questions emerged from faculty feedback, were inspired by Jewish tradition and values, and were meant to frame future programmatic choices for EL activities and trips. These questions are included in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Guiding Thematic Questions for Kaplan's EL Program

Grade Level	Guiding Thematic Question
6th	*If I am not for myself, who will be for me?*
7th	*If I am only for myself, what am I?*
8th	*If not now, when?*
9th	*Where are we?*
10th	*Where have we been?*
11th	*Where are we going?*
12th	*Hineni: Here I am*

This committee also established four pillars of Kaplan's EL: community building, distinctive experience, curricular integration, and moral development. These pillars would define all future EL programming and would serve as a litmus test for new programming ideas and activities. The DoEE shared these pillars with the school community by email and included them on the school's website for the benefit of prospective families.

Based on the needs assessment in Chapter 2, I had originally planned to focus on the 10th grade spring culture trip to San Francisco (tentatively scheduled for March 2022). This trip was consistently identified by teachers and school leaders as the trip in most need of improvement. However, due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, an adjustment was made to Kaplan's schedule of trips for the 2021-2022 school year, whereby the 10th grade winter outdoor trip was moved to the spring season, leaving an opening during the winter block. The change in timeframe, as well as the two-year pause in domestic travel, provided an opportunity for Kaplan's leaders to reimagine and redesign this culture trip.

By the late spring 2021, taking the lead from the school's DoEE, members of the 10th grade team began exploring options for a new culture trip experience. After consulting multiple organizations with EL expertise, consensus quickly coalesced around a partnership model where Kaplan would outsource most of the logistical planning and some of the thematic design of the trip, freeing up teachers to focus on EL facilitation and curriculum integration. By June of 2021, a partnership was formed with Tiyulim USA[1] (hereafter referred to as "Tiyulim"), a Jewish experiential education organization that specializes in thematic, social justice-oriented trips for high school students. In June 2021, Kaplan's DoEE and members of the leadership team decided on Tiyulim's pre-packaged trip to Los Angeles that focuses on racial justice and Jewish identity. This trip would address the guiding thematic question for the 10th grade (Where have we been?) by exploring the history of race in the United States and helping students explore their own identities in contrast. After two early conversations by Zoom, Tiyulim provided the school with a rough itinerary of this new trip. Additional planning and preparation would be needed from Kaplan teachers to front-load important thematic material prior to the trip, and any integrative elements and curriculum in classrooms following the trip.

During this same time, similar improvement efforts were also taking place in the 9th grade EL program. At the encouragement of the DoEE, a small group of 9th grade teachers agreed to participate in a pilot group for co-designing integrated EL curriculum for freshmen. In particular, these teachers sought to integrate into their curricula themes related to the guiding thematic question (Where are we?), as well as those addressed during the annual 9th grade trip to Big Bend National Park (planned for January 2022) and a local, week-long program focused on world religions (planned for March 2022). The trip to Big Bend was a long-standing Kaplan tradition, and was one of Kaplan's strongest EL programs, both in its planning and reputation

among students. The 9th Grade World Religions Week would be a new experience for freshmen in 2021-2022, though the trip itself was not new. In the past, this particular EL trip had been designed for 11th grade students.

To further support these initiatives and improvements to Kaplan's EL program, and at the encouragement of the DoEE, a number of teachers (across multiple grade-levels) attended trainings during the 2020-2021 academic year that were hosted by the Independent Schools Experiential Education Network (ISEEN). These ISEEN trainings were designed to introduce EL theory and design, while supporting teachers in their roles as EL educators and facilitators. Early feedback from Kaplan teachers who participated in these PD experiences was overwhelmingly positive.

In conjunction with and in support of the ongoing work described above, I proposed a collaborative program evaluation (Worthen, 1990), through which I would both support and evaluate the improvement efforts related to Kaplan's EL program. Specifically, I would capitalize on the opportunity to study what was already happening within the 9th and 10th grade teams. My program evaluation study would include a pre-program survey, PD sessions, exit ticket surveys, and observations related to EL design and curricular integration in the fall before the 9th and 10th grade winter trips. After the winter trips, I would study the impacts of the PD on teachers' efforts in the classroom by making observations, giving a program evaluation survey, conducting interviews, gathering teacher-made instructional artifacts, and administering a post-program survey to measure teacher growth and change.

At the end of my proposed evaluation and after the spring trips, I planned to observe a final presentation made by teachers for teachers, where they would share best practices, lessons learned, and strategies that may be useful to other grade-level teams in the future. By recruiting

participants from both the 9th and 10th grade teams, I would have a unique opportunity to compare their work, while also developing with them principles for the integration of EL experiences into classroom curricula. The theoretical mechanisms that supported the desired outcomes for this program evaluation included effective and meaningful PD (Avalos, 2011; Furman Shaharabani & Tal, 2017; Wayne, 2008), ELT (Kolb, 1984), and Guskey's (1986) research on meaningful PD and teacher change. When framing PD, it is important to note that "effective PD" is separate from "meaningful PD." The former represents adherence and the later represents quality. My theory of treatment model is included in Appendix C.

Objectives

My objectives for this proposed program evaluation were 1) that I would be able to detect teacher engagement in EL design and enactment before, during, and after the PD, 2) that I would be able to document the integration of EL themes (emphasized on grade-level trips) within classroom curricula and in alignment with Kaplan's mission (expressed through grade-level thematic questions), and 3) that I would be able to collect resources and analyze strategies for other teachers to emulate as part of the scale-up effort to improve EL at Kaplan in the future. Furthermore, I anticipated being able to interpret patterns from these data that would have practical implications beyond Kaplan and for other similar schools.

Research Design

As mentioned above, my proposed study was a program evaluation. It would be formative in nature. Formative evaluations, like this one, are implemented in order to improve an existing program (Worthen, 1990). Such would be my perspective as a researcher. Moreover, from the perspective of my participants, this collaborative evaluation would be an action research project (Avalos, 2011; Tal, 2010). McNiff and Whitehead (2002) described action research as a

"practical way of looking at [one's own] practice in order to check whether it is as [one feels] it should be" (p. 15). These authors wrote directly to teachers, capturing the spirit of action research:

> If you feel that your practice is satisfactory you will be able to explain how and why
>
> you believe this is the case; you will be able to produce evidence to support your claims.
>
> If you feel that your practice needs attention in some way you will be able to take action
>
> to improve it, and then produce evidence to show in what way the practice
>
> has improved. (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002, p. 15)

Both 9th and 10th grade teachers would be working to improve their own practice, while also working to improve the efficacy of Kaplan's EL program. Following Zhang & Brundrett (2010), as a school leader I would engage in practitioner research by evaluating programmatic improvements and resources generated by this work, together with participating teachers. As discussed earlier, I expected to document changes in content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge by involving teachers in this reflective process (Taitelbaum et al., 2008).

In order to authentically measure and evaluate the processes and outcomes of this proposed program evaluation, I planned to employ an exploratory, mixed methods design. Following Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), the exploratory design is best suited to this type of study, where most of the data will be qualitative. Furthermore, utilizing a mixed methods approach to data analysis often provides a better understanding of research problems than either solely quantitative or qualitative approaches could do alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The structure, processes, outcomes, assumptions, and external factors associated with my proposed study are illustrated in a logic model below (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Planned Program Evaluation: Logic Model

Collaborative Program Evaluation of Experiential Learning Design, Enactment, and Curricular Integration			
Situation: Teachers, as experiential learning (EL) facilitators, have needs and concerns related to the design and enactment of an EL program, as well as its alignment to classroom learning. This researcher will study and evaluate program improvement efforts in the 9th and 10th grades at an independent school (Kaplan Academy) in the American southwest.			

	PROCESSES		OUTCOMES
INPUTS	***OUTPUTS***		**Short-Term:** *Within 12 weeks, participants will demonstrate...* Increased knowledge of EL as a theoretical concept
	ACTIVITIES	*PARTICIPATION*	
Time: researcher's and participants' time to participate, plan, and implement	*Sept.- Dec. 2021* Pre-program survey (by email) Five one-hour long PD workshops with teachers, focused on experiential learning design and curricular integration (use of PDSA Cycle) Five hours of individual work time for participants	**Trip Leaders:** 9th grade-level coordinator 10th grade-level coordinator **Teachers:** 9th grade teachers (4-6 teachers); pilot group participants 10th grade teachers (6-9 teachers); trip co-facilitators **School Administrator:** Director of EL	Increased knowledge of EL curricular integration strategies Measurable changes in sense of self-efficacy related to EL improvement efforts and curricular integration (as an indicator of quality)
Materials: Handouts, sample lesson plans, exit tickets, interview protocols, pre-test/post-test surveys			**Intermediate:** *By the end of the academic year, participants will...* Integrate lessons and themes of EL trip in classroom curricula Present to other faculty members with lessons learned as a result of the PD, trip, and integrative work
Space: physical spaces to conduct PD sessions, interviews, and for participants to present to faculty	*Jan.- Mar. 2022* Observations of integrated lessons and collection of artifacts Program evaluation survey (by email) Semi-structured interviews (30-35 min.) with participants		
Technology: laptops, Google Drive access (Forms, Documents, Sheets), recording device	*Apr.-May 2022* Observation of participants' presentation to faculty Post-program survey (by email)		**Long term:** *Within the following academic year (2021-2022, participants will...* Continue efforts to improve the 9th and 10th grade EL curricula, based on their experiences Share lessons learned and approach with other grade-level teams as part of ongoing improvement efforts at Kaplan
Knowledge Base: researcher and participants' pre-existing knowledge and experience with EL theory (Kolb, 1984) and action research			

ASSUMPTIONS	***EXTERNAL FACTORS***
Teacher participation and engagement Teacher attendance at PD sessions Teachers completing individual work between sessions Execution of 9th and 10th grade winter/spring trips as planned	School calendar considerations Partner EL Organization (Tiyulim USA) Hopkins IRB Approval

Process Evaluation

As indicated in the logic model above, processes in this proposed evaluation study would include inputs (time, materials, space, technology, and knowledge base) and outputs (activities and participation). My evaluation of these inputs and outputs would be important to determining the overall efficacy of ongoing EL improvements at Kaplan.

Process Evaluation Research Questions

In evaluating the processes of my proposed evaluation study of the ongoing EL improvement program, I sought to answer the following three questions:

RQ1. To what extent was the evaluation implemented with fidelity as planned?

RQ2. In what ways did participants respond to the evaluation?

RQ3. In what ways did participants as co-designers perceive the quality of delivery of the EL improvement program?

Process Evaluation Indicators & Components

Fidelity is a measure of the efficacy of implementation for a proposed treatment or study, and "helps to explain *why* innovations succeed or fail" (Dusenbury et al., 2003, p. 240). In order to evaluate fidelity, I planned to measure overall adherence to the collaborative program evaluation plan (Dunsebury et al, 2003). I would take notes during PD sessions (led by the DoEE and me, and partner organizations), record the sessions for later transcription, collect program artifacts (calendars, timelines, sign-in sheets, exit tickets, lesson plans, assignments, etc.), and conduct semi-structured interviews in order to determine the level of adherence to the evaluation study as planned. In particular, I would be looking for participant application of particular theories, strategies, and/or materials. I also planned to note the way that teachers reference these

concepts in their conversations with students, pedagogical practice, and/or interviews. I hoped to measure high process adherence as an indicator of fidelity.

The degree to which participants respond positively to a collaborative evaluation study is one measure of its overall efficacy. Dunesbury et al. (2003) described participant responsiveness as the involvement, satisfaction, and/or interaction with the content of a study. As mentioned in the previous chapter, one measure of successful PD lies in teachers' feelings of self-efficacy (Avalos, 2011). Participant responsiveness as an indicator also includes teachers' support of, excitement for, and willing participation in the study. I planned to collect data related to this indicator from ongoing observations of PD sessions, exit ticket responses, program evaluation survey, semi-structured interviews, and pre-program/post-program surveys that would measure teachers' perception and experience of the PD and its implementation. The survey instruments are included in Appendices F-H, and the semi-structured interview questions are included in Appendix I.

I planned to answer the question related to participants' perception of the quality of delivery by examining to what extent the activities of the program evaluation focused attention on the key conceptual elements and goals, and to what extent these elements and goals were perceived by participants to be supportive of student learning. According to Dusenbury et al. (2003), quality of delivery refers to the "quality of interaction and the degree to which interactive elements focus the attention on desired elements" (p. 244). I intended to measure the quality of delivery and program effectiveness by analyzing my observations of participants during the study activities, participants' exit ticket responses, their responses to a program evaluation survey, and by comparing pre-program survey responses and post-program survey responses. As my participants were co-evaluators of this program improvement effort, their critical insights

would be exceptionally valuable. I have included a data collection matrix for my process evaluation in Appendix D.

Outcome Evaluation

In my logic model (Figure 4, p. 82), I have listed short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes related to my proposed study. Short-term outcomes (that is, within 12 weeks of the conclusion of active participation by participants) would include participants demonstrating increased knowledge of EL as a theoretical concept, increased knowledge of EL curricular integration strategies, and measurable changes teachers' sense of self-efficacy related to EL improvement efforts and curricular integration. Intermediate outcomes (that is, by the end of the academic year) would include participants integrating lessons and themes from an EL trip in classroom curricula and presenting to other faculty members the lessons learned as a result of the PD, trip, and integrative curricular work. Long-term outcomes (that is, by the end of the following academic year) would include participants continuing to make efforts to improve the 9th and 10th grade EL curricula based on their experiences, and sharing lessons learned and approach with other grade-level teams as part of the ongoing improvement efforts at Kaplan.

Outcome Evaluation Research Questions

In evaluating the outcomes of my proposed study, I sought to answer the following three questions:

RQ4. What changes, if any, to classroom curricula were made by participants, and were these changes consistent with EL theory as emphasized in the PD and/or reflective of Kaplan's vision for EL programing?

RQ5. What resources, if any, were produced by teachers to facilitate EL integration into classroom curricula?

RQ6. What principles for curricular integration emerged from the program evaluation that support the effort to improve the EL program writ large at Kaplan?

Outcome Evaluation Indicators & Components

In analyzing any substantive changes to classroom curricula made by participants, I proposed to evaluate these outcomes by determining whether the changes are inspired or framed by ELT (i.e., experiential learning theory) (Kolb, 1984) and whether the changes reflect Kaplan's mission as articulated in grade level guiding thematic questions (Table 3, p. 77). As discussed in Chapter 3, Kolb's (1984) ELT includes his eponymous Kolb cycle, where abstract conceptualization informs active experimentation, which defines concrete experience that must be followed by reflective observation. The purpose of this reflection is to evaluate and improve active experimentation—at which point the cycle begins again. In the outcomes of my evaluation study, I would look for evidence of these stages in both the process and product. I would also seek to identify curriculum materials that highlight and support Kaplan's grade level thematic questions.

In my analysis of expected curricular changes, I planned to pay close attention to those changes that can be traced to or associated with my proposed collaborative evaluation study. I proposed to evaluate these changes by collecting and examining study-related classroom resources created by participants. These tools and artifacts might include classroom materials, lesson plans, presentations, or videos.

I anticipated that these changes to classroom curricula, the generation of related resources, and the lessons learned by participants would represent best practices that might be emulated in ongoing and future EL program improvement work at Kaplan. I planned to document and analyze these best practices by collecting data from exit ticket surveys, a program

evaluation survey, semi-structured interviews (where the question would be asked specifically), and PD/classroom observations. I also planned to observe and record the final presentation that participants would make to other faculty members related to best practices for ongoing improvement efforts. I have included a data collection matrix for my outcome evaluation in Appendix E.

Method

In this section, I describe the methods that I used and/or planned to use to investigate the research questions outlined above. I have included information on participants, measures and instrumentation, and procedure, which includes methods of data collection and data analysis. Where there were changes to my plan due to the impacts of COVID-19, I have noted those changes in brief and elaborate in greater detail in Chapter 5.

Participants

Participants in my study were to include 9th and 10th grade teachers at Kaplan. Though any 9th grade teacher (nine in total) could have participated in this study, I hoped to recruit participants from among the 9th grade EL pilot group (four teachers in total). These teachers had already volunteered to collaborate on a team that would work to improve and integrate thematic material from the 9th grade trips into their classroom curricula during the 2021-2022 school year.

I planned also to recruit participants from among all of Kaplan's 10th grade teachers (at the time, nine in total), and I hoped to have participants from the subgroup of chaperones, or EL co-facilitators, who had been assigned to the 10th grade winter trip (as this trip would be entirely new for Kaplan and the focus of internal EL improvements). By participating in this trip, the collaborative work related to design and curricular integration should have been more

meaningful to these teachers. To be assigned to this trip, teacher EL co-facilitators had previously self-selected their preference to travel during the winter (as opposed to the spring).

In actuality, I recruited ten participants, all of whom would be traveling with either 9th or 10th grade students on winter and spring trips. Two of my participants were members of the 9th grade EL pilot group. All participants were Kaplan employees, and all had earned at least a bachelor's degree. These participants had various years of experience facilitating EL programming at Kaplan.

Measures & Instrumentation

In the section below, I outline the constructs that I used and/or planned to use, the instruments that I would use to measure these constructs, and the protocols I would follow for their measurement.

Constructs

I selected and designed measures to examine three primary constructs: 1) teacher responsiveness to PD, 2) curriculum and resource design, and 3) best practices for curricular integration of EL. According to Guskey (2002), the degree to which teachers respond positively to PD is shaped by their motivations. These motivations are most often the desire to better oneself and grow professionally, and most significantly, to improve student learning (Guskey, 2002). Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) underscored that for teachers to be engaged in PD, that PD must be defined by active learning, collaboration, and reflection.

Curriculum and resource design is an aspect of normal educational practice, and a defining feature of action research. Teachers engaged in this work will create resources (materials, lessons, presentations, projects, etc.) that support goals for student learning and are sharable and/or replicable.

Best practices for curricular integration will include principles for creation and collaboration and should be scalable. This construct, too, is associated with action research and its reflective component. Principles for best practices related to curricular integration of EL will include tested strategies and scalable resources designed by teachers to support ongoing improvement efforts.

Observations

Through observations of my participants, I collected data related to all three constructs referenced above. Following a modified version of the FiNE (field trips in natural environments) observation protocol developed by Tal et al. (2014) and Alon & Tal (2017), I focused my observation notes on information related to trip preparation, connection to curriculum, learning activities, and collaboration. According to Tal et al. (2014), the FiNE framework includes three layering components: planning, pedagogy, and activity. Each of these components had subcomponents, which I altered to reflect and serve my evaluation study. I have included this modified FiNE framework in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Modified FiNE Framework

Component (Layer)	Subcomponents
Planning	Integrative Lesson Design
	EL Connection to Curriculum
Pedagogy	Clarifying the Goals of Learning
	Utilizing EL Theory
	Referencing Grade-Level Themes
	Connection to EL Trip
	Teacher's Role in Lesson
Activity	Teacher Responsiveness to PD
	Active Learning
	Peer Leadership

Pre-program & Post-program Surveys

I administered identical pre-program and post-program anonymous surveys to all participants to measure changes related to knowledge of ELT and practice, teacher responsiveness, and their feelings of self-efficacy. Following Fishman et al. (2003) and Ateşkan and Lane (2016), I created this survey instrument myself and organized it into three sections. The first section was designed to collect minimal demographic information about each participant. The second section included questions on related to ELT, and the third section included questions related to teacher responsiveness and growth. This survey is included in Appendix F.

Exit Ticket Surveys

I used exit tickets following each PD session to solicit immediate feedback on the session from my participants. These exit ticket surveys allowed me to gather data related to teacher responsiveness and quality of delivery. The exit ticket survey is included in Appendix G. I only collected two exit ticket survey responses, for reasons that will be explained in Chapter 5.

Artifact Collection

Following Tal (2004) and others, I collected artifacts during the collaborative evaluation study for analysis. These artifacts provided insight on curriculum and resource design, while also highlighting best practices for future improvement efforts. As mentioned earlier, I had planned for artifacts to include classroom materials, lesson plans, whiteboard notes, and presentations. Despite changes to my planned study, I was able to collect several artifacts which will be described in the next chapter.

Program Evaluation Participant Survey

Following Lusky and Hayes (2001), Astramovich et al. (2005) and others who have conducted program evaluations in schools, I collected survey data from participants related to the perceived quality of delivery of this evaluation study. I organized the survey into two sections. The first section was designed to collect minimal demographic data, while the second section would collect information related to the participants' evaluation of the PD and related curricular integration work. This survey is included in Appendix H. I did expand the demographic section of the survey later in response to contextual changes, which will be explained in Chapter 5.

Semi-Structured Interviews

After participants implemented design changes to their curricula, and following the winter trips, I planned to interview them to collect data on all three constructs. Following Fishman et al. (2003), I planned to conduct these interviews individually and in focus groups, depending on the preferences of the participants. Ultimately, I interviewed nine participants, and three of these participants were interviewed twice, for a total of 12 interviews. All interviews were one-on-one. Following Anderson et al. (2006), the interview questions that I used were

open-ended. I have included my prompting questions in Appendix I. I created additional questions after contextual changes which will be explain in the next chapter, and these additions are included in Appendix J.

Procedure

In this section, I describe the procedure for my collaborative evaluation study. I have included information on participant recruitment, researcher positionality, and on the program evaluation itself (scope, duration, timeline, and materials), as well as data collection and data analysis. In cases where procedures differed from those originally planned, I provide further information.

Participant Recruitment

I planned that all Upper School teachers would receive an email from an honest broker by mid-September 2021, requesting volunteer participation in this proposed evaluation. In fact, this email was sent in early October, for reasons that will be discussed later. The honest broker sent a recruitment letter written by me, using an all faculty and staff listserv. Over a two-week period, the honest broker collected names of volunteers. The honest broker then sorted volunteers by those teachers who teach 9th or 10th grade, and those who do not, and sent this final list to me by email. Only teachers who were members of the 9th and 10th grade teaching teams were to be included in my proposed study. By early-October, I notified participants that they had been included in the study and reminded them that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

Researcher Positionality

As the Head of Upper School at Kaplan, I was the direct supervisor of all participants in this study, including the DoEE. To avoid any conflicts of interest, and as discussed above, I

utilized an honest broker in my recruitment and selection of participants. The honest broker was a member of the Kaplan staff who did not report to me. It is also important to note as context for this program evaluation study that all 9th and 10th grade teachers were expected to attempt to integrate themes and goals from EL trips into their classroom curricula, per a prior directive from the Head of School and as part of ongoing, institutional improvement efforts to the EL program. As such, because all 9th and 10th grade teachers would be formally evaluated—at least in part—in terms of how they meet this directive, those teachers who choose to participate in my study would not receive preferential treatment in these professional evaluations. To provide further assurances, the formal, annual evaluations of all study participants were reviewed by the Human Resources Consultant and the Head of School.

Collaborative Program Evaluation Activities

My evaluation study was to involve approximately twenty hours of engagement by me and the participants and be organized in three phases. These phases would take place before and after Kaplan's winter trips, and before and after Kaplan's spring trips. I have illustrated these planned phases, their components, and time allocated in Table 5 below. Due to changes in the various contexts during the data collection period, some activities were changed. I provide details in Chapter 5 about changes to the context and specific activities beyond those noted below. Despite these changes, I was able to document over twenty-five hours of engagement in this study.

Table 5

Planned Collaborative Evaluation Study: Phases & Time Expected

Phase	Components	Time Expected
I: Design & Preparation	Pre-program Survey	15-20 min.
	PD Sessions (x5) & observations	45-60 min. (ea.)
	Individual work time for participants	3-5 hrs.
	Front-loading lesson & observation	30-45 min.
Winter Trips	9th Grade Outdoor Trip to Big Bend National Park, Texas	5 days
	10th Grade Cultural Trip to Los Angeles, California	5 days
II: Curricular Integration	Integrative lessons & observations (x3-6)	45-60 min. (ea.)
	Artifact collection	2-3 hrs.
Spring Trips	9th Grade World Religions Week	5 days
	10th Grade Outdoor Trip to Big Bend National Park, Texas	5 days
III. Sharing & Review	Program evaluation participant survey	15-20 min.
	Semi-structured interviews (x2-?)	20-30 min. (ea.)
	Participant presentation to faculty	45-60 min.
	Post-program Survey	15-20 min.

Phase I: Design & Preparation (September – December 2021)

The planned study was to be implemented between September 2021 and April 2022. In fact, this study began in October 2021 and was completed in May 2022. After recruiting participants through an honest broker, I administered a brief pre-program survey (Appendix F) via Google Forms. Participants were given two weeks to complete the survey. The survey took no longer than 15-20 minutes to complete.

Five PD sessions were planned to be held between October and December of 2021. Each session would be 45-60 minutes long and be audio recorded. During each session, a facilitator

would establish the goals of the PD and lead participants in activities related to EL curriculum co-design and integration. Participants would be asked to complete related tasks prior to the next meeting during individual work time (three to five hours total). They would also be asked to prepare at least one front-loading lesson in their classroom prior to the 9th and 10th grade winter trips. During this time, I planned to collect artifacts from the PD sessions, including notes, pictures of whiteboard work, exit tickets, and other relevant materials. I also planned to observe the class period (30 – 45 minutes) of any participant who implemented a front-loading classroom lesson. Due to context changes that will be explained in the next chapter, this planned schedule changed. The actual schedule was two formal PD sessions that took place in December 2021.

Winter Trips (January 2022)

The 9th grade outdoor trip to Big Bend National Park, as originally planned, was scheduled to take place in early January and would be facilitated internally by members of the 9th grade team. The major themes of this outdoor adventure trip were immigration, community, and identity. Participants would be encouraged to keep a reflective journal during the trip (that would not be collected or analyzed but might be referenced later during interviews). Participants were also encouraged to collect materials (itineraries, maps, handouts, work sheets, etc.) related to their experience as EL facilitators.

During the same week, the 10th grade cultural trip was scheduled to take place in and around Los Angeles, California, facilitated by Tiyulim. Though Tiyulim staff members would be primarily responsible for leading and organizing this experience, Kaplan teachers would also serve as co-facilitators on this trip. The major themes of the trip—as designed by Tiyulim—were to be racial justice and Jewish identity. Participants on this trip would also be encouraged to keep

a reflective journal (for reasons explained above) during the trip and to collect materials (itineraries, maps, handouts, work sheets, etc.) related to their experience as EL facilitators.

Due to changes in different contexts (trip schedules, COVID, etc.), the actual trips were changed. The trips taken were the 9th Grade trip to Big Bend National Park, the 10th Grade trip to Los Angeles, and the 11th Grade Civil Rights trip. Data collection was also changed to correspond to the changes in activities. I will provide more detail on these changes in Chapter 5.

Phase II: Curricular Integration (January – March 2022)

As originally planned, upon returning to campus, participants would enact a lesson (designed during the fall semester) that reinforced themes and goals from the trips. This lesson should also address the grade level guiding thematic question (Table 3, p. 77). I planned to observe these lessons (30 –45 minutes each) and collect relevant artifacts (photographs, hand-out materials, slides, etc.). Due to contextual changes which I will explain in the next chapter, this plan changed.

Spring Trips (March 2022)

In mid-March, the 9th grade was scheduled to participate in World Religions Week which would take place in a large, local, urban center. This EL program would be facilitated by Kaplan teachers, and the themes of the week's programming were to be inclusivity, pluralism, and historic monotheism.

The 10th grade class would travel to Big Bend National Park during this same time. This outdoor adventure trip would be facilitated by Kaplan teachers and led by me. The major themes of this spring trip—as they would be for the 9th grade winter trip—were to be immigration, community, and identity. (To reiterate, the 10th grade would be taking this trip to Big Bend because they missed the same trip during their 9th grade year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.)

Again, due to changes in the context of this study, the trips differed. These changes are described in detail in Chapter 5.

Phase III: Sharing & Review (March – April 2022)

After Kaplan's Spring Break in March, I planned to administer a program evaluation survey (Appendix H) to all participants. Once this survey had closed in early April, I planned to conduct 20 – 30-minute semi-structured interviews (Appendix I) with participants, recording and transcribing these conversations for further analysis. In fact, I conducted twelve interviews of nine participants in March and April of 2022, for a total of approximately three hours. During these interviews, participants were encouraged to reference notes that they had taken in trip journals. I was not able to administer the program evaluation survey until late April, for reasons that I will discuss in the next chapter.

As originally planned, by mid and late April, participants in this study were to present lessons learned and integrative strategies to the rest of the Upper School faculty during a faculty meeting, the date of which would be determined. I planned to audio record and take notes during this presentation (45 – 60 minutes), as well as collect slides and/or any hand-outs. Again, contextual changes led to a change in the presentation, and these changes are detailed in Chapter 5. Finally, I administered the post-program survey (Appendix F) to all participants in late April. The survey was essentially identical to the pre-program survey and would not take longer than 15 – 20 minutes to complete. Minor changes were made to the survey instrument to accommodate contextual changes, and these are discussed in the next chapter.

Data Collection

As discussed earlier, I planned to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, including secondary data, researcher observations, pre-program/post-program participant surveys, exit

ticket surveys, artifact collection, program evaluation participant surveys, and semi-structured interviews. Each of these approaches and any changes to the planned approaches are explained below.

Secondary Data

Before meeting with participants, I planned to gather, organize, and review any existing data from the last three years related to EL at Kaplan, including (but not limited to) de-identified student surveys, de-identified faculty surveys, itineraries, trip planning documents, etc. I planned to study this data to inform the collaborative evaluation study and associated PD. I found a minimal amount of data for analysis, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Observations

I took electronic notes (on a Google Document) during observations of all PD sessions, front loading activities and lessons, and during a presentation to faculty in the spring. The qualitative data in these notes was deidentified by me and stored securely on Google Drive.

Pre-program & Post-program Surveys

The pre-program survey (Appendix F) was administered to all participants at the beginning of the study. This anonymous, Likert-scale survey was shared with participants by email and via Google Forms. The post-program survey, which was essentially identical to the pre-program survey (with only minor changes, as explained in Chapter 5), was administered to participants at the conclusion of the study. I kept the quantitative data collected from these surveys in electronic form and securely on Google Drive.

Exit Tickets Surveys

I administered short, anonymous exit ticket surveys (Appendix G) to all participants following both PD sessions. I utilized Google Forms and each survey did not take more than five minutes to complete. In these exit ticket surveys, I collected both quantitative and qualitative data from participants.

Artifact Collection

During this evaluation study, I collected artifacts that included classroom and trip materials, lesson plans, examples of student work, and presentation slideshows. Some of these artifacts were hard-copy and some were electronic in form. I stored de-identified digital copies of these qualitative data securely on Google Drive.

Program Evaluation Participant Survey

The program evaluation participant survey (Appendix H) was administered to all participants after the curricular integration work was completed. This anonymous, Likert-scale survey was shared with participants by email and via Google Forms. I kept the quantitative data collected from these anonymous surveys in electronic form securely on Google Drive.

Semi-Structured Interviews

I conducted interviews (Appendix I) of all participants and gave each participant the choice to be interviewed individually or in focus groups. I conducted twelve total interviews of nine participants (three participants were interviewed twice) for a total of two hours between April 4 and April 28, 2022. One participant did not respond to my request for an interview. I recorded each interview and uploaded the recordings to Otter AI for transcription. Transcribed

interviews were deidentified by me and stored in electronic form securely on Google Drive. In these interviews, I collected qualitative data only per the protocol.

Data Analysis

My analysis of the data collected using the methods and instruments described above was ongoing throughout the duration of the collaborative program evaluation study. I used a mixed methods approach to organize, analyze, and present these data in an integrative manner. Below, I explain how I analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data sets.

Quantitative Data

After collecting quantitative data from pre-program/post-program surveys, exit ticket surveys, and the program evaluation survey, I manually recorded the data from Likert scale items to a Google Sheets spreadsheet. Once in Google Sheets, I was able to make comparisons between these data. I analyzed these Likert scale items using descriptive statistics: averaged means, medians, modes, and ranges. I also labeled each exit ticket or survey question item with its corresponding construct and organized the table of data by construct. Finally, I conducted T-Tests of the pre-survey and post-survey items, as well as by constructs.

Qualitative Data

Following Hseih and Shannon (2005), and as I did in my needs assessment study (Chapter 2), I utilized both conventional and direct methods in my qualitative analysis of data collected from survey instruments, interviews, artifacts, and observations. I first analyzed data in a directive fashion, looking for a priori themes. As discussed earlier, I then categorized and sorted data using a modified version of the FiNE framework (Alon & Tal, 2017; Tal et al., 2014), which provided a priori themes (Table 4, p. 90).

I also coded for emergent (inductive) themes. My observation notes and open-ended responses were electronic, and therefore easy to reorganize, sort, search, and present. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed (as discussed earlier) for the same reason. As I read through each interview response and reviewed my observation notes, I highlighted key concepts, ideas, and enactments, and labeled each with emergent themes. I sorted and presented this information in tables using Google Sheets. The full list of emergent themes from these interviews is included in Figure 16 (Chapter 5).

Member Check Protocol

As mentioned earlier, the participants in this program evaluation were co-designers and co-evaluators of my study. Due to my positionality as a researcher (described previously), it was important to utilize a member check protocol as part of ensuring the validity of this evaluation. According to Murphey and Falout (2010), member checks—especially those following a critical participatory looping (CPL) structure—can provide enriched data interpretation. I planned to employ a CPL approach when conducting my own member check protocol during this evaluation study, relying on dialectic process to inform and bolster my research (Murphey & Falout, 2010).

At two separate intervals during the study, I conducted member checks, inviting participants to review and comment on my findings. The first occasion followed my creation of the data tables (in mid-May) related to my coding analysis of a priori and emergent themes. I solicited this feedback on the preliminary findings by email and made changes or improvements to the presentation of my findings where appropriate. The second occasion for member check followed my first written draft of significant findings (in late May). I sent to participants (by email) the findings section of Chapter 5 and asked for their critical review. Despite my outreach, only one participant responded with meaningful feedback.

As will be discussed in the next chapter, one of my participants was Kaplan's DoEE, which provided a unique opportunity for member check protocols beyond the plan I had originally imagined. Early on, we began meeting regularly to review and discuss the data and findings from this study. The DoEE was a constant, collaborative partner throughout this program evaluation, and as such, helped me honor the spirit of the critical participatory looping.

Strengths and Limitations

The research design described in this chapter had both strengths and limitations. A major strength lay in the mixed methods approach itself, which afforded me the opportunity to study the data collected during this program evaluation from multiple viewpoints. Another strength was the amount of data collected. For a program evaluation of this scale, multiple data sources and the volume of data, would prove beneficial.

Limitations, conversely, included threats to trustworthiness and experimenter expectancies. As most of the data collected in this study were qualitative in nature, I needed to check for trustworthiness by verifying the credibility and reliability of my analysis methods. In addressing experimenter expectancies, I knew that I must guard against seeing what I expected to see. Employing a mixed methods approach to data collection (as described earlier) and using member checks addressed this threat to validity.

Conclusion

In Chapter 5, I describe the process of implementation for this collaborative program evaluation study as it actually unfolded during the 2021-2022 academic year. I also outline and describe key findings and draw conclusions from this study that are relevant for Kaplan, and hopefully, for a wider audience as well.

Chapter 5

In the previous chapter, I outlined my planned study and described it as a collaborative program evaluation. I reviewed in detail the steps that I expected to follow as this evaluation was implemented during the 2021-2022 academic year. My objectives for this collaborative program evaluation were the following: 1) to be able to measure teacher engagement in experiential learning (EL) design and enactment in proximity to targeted professional development (PD); 2) to be able to witness integration of EL themes (emphasized on grade-level trips) within classroom curricula—and that this integration would be in alignment with the school's mission (expressed through grade-level thematic questions); and, finally, 3) to be able to collect resources and analyze strategies for other teachers to emulate as part of an ongoing improvement effort related to EL at Kaplan Academy (hereafter referred to as "Kaplan"). Moreover, as I studied and engaged with teachers in a collaborative evaluation of the school's ongoing EL improvement efforts, I hoped to interpret patterns from these data that would have practical implications beyond Kaplan.

My collaborative program evaluation study ran from October 2021 through May 2022. Though initially on track to follow to the timeline outlined in Figure 4 (p. 82), the emergence of new variants of COVID-19 impacted my study, forcing me to make adjustments to the original implementation plan. These unexpected changes notwithstanding, over the course of the 2021-2022 academic year, I was able to collect a large amount of data for analysis. My findings and subsequent conclusions have implications related to future success of EL at Kaplan, as well as implications for other similar schools that prioritize EL pedagogy and practice.

Process of Implementation

In reviewing the actual implementation of this evaluation study, I will analyze the process by addressing the following indicators: adherence, participant responsiveness, and quality of delivery (Dunsebury et al, 2003). By focusing on adherence, I will be able to ascertain process fidelity. Participant responsiveness will be an indicator of overall engagement by participants. Finally, to determine whether this evaluation highlighted key conceptual elements and goals, I will describe the quality of delivery, and how that quality was perceived by participants.

Secondary Data

While waiting for an opportune time to recruit participants, I searched for any secondary data related to EL at Kaplan. I was hoping to find any data collected from students or faculty, over the past three years. I expected to find surveys and/or planning materials. These data were extremely limited or non-existent. I found only one anonymous survey given to 9th grade students after the Big Bend Trip in 2019. In these survey responses, students expressed positivity about trip experiences, but expressed concerns related to food options, rooming preferences, and the physical requirements of certain activities. No surveys (to my knowledge) were administered to faculty trip chaperones in the last three years, other than those asking faculty members for their trip preferences (winter or spring). Beyond a paragraph statement describing the purpose and program of EL found in the student handbook (discussed in Chapter 1), I found nothing else of value to inform this study.

Participants

After receiving institutional board review approval (following a minor delay in September) from Johns Hopkins University (JHU), I officially began implementation in early

October. On October 11, I sent a recruitment email to all faculty and staff at Kaplan. My email was blind carbon copied to an all faculty and staff listserv, and in my letter, I briefly described the purpose of my study and indicated that I was looking for participants who taught 9th or 10th grade, and/or would be travelling in the winter or spring with 9th or 10th grade students. Any volunteers who were interested in participating my study were directed to contact the assistant to the Head of School within a week. This honest broker would then create a spreadsheet with a list of names and forward this list to me after the recruitment window closed. On October 15, I sent a reminder email to the all faculty and staff' listserv, and on October 18, the assistant to the Head of School sent me the final list of participants, of which there were ten in total. My participants are listed in table below, with relevant demographic data.

Table 6

Program Evaluation Participants

Participant	Role(s)	Grade(s) Taught	Trip(s)
Participant 1	Classroom Teacher	10th	Spring (10th)
Participant 2	Classroom Teacher, Trip Leader	9th	Winter (9th), Spring (9th)
Participant 3	Administrator, Classroom Teacher	N/A	Winter (9th)
Participant 4	Classroom Teacher, Trip Leader	9th, 10th	Winter (10th), Spring (10th)
Participant 5	Classroom Teacher	10th	Winter (10th)
Participant 6	Administrator	N/A	Winter (10th)
Participant 7	Classroom Teacher	9th	Winter (9th)
Participant 8	Classroom Teacher	9th	Spring (9th)
Participant 9	Classroom Teacher	9th, 10th	N/A
Participant 10	Administrator, Trip Leader, Classroom Teacher	N/A	Winter (10th)

Two of these participants had participated in my needs assessment study (Chapter 2) a year earlier. Two participants were members of the 9th grade EL pilot group (mentioned in

Chapter 4), organized by Kaplan's Director of Experiential Education (DoEE). Two participants served as grade-level coordinators (GLCs) and trip leaders—one on the 9th grade team, and one on the 10th grade team. Both these participants were scheduled to lead and/or attend both winter and spring trips. Three participants served as mid-level administrators, in areas including Student Life and Learning Support. One participant was Kaplan's DoEE. All participants except one were classroom teachers, and all but one would be traveling with students in either the winter or spring of 2022. Six participants were new enough to Kaplan to have never traveled with students on a winter or spring trip.

On October 21, I emailed all participants with my thanks, and included list of research elements related to this study. I also attached an informed consent form to this email for their review and eventual submission. Over the next two weeks, participants sporadically delivered their signed informed consent forms to me through my office assistant. Once I had all these forms in my possession, I emailed the participants on November 4 with a link to the pre-program survey (Appendix F). When the survey closed on November 12, eight participants had responded. Two participants did not respond to the pre-program survey.

Key Partners

Shortly after learning that Kaplan's DoEE was one of my participants, they met with me to discuss plans for forthcoming PD related to EL. Indeed, having the DoEE as a participant meant that I would be able to implement member check protocols (Murphey & Falout, 2010) earlier than originally planned. At multiple points along the way, I shared my progress, data collection, and findings with the DoEE for their input and evaluation. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the DoEE had already been in contact with the Independent Schools Experiential Education Network (ISEEN), and earlier in the fall, they and ISEEN had tentatively planned for a series of

fall PD sessions for teachers. During the summer of 2021, at least six Kaplan teachers attended ISEEN's virtual summer session, and the DoEE was hoping to expand this partnership to include more opportunities for faculty PD.

In late October, the DoEE and I met remotely with ISEEN educators to plan for targeted PD at Kaplan. During this meeting, we discussed bringing ISEEN educators to campus. However, due to an increase of COVID-19 cases nationwide, ISEEN was only offering remote options for PD. Similarly, in anecdotal conversations with faculty at Kaplan, the DoEE and I sensed discomfort among the faculty around in-person PD. Moreover, though our needs related to PD in EL were diverse, we decided to focus our efforts for learning and improvement on the planned 10th grade winter trip to Los Angeles. Consequently, after negotiating a suitable date for all parties, we finally agreed to schedule an ISEEN PD via Zoom on December 7. When I sent the pre-program survey instrument to participants on November 4, I included information and an invitation for 10th grade trip chaperones and teachers to attend the December training with ISEEN. Eight participants responded to the pre-program survey over the course of a week.

Phase I: Winter Trip Preparation and Professional Development

As the winter trips approached, grade-level teams began meeting to review logistics and trip goals with faculty chaperones. On December 1, I observed one such meeting for 10th grade winter trip chaperones (PD 1). Four of my participants were in attendance for this preparatory meeting. Kaplan's DoEE led the meeting, which included a minilesson related to EL pedagogy and practice. Following this hour-long PD, I sent an exit-ticket survey (Appendix G) electronically (by text message) to each participant in attendance. Three participants responded to this brief survey on the same day.

On December 7, I observed one participant lead an Advisory meeting with 10th grade students. The purpose of this meeting was to front-load key concepts related to the winter trip to Los Angeles. After the meeting ended, I met with the participant for a brief debrief interview, and I took notes related to our conversation. Later that afternoon, I attended and observed the PD with ISEEN by Zoom (PD 2). Four participants were in attendance, and after the 90-minute session ended, I sent an exit-ticket survey (Appendix G) electronically (by text message) to each participant in attendance. All four participants responded to this survey on the same day.

At this time, one participant contacted me with an invitation to observe an upcoming lesson (in early January) in their 10th grade classroom. This lesson was designed as a front-loading experience for the 10th grade winter trip to Los Angeles and was meant help students learn how to navigate an art museum, as well as draw meaningful conclusions and make connections to classroom objectives. This teacher also scheduled a field trip for the first week in January, where students would visit a local art museum. Moreover, this field trip was in conjunction with a special exhibit that aligned with themes and content related to the upcoming 10th grade winter trip. I agreed to observe this teacher's classroom in January and to join the field trip (as a chaperone) to the museum when we returned from Winter Break.

Impacts of COVID-19

When school closed for the winter holidays, Kaplan's senior leadership team (SLT) was already having serious discussions about the viability of holding winter trips as originally planned. At the end of November, the Omicron-variant of COVID-19 was spreading rapidly and raising real questions and concerns related group gatherings and travel. At the end of December, the SLT decided to cancel and/or postpone all winter trips. Where possible, trips would be postponed until March. If a trip could not be moved, or if the spring trip was judged to be more

valuable (or hard to move) than the winter trip, the winter trip would be cancelled outright. Upon

returning to campus during the first week of January, the field trip to the art museum was also

cancelled. The new spring trip schedule, agreed upon by Kaplan's SLT, is shown in Table 7

below.

Table 7

Updated Kaplan Spring Trips as of January 2022

Grade	Trip (Updated)	Dates
9th	Outdoor Trip to Big Bend National Park, Texas	Mar. 6-11, 2022
10th	Cultural Trip to Los Angeles, California	Mar. 6-10, 2022
11th	Cultural Trip to the Deep South (Civil Rights Trip)	Mar. 7-11, 2022

With these cancellations and/or postponements, trip chaperones were reassigned to spring

trips based on preference and availability. As a result of the changes, many of my participants

were affected in some way. For example, one participant was reassigned to the 10th grade spring

trip, and another participant was moved to the 11th grade cultural trip to the Deep South. One

participant would not be traveling on a spring trip at all. Earlier in December, the 11th grade-level

coordinator had been diagnosed with a long-term illness and was unable to lead the 11th grade

trip—and consequently, one of my participants was asked to lead the trip instead. As a result of

these changes, all participants except one would be chaperoning a week-long trip for the first

time. All these new trip assignments are reflected in the updated participant list in Figure 12.

Table 8

Program Evaluation Participants (Updated in January 2022)

Participant	Role(s)	Grade(s) Taught	Trip (Updated)
Participant 1	Classroom Teacher, Trip Leader	10th, 11th	Spring (11th)
Participant 2	Classroom Teacher, Trip Leader	9th	Spring (9th)
Participant 3	Administrator, Classroom Teacher	11th	Spring (9th)
Participant 4	Classroom Teacher, Trip Leader	9th, 10th	Spring (10th)
Participant 5	Classroom Teacher	10th	N/A
Participant 6	Administrator	N/A	Spring (10th)
Participant 7	Classroom Teacher	9th	Spring (9th)
Participant 8	Classroom Teacher	9th	Spring (11th)
Participant 9	Classroom Teacher	9th, 10th, 11th	Spring (10th)
Participant 10	Administrator, Classroom Teacher	N/A	Spring (10th)

In early January, I met with my JHU advisor to discuss the impacts of these changes to my evaluation study, and to formulate a reasonable plan for moving forward. We agreed that given the facts—that two of my participants were now assigned to the 11th grade Civil Rights trip, that one of them would be the trip leader, and that there would only be one set of trips, and not two—it seemed prudent to expand the scope of my study to include collecting data related to the 11th grade-level trip as well. At this point, I also modified my semi-structured interview questions (Appendix J), adding extra questions that made the survey more reflective of the recent, unanticipated changes to EL PD and trips. For example, I asked participants: "Did you participate in any professional development last fall or this spring related to experiential learning or the trips? Was it valuable for you? Why or why not?" (Appendix J). I also asked participants to identify whether they had attended either of the planned PD sessions (Chapter 4).

Phase II: Spring Trip Preparation and Pre-trip Interviews

During the first week of January, one participant informed me that she had decided to rework her lesson plan and field trip idea to plan for virtual field trip to an art museum instead of an actual visit. I was invited to observe this lesson in their classroom. This was still meant to be a front-loading exercise for the 10th grade trip, now rescheduled for the spring. I reached out to other participants, asking if any others had lessons or materials that they would be willing to share with me. Those who did respond communicated to me that they had put any such plans on hold, wanting to focus their attention instead on maintaining "normal" classroom learning while our community weathered a COVID-19 spike.

In early February, after discussing with my JHU advisor, I sent an email to all participants, asking for updated participation information, and inviting them to participate in short semi-structured interviews (one-on-one or in focus groups) both before and after the upcoming spring trips. Three participants responded to me by email that they were willing to be interviewed one-on-one, and I asked my office assistant to schedule these brief meetings.

In early March, I conducted three interviews with participants before the week of spring trips. These semi-structured interviews were 15 to 20 minutes in length and were recorded by me on my iPhone using the VoiceMemos application. I utilized my modified semi-structured interview questions during these interviews.

Days before the spring trips, I observed a front-loading presentation related to the 10th grade trip to Los Angeles. All 10th grade students were in attendance, as well as faculty chaperones. Three of my participants were included in this number. This 30-minute presentation was led by the DoEE and included a short EL activity meant to prepare students for the upcoming trip. The meeting required student engagement in the form of volunteer responses and

discussion in pairs. The session concluded with a review of important travel logistics by the DoEE and GLC.

Phase III: Spring Trips and Post-trip Interviews

Kaplan's spring trips took place during the second week of March (see Table 7, p. 110), after which the school closed for Spring Break (March 12-20). Upon returning to campus, I reached out to all participants again to request follow-up interviews (one-on-one or in focus groups). Nine participants agreed to be interviewed one-on-one, and I followed the same protocol as I had with the pre-trip interviews. In total, I conducted 12 one-on-one interviews of nine total participants (pre-trip and post-trip) in March.

After making audio recordings of these interviews using my iPhone's VoiceMemos application, I uploaded each mp4 file to Otter AI for transcription. Once transcribed, I then downloaded each interview as a Microsoft Word document to my computer and uploaded these files to a secure Google Drive folder. I converted each file into a Google Sheets spreadsheet, where distinct utterances were separated out by row. I removed my comments from each transcript, deidentified the transcribed dialogue, and added a column where I could code each utterance with emergent themes. I read every interview at least three times and kept a separate spreadsheet where I noted emergent themes that appeared in at least three distinct participant interviews. I then tallied and recorded the number of utterances where a particular theme emerged, while also including how many participants referenced each theme. This table of descriptive statistics (See Table 20, p. 130) would prove useful in my later analysis of these data.

At the end of March, I was also able to attend a trip leaders debrief meeting, led by the DoEE, and with grade-level coordinators in attendance. Four of my participants were in this

meeting. The discussion during the meeting focused on strengths and weaknesses of each trip, as well as future improvements. I took field notes during this meeting for later analysis.

Phase III (continued): Faculty Presentation, Collecting Artifacts, and Final Survey Instruments

In early April, after discussing with my JHU advisor, I made changes to the program evaluation survey instrument (Appendix K) to better reflect the actual implementation activities my participants experienced. I also made a minor change to the post-program survey instrument (Appendix L) to include the 11th grade cultural trip as an option for participants to select. In both cases, the initial focus of the surveys was maintained and quantitative items were not altered. During this month, I also became aware of integrated content and materials created by some of my participants—or other faculty members that they knew—related to EL at Kaplan.

Though originally, I had hoped to have a group of participants present to the faculty in the late spring about their experiences related to EL at Kaplan, there was not enough time after the spring trips to see this plan come to fruition. In anecdotal conversations with multiple participants, many were concerned about their ability to plan something of substance before the end of the school year. Instead, in mid-April, the DoEE led an hour-long PD session for all faculty related to EL pedagogy and practice at Kaplan. I observed this session and took field notes for later analysis.

At the end of April, I emailed all participants with two final survey instruments: the revised program evaluation survey and revised post-program survey. I also asked participants to share any lesson plans, materials, or activities that they had created—or knew that others had created—and that demonstrated integration of trip themes and goals with curricular objectives in the classroom. Two participants shared their own original work with me that was both creative

and integrative. Two other participants shared original work of others, some that was created by students and some that was created by faculty members. Work that created by students was de-identified, and the work created by other faculty members was shared with their permission. I digitized all these artifacts by taking pictures (with my iPhone) and uploading these images to a secure Google Drive folder.

On May 3, I sent a final email reminder to participants, before closing both final survey instruments on May 6, and officially concluding my program evaluation study. Eight participants responded to the program evaluation survey over two weeks. Eight participants also responded to the post-program survey over a similar two-week period.

Following my member check protocol (discussed in Chapter 4), on May 21, I emailed participants with an invitation to provide their reactions, questions, and feedback on deidentified, partially analyzed data (both quantitative and qualitative). I compiled all quantitative data into a single Google Sheets spreadsheet and gave participants "view only" access. I then shared (via Google Drive) the raw transcripts (on Google Sheets spreadsheets) from each individual participant's interview (or interviews) with that participant. Participants were only given access to view their own interviews. Two participants spoke with me briefly while on campus about these findings, but no one responded by email.

On May 31, I shared with participants the portion of this chapter that included my findings, summative conclusions, and discussion. I asked again for their reactions, questions, and/or constructive feedback. No participants responded to my email communication, though one participant did meet briefly with me in person. They asked clarifying questions and indicated that they were looking forward to reviewing my conclusions.

In Table 9 below, I have outlined the actual process of implementation of my evaluation, including the three phases described in Chapter 4. As a measure of fidelity, the implementation of this study involved more than twenty hours of engagement, beyond what was originally expected.

Table 9

Program Evaluation Implementation: Phases & Time Spent

Phase	Components	Time Spent
I: Design & Preparation (Winter Trip Preparation & PD)	Review of Secondary Data	2 hrs.
	Pre-program survey (8 respondents)	2 hrs. (15-20 min. ea.)
	Meeting with DEE to plan PD & review program evaluation	1 hr.
	Observations: PD Sessions (x2)	2 hrs. (45-60 min. ea.)
	Individual work time for participants (lesson planning)	3-5 hrs.
	Observation: Front-loading Advisory activity	30 min.
Winter Trips (January 2022)	Cancelled and/or postponed by SLT (Dec. 2021)	
II: Curricular Integration & Sharing (Spring Trip Preparation & Pre-Trip Interviews)	Observation: Integrative lesson	50 min.
	Observation: Front-loading Grade-Level Presentation	30 min.
	Semi-structured interviews (x3)	1 hr. (20 min. Ea.)
Spring Trips (March 2022)	9th Grade Outdoor Trip to Big Bend National Park, Texas	6 days
	10th Grade Cultural Trip to Los Angeles, California	5 days
	11th Grade Cultural Trip to Deep South (Civil Rights Trip)	5 days
III. Curricular Integration (cont.), Sharing, & Review (Post-trip Interviews, Faculty Presentation, Collecting Artifacts, & Final Survey Instruments)	Artifact collection	2-3 hrs.
	Program evaluation participant survey (8 respondents)	2 hrs. (15-20 min. ea.)
	Semi-structured interviews (x9)	1 ½ -2 hrs. (20-30 min. (ea.)
	Observation: Trips Debrief Meeting	1 hr.
	Observation: DEE's Presentation to Faculty	1 hr.
	Member check outreach & electronic exchanges	1-3 hrs.
	Post-program survey (8 respondents)	2 hrs. (15-20 min. ea.)

In Table 10 below, I have listed significant changes to my study by including information related to the original planned study elements, any changes, new study elements, and any impacts overall.

Table 10

Program Evaluation Plan: Changes & Impacts

Original Elements	Change	New Elements	Impacts
Collect data related to 9th and 10th grade Winter Trips & 9th and 10th grade Spring Trips	Cancellation of Winter Trips due to COVID-19	Collected data related to 9th, 10th, and 11th grade Spring Trips only	Faculty chaperone reassignments; new data sources
Collect data related to two trips in particular: 9th Grade Outdoor Trip to Big Bend National Park, Texas 10th Grade Cultural Trip to Los Angeles, California	After cancellation of Winter Trips, two participants were assigned to the 11th Grade Spring Cultural Trip to Deep South (Civil Rights Trip)	Broadened scope of study to include 11th Grade Cultural Trip	Gathered data related to the 11th Grade Cultural Trip, providing additional perspective for analysis of Kaplan's El program overall
Conduct and study five hour-long PD sessions in the fall	Impacts of COVID-19 result in participant hesitancy and scheduling challenges	Studied two PD sessions (one 60-minutes, and one 90-minutes) in the fall	Less structured PD directly associated with this study; no creation of PD by the researcher
Administer post-program survey	After cancellation of Winter Trips, some participants were assigned to other trips	Addition to demographic section of survey to include option for participants to select 11th grade trip	Minor and grammatical
Observe participant presentation to faculty in the spring	Due to time constraints and participant hesitancy, participants did not present to faculty. DoEE (a participant) decided to present instead.	Kaplan's DoEE gave a 60-min presentation related to EL program improvements and pedagogy to all faculty	Any teacher-led presentations were postponed until the 2022-2023 school year

Findings

In the section that follows, I will review the data collected in this study. I will organize my presentation of these data by type: quantitative and qualitative. In the next section, utilizing a mixed methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), I will integrate these data and discuss my conclusions.

Quantitative Findings

I collected quantitative data in four Likert scale survey instruments, including pre-program and post-program surveys, exit ticket surveys, and a program evaluation survey. I will review the data collected using each of these instruments in the section below.

Pre-program Survey

Both the pre-program (Appendix F) and post-program surveys included the same twenty Likert scale questions, grouped by three constructs: best practices, curriculum and resource design, and participant responsiveness to PD. According to the results of the pre-program survey, participants indicated that they felt moderately confident in explaining or demonstrating the value of EL as a best practice in education. Notably, most participants did not consider EL to be well-integrated within classroom curricula at Kaplan (Q. 2). Similarly, some participants indicated that they did not feel confident integrating EL (Q. 18). I have included the questions of this survey, grouped by construct, along with descriptive statistics, in Table 11. In Table 12, I have included the findings by construct.

Table 11

Pre-program Survey: Likert Scale Responses

Q. #	Construct	Likert-scale Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
1	Best Practices	I feel comfortable explaining what experiential learning is—both as a concept and as a teaching practice—to others.	4.1	4	4	2
2	Best Practices	Activities, themes, and values from experiential learning trips at this school are well-integrated within my own classroom curriculum.	2.8	3	4	3
3	Best Practices	Experiential learning is a strategy that works in the classroom just as well as it does off-campus (for example, on trips).	3.9	4.5	5	3
4	Best Practices	I understand the "Kolb Cycle" of experiential learning.	3.5	3.5	3	4
5	Best Practices	Experiential learning supports critical thinking in students.	4.6	5	5	2
6	Best Practices	Experiential learning supports character development in students.	4.8	5	5	2

Q. #	Construct	Likert-scale Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
7	Best Practices	Experiential learning supports the development of a social justice mindset in students.	4.5	5	5	2
8	Best Practices	Experiential learning, or "learning by doing," helps make learning more meaningful for students.	4.9	5	5	1
9	Best Practices	I see myself as an experiential learning facilitator or co-facilitator.	4.1	4	4	2
10	Best Practices	For experiential learning strategies to be successful, facilitators or co-facilitators must have a good understanding of experiential learning theory and best practices.	4.6	5	5	3
13	Best Practices	I often reference or utilize experiential learning strategies in my teaching.	4.3	5	5	3
20	Best Practices	I am willing to share what I've learned in my teaching practice with other teachers.	4.6	5	5	1
12	Curriculum & Resource Design	I have experience designing or co-designing experiential learning lessons or activities.	4.5	5	5	3
18	Curriculum & Resource Design	I feel confident integrating experiential learning best practices into my teaching.	3.9	4	4	3
19	Curriculum & Resource Design	I enjoy creating (or re-creating) new classroom materials and/or lesson plans.	4.3	4.5	5	2
11	Responsiveness to PD	Related training or professional development is essential for an experiential learning facilitator/co-facilitator to be successful.	4.4	5	5	2
14	Responsiveness to PD	I see myself as an active, life-long learner.	4.9	5	5	1
15	Responsiveness to PD	I typically find professional development related to experiential learning theory and practice helpful or engaging.	4.4	4.5	5	2
16	Responsiveness to PD	I enjoy participating in professional collaboration related to experiential learning with my colleagues.	4.6	5	5	2
17	Responsiveness to PD	My own professional learning related to experiential learning positively impacts the learning of my students.	4.5	5	5	2

Note: 1= false, 2 = somewhat false, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat true, 5 = true

Table 12

Pre-program Survey: Findings by Construct

Construct	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
Best Practices	4.2	4.5	4.6	2.3
Curriculum & Resource Design	4.2	4.5	4.7	2.7
Responsiveness to PD	4.6	4.9	5.0	1.8

Note: 1= false, 2 = somewhat false, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat true, 5 = true

Post-program Survey

In comparing the quantitative data collected in the pre-program survey to that collected in the post-program survey (Appendix L), I was able to note increases (by at least half a point) in multiple areas. To evaluate the statistical significance of these data sets, I conducted a two-tailed, paired T-Test of the Likert scale mean scores for all questions. The result of this T-Test was $p=0.0000572951$, confirming statistical significance in the difference between the pre-survey results and the post-survey results. I also conducted three two-tailed, paired T-Tests of the means by construct. For the construct of best practices, the T-Test result was $p=0.007444$. For the construct of curriculum and resource design, the T-Test result was $p=0.133333$. For the construct of responsiveness to PD, the T-Test result was $p=0.013236$. These values were all less than the critical value, representing measured statistical significance between these three constructs.

Overall, the results of the pre-post survey instrument demonstrated significant increases in all three constructs. According to these findings, at the conclusion of this program evaluation, participants were more convinced that EL strategy works (Q. 3), had a better understanding of EL theory, such as the Kolb cycle (Q. 4), had greater self-efficacy in their role as EL co-facilitators (Q. 9), further underscored their desire for more training (Q. 11), expressed greater confidence with curricular integration of EL themes and goals (Q. 18), and demonstrated more enjoyment in creating materials relevant to integration and classroom learning (Q. 19). I have again included the survey items, corresponding constructs, and descriptive statistics in Table 13 below. In Table 14, I have included findings by construct.

Table 13

Post-program Survey: Likert Scale Responses

Q. #	Construct	Likert Scale Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
1	Best Practices	I feel comfortable explaining what experiential learning is—both as a concept and as a teaching practice—to others.	4.8	5	5	1
2	Best Practices	Activities, themes, and values from experiential learning trips at this school are well-integrated within my own classroom curriculum.	3.1	3	3	4
3	Best Practices	Experiential learning is a strategy that works in the classroom just as well as it does off-campus (for example, on trips).	4.5	5	5	2
4	Best Practices	I understand the "Kolb Cycle" of experiential learning.	4.3	4.5	5	2
5	Best Practices	Experiential learning supports critical thinking in students.	4.9	5	5	1
6	Best Practices	Experiential learning supports character development in students.	5	5	5	0
7	Best Practices	Experiential learning supports the development of a social justice mindset in students.	4.8	5	5	2
8	Best Practices	Experiential learning, or "learning by doing," helps make learning more meaningful for students.	5	5	5	0
9	Best Practices	I see myself as an experiential learning facilitator or co-facilitator.	4.8	5	5	1
10	Best Practices	For experiential learning strategies to be successful, facilitators or co-facilitators must have a good understanding of experiential learning theory and best practices.	4.5	5	5	2
13	Best Practices	I often reference or utilize experiential learning strategies in my teaching.	4	4	3,5	2
20	Best Practices	I am willing to share what I've learned in my teaching practice with other teachers.	4.8	5	5	1
12	Curriculum & Resource Design	I have experience designing or co-designing experiential learning lessons or activities.	4.6	5	5	2
18	Curriculum & Resource Design	I feel confident integrating experiential learning best practices into my teaching.	4.6	5	5	1
19	Curriculum & Resource Design	I enjoy creating (or re-creating) new classroom materials and/or lesson plans.	4.8	5	5	2
11	Responsiveness to PD	Related training or professional development is essential for an experiential learning facilitator/co-facilitator to be successful.	4.9	5	5	1
14	Responsiveness to PD	I see myself as an active, life-long learner.	5	5	5	0
15	Responsiveness to PD	I typically find professional development related to experiential learning theory and practice helpful or engaging.	4.8	5	5	1

Q. #	Construct	Likert Scale Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
16	Responsiveness to PD	I enjoy participating in professional collaboration related to experiential learning with my colleagues.	4.8	5	5	2
17	Responsiveness to PD	My own professional learning related to experiential learning positively impacts the learning of my students.	4.8	5	5	2

Note: 1= false, 2 = somewhat false, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat true, 5 = true

Table 14

Post-program Survey: Findings by Construct

Construct	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
Best Practices	4.5	4.7	4.8	1.5
Curriculum & Resource Design	4.7	5.0	5.0	1.7
Responsiveness to PD	4.9	5.0	5.0	1.2

Note: 1= false, 2 = somewhat false, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat true, 5 = true

Exit Ticket Surveys

Based on the data that I collected in the two exit ticket surveys (Appendix G), participants were largely positive about the PD implemented during this program evaluation. Unfortunately, due to factors discussed earlier, only two PD sessions took place—but the feedback that I received through these surveys was nonetheless informative. One exit ticket survey followed a 10th grade team meeting (PD/ET 1) and the other followed the ISEEN training (PD/ET 2). In three Likert scale survey items, participants were asked to rate each PD in terms of how engaging it was, how enjoyable it was to collaborate, and how valuable the PD was for student learning. I have included tables of descriptive statistics for both surveys in Table 15 and 16.

Table 15

Exit Ticket Survey: 10th Grade Team Meeting (Dec. 1, 2021)

Q. #	Likert Scale Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
1	I found today's session meaningful and engaging.	4.3	4	4	1
2	I enjoyed working with my colleagues in collaborative professional development.	5	5	5	0
3	The work that I/we completed today will have a positive impact on student learning.	5	5	5	0

Note: 1= false, 2 = somewhat false, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat true, 5 = true

Table 16

Exit Ticket Survey: ISEEN Training (Dec. 7, 2021)

Q. #	Likert Scale Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
1	I found today's session meaningful and engaging.	3.5	3.5	2,3,4,5	3
2	I enjoyed working with my colleagues in collaborative professional development.	5	5	5	0
3	The work that I/we completed today will have a positive impact on student learning.	4.3	5	5	3

Note: 1= false, 2 = somewhat false, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat true, 5 = true

It is worth noting that after the ISEEN PD (PD 2) in early December, participants demonstrated a broader range of responses when asked if the training was meaningful and engaging (Q. 1).

Program Evaluation Survey

In the program evaluation survey (Appendix K) administered at the end of the study, participants were asked to reflect on the efficacy of the program overall. At least six participants indicated that they attended PD in the last year, though not necessarily related to this program

evaluation study. The survey included nine Likert scale questions, and each item was connected to a construct: best practices, curriculum and resource design, and participant responsiveness to PD. I have included the survey questions and corresponding constructs, along with measures of central tendency in Table 17. I have also included findings by construct in Table 18.

Table 17

Program Evaluation Survey: Likert Scale Responses

Q. #	Construct	Likert Scale Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
4	Best Practices	Improvements to school-wide curricula are best made in collaboration with other teachers.	4.9	5	5	1
9	Best Practices	I believe that students (in the grade level that I traveled with) can successfully identify the grade-level experiential learning theme or question.	3.3	3	3	4
5	Curriculum & Resource Design	I have been able to successfully integrate themes and goals from the spring trip in my classroom curricula.	3.5	4	4	4
6	Curriculum & Resource Design	I am aware of teachers that have or will integrate themes and goals from the spring trip in their classroom curricula.	3.9	4	5	3
1	Responsiveness to PD	The professional development around experiential learning that I attended in the last year helped me grow as an educator.	4.1	4	5	2
2	Responsiveness to PD	The professional development that I participated in helped me grow as an experiential learning co-facilitator (chaperone).	4.4	5	5	2
3	Responsiveness to PD	I enjoyed collaborating with my colleagues during this professional development.	4.7	5	5	1
7	Responsiveness to PD	Overall, the professional development that teachers participated in last year made the spring trips more meaningful for students.	4	4	3,5	2
8	Responsiveness to PD	My participation in professional development over the last year has had a positive impact on student learning.	4.4	4.5	5	2

Note: 1= false, 2 = somewhat false, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat true, 5 = true

Table 18

Program Evaluation Survey: Findings by Construct

Construct	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
Best Practices	4.1	4	4	2.5
Curriculum & Resource Design	3.7	4	4.5	3.5
Responsiveness to PD	4.3	4.5	5	1.8

Note: 1= false, 2 = somewhat false, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat true, 5 = true

According to the quantitative results of this survey, participants were moderately positive when asked if curriculum integration was happening at Kaplan (Q.5, Q.6), though neutral when asked if grade-level thematic questions were integrated in classrooms (Q. 9). When compared to findings by construct in the pre-survey and post-survey, though participants generally expressed belief that curricular integration of EL is valuable, they were on average barely above neutral in indicating that this integration is taking place at Kaplan. Participants were, at the same time, generally positive about PD and its impact on the growth, pedagogy, and practice. Additionally, participants indicated that they believed collaboration was an essential best practice of ongoing improvement work at Kaplan (Q. 4).

Qualitative Findings

As indicated in the previous chapter, I utilized an exploratory design for this program evaluation, because most of the data collected were qualitative in nature (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). These data were collected through online survey instruments, notes from field observations, transcripts of semi-structured interviews, and artifacts created by participants. I will discuss each of these data sets in turn in the section below.

Exit Ticket Surveys

The exit ticket survey (Appendix G) included an optional open response survey item. Four participants, responding in both exit ticket surveys (ET 1, ET 2), shared that more clarity was needed around school expectations related to being an EL facilitator, travel details and logistics, and specific trip activities and/or programming. One participant summed up these concerns in their short answer response:

> While I appreciate how much energy we are putting into thinking big, I am wishing there was more information on practical logistics and chaperone expectations. One conversation [that] I would think would have been (or would be) beneficial is about working [toward] what I have called a "united front." In addition to having a clearer sense of the school's expectations for chaperones, I think it would be helpful to have some pre-trip time devoted to working as a team of adults... I love the collaborative environment, but I would also love some more firmly set structure (rather than co-created structure). (ET 2)

Some participants also indicated that they had some confusion related to curricular integration, and what defines effective EL strategy. That said, all participants indicated that both PD sessions were valuable for them as trip chaperones.

Field Observations

Over the course of this study, I conducted seven field observations related to the implementation of EL trips at Kaplan, including observations of an integrative classroom lesson, PD sessions for chaperones, a front-loading Advisory activity for students, a post-trip debrief meeting, and presentations to faculty and students by Kaplan's DoEE. During these observations,

I was able to note strategies for integration of EL themes and goals within classroom curriculum, modes for effective PD, and participant responsiveness.

I have listed these field observations in Table19, where each observation serves as evidence within a modified FiNE (field trips in natural environments) framework (Tal et al., 2014; Alon & Tal, 2017). The components of this framework are planning, pedagogy, and activity, and each component has related subcomponents. Evidence related to these categories is included in my discussion that follows.

Table 19

Modified FiNE Framework: Observational Evidence

Component (Layer)	Subcomponents	Observational Evidence
Planning	Integrative Lesson Design	Integrative Lesson (1/7/22)
	EL Connection to Curriculum	DEE's Presentation to Faculty (4/11/22)
Pedagogy	Clarifying the Goals of Learning	PD session with 10th grade chaperones (12/1/21)
	Utilizing EL Theory	PD session with ISEEN (12/7/21)
	Referencing Grade-Level Themes	Grade-Level Presentation to Students (3/1/22)
	Connection to EL Trip	Front-loading Advisory activity (12/7/21)
	Teacher's Role in Lesson	Integrative Lesson (1/7/22)
Activity	Teacher Responsiveness to PD	PD session with ISEEN (12/7/21)
	Active Learning	PD session with 10th grade chaperones (12/1/21)
	Peer Leadership	Trips Debrief Meeting (3/23/22)

Planning. Planning, as a layer of this framework, includes two subcomponents: integrative lesson design and the connection of EL to classroom curricula. I collected data in my observations that related to both these subcomponents. One participant enacted an integrative lesson related to the upcoming 10th grade trip to LA, where the teacher sought to model EL pedagogy while students explored an art museum. This participant created an interactive lesson designed to help students answer the question: "What's the difference between an artist and a curator?" (Participant 5). The teacher utilized an online art museum collection of a museum that

was on the Los Angeles trip itinerary, and one that the students would eventually visit in person. This integrative lesson included aspects of a Kolb cycle (Kolb, 1984), where students were given an experience in real-time and then asked to reflect on that experience for future application. In the DoEE's summative presentation to faculty, they articulated how and why EL should be connected to classroom curricula. They also referenced recent student post-trip surveys that indicated that students at Kaplan are eager for these connections. The DoEE shared that an increasing number of faculty members are seeking to incorporate EL theory and pedagogy in the classroom, and shared enthusiasm for possibilities in the upcoming school year. During their presentation, they shared about their own experience at an ISEEN training in the early spring, where they attended PD for school directors of EL. The DoEE described a challenging experience, where they were pushed enough to facilitate growth. They used this story to illustrate underlying value of EL at Kaplan: "If you choose something that's hard enough that you have to change in order to get it, you can make a lot of progress" (Participant 10).

Pedagogy. As a component or layer, pedagogy refers to how a trip chaperone and/or teacher clarifies the goals of learning, utilizes EL theory, references grade-level themes, makes connections to EL trip, and what their role in executing a lesson should be. My observations highlighted all these aspects of pedagogy. In a meeting with 10th grade trip chaperones (PD 1), the DoEE and the trip leader led a pre-trip workshop for other participants reviewing the goals of the trip. Both trip leaders answered questions related to programming and the travel itinerary. The DoEE also referenced a book related to the themes and programing of the upcoming trip (which had been purchased by the school for all chaperones) and encouraged attendees to read and reflect on the book. The DoEE then modeled an EL pedagogical strategy for attendees. Referencing design theory, the DoEE described a narrative arc and defined "flat moments" in

students' learning experiences. The DoEE challenged chaperones to "make flat moments rounder" through intentional design and asked each attendee to brainstorm methods and plan to implement one such strategy during the upcoming trip.

The PD session led by ISEEN in early December (PD 2) was also a chance for me to observe EL theory and pedagogy in practice. Four of my participants were in attendance for this virtual PD, and three? were engaged throughout the 90-minute training. Among the topics emphasized was that of reflection, and its importance to a robust EL cycle. One participant synthesized part of this conversation:

> For me, I think it's super important to make sure that the kids always connect personally with whatever it is that we're doing with experiential education. Because even if it is a super exciting experience, if [students] don't have the chance to reflect on why that is important to them, how they are a part of the greater world outside of their school, outside of their homes, it's just not thinking as deeply. (Participant 4, PD 2)

A few participants talked about the need for norms around expectations and planning, and the ISEEN leaders affirmed this need. In particular, one participant made a connection to a classroom management strategy: "I know a lot of us use norms in our classrooms—and sometimes have the students come up with the norms. So there's common language. I don't think this is a thing that Kaplan has done on grade-level trips" (Participant 10, PD 2). Following on the conversation around norms, the ISEEN facilitators led a discussion around curricular integration. One participant shared their desire to better integrate the themes of the Los Angeles trip with content in their classroom, but was concerned about timing and best practices:

> So I'm thinking about integrating with English, and I have an idea—but the book [that is related to my idea], I'm not going to do [this book] until the end of the year. So is there a

time limit where this [kind of curricular integration] stops being as effective? Or is it good that my... book is where it is... and that's not a bad thing?" (Participant 5, PD 2) During a grade-level presentation to 10th grade students, the DoEE referenced grade-level question (Figure 6) in the subject matter of the presentation. Without explicitly mentioning the question itself, they led an activity for students related to perception and perspective. Using an image of an optical illusion, the DoEE asked students, "What do you see when you first look? What do we see when we look closer?" (Participant 10). Students offered verbal suggestions, to which the presenter responded and connected this exercise to the upcoming goals of the trip to LA. The DoEE modeled for students—and for trip chaperones (and study participants) who were present—how to engage in reflection, and by extension, encouraged chaperones (as EL facilitators) to model similar reflective leadership while on the trip.

Activity. According to my modified FiNE framework (Table 19, p. 126), activity is expressed by three subcomponents: teacher responsiveness to PD, evidence of active learning, and peer leadership related to EL facilitation. By in large, I observed participants responding to this collaborative program evaluation with curiosity, engagement, and reflectiveness. In a front-loading Advisory activity for 10th grade students, the leading participant implemented a minilesson around themes related to the upcoming trip to Los Angeles. Afterwards, during a short post-activity follow up conversation, this participant told me that these kinds of activities were important to prepare students for "the learning experience that is the trip" (Participant 4).

In late March, I observed a team debrief meeting facilitated by Kaplan's DoEE where trip leaders were in attendance (including four study participants). The meeting mostly focused evaluative comments about PD, strategies for active learning while on trips, and opportunities for collaborative problem-solving. The DoEE asked each attendee to list strengths and weaknesses

of the trips, and the group had a lively and thoughtful discussion around the similarities and differences of these observations. Mutiple attendees also discussed the need for greater clarity around norms of behavior, and the desire for more PD related to each trip in the future.

Semi-Structured Interviews

In twelve semi-structured interviews, participants discussed with me topics that were relevant to the goals of this study. Though participant responses did follow and address questions specifically asked by me, participants chose to spend more time discussing certain topics. In Table 20 below, I have listed emergent themes identified by me in these interviews. I have also included the total number of references for each theme, as well as the total number of participants who individually referenced any particular theme. Based on my findings, participants were most interested in discussing factors related to the role of being an EL facilitator at Kaplan. Moreover, all participants wanted to talk about the need for (or lack of) pre-trip preparation, purposed planning of EL programming, how a trip met (or did not meet) stated goals. Far and away, the most referenced topic was that of curricular integration.

Table 20

Semi-Structured Interviews: Emergent Themes

Emergent Theme	Total number of references	Number of participants who referenced theme
Role as EL co-facilitator and/or leader (i.e. chaperones)	28	9
Pre-trip preparation for EL co-facilitators (i.e. chaperones)	26	9
Purposeful planning of EL programming	25	9
Meeting trip goals	23	9
PD related to EL	23	8
Focus on student experience, learning & growth	20	8
Post-trip follow-up for students	15	8
Focus on curricular integration	35	7
Pre-trip front-loading for students	16	7

Emergent Theme	Total number of references	Number of participants who referenced theme
Collaboration with partners	11	7
Integration of grade level thematic question in programming	9	7
Understanding of EL theory & pedagogy	19	6
Importance of reflection to efficacy of EL programming	19	6
Significance of prior experience with EL pedagogy and practice	10	6
Future program improvements	8	6
Creation of lesson plans, materials, and/or activities	18	5
Impacts of COVID-19 to programming	11	5
Concerns & constraints	9	5
Motivations related to PD	6	5

In discussing the importance of curricular integration, one participant emphasized the role of EL in making classroom learning more understandable for students: "There's lots of context. The trip provided context for pretty much everything that I'm [teaching about] the civil rights movement, specifically" (Participant 1). Another participant stressed the need for thoughtful, coordinated collaboration in making curricular integration effective and across-the-board:

> Maybe it's just me, but it feels surface level. It's not going anywhere deeper. I think English has ample opportunity to do something. But we're not doing it. There's ample opportunity in History. We're not doing it. The journal [that we created for 9th grade] is all [related to] Judaics [class]. But what it really comes down to is communication— communicating what we're doing. (Participant 2)

Multiple participants expressed their interest making a greater effort in the future to integrate classros and the trips. One participant referenced the work of other teachers, before sharing their own ideas for integration:

> [One teacher who went on the Big Bend trip] has a lot of knowledge about archaeology and geology. And another teacher, who is a biology teacher, had the students create a plant guide, and an animal guide, prior to the trip. In what ways can we maybe instead of

just doing a plant and animal guide, can we also do a guide for what they can expect to see as far as the rock formations, the fossils? And then, as a literary scholar [myself], there's so much work and inspiration, especially in the Romantic period... about naturalism in nature. So how can I maybe pick some poems that the kids can read and study before to help them get in the spirit of it before they go on the trip? (Participant 7)

The need for pre-trip preparation was another topic that participants wanted to discuss with me at length. Some participants felt that they were adequately prepared as a trip chaperone. Other participants felt that they needed to be more prepared. One participant, who traveled to Los Angeles with the 10th grade class, shared their perspective on pre-trip preparation:

I was a little unprepared. I mean, on paper, I could see that our trip was going to be heavy. I was unprepared for the pace, which was intense... I think that would have been better to have been a little bit more prepared for the fact that we would have [so much serious programming] in one day, as opposed to like, separate it out with a little bit of processing time in between. (Participant 9)

Similarly, all participants stressed the need for purposeful planning of school trips. Some participants felt involved in this planning, and others did not. Most participants saw evidence of some thoughtful planning in advance of the trips, but most felt that improvements were in order. A participant who traveled with the 10th grade class believed that more could have been done to prepare chaperones:

I wish we could have done [more purposeful planning]. Really going over the vocabulary that was being used on the trip... like what does "BIPOC" [black, indigenous, or people of color] mean? Or "unsheltered"? A word bank [would have been] a way we could have

132

framed [the experience] and empowered the students with the correct language.

(Participant 6)

Illustrating this desire for more intentionality in planning, one participant articulated their desire to understand the EL theory behind making certain programmatic choices:

I'm at a stage [as a Kaplan trip leader] ... where I just organically know what works. And I would love to get to a point where I actually *know* what works... For example, we did a... hike [on the first day]. That was fine. And then our second day hike was absolutely brutal. It was physically seven miles in the desert, [and] the sun was beating down on us. We survived it. We camped out that night... [and] felt like we *survived* something. The next day, the kids floated [down the river and then] did these shorter hikes. And they all—after that day was over—[were] like, "I love this day!" This was great. They were bonding. And I was just like, in my head, "We did something, [but] I don't know what we did." (Participant 2)

When asked about meeting trip goals, most participants responded that they believed that these goals were generally met. For example, one participant told me that the two major goals of the 9th grade Big Bend trip were "bonding" and "acclimation" (Participant 3). This participant shared with me why they considered the trip an overall success:

I do think that [the students] bonded, [and] I think that some kids had some growing opportunities that they weren't expecting... I do think that most kids came away feeling like they were included, and they were making new friendships. But there were some [students] that really did struggle, [trying to] figure out, "How do I make friends?" One student that I talked to, it was the same conversation... [I said to the student,] "You get out what you put in." And that was something that I reminded her of several times during

133

the trip: "You have put yourself out there... [and] let people in." It was a big growing experience [for this student]. (Participant 3)

In contrast, another participant admitted that they did not even know the grade-level thematic question and could not speak to the success of the trip vis-a-vis meeting trip goals. One participant, when asked if the goals for the 11th grade cultural trip were met, responded with an answer, and then a series of questions:

Was that the goal that we were trying to meet? Did we do what we thought that you thought we should do? And what about the other trips? The outdoor trips? What are the goals for those trips? And how does [my classroom content] fit in there? If at all? How do we can we or should we? I don't know the answer to that either. (Participant 8)

Program evaluation survey

In the first section of the program evaluation survey (Appendix K), there was a short open response item where participants could identify and describe any PD that they attended in the past year. Three participants cited PD with ISEEN, and two participants referenced PD led by Kaplan's DoEE.

Artifacts

I collected materials created by two participants over the course of this evaluation study, which are described below. Some additional resources collected were second-hand, meaning that they were not directly created by one of my participants.

One participant shared examples of de-identified student responses to reflection questions. These student responses indicated awareness of the trip goals and were evidence of EL best practice around reflection and metacognition. Another participant referenced the work of a teacher to create science field notebooks for their biology students. Other participants

mentioned their awareness of this notebook and shared that they observed it being used by students while on the Big Bend trip. A participant shared a copy of the science field notebook with me.

One participant created a reflective journal for the 9th grade trip to Big Bend (Figure 5). This 32-page journal was printed for each student and was designed to utilize an online platform called Rocket Book to facilitate easy digitization of student entries. This journal was used during the week of the Big Bend trip and was later referenced in an Advisory activity when the students returned to school. Part of this activity involved having students digitize their journals. This participant had already created a similar journal for the 9th grade weekend retreat (in the early fall), and plans—in collaboration with the DoEE—to create similar journals for other grade-level EL trips in the future.

Figure 5

Excerpts from 9ᵗʰ Grade Big Bend Journal
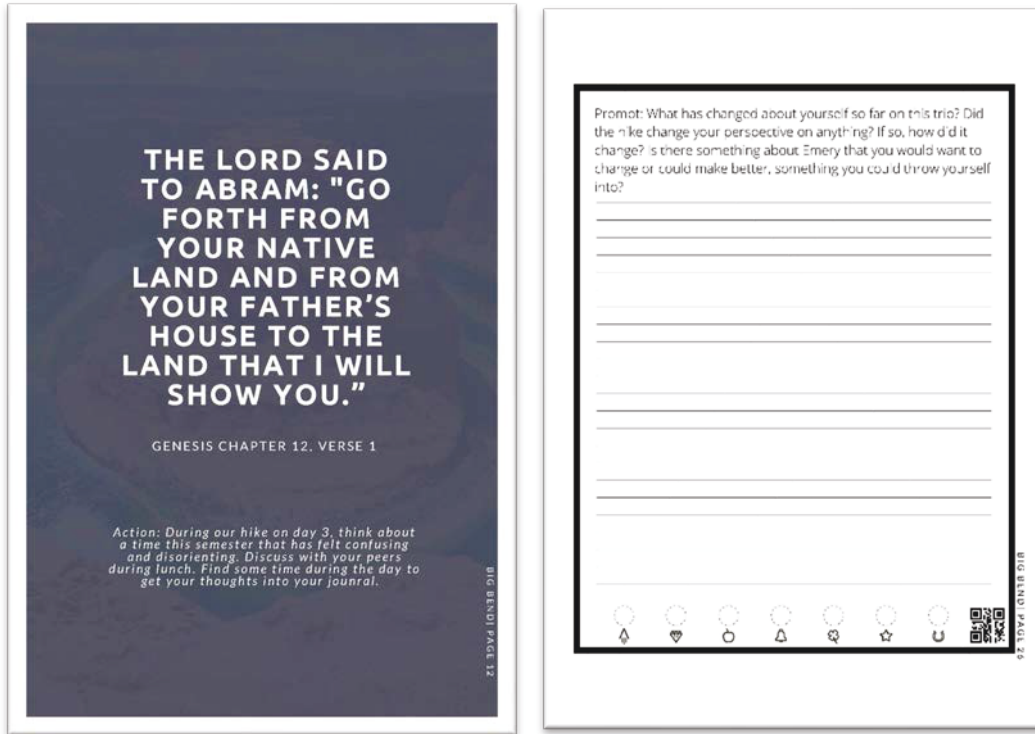
Yet another participant created a fully integrated assignment for all students in their art classes.

This teacher created a "Curated Travel Sketchbook" assignment, and asked students to complete

at least seven sketches related to meaningful experiences on the trip. This participant modeled

this assignment by creating their own series of sketches while on the 10ᵗʰ grade trip. The teacher

created a rubric for this assignment, and after students returned to school, made time in class for

student presentations of the drawings in their sketchbooks. This participant shared a copies of

original student work with me, as well as some of their own, some of which I have included

below in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Examples "Curated Travel Sketchbooks" work
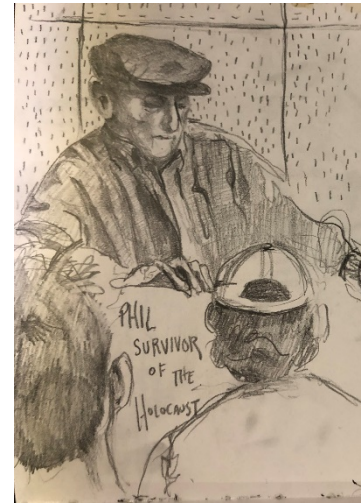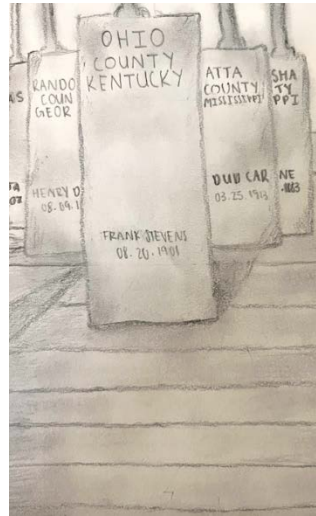
Summary of Integrated Findings

Having reviewed quantitative and qualitative findings, I will now discuss the integrated findings following a mixed methods, integrative approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In the previous chapter, I listed six research questions under categories related to both process of implementation and expected outcomes. Using these six research questions as subheadings, I will share the integrated findings from my analysis of the data.

Research Question 1: To what extent was the evaluation implemented with fidelity as planned?

In spite of significant circumstantial factors beyond my control, this collaborative program evaluation was implemented with a high degree of fidelity. As mentioned earlier, I was able to record close to twenty-five hours of engagement (Table 9, p. 115). I was able to honor the spirit of my proposed program evaluation (Chapter 4) by partnering with participants, learning from them, and uncovering findings that will support ongoing, scalable improvements at Kaplan.

The impacts of COVID-19 on this study were cited by some participants (Table 20, p. 130) as consequential—and certainly led to significant changes to my implementation plan. As discussed earlier, the spread of both the Delta and Omicron variants of COVID-19 resulted in participant hesitancy around implementation and trip cancelations and/or postponements. Kaplan's DoEE described the impacts of these changes, and the relevance of what was accomplished in spite of COVID-19 to the future of EL programming:

> COVID sort of threw us for a loop. Originally, we were really thoughtful about which chaperones we put on [each] trip... [and] we started to do some work with them about our role versus the role of the [partner] organization on the ground... And then we had to like mix up the chaperones a little bit... only a handful of those chaperones ended up being the actual chaperones [for the trip to LA]. But I think our instincts were right on, like some of the stuff work we needed to do to front-load. And because we were doing it... and starting to implement it. I think we can do it again next year, and even better. (Participant 10)

Essentially, though there were significant changes to the original program evaluation plan (Table 10, p. 116), I was able to evaluate and analyze the work of ongoing improvements to EL at Kaplan with fidelity.

Research Question 2: In what ways did participants respond to the evaluation?

Participants generally responded positively to this program evaluation. As discussed earlier, most participants were actively engaged in this study for the duration. They completed survey instruments when asked, agreed to participate in interviews, allowed me to observe them in the classroom, and shared original lesson plans and classroom materials with me. Overall, participants demonstrated a reflective, open-minded attitude toward PD and programmatic improvements. Following Guskey (2002), teachers were pragmatic about PD and highlighted the

role of teacher learning in boosting their own confidence and improving student learning. One participant articulated this growth-focused mindset:

> I'm going to get better at my job... I don't like showing up and then feeling unprepared. It personally makes me feel panicked. I get nervous... So, for me professional development is about figuring out what I don't know. And so even if I'm not able to answer every question ahead of time, at least anticipating what the common questions are and what the common issues will be ahead of time just makes me feel that much more in control. I feel like I'm better able to tailor the lessons to my students, and they're less confused. It's just prep work, just working ahead. To make my job easier. (Participant 7)

In exit ticket surveys, some participants mentioned that though they found collaboration and PD with their colleagues to be meaningful, they wanted to see more attention paid to trip logistics and programmatic details. This concern was reiterated in some interviews with participants. Overall, participants responded to this collaborative program evaluation with a willingness to engage in conversation, and an eagerness to share perceptions, ideas, and resources.

Research Question 3: In what ways did participants as co-designers perceive the quality of delivery of the evaluation?

Participants underscored the importance of collaboration in making school-wide curricular improvements, and most enjoyed this professional collaboration (Table 17, p. 123). Four participants evidenced their role as co-designers and made a point to check in with me frequently to share artifacts, discuss ongoing improvements, or ask questions related to my research. Following Guskey (2002), teachers also drew a line of connection between PD and

positive student learning outcomes in the classroom. One participant shared a trip experience where this connection was evident:

> Students got a lot out of the [trip] itself... [and] I'm wondering if I could do if I could capture some of that energy in a place that's maybe closer to home. One of the big surprises [for me] was actually not related to the [trip], but an event we did the day before where the students got together and got to practice photography skills. And I discovered that [this activity] actually filled a need for them to practice photography [in class]... (Participant 7)

Moreover, in data collected through survey instruments, participants indicated that they found PD related to EL meaningful (Table 17, p. 123 and most participants discussed the importance of such targeted PD during semi-structured interviews (Table 20, p. 130). In their responses, participants underscored the quality of this program evaluation and evidenced their own investment and engagement. One participant shared their excitement moving forward after all they learned this past year:

> I think we have opportunities weekly, if not every day to include experiential education in the classroom. I am not at the level that I personally want to be at yet, because it is difficult to overhaul what you're used to doing to include this new thing. But what I learned in the professional development [related to EL] last year is that you don't have to make changes that are very big, just including more reflection opportunities is already something that would feel more like experiential education, because you're bringing it back to the kid themselves, instead of just this textbook, this lesson, this country or whatever. (Participant 4)

As a measure of the quality of this program evaluation, participants' self-efficacy increased over the course of this study. This was evidenced by comparing results from the pre-program (Tables 11 & 12, p. 118) and post-program surveys (Tables 13 & 14, p. 120), exit ticket surveys (Tables 15 & 16, p. 121-122), and by analyzing the program evaluation survey (Tables 17 & 18, p. 123). Most participants indicated that they experienced growth by way of their participation in the study and in related PD, and importantly, could identify related positive student learning outcomes. There was also a significant increase in participants' positive feelings about PD in general between the pre-program and post-program surveys. The same was true as it relates to participants' comfort level in understanding EL theory and best practices. On all survey instruments, participants indicated that collaboration with colleagues was something that they both enjoyed and found necessary to successful integrative work.

Research Question 4: What changes, if any, to classroom curricula were made by participants, and were these changes consistent with EL theory as emphasized in the PD and/or reflective of Kaplan's vision for EL programing?

I was able to note changes to classroom curricula in at least three cases. One participant planned a lesson designed to front-load an experience on an upcoming trip. This lesson was experiential and prioritized reflection. Another participant referenced an assignment created by another teacher (who was not a participant) and shared a copy of this assignment with me. One participant created materials that were intentionally designed to integrate the themes of the trip within their classroom curriculum (see Figure 6, p. 136).

Multiple participants shared their desire to plan for new or better changes to the classroom in the future. It is important to note once again that, except for one participant, all participants were new to the trip that they chaperoned. Six participants had never traveled on a

141

Kaplan spring trip before. This fact may explain why most of the discussion around curricular integration was aspirational.

Interestingly, some participants indicated that they could identify specific references to grade level thematic questions (Table 3, p. 77) in the planning and execution of trips. Other participants did not see evidence of these connections. These findings indicate that some work may be needed to make these connections explicit, both for teachers and for students.

Research Question 5: What resources, if any, were produced by teachers to facilitate EL integration into classroom curricula?

As shared previously, I was able to document the integration of EL themes and goals within classroom curricula. One teacher designed an EL lesson to front-load similar trips to museums during the 10th grade trip to Los Angeles. This lesson plan included an online digital resource, and a reflective graphic organizer for students to complete. Similarly, the "Curated Travel Sketchbook" (Figure 6, p. 136) is an example of curricular integration with an EL trip—and this case, multiple trips. The 9th Grade Big Bend reflective journal (Figure 5, 135), too, is a model for other reflective materials at other grade-levels. Though not made by one of my participants, the science field notebook is another such example of integrative work that may be scalable at Kaplan.

Research Question 6: What principles for curricular integration emerged from the program evaluation that support the effort to improve the EL program writ large at Kaplan?

As a result of this program evaluation, I detected a number of outcomes that underscore key principles related to the support of ongoing improvements to the EL program at Kaplan. In Chapter 4, I described short-term (within 12 weeks), intermediate (by the end of the academic year), and long-term (within the next school year) outcomes. Short-term outcomes that I was able

to measure include increased knowledge of EL as a theoretical concept by participants, increased knowledge of EL curricular integration strategies by participants, and measurable changes in sense of self-efficacy related to EL improvement efforts and curricular integration by participants. Expected intermediate and long-term outcomes will be discussed in the next section.

Increased knowledge of EL as a theoretical concept by participants was evidenced in survey instruments and interviews, where participants made frequent references to the Kolb cycle (1984) and EL best pedagogical practices. In pre-program and post-program surveys, I measured an increase in participants' sense of their own theoretical understanding related to EL (Tables 12 & 14, p. 119 & 121). As a group, participants in this study may represent a sub-set of Kaplan's faculty team that have a greater sense of the theory that supports EL. This may contribute to their role as future leaders in EL program improvements. One participant discussed the realities and implications of this fact:

> I think there are there [are] three camps [at Kaplan]. There [are] people who don't understand the Kolb cycle. So they're just ignorant. Then, there [are] the people who hear what the Kolb cycle is, and they think... it's all about doing an activity. And then there [are] the people actually understand the Kolb cycle and realize it's not [just] about having an experience, like the way that I think some people imagine it... like there's actually supposed to be a [pedagogical] spiral... and it requires them to radically blow up their curriculum...   (Participant 2)

As for curricular integration, participants identified key contributing factors, including the need for purposeful planning, ongoing targeted professional learning, and pre-trip preparation for trip chaperones (see Table 20, p. 130). One participant described this concept of purposeful planning, and looked forward to future opportunities for collaborative curricular integration:

In my own classroom, we were working on the *Odyssey*. And so coming back from the trip [to Big Bend National Park], I asked them to reflect on their own experiences as an "odyssey." During the trip, I was able to connect with a lot of teachers who plan to do this [kind of curricular integration] in the future. We made a few long term plans about... how we are going to shape our curriculum to make sure the kids are ready [for the next trip]... The [teachers and I] were just thinking out loud, pretty much [during] the entirety of the trip like, we wish that we had talked about this with the students. We wish we had given the students this knowledge... in advance of the trip... kind of long term thinking. We hope to take some of those plans and integrate them next year into our curriculum." (Participant 7)

There was also measured improvement in participants' sense of self-efficacy related to the enactment of EL facilitation and curricular integration. In survey data and interviews, participants demonstrated increased confidence as EL facilitators that was grounded in actual, first-hand experience.

The outcomes discussed above inform and should inspire ongoing efforts at Kaplan to scale success vis-a-vis EL programming and curricular integration. As discussed in Chapter 1, leadership focus on EL programming will continue to be important for the school moving forward. Furthermore, according to the analysis of the evidence, ongoing PD related to EL theory and practice is critical for Kaplan's faculty and chaperones. Finally, participants in this study indicated repeatedly that curricular integration is dependent on collaborative, purposeful planning. This collaborative effort was modeled in my program evaluation study. The principles that emerged from this study are the following: the need for ongoing leadership and vision, the

need for ongoing targeted PD, and the need for collaborative, purposeful planning. I will discuss each of these principles in the section that follows.

Discussion

Over the past two years, Kaplan's EL program has seen robust improvements and significant challenges. In hiring a Director of Experiential Education (DoEE) in 2020, Kaplan's leaders signaled that EL would receive special attention under thoughtful, intentional leadership. Since then, as more teachers have been exposed to PD related to EL. Over the course of this dissertation study, I documented a culture shift that is underway at Kaplan. This shift was evidenced in both my needs assessment (Chapter 2) and in my collaborative program evaluation study. More teachers and leaders are talking about EL theory and practice, and many are interested making connections with classroom curriculum. Teachers have a better sense of their role as EL facilitators and interest in incorporating EL strategies in the classroom. They are also excited to be involved in improving EL at Kaplan on an institutional level.

As school leaders seek to encourage and scale-up ongoing program improvements, I offer three principles of effective ongoing EL program design work that are informed by research and the findings of this study.

Ongoing Leadership Attention & Vision

In multiple interviews, participants referenced other participants who are grade-level trip leaders (Participants 1, 2, & 4) at least three times each. These leaders play important roles in providing structure, guidance, and support for EL programming at Kaplan. More than any other school leader, however, participants cited Kaplan's DoEE (Participant 10) as instrumental in coordinating PD related to EL, planning and executing trips, and articulating the school's vision for EL. Clearly, teachers see the benefit of having a senior level administrator overseeing EL.

145

The DoEE has led the effort to improve Kaplan's EL curriculum since 2020 (when they were

hired at the time of my needs assessment in Chapter 2), and as a school leader, their unique

ability to articulate the vision for EL has been just as instrumental. Faculty members look to the

DoEE to set forth the vision for EL, plan for related PD, support trip chaperones, and conduct

ongoing evaluation of EL programming.

As reviewed in Chapter 1, the literature underscores the importance of leadership within

schools. Educational leadership serves both cultural and structural functions (Decoux &

Holdaway, 1999), and is most effective when it is collaborative and research-driven (Zhang &

Brundrett, 2010). Kaplan's DoEE has led a culture shift in the way teachers and leaders talk

about EL. Following Boerema (2006), the DoEE articulated Kaplan's vision and mission for EL

through facilitating a collaborative process that generated grade level thematic questions (Figure

6). Administratively, the DoEE has provided structural focus to improvement efforts. As a

collaborative leader, the DoEE has led by example, working alongside teachers in creating

curricular content and facilitating activities and trips. Following Zhang and Brundrett's (2010)

findings, the DoEE's citation of and participation in practitioner research grounded their

leadership and pedagogy in best practices. In a style similar to that discussed in Tal et al. (2014),

Kaplan's DoEE has modeled high quality practices in leading PD related to EL, including

activity and action, teacher involvement, and the use of place-based environments.

This study demonstrated that Kaplan's move to hire a DoEE was critical to supporting

needed programmatic improvements. Other schools, similarly committed to EL, would do well

to prioritize the hiring of a senior leader tasked with the evaluation, organization, expansion, and

support of EL and curricular integration.

It is also important to point out that chaperones who had not traveled on particular trips previously felt less prepared overall, and some indicated that they appreciated the presence and leadership of more experienced chaperones. As discussed in earlier chapters, I have noted that prior experience is a key to EL facilitator success—and no less so at Kaplan. Asking a teacher chaperone to facilitate EL activities in ways or places that they have not previously experienced is almost an unreasonable ask (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Furman-Shaharabani & Tal, 2016). Ideally, pre-service education would provide a teacher-chaperone with the needed prior experience to be an effective EL facilitator (Anderson et al., 2006; Ateşkan & Lane, 2016), but with teachers already in active service, the prerequisite of pre-service training is moot. What can be done, however, is to plan for a scale-up approach to supporting teachers in their growth as EL facilitators. Consequently, Kaplan leaders and those at other schools may need to consider balance of trip chaperones on particular trips, making sure to include veteran EL facilitators on trips as well as new faculty chaperones. These veterans can serve as mentors for less experienced teachers. Kaplan leaders should also consider immersive EL experiences for teachers new to EL facilitation. In the style of Tal and Argaman (2005), Kaplan's DoEE may want to plan for intensive PD experiences in natural settings, where teachers can be exposed to best practices in real-time. It is to the subject of such targeted PD that I turn to next in the following section.

Ongoing Targeted Professional Development

Following Guskey (1986), teachers often approach PD pragmatically, and are ultimately inspired to grow when they see how PD is directly connected to student learning. Participants in this study expressed their awareness that PD related to EL supports more meaningful learning experiences for students. As discussed in Chapter 3, effective PD is also sustainable, collaborative, and grounded in context (Avalos, 2011; Borko et al, 2010; Darling-Hammond &

Richardson, 2009; Furman Shaharabani & Tal, 2017; Penuel et al., 2007; Wayne et al., 2008; Yoon et al., 2007). Kaplan leaders should be sure to plan for this kind of PD—and as evidenced in this study, multiple participants shared that they appreciated PD related to EL. Some participants looked forward to more such PD in the future.

PD administered by ISEEN—more than any other single PD source—was cited by participants as especially valuable. In light of the research on effective PD, the PD provided by ISEEN may have been viewed as beneficial because of its relevance to student learning. Multiple participants described how the PD from ISEEN was applicable in their classroom. Some participants made specific connections to curricular goals and positive student learning outcomes. This conclusion is supported by Guskey (1986) and others.

Another reason the ISEEN PD was positively received by teachers may be related to the fact that multiple teachers were trained in multiple sessions over an entire year (including over the summer break). Following Avalos (2011) and Wayne et al. (2008), PD related to EL theory, facilitation, and curricular integration is most effective when it is sustained. As such, Kaplan leaders should continue to invest in an ongoing partnership with ISEEN (and similar EL-focused partners), where an increasing number of teachers are receiving similar trainings and using similar language related to EL best practices. In additional to sustainability, effective PD is always collaborative (Forte & Flores, 2014)—and I will explore this need for ongoing collaboration in the next section.

Collaborative, Purposeful Planning

Not only is collaboration a hallmark of effective PD (Borko et al., 2010; Forte & Flores, 2014; Penuel et al., 2007; Stoll et al., 2006), but collaboration is also an essential feature of purposeful planning of EL activities and curricular integration (Furman Shaharabani & Tal,

2017; Mathew et al., 2017). Though teachers may be willing to acknowledge that teamwork is important at some level, focused PD that relies on collaboration in EL contexts can lead to cogent understanding by participants and better learning outcomes for students (Tal et al., 2019). When teachers as EL co-facilitators design EL programming in the collaborative space, their planning is more purposeful.

As an emergent theme, purposeful planning represents the intentionality that informs the design, enactment, and curricular integration of a particular EL activity. Many participants were able to articulate what purposeful planning felt like from a programmatic perspective. In discussing the importance of this kind of front-end purposeful planning, many participants expressed their desire for more peer-to-peer collaboration during the planning phase. Others noted that the grade level thematic question could have been better integrated in the trip activities. As many of my participants were new to their particular trip, most returned with an excitement to plan for intentional front-loading lessons, robust curricular integration, and thoughtful reflective activities during the following school year.

Reflection, of course, is a key component of making any EL activity meaningful (Kolb, 1984; Tal & Morag, 2009; Vernon & Seaman, 2012). Tal (2010) found that reflection is essential to ensuring the efficacy of EL activities, and should take place before, during, and after EL activities. Some of my participants discussed preparing for reflective "friendship circles" before traveling with students. These large group meetings with students are a feature of every Kaplan EL trip and take place each evening during a trip. There may be value in scheduling time to review and/or practice "friendship circles" with teacher chaperones before each trip.

As for reflection during trips, another participant described their design and use of a custom reflective journal for students (Figure 5, p. 135). These journals—and their digital

components—were so successful in the 9th grade, that Kaplan's DoEE has asked this teacher to assist in designing journals for other grade levels as well. Similarly, the sketchbook activity designed by one participant was another example of purposeful planning around mid-trip reflection (Figure 6, p. 136).

According to Kolb (1984), post-EL reflection is the most opportune time for meaningful learning and feedback. This year, after the spring trips, the DoEE administered post-trip surveys for all students and faculty chaperones. The analysis of this reflective, post-experience feedback will be crucial to the ongoing success of EL at Kaplan. After an early read of the data, the DoEE was pleased that students were able to identify connections between the trips and at least three pillars of Kaplan's EL program: community building, distinctive experience, and moral development. Notably, the pillar that was less clear for students was curricular integration. This may indicate that even students are aware that this integration has been lacking at Kaplan. With the interest evidenced by teachers, there remains a strategic opportunity for Kaplan educators to focus on this integration in the coming school year. Through collaborative, purposeful planning, leaders and co-facilitators can realize the goal of meaningful curricular integration with EL trips and activities.

As the findings in this study indicate, there remains potential value in conducting an ongoing collaborative program evaluation that will serve to inform the continuing EL program improvements at Kaplan. This program evaluation study has demonstrated the benefits of collaborative action research and PD, self-reflection, and research-informed decision-making.

Conclusions and Implications

In Chapter 4, I listed short-term outcomes, including participants' increased knowledge of EL as a theoretical concept, participants' increased knowledge of EL curricular integration

strategies, and measurable changes in participants' sense of self-efficacy related to EL improvement and integration efforts. These outcomes were achieved as noted earlier, despite changes made to this study in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I also listed expected intermediate outcomes. By the end of Kaplan's 2021-2022 academic year, some of these anticipated intermediate outcomes had already taken place. These included finding evidence of integrated lessons and themes of EL trips within classroom curricula, and a PD presentation for faculty related to EL. Though my participants did not present (for reasons discussed earlier), the DoEE did present to other faculty members, reviewing lessons learned from PD related to EL and previewing future integrative work.

As for long-term outcomes, Kaplan's leaders—under the guidance of the DoEE—plan to continue efforts to improve the EL curricula, not only in grades 9 and 10, but school-wide. In fact, the school's senior leadership team met in June 2022 to review and evaluate EL during the 2021-2022 academic year. This review informed a plan for future work related to EL at Kaplan. School leaders identified three priorities for the upcoming school year, which included more teacher training related to EL (more ISEEN trainings, in particular), more intentionality in hiring practices to recruit new teachers with interest and/or experience in EL, and a focus on developing a more robust approach to the 11th grade student internship program (as a mode of EL). Additionally, the leadership team agreed that future improvement work related to EL will be facilitated best through grade level teams, under the direction of grade level coordinators and the DoEE.

As discussed earlier, in looking for useful secondary data, not much of value could be found. Along with new post-experience surveys developed by the DoEE, this study represents

part of a new archiving and evaluation process at Kaplan. Moving forward, Kaplan's leaders have an interest in documenting changes and ongoing, scalable improvements.

Consequential changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic notwithstanding, this collaborative program evaluation study was a worthwhile endeavor for Kaplan's teachers and leaders. Shortly before my needs assessment (Chapter 2), Kaplan hired the DoEE and the work of intentional improvements to the school's EL programming began. At that time, participants indicated that they believed a whole-school approach was necessary to effectively make improvements Kaplan's EL program writ large. Over the next two years, I was able to document changes, study PD, interview teachers, collect artifacts, and analyze tangible scale-up efforts. This research has underscored the significance of key priorities for ongoing work and serves to document best practices for the future.

There are several implications for other schools that are similar to Kaplan and that are seeking to better integrate EL within classrooms or improve existing EL programming. Firstly, this study stresses the importance of visionary leadership to evaluate, coordinate, and support EL programming and related PD. Secondly, following other similar studies (Tal, Alon, & Morag, 2014; Tal, Levin-Peled, & Levy, 2019; Tal & Morag, 2009), this program evaluation study reinforces the critical role of training and first-hand experience for teachers who serve as EL facilitators. In the absence of pre-service training, teachers need PD related to EL facilitation and schools should prioritize this kind of professional learning. Thirdly, in order to effectuate curricular integration of EL themes, purposeful planning and preparation is needed. This planning should include focuses on front-loading experiences, contextual experiences, and opportunities for post-experience reflection. Furthermore, scalable resources and materials should be shared with less experienced teachers by way of example.

This study lacked robust observations of classroom activities and field experiences—due in part to limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Future research should focus on the actual implementation by teachers of EL strategies with students in context. It could also be interesting to conduct field observations during an EL trip, making special note of teachers' roles and student learning outcomes. Though this study was able to document the early stages of successful curricular integration at Kaplan, more research is needed to validate the principles and implications discussed herein.

References

Affum-Osei, E., Adom, E. A., Barnie, J., Furkuoh, S. K. (2014). Achievement motivation, academic self-concept and academic achievement among high school students. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences, 2*(2)*,* 24-27.

Alon, N. L., & Tal, T. (2016). Teachers as secondary players: Involvement in field trips to natural environments. *Research in Science Education, 47*(4), 869-887. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11165-016-9531-0

Anderson, D., Kisel, J., & Storksdieck, M. (2006). Understanding teachers' perspectives on field trips: discovering common ground in three countries. *Curator: The Museum Journal, 49*(3)*,* 365-386. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.2151-6952.2006.tb00229.x

Anderson, D., Lawson, B., & Mayer-Smith, J. (2006). Investigating the impact of a practicum experience in an aquarium on pre-service teachers. *Teaching Education, 17*(4), 341-353. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10476210601017527

Anderson, D., & Zhang, Z. (2003). Teacher perceptions of field-trip planning and implementation. *Visitor Studies Today, 6*(3)*,* 6-11.

Astramovich, R. L., Kelly Coker, J., & Hoskins, W. J. (2005). *Training school counselors in program evaluation.* Professional School Counseling, 9(1), 49-54. https://dx.doi.org/10.5330/prsc.9.1.80442r1q5n29x546

Ateşkan, A. & Lane, J. F. (2016) Promoting field trip confidence: teachers providing insights for pre-service education. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 39*(2)*,* 190-201. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2015.1113252

Avalos, B. (2011). Teacher professional development in *Teaching and Teacher Education* over

ten years. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 27*(1), 10-20.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.08.007

Bausmith, J. M. & Barry, C. (2011). Revisiting professional learning communities to increase

college readiness: The importance of pedagogical content knowledge. *Educational*

Reformer, 40(4), 175-178. https://dx.doig.org/10.3102/0013189X11409927

Boerema, A. J. (2006). An analysis of private school mission statements. *Peabody Journal of*

Education, 81(1), 180-202. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327930pje8101_8

Bogler, R. (2001). The influence of leadership style on teacher job satisfaction. *Educational*

Administration Quarterly, 37(5)*, 662-683. https://doi.org/10.1177/00131610121969460

Borko, K. (2004). Professional development and teacher learning: Mapping the terrain.

Educational Researcher, 33(8), 3-15. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x033008003

Borko, K., Jacobs, H., & Koellner, J. (2010). Contemporary approaches to teacher professional

development. *International Encyclopedia of Education, 7*, 548-556.

https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-08-044894-7.00654-0

Brackenburg, M., Luckner, J., & Pinch, K. (1994). Research update: essential skills for

processing adventure experiences. *Journal of Experiential Education, 17*(3)*, 45-47.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/105382599401700311

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1976). The experimental ecology of education. *Educational Researcher,*

5(9), 5-15. https://doi.org/10.2307/1174755

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. In T. Husen, & T.

Postlethwaite (Eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Education* (pp. 1643-1647).

Pergamon.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). The bioecological model of human development.

In R. Lerner, & W. Damon (Eds.), *Handbook of Child Psychology* (pp. 793-828). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Brown, M. (2002). The facilitator as gatekeeper: a critical analysis of social order in facilitation sessions. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning, 2*(2)*,* 101-112. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14729670285200211

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Davies, P., & Davies, N. M. (2014). Paying for quality? Associations between private school income, performance and use of resources. *British Educational Research Journal, 40*(3)*,* 421-440. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/berj.3107

Darling-Hammond, L. & Richardson, N. (2009). Teacher learning: What matters? *Educational Leadership, 66*(5), 46-53.

Decoux, B. V., & Holdaway, E. A. (1999). Some aspects of leadership in independent schools in Alberta. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 45*(1), 67-84.

Dewey, John. (1938). *Experience and education*. Touchstone.

Dusenbury, L., Brannigan, R., Falco, M., & Hansen, W. (2003). A review of research on fidelity of implementation: Implications for drug abuse prevention in school settings. *Health Education Research, 18*(2), 237-256. https://doi.org/10.1093/her/18.2.237

Elliot, J. (1991) *Action research for educational change.* Open University Press.

Fishman, B., Marx, R., Best, S., & Tal, R. (2003). Linking teacher and student learning to improve professional development in systemic reform. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 19*(6), 643-658. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(03)00059-3

Forte, A. M., & Flores, M. A. (2014). Teacher collaboration and professional development in the workplace: a study of Portuguese teachers. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 37*(1), 91-105. http://dx/doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2013.763791

Furco, A. (1996). Is service-learning really better than community service? A study of high school service program outcomes. *Service Learning, General. Paper*, *154,* 23-50.

Furman Shaharabani, Y. & Tal, T. (2017). Teachers' practice a decade after an extensive professional development program in science education. *Research in Science Education, 47*(5), p. 1031-1053. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11165-016-9539-5

Girven, C., Conneely, C., & Tangney, B. (2016). Extending experiential learning in teacher professional development. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 58*, 129-139. https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.04.009

Griffin, J. & Symington, D. (1997). Moving from task-oriented to learning-oriented strategies on school excursions to museums. *Science Education, 81,* 763-779. https://doi.org/10.1002/(sici)1098-237x(199711)81:6<763::aid-sce11>3.0.co;2-o

Guskey, T. R. (1986). Staff development and the process of teacher change. *Educational Researcher, 15*(5), 5-12.

Guskey, T. R. (2002). Professional development and teacher change. *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice, 8*(3/4), 381-391. https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/135406002100000512

Hseih, H. & Shannon, S. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research 15*(9), 1277-1288. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687

Hunter-Jones, P. (2012). The continuum of learner disengagement: ethnographic insights into experiential learning in marketing education. *Journal of Marketing Education, 34*(1)*,* 19-29. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0273475311430801

Jakubowski, L. M. (2003). Beyond book learning: cultivating the pedagogy of experience through field trips. *Journal of Experiential Learning, 26*(1), 24-33. https://doi.org/10.1177/105382590302600105

James, M., & McCormick, R. (2009). Teachers learning how to learn. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(7), 973-982. https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.02.023

Kennedy, A. (2011). Collaborative continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers in Scotland: aspirations, opportunities and barriers. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 34*(1), 25-41. https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2010.534980

Kloss, D. (2018). The culture of the independent progressive school. *International Journal of Progressive Education, 14*(1)*,* 201-219. http://dx.doi.org/10.29329/ijpe.2018.129.14

Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as a source of learning and development.* Prentice Hall.

Kolb, A & Kolb, D. (2009). The learning way: Meta-cognitive aspects of experiential learning. *Simulation and Gaming, 40*(3), 297-327. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1046878108325713

Leviton, L. C., & Lipsey, M. W. (2007). A big chapter about small theories: Theory as method: Small theories of treatments. *New Directions for Evaluation, 2007*(114), 27–62. https://doi.org/10.1002/ev.224

Loughran, J. (2002). Effective reflective practice: In search of meaning in learning about teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(1), 33-43. https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022487102053001004

Luskey, M. B., & Hayes, R. L. (2001). *Collaborative consultation and program evaluation.* Journal of Counseling and Development, 79, 26-38. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2001.tb01940.x

Mathew, P., Mathew, P. & Peechattu, J. (2017). Reflective practices: A means to teacher

    development. *Asia Pacific Journal of Contemporary Education and Communication*

    Technology, 3(1), 126-131.

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J. (2002). *Action Research: Principles and Practice.* (2nd ed.).

    RoutledgeFalmer.

Michie, M. (1998). Factors influencing secondary science teachers to organise and conduct

    field trips. *Australian Science Teachers Journal, 44*(4)*,* 43-50.

Murphey, T. & Falout, J. (2010). Critical participatory looping: Dialogic member checking with

    whole classes. *TESOL Quarterly, 44*(4), 811-821. https://doi.org/10.5054/tq.2010.237337

Neal, J. W., & Neal, Z. P. (2013). Nested or networked? Future directions for ecological

    systems theory. *Social Development, 22*(4), 722-737.

    http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/sode.12018

Neill, J. T. & Dias, K. L. (2001). Adventure education and resilience: the double-edged sword.

    Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning, 1(2)*,* 35-42.

    http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14729670185200061

Odom, S. F., Shehane, L. L., Moore, L., & McKim, B. (2014). An analysis of a high-impact

    field experience in agriculture: documenting critical thinking skills through reflection.

    NACTA Journal, 58(3)*,* 214-220.

O'Sullivan, M. C. (2002). Action research and the transfer of reflective approaches to in-service

    education and training (INSET) for unqualified and underqualified primary teachers in

    Namibia. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 18*(5), 523-539.

    https://doi.org/10.1016/s0742-051x(02)00014-8

Penuel, W. R., Fishman, B. J., Yagamuchi, R., & Gallagher, L. P. (2007). What makes

professional development effective? Strategies that foster curriculum implementation.

American Educational Research Journal, 44(4), 921-958.

https://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0002831207308221

Piaget, J. (1964). Cognitive development in children: Piaget – Development and learning.

Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 2, 176-186.

https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.3660020306

Pizarro Milan, R. & Davies, S. (2017). Open competition or balkanized coexistence? The

effects of market segments on Toronto private schools. *Education Policy Analysis*

Archives, 25(39). http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.25.2687

Powers, A. L. (2004). An evaluation of four place-based education programs. *Journal of*

Environmental Education, 35(4), 17-32. http://dx.doi.org/10.3200/JOEE.35.4.17-32

Rea, T. (2008). Alternative visions of learning: children's learning experiences in the outdoors.

Educational Futures, 1(2)*,* 42-50.

Shakeel, M. D. & DeAngelis, C. A. (2017). Who is more free? A comparison of the

decision-making of private and public school principals. *Journal of School Choice, 11*(3)*,*

442-457. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15582159.2017.1345235

Sibthorp, J., Collins, R., Rathunde, K., Paisley, K., Schumann, S., Pohja, M., Gookin, J., &

Baynes, S. (2015). Fostering experiential self-regulation through outdoor adventure

education. *Journal of Experiential Education, 38*(1)*,* 26-40.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1053825913516735

Stan, I. (2009). Recontextualizing the role of the facilitator in group interaction in the outdoor

classroom. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning, 9*(1)*,* 23-43.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14729670902816611

Stan, I. & Humberstone, B. (2011). An ethnography of the outdoor classroom - how teachers manage risk in the outdoors. *Ethnography and Education, 6*(2)*,* 213-228. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17457823.2011.587360

Stoll, L., Bolam, R., McMahon, A., Wallace, M., & Thomas, S. (2006). Professional learning communities: A review of the literature. *Journal of Educational Change, 7*(4), 221-258. https://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10833-006-0001-8

Storksdieck, M. (2001). Differences in teachers' and students' museum field-trip experiences. *Visitor Studies Today! 4*(1)*,* 8-12.

Taitelbaum, D., Mamlok-Naaman, R., Carmeli, M., & Hofstein, A. (2008). Evidence for teachers' change while participating in a continuous professional development programme and implementing the inquiry approach in the chemistry laboratory. *International Journal of Science Education, 30*(5), 593-617. https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09500690701854840

Tal, R. T. (2004). Using a field trip to a wetland as a guide for conceptual understanding in environmental education -- a case study of a pre-service teachers' research. *Chemistry Education: Research and Practice, 5*(2)*,* 127-142. https://doi.org/10.1039/b4rp90016b

Tal, T. (2010). Pre-service teachers' reflections on awareness and knowledge following active learning in environmental education. *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education, 19*(4), 263-276. https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10382046.2010.519146

Tal, R. & Argaman, S. (2005). Characteristics and difficulties of teachers who mentor environmental inquiry projects. *Research in Science Education, 35*(4), 363-394. https://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11165-004-8163-y

Tal, R., Alon, N. L., & Morag, O. (2014). Exemplary practices in field trips in natural
environments. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 51*(4), 430-461.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/tea.21137

Tal, R., Bamberger, Y., & Morag, O. (2005). Guided school visits to natural history museums
in Israel: Teacher's roles. *Science Education, 89*(6)*,* 920-935.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/sce.20070

Tal, R., Levin-Peled, R., & Levy, K. S. (2019). Teacher views on inquiry-based learning: the
contribution of diverse experiences in the outdoor environment. *Innovation and
Education, 1*(1), 1-17. http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/s42862-019-0004-y

Tal, T., & Morag, O. (2009). Reflective practice as a means for preparing to teach outdoors in
an ecological garden. *Journal of Science Teacher Education, 20*(3)*,* 245-262.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10972-009-9131-1

Tella, A. (2007). The impact of motivation on student's academic achievement and learning
outcomes in mathematics among secondary school students in Nigeria. *Eurasia Journal
of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education, 3*(2)*,* 149-156.
http://dx.doi.org/10.12973/ejmste/75390

Tienken, C. H., & Achilles, C. M. (2003). Changing teacher behavior and improving student
writing achievement. *Planning and Changing, 34*(3 & 4), 153–168.

Thomas, G. (2010). Facilitator, teacher, or leader? Managing conflicting roles in outdoor
education. *Journal of Experiential Education, 32*(3), 239-254.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/105382590903200305

Van Driel, J. & Berry, A. (2012). Teacher professional development focusing on pedagogical

content knowledge. *Educational Researcher, 41*(1), 26-28.

https://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0013189X11431010

Vernon, F. (2016). The diversity project: an ethnography of social justice experiential education

programming. *Ethnography and Education, 11*(3)*, 298-315.*

http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17457823.2015.1101380

Vernon, F. & Seaman, J. (2012). Co-instructing on extended wilderness expeditions: a

phenomenological inquiry. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership,*

4(3)*, 140-156.* http://dx.doi.org/10.7768/1948-5123.1127

Wadsworth, B. J. (1978). *Piaget for the classroom teacher.* New York: Longman.

Wayne, A. J., Yook, K. S., Zhu, P., Cronen, S., & Garet, M. S. (2008). Experimenting with

teacher professional development: Motives and methods. *Educational Researcher, 37*(8),

469-479. https://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0013189X08327154

Williams, D., & Coles, L. (2017). Teachers' approaches to finding and using research evidence:

an information literacy perspective. *Educational Research, 49*(2), 185-206.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00131880701369719

Worthen, B. R. (1990). Program evaluation. In H. Walberg & G. Haertel (Eds.), *The*

international encyclopedia of educational evaluation (pp. 42-47). Pergammon Press.

Yoon, K., Duncan, T., Lee, S. W.-Y., Scaross, B., & Shapley, K. (2007). *Reviewing the evidence*

on how teacher professional development affects student achievement. (Issues & Answers

Report, REL 2007 - No. 033). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute

of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional

Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest.

https://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0013189X08327154

Zhang, W., & Brundrett, M. (2010). School leaders' perspectives on leadership learning: the

case for informal and experiential learning. *Management in Education, 24*(4), 154-158.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0892020610376792

Appendix A

Needs Assessment Study Survey

Part I of the Google Forms survey included two questions related to the participant's role:

- What is your current role at the school? (check all that apply) 1. Teacher, 2. Administrator

- Do you have experience participating in experiential learning at this school? 1. Yes, 2. No

Part II included 15 Likert-scale questions, using the following scale: 1- false, 2 - somewhat false, 3 - neutral, 4 - somewhat true, 5 - true. The questions are:

1. Experiential learning is important to the mission of my school.

2. Experiential learning at my school supports character development in students.

3. Experiential learning at my school supports critical thinking in students.

4. Experiential learning at my school supports the development of a social justice mindset in students.

5. Experiential learning encourages student learning and growth.

6. Administrators provide an important visionary role as it relates to experiential learning.

7. Administrators are primarily responsible for the logistical details related to experiential learning.

8. Teachers at this school are well supported in their planning of experiential learning activities.

9. Teachers receive regular training related to experiential learning.

10. I have prior experience as an experiential learning facilitator (or co-facilitator).

11. Experiential learning supports my classroom curriculum in meaningful ways.

12. I feel supported by the administration and leadership to successfully implement experiential learning activities.

13. My teacher training included practice related to the implementation of experiential learning.

14. I feel confident as an experiential learning co-facilitator on school trips.

15. My experience(s) as an EL co-facilitator on field trips, retreats, winter trips, and/or spring trips has been positive and meaningful to me.

Part III of the survey included 4 free response questions:

- In a sentence or two, what does "experiential learning" mean to you?

- What does experiential learning look like at this school? Please include a few examples.

- What values does the experiential curriculum support at this school?

- What concerns (if any) do you have about experiential learning at this school?
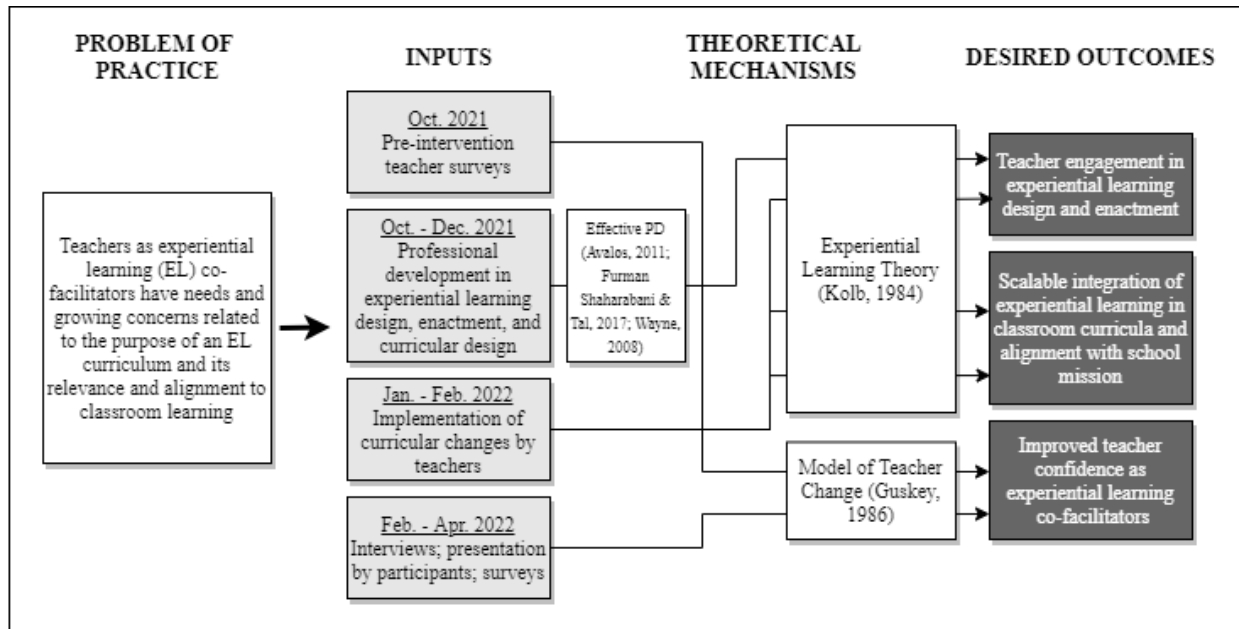
Appendix B

Needs Assessment Interview Questions

- Is experiential learning a concept you are familiar with?

- What is required of you as an experiential learning co-facilitator?

- What has been your experience of experiential learning at this school?

- Do students at the school enjoy and benefit from the experiential learning activities offered?

- Why do you think so much attention is given to experiential learning on campus?

- If you could change anything about the way experiential learning works at this school, what would it be and why?

Appendix C

Theory of Treatment Model

Appendix D

Process Evaluation: Data Collection Matrix

Process Evaluation Question	Indicator(s)	Data Source(s)	Data Collection Tool	Frequency
To what extent was the evaluation implemented with fidelity as planned?	Adherence (i.e., fidelity in implementation)	Observations Artifacts Interviews Surveys	Researcher notes Google Drive Audio recordings & transcripts Program evaluation participant survey	Ongoing observations; ongoing collection of artifacts; interviews will take place during Phase II (Jan. - Mar.); program evaluation survey will be administered before the interviews begin
In what ways did participants respond to the evaluation?	Participant responsiveness (i.e., teacher engagement and change related to program evaluation)	Observations Surveys Interviews	Researcher notes Pre-/post-test surveys Exit tickets surveys Audio recordings & transcripts	Ongoing observations; pre-test survey at the beginning of the evaluation study and post-test survey at the end; exit tickets given after each PD sessions; interviews will take place during Phase II (Jan. - Mar.)
In what ways did participants perceive the quality of delivery of the evaluation?	Quality of delivery (i.e., value-add and efficacy of evaluation)	Observations Surveys	Researcher notes Pre-program/post-program surveys Exit tickets surveys Program evaluation participant survey	Ongoing observations; pre-program survey at the beginning of the evaluation study and post-program survey at the end; exit tickets given after each PD sessions; program evaluation survey will be administered before the interviews begin

Appendix E

Outcome Evaluation: Data Collection Matrix

Process Evaluation Question	Indicator(s)	Data Source(s)	Data Collection Tool	Frequency
What changes, if any, to classroom curricula were made by participants, and were these changes consistent with EL theory as emphasized in the PD and/or reflective of Kaplan's vision for EL programing?	Application of ELT (Kolb, 1984) and grade-level guiding thematic questions (i.e., alignment to Kolb cycle and intentionality in design)	Observations Artifacts Interviews Surveys	Researcher notes Google Drive Audio recordings & transcripts Program evaluation participant survey	Ongoing observations; ongoing collection of artifacts; interviews will take place during Phase II (Jan. - Mar.); program evaluation survey will be administered before the interviews begin
What resources, if any, were produced by teachers to facilitate EL integration into classroom curricula?	Resources (i.e., materials and tools)	Artifacts	Google Drive and hard-copies	Ongoing collection of artifacts
What principles for curricular integration experienced by participants emerged that support the effort to improve the EL program writ large at Kaplan?	Best practices (i.e., scalable strategies, methods, etc.)	Observations Interviews Surveys	Researcher notes Audio recordings & transcripts Exit tickets surveys Program evaluation participant survey	Ongoing observations; exit tickets given after each PD session; ongoing collection of artifacts; interviews will take place during Phase II (Jan. - Mar.); program evaluation survey will be administered before the interviews begin

Appendix F

Pre-Program/Post-Program Survey (Original)

This anonymous participant survey is organized into three sections. Section One (Participant Information) will include the following demographic, multiple choice items:

- Which grade(s) do you teach? Answer Choices: 9th, 10th, Both, Neither

- What trip will you/did you attend during the 2021-2022 school year? Answer Choices: 9th Grade Winter Trip to Big Bend, 9th Grade Spring Trip to Houston for World Religions Week, 10th Grade Winter Trip to Los Angeles, 10th Grade Spring Trip to Big Bend

Section Two (Experiential Learning Theory & Practice) will include Likert-scale questions, using the following scale: 1- false, 2 - somewhat false, 3 - neutral, 4 - somewhat true, 5 - true. The questions in this section are:

- I feel comfortable explaining what *experiential learning* is—both as a concept and as a teaching practice—to others.

- Activities, themes, and values from experiential learning trips at this school are well-integrated within my own classroom curriculum.

- Experiential learning is a strategy that works in the classroom just as well as it does off-campus (for example, on trips).

- I understand the "Kolb Cycle" of experiential learning.

- Experiential learning supports critical thinking in students.

- Experiential learning supports character development in students.

- Experiential learning supports the development of a social justice mindset in students.

- Experiential learning, or "learning by doing," helps make learning more meaningful for students.

- I see myself as an experiential learning facilitator or co-facilitator.

- For experiential learning strategies to be successful, facilitators or co-facilitators must have a good understanding of experiential learning theory and best practices.

- Related training or professional development is essential for an experiential learning facilitator/co-facilitator to be successful.

- I have experience designing or co-designing experiential learning lessons or activities.

- I often reference or utilize experiential learning strategies in my teaching.

Section Three (Teacher Responsiveness) will include Likert-scale questions, using the following scale: 1- false, 2 - somewhat false, 3 - neutral, 4 - somewhat true, 5 - true. The questions in this section are:

- I see myself as an active, life-long learner.

- I typically find professional development related to experiential learning theory and practice helpful or engaging.

- I enjoy participating in professional collaboration related to experiential learning with my colleagues.

- My own professional learning related to experiential learning positively impacts the learning of my students.

- I feel confident integrating experiential learning best practices into my teaching.

- I enjoy creating (or re-creating) new classroom materials and/or lesson plans.

- I am willing to share what I've learned in my teaching practice with other teachers.

Appendix G

Exit Ticket Survey

Following each PD session, participants will be asked to complete a short exit ticket survey. The survey will include three Likert-scale survey questions, using the following scale: 1- false, 2 - somewhat false, 3 - neutral, 4 - somewhat true, 5 - true. These questions are:

- I found today's session meaningful and engaging.

- I enjoyed working with my colleagues in collaborative professional development.

- The work that I/we completed today will have a positive impact on student learning.

The survey will also include two open-ended questions:

- What was the most valuable feature of today's session/work?

- What one thing (if any) would you change about today's session/work?

Appendix H

Program Evaluation Participant Survey

This participant survey is organized into two sections. Section One (Participant Information) will include the following demographic, multiple choice items:

- Which grade(s) do you teach? Answer Choices: 9th, 10th, Both, Neither

- What trip will you/did you attend during the 2021-2022 school year? Answer Choices: 9th Grade Winter Trip to Big Bend, 9th Grade Spring Trip to Houston for World Religions Week, 10th Grade Winter Trip to Los Angeles, 10th Grade Spring Trip to Big Bend

- Did you participate in professional development sessions related to experiential learning last fall? Answer Choices: Yes, No

Section Two (Program Evaluation) will include Likert-scale questions, using the following scale: 1- false, 2 - somewhat false, 3 - neutral, 4 - somewhat true, 5 - true. The questions in this section are:

- The EL professional development that I participated in during the fall semester helped me grow as an educator.

- The professional development that I participated in during the fall semester helped me grow as an experiential learning co-facilitator (chaperone).

- I enjoyed collaborating with my colleagues during the professional development session in the fall.

- Improvements to school-wide curricula are best made in collaboration with other teachers.

- I was able to successfully integrate themes and goals from the winter or spring trip in my classroom curricula.

- Overall, the professional development sessions in the fall made the winter or spring trip more meaningful for students.

- My participation in this professional development has had a positive impact on student learning in my classroom.

- Students (in the grade level that I teach) can successfully identify the grade-level EL guiding theme or question.

Appendix I

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

- What did you think of professional development that you participated in last fall related to experiential learning? Was it valuable for you? Why or why not?

- How comfortable are you with integrating EL into your classroom content/coursework?

- What motivates you to participate in professional development?

- Do you know what a Kolb Cycle is? If so, how do you make use of it in your classroom (if at all)?

- Were you able to integrate the grade-level thematic question play in your classroom curricula? If so, how did it go?

- What resources did you and your colleagues create that you are especially proud of? Why?

- What lessons did you learn during this process that will be helpful for other teachers to know?

Appendix J

Semi-Structured Interview Questions (Updated in January 2022)

- Did you participate in any professional development last fall or this spring related to experiential learning or the trips? Was it valuable for you? Why or why not?

- How comfortable are you with integrating EL into your classroom content/coursework?

- What motivates you to participate in professional development?

- Do you know what a Kolb Cycle is? If so, how do you make use of it in your classroom (if at all)?

- Were you able to integrate the grade-level thematic question play in your classroom curricula? If so, how did it go?

- What resources did you and your colleagues create that you are especially proud of? Why?

- What lessons did you learn during this process that will be helpful for other teachers to know?

- What were the goals of the trip? Were these met?

- What was your job as a trip chaperone? What makes a trip chaperone successful?

- What did preparation before the trip look like for you? And for your students?

- What has been done to follow up on themes or ideas from the trips?

Appendix K

Program Evaluation Participant Survey (Updated in April 2022)

This participant survey is organized into two sections. Section One (Participant Information) will include the following demographic, multiple choice items:

- Which grade(s) do you teach? Answer Choices (multiples can be selected): 9th, 10th, 11th, N/A

- What trip did you attend during the 2021-2022 school year? Answer Choices: 9th Grade Spring Trip to Big Bend, 10th Grade Spring Trip to Los Angeles, 11th Grade Spring Trip to the Deep South, None of the above

- Did you participate in any professional development related to experiential learning in the last year? Answer Choices: Yes, No

- If your answer was "yes," what professional development session(s) did you participate in the last year? Answer Choice: Short Free Response

Section Two (Program Evaluation) will include Likert-scale questions, using the following scale: 1- false, 2 - somewhat false, 3 - neutral, 4 - somewhat true, 5 – true, N/A - not applicable. The questions in this section are:

16. The professional development around experiential learning that I attended in the last year helped me grow as an educator.

17. The professional development that I participated in helped me grow as an experiential learning co-facilitator (chaperone).

18. I enjoyed collaborating with my colleagues during this professional development.

19. Improvements to school-wide curricula are best made in collaboration with other teachers.

20. I have been able to successfully integrate themes and goals from the spring trip in my classroom curricula.

21. I am aware of teachers that have or will integrate themes and goals from the spring trip in their classroom curricula.

22. Overall, the professional development that teachers participated in last year made the spring trips more meaningful for students.

23. My participation in professional development over the last year has had a positive impact on student learning.

24. I believe that students (in the grade level that I traveled with) can successfully identify the grade-level experiential learning theme or question.

Appendix L

Post-Program Survey (Updated in March 2022)

This anonymous participant survey is organized into three sections. Section One (Participant Information) will include the following demographic, multiple choice items:

- Which grade(s) do you teach? Answer Choices (multiples can be selected): 9th, 10th, 11th, N/A

- What trip did you attend during the 2021-2022 school year? Answer Choices: 9th Grade Spring Trip to Big Bend, 10th Grade Spring Trip to Los Angeles, 11th Grade Spring Trip to the Deep South, None of the above

Section Two (Experiential Learning Theory & Practice) will include Likert-scale questions, using the following scale: 1- false, 2 - somewhat false, 3 - neutral, 4 - somewhat true, 5 - true. The questions in this section are:

- I feel comfortable explaining what *experiential learning* is—both as a concept and as a teaching practice—to others.

- Activities, themes, and values from experiential learning trips at this school are well-integrated within my own classroom curriculum.

- Experiential learning is a strategy that works in the classroom just as well as it does off-campus (for example, on trips).

- I understand the "Kolb Cycle" of experiential learning.

- Experiential learning supports critical thinking in students.

- Experiential learning supports character development in students.

- Experiential learning supports the development of a social justice mindset in students.

- Experiential learning, or "learning by doing," helps make learning more meaningful for students.

- I see myself as an experiential learning facilitator or co-facilitator.

- For experiential learning strategies to be successful, facilitators or co-facilitators must have a good understanding of experiential learning theory and best practices.

- Related training or professional development is essential for the an experiential learning facilitator/co-facilitator to be successful.

- I have experience designing or co-designing experiential learning lessons or activities.

- I often reference or utilize experiential learning strategies in my teaching.

Section Three (Teacher Responsiveness) will include Likert-scale questions, using the following scale: 1- false, 2 - somewhat false, 3 - neutral, 4 - somewhat true, 5 - true. The questions in this section are:

- I see myself as an active, life-long learner.

- I typically find professional development related to experiential learning theory and practice helpful or engaging.

- I enjoy participating in professional collaboration related to experiential learning with my colleagues.

- My own professional learning related to experiential learning positively impacts the learning of my students.

- I feel confident integrating experiential learning best practices into my teaching.

- I enjoy creating (or re-creating) new classroom materials and/or lesson plans.

- I am willing to share what I've learned in my teaching practice with other teachers.