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This dissertation, PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICE: AN INVESTIGATION OF URBAN TEACHERS' PERCEIVED AND OBSERVED TEACHING DISPOSITIONS, by CARLA BERNARD MILLER, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Philosophy, in the College of Education and Human Development, Georgia State University.

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PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICE: AN INVESTIGATION OF URBAN TEACHERS'
PERCEIVED AND OBSERVED TEACHING DISPOSITIONS

by

CARLA BERNARD MILLER

Under the Direction of Diane M. Truscott, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

The importance of teacher dispositions has quickly become commonplace in the preparation of teachers. Unlike other well-established domains of teacher education, like knowledge and skills, the evolving concept continues to challenge those mandated to identify, nurture, and assess the dispositions of teachers. The purpose of this study was to expand the conversation on teacher dispositions by examining connections between perceived dispositions and dispositions-in-action using Argyris and Schön's (1974) theory of action framework. Case studies of two experienced elementary classroom teachers working in high-needs urban schools provided information on how teachers perceive their teaching dispositions compared with dispositions evidenced in their classroom practices. Data for this multiple case study included a validated self-assessment disposition instrument, the Diversity Disposition Index, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations. The study found evidence of congruence and incongruity between the participants' perceived and observed teaching dispositions. While both teachers shared similar self-reported teaching dispositions, such as enthusiasm for content, importance of classroom management, and attention to expectations for students, their enactment of those teaching dispositions varied greatly in their classrooms despite similarities in context. Implications are provided for teachers working in high-needs urban schools who face unique challenges and for teacher education programs designed to prepare and support new urban educators.

INDEX WORDS: Teacher dispositions, High-needs schools, Urban schools

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by

CARLA BERNARD MILLER

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the

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in

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Atlanta, GA

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, Damian, and my daughter, Bradley.

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THE EVOLUTION OF TEACHER DISPOSITIONS: CONSIDERATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

Quality teachers contribute to the academic success of students in the classroom. For this reason, improving the quality of classroom teachers has been a constant goal of professional education organizations, school districts and teacher education programs throughout the history of education. Over the past three decades, the concept of teacher dispositions was adopted into state and national policy, teacher education program design, and the general language of the field in an effort to improve the quality of classroom instruction. Though the term became commonplace in education relatively quickly, its conceptualization and application challenges many teacher education institutions who are mandated to identify, nurture, and assess the dispositions of their pre-service teachers. Unlike the acquisition of well-established domains of teaching, like knowledge and skills, the incorporation of teacher dispositions into teacher education program design has been complex and controversial. When the concept was first introduced, there was little or no consensus on how teacher dispositions should be defined, developed or assessed, and many teacher education programs injected the term into their program goals with a limited understanding of the concept. While some believe the term's ambiguity alleviates potential controversy and allows for flexibility with implementation (Osguthorpe, 2008; Sockett, 2009), others maintain that a better defined concept would result in the development of quality teachers with the desired dispositions to effectively teach all students in the classrooms (Lee Smith, Knopp, Skarbek, & Rushton, 2005).

Guiding Questions

A great deal can be learned about a topic by studying its evolution. Knowing and understanding how and why a term came to fruition can provide insight into its nature, intention

and proper application. This historical review uses a chronological approach to provide clarity to and a comprehensive understanding of the concept of teacher dispositions. The guiding questions that drove this historical review were: (a) How and when were teacher dispositions introduced into the field of teacher education?, (b) What was the historical impetus in public education for the term's swift adoption into teacher education vernacular?, (c) How are teacher dispositions conceptualized in the field of teacher education?, and (d) Why is conceptualization of teacher dispositions important for disposition assessment, especially for urban teacher educators? Answering these questions will provide clarity on the concept for the future considerations of teacher educators. Though an abundance of literature on teacher dispositions currently exists, most only offer a brief overview of the history of the topic for the purpose of providing background knowledge, and few, if any, have used an historical perspective to examine the definitions, development and assessment of teacher dispositions in teaching and teacher education. This chronological overview of teacher dispositions will compare and contrast developing and varying definitions, theories on disposition development, and methods of assessment in an effort to uncover themes that will assist teacher educators in planning and supporting teacher disposition curriculum.

The literature were selected for the review using Questia, an online research library, and Galileo Scholars, Georgia's online learning library. A majority of the literature chosen for this review were conceptual pieces. Key terms used to find books and articles included, (a) dispositions, (b) teacher dispositions, (c) history of education, (d) education reform, (e) assessment and dispositions, (f) effective teaching and dispositions, (f) teacher education and dispositions, (g) moral education and (h) teacher dispositions and urban schools. Though much of the literature used was chosen to provide historical background on the topic of both

dispositions and teacher dispositions, literature was also selected to illustrate how teacher education programs were defining, assessing, and developing the teaching dispositions of pre-service teachers at that time in history. Once literature was selected, information received from articles and books was divided by decade (1960's, 1970's, 1980s, 1990's, 2000's) and placed on a timeline to create a visual illustration of the term's evolution. Analysis focused on understanding definitions, theories of development, and methods of assessment, and resulted in categorized themes.

The paper begins with an examination of early definitions of dispositions from the varying perspectives of four theorists. The paper continues with a chronological overview of the climate of education from the 1960's to present and provides an explanation of how societal and educational trends influenced public schools and initiated the evolution of teacher dispositions in teacher education. The last part of the review provides implications and considerations for teacher educators with particular attention to the urban public school context. An emphasis on discussion of implications for urban schools acknowledges the significance of teacher dispositions in educational settings where teachers' beliefs and attitudes about students who are different strongly influence what happens in the classroom (Lee & Herner-Patnode, 2010; Vazquez-Montilla & Tricari, 2014). The literature review provides a foundation that may prove useful for teacher educators on how to best define, develop, and assess teacher dispositions, which will, in turn, help to improve the quality of teachers in all classrooms.

Historical Review

Early Definitions of Dispositions

Though teaching dispositions are a relatively modern concept in the field of teacher education, the term, dispositions, is far from new. Grounded in the disciplines of psychology

and philosophy, the concept of dispositions can be traced as far back as 300 B.C. In Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (trans. 1999), the philosopher describes dispositions as they relate to one's moral/ethical habits. According to Aristotle (trans. 1999), dispositions are ethical virtues that are trainable, stimulated by habit, and help guide individuals desired feelings (Freeman, 2007; Kraut, 2005). Additionally, Aristotle's work introduced the notion that moral virtues or dispositions are habits that develop slowly over time and are reinforced by exposure to various situations (Aristotle, trans. 1999).

Like Aristotle, cognitive educator, John Dewey (1916/1944) also characterized dispositions as they relate to habits. Using a cognitive lens, Dewey (1916/1944) described dispositions as *habits of mind* that render one's actions intelligent. According to Dewey (1916/1944), these habits or dispositions can be learned and are designed to promote the intellectual growth for the purpose of improving conditions in society (Dottin, 2006). From this statement, it can be assumed that, like Aristotle, Dewey also believed that dispositions are characteristics that are both virtuous in nature and trainable over time. Some of the dispositions highlighted in Dewey's work include straightforwardness, open-mindedness, integrity of purpose, responsibility, simplicity, spontaneity, and naiveté (Hansen, 2001).

Though Dewey (1916/1944) used the word 'habits' to describe dispositions, he called attention to the complexity of the word and explained that he was not using the word in its customary sense.

... we need a word to express that kind of human activity which is influenced by prior activity and in that sense acquired; which contains within itself a certain ordering or systematization of minor elements of action; which is projective, dynamic in quality, ready for overt manifestation; and which is operative in some subdued subordinate form

even when not obviously dominating activity. Habit even in its ordinary usage comes nearer to denoting these facts than any other word. If the facts are recognized we may also use the words attitude and disposition. But unless we have first made clear to ourselves the facts which have been set forth under the name of habit, these words are more likely to be misleading than is the word habit. For the latter conveys explicitly the sense of operativeness, actuality. (Dewey, 1922/1999, p. 33)

Dewey's thoughtfulness in word choice speaks to the complexity of the concept of dispositions and is somewhat prophetic in foreshadowing the difficulties that contemporary educators and policy makers have defining and conceptualizing teacher dispositions. As stated by Dewey (1922/1999), without a proper definition of the term, its meaning and intent can be misleading. This is evident today with teacher dispositions, as the term's ambiguity has hindered its conceptualization in the field. Dewey's work surrounding habits is still used as a framework to conceptualize teaching dispositions (Sockett, 2009).

Behaviorist, Gilbert Ryle, noted for his important contributions to philosophical psychology, represents a behaviorist view of the term dispositions. In his classic work, *The Concept of Mind* (1949), Ryle defined dispositions as attributions that one makes about a person after witnessing their behavior. Contrary to Dewey's cognitive view, Ryle (1949) disputes that dispositions are intellectual acts, mental processes, or habits of mind. The philosopher describes dispositions as propensities that can be used to explain various observable behaviors (Brown & Thomas, 2008). According to Ryle (1949), dispositions are the motives behind the actions that explain why the observable behavior is occurring. For example, a teacher with the disposition that 'all students can learn' has a tendency to direct activities that make it possible for all of her students to learn. While, Dewey (1916/1944) posits that teacher's intellect guides their behavior

and motivates their actions, Ryle (1949) maintained that propensities or dispositions could be explained by context or what the teacher is likely to do in certain situations, but are not led solely by individual mental processes.

Though Ryle (1949) believed that dispositions explain the likelihood of behaviors in given situations, he discredits their predictive nature. According to Ryle (1949), dispositions are highly contingent on context and situation, and can only explain what *may* happen in given circumstances (Brown & Thomas, 2008; Ryle, 1949). This notion of whether dispositions can predict future actions will resurface when teaching dispositions are introduced to the field of teacher education (Arnstine, 1967; Katz & Raths, 1985).

Humanistic psychologist and educator, Arthur W. Combs made great contributions to the fields of psychology and education and was one of the first to conduct research on dispositions as they relate to teachers (Wasicsko, 2007). With a background in education, clinical psychology and counseling, Combs' is noted for his book on the theory of personality, *Being and Becoming* (2006), and for inventing the phenomenal field theory, a systematic framework for the study of persons, which he worked on with fellow psychologist Donald Snygg (Combs, 1999). Snygg and Combs' (1949) theory, which Combs later referred to as the perceptual/phenomenal field theory, proposed that all behavior is determined by one's perceptual field, or subjective reality. The theory states that our subjective reality includes all of the things that a person is aware of, including objects, people and their behaviors, thoughts, images, and ideas (Snygg & Combs, 1949). For over 40 years, Combs examined the implications of perceptual psychology for the purpose of understanding and improving the profession of education and counseling (Wasicsko, 2007).

In the late 1960's, Combs and others used his perceptual approach to investigate perceptions that contribute to effective practice in helping professions. Using terms *perceptions* and *dispositions* interchangeably, researchers used high inference perceptual scales to assess the dispositions of counselors, ministers, nurses, public officials, resident assistants, and teachers from all levels of education (Combs, Soper, Gooding, Benton, Dickman, & Usher, 1969; Wasicsko, 2007). In the study which involved teachers, a group of nineteen effective and thirteen ineffective teachers were identified. Effectiveness of teacher participants was determined by evaluation of teachers, students, colleagues and administrators; qualification for national honors for outstanding teaching; and student test scores on achievement tests (Combs et al., 1969). All of the teachers chosen for the study were female. The scales used by researchers rated teachers' dispositions during classroom observations, interviews and written vignettes about their teaching experiences (Combs et al., 1969; Wasicsko, 2007). Observers in the study were trained to make *perceptual inferences* or read behavior backwards. Three observations and one interview were conducted with each teacher. The study found that effective teachers had specific dispositions about themselves, their students, and their teaching that separated them from ineffective teachers (Combs et al., 1969). Dispositions for effective teaching found in the studies included: (a) perception of self as able, positive, and identified with diverse groups; (b) perception of others as able, dependable, and worthy; (c) perceptions of the purpose of education as freeing, self-revealing, and larger; and (d) a frame of reference that is people oriented, open and focusing on personal meaning (Combs et al., 1969; Wasicsko, 2007). The Combs et al. studies (1969) found evidence that effective professional helpers (teachers in this case) have perceptions or dispositions about themselves and those that they serve. Additionally, the study

showed that the task of *helping* distinguished the effective professionals from those that were deemed ineffective in their fields.

Though Combs' work did not provide an operational definition of disposition, the psychologist did provide the following tenants that can be used today to help understand the dispositions. They are as follows: (a) people behave according to how the world appears to them, (b) behaviors are symptoms of underlying dispositions, (c) core dispositions are formed over a lifetime and changes slowly, (d) behavior can be understood if one can determine how people perceive themselves their world and their goals, and (e) one understands others' perceptions by "reading [their] behavior backwards" (Wasickso, 2007, p. 57).

Combs' views about dispositions were in accord with some of his predecessors. Like Ryle (1949), Comb et al. (1969) study supported the idea that dispositions were manifested in action. Ryle (1949) and Combs et al. (1969) believed that dispositions are the motives behind the action. In terms of the nature of disposition development, Combs shared Aristotle's views that dispositions are traits that develop slowly over time (Aristotle, trans. 1999; Combs et al., 1969; Wasicsko, 2007). Though Combs et al. (1969) work received minimal attention from teacher educators at the time, his study would later lead to the framework on effective teaching dispositions currently used in teacher education today (Usher, Usher, & Usher, 2003).

Though the nuances of many of these early definitions of dispositions differ, congruent themes regarding morality, the nature of disposition development, and the role of action/behavior are evident throughout all of the views of these early philosophers. These themes will reemerge and remain consistent throughout history as others attempt to conceptualize dispositions. Aristotle's and Dewey's work add to the current dialogue regarding the ethics of teaching, making connections between dispositions and morals (Clark 2005; Sockett, 2009). Though

Dewey (1916/1944) linked dispositions to intellectual character, his belief that dispositions promoted intellectual growth in order to better society acknowledges the relationship between dispositions and morals or values. Aristotle (trans. 1999) openly connects dispositions and morals by defining dispositions as ethical virtues. Though morality is not presented in all of the definitions discussed, the connection of dispositions and morals will resurface and will add to the contention surrounding defining teacher dispositions.

Another theme acknowledged in these early definitions and continuing today is that of the nature of disposition development. Though Ryle (1949) does not address how dispositions grow and/or change, Dewey (1916/1944) and Aristotle (trans. 1999) both make mention of the learnability or trainability of dispositions. Like Combs et al. (1969), Aristotle (trans. 1999) believed that dispositions can be learned and asserted that these learnable traits develop slowly over time.

The final theme, action or behavior, is evident in varying degrees in all four definitions. Aristotle (trans. 1999), Dewey (1916/1944), Combs et al. (1969), and Ryle (1949), all recognize that actions play some role dispositions. Ryle (1949) describes dispositions as the motives behind the action, while Combs et al. (1969) purports that actions or behaviors are the symptoms of underlying dispositions. Both Dewey (1916/1944) and Aristotle (trans. 1999) use of the word habits in their definition of dispositions acknowledge some connection to action or behavior.

Though the majority of these early philosophers and educators did not relate dispositions to teachers or teacher education, the themes extracted from their work remains consistent throughout history. As others attempt to conceptualize dispositions, the work of these philosophers will provide insight into issues that exist as educators attempt to define dispositions today.

The Swinging Pendulum of School Reform: The Sixties & Seventies

Growing concerns about the state of the educational system in the United States climaxed in 1957, when the U.S.S.R. launched Sputnik, the world's first artificial satellite, into space. Though there was noted discontent about the inadequacies of U.S. schools prior to the successful launch of the satellite, Sputnik was a wake-up call for Americans and became a symbol for the lack of academic rigor and indifference to high academic standards of the progressive movement of the 1950s (Iorio & Yeager, 2011). Following Sputnik, many critics blamed schools for "endangering the nation's security" by falling behind Russia academically in the areas of science, math, and engineering (Bracey, 2002; Resnick, 2006).

Teacher education was also targeted as both the "cause of" and the "cure for" the problems of American schools (Johnson, 1999). With the majority of Americans in agreement that schools needed improvement, Federal and corporate agencies made school reform a priority in an effort to ensure that American students would be competitive in the changing global society.

During the early part of the 1960's, the nation was less concerned with the attitudes, perceptions and dispositions of teachers and more concerned the cognitive development of students. Educational reformers of the time wanted a pedagogical revolution, and proposed that the conservative teaching practices of the 1950s be replaced with a hands-on, inquiry-based, student-centered curricula (Marantz & Scheer, 1997). "Teacher-proof" curriculum packages were implemented to allow students to use "discovery" inquiry and inductive reasoning as methods of learning (Ravitch, 1983). Reformers believed that even classrooms needed to

undergo a transformation, proposing that flexible furnishings, movable walls, and open spaces could facilitate student learning (Ravitch, 1983).

To the dismay of reformist, the “revolution in schools” ended before it could truly start, and by the mid-1960’s, issues of the times, including the Civil Rights Movement, the assassination of President Kennedy, and the beginning of Vietnam War, took precedent over the current educational reform (Iorio & Yeager, 2011; Marantz & Scheer, 1997). The push to be globally competitive with Russia was suspended and a new progressivism movement grew in response to discontent over U.S. public school’s inability to provide an equal education to children of color.

Just as Civil Rights laws were passed to provide all students with equal educational opportunities, White, middle class families simultaneously migrated from big cities to the suburbs to maintain the status quo of segregation. When the White population left the city, so did urban school funding. This “White Flight,” the trend of White families moving to the suburbs, changed the racial and economic dynamics of urban schools (Massey, Warrington, & Holmes, 2014), and urban school systems became known for large populations of Latinos and African Americans, lack of financial and educational resources, and student underperformance (Billingham & Kimelberg, 2013; Tolbert & Theobald, 2006).

Critics blamed public schools for perpetuating the inequities of society, and a myriad of educational reforms aimed at racially balancing schools were introduced (Ravitch, 1983). In the midst of alternating school reforms and racial unrest, there was no mention of teaching dispositions from professional education organizations, school districts or teacher education programs. However, not widely credited, University of California professor of education, Donald Arnstine was the first to introduce the term dispositions to the field of education in 1967

(Freeman, 2007). Arnstine believed in the importance of dispositions to teaching, advocating that teaching dispositions are “the most important contribution schools and teachers can make on behalf of their students” (Raths, 2007, p. 154). Though Arnstine (1967) did not provide a formal definition, similar to Ryle (1949) and Combs et al. (1969), the professor believed that dispositions were attributes or behaviors that one ascribed to people or things. According to Arnstine (1967), dispositions are characteristics that are thoughtful, contextual, and predictive in nature.

In *Philosophy of Education: Learning and Schooling* (1967), Arnstine explains that a disposition:

... is not some sort of a thing or mysterious unobservable property of things; rather it is a concept that has its use in predictive statements. To ascribe a disposition to something or to someone is to say he has a tendency to behave in certain ways when certain conditions are realized. Ascribing a disposition, then allows for the making of a prediction. (p. 32)

Additionally, Arnstine (1967) asserted that dispositions are not innate qualities, explaining that learning is the process of acquiring and changing particular dispositions (Freeman, 2007). This view of dispositions as attributes that can be acquired is in line with the views of Aristotle (trans. 1999) and Dewey (1916/1944), but challenges Combs et al. (1969), who stated that dispositions form over a lifetime and are inability to change. Viewing dispositions as dynamic and/or teachable traits will prove important to teacher education programs with goals of nurturing the growth of the dispositions of pre-service teachers.

Schools at Risk: The Eighties

At the end of the 1970's, the general perception continued to be that America's schools were failing. Urban public schools, at the time, were “positioned as the antithesis of learning and

were blamed for the demise of American public education” (Massey et al., 2014, p. 176).

Arnstine (1967) work on dispositions had little impact on schooling, teachers or teacher education, and national concerns about the low academic levels of American students continued. The onset of the decade brought an increased amount of criticism aimed at both public schools and teachers, calling for increased standards for both teachers and students.

National cries for educational reform were further compounded in 1983 when The National Commission on Excellence in Education published *A Nation at Risk*, a report highlighting the “mediocrity” of the American school system at the time. Citing poor SAT scores and low academic requirements for students, the report sharply criticized the condition of teacher education in the United States (Resnick, 2006). Though the report stressed that teachers were not responsible for the current state of education, it placed the responsibility on colleges and institutions of higher education pledged with producing competent teachers, with the appropriate aptitude to teach (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The Commission contended that much like students in a classroom, pre-service teachers should be required to meet high educational standards (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983).

The publication of the report coupled with America’s continued criticisms of public schools fueled the nation’s desire for yet another educational reform, resulting in the birth of the Standards Movement. During this time, politicians and educators made raising standards for students and establishing standards and accountability for teachers a priority. Standards-based reform focused on what students should know and what they should be able to do (Thompson, 2001). The goal of the Standards Movement was to increase the academic success for all by providing specific teaching and learning expectations for both teachers and students (Jones,

1996, Thompson, 2001). According to Thompson (2001), authentic standards-based reform has the potential to improve the quality of student performance to meet system-wide standards, make schools accountable to the communities they serve and improve the quality of teachers in the classroom. Opponents of the movement believed that standards-based reform could have the opposite effect on teaching and learning. Many believed that standards-based curriculums were difficult to implement and promoted test-driven instruction (Lewis, 1995; Thompson, 2001). Others believed that the accountability piece of the reform led to unfair competition among schools (Berliner & Biddle, 1995), giving little regard to racial inequities and lack of access that existed in urban schools as compared to their suburban counterparts (Massey et al., 2014)

In response to the Standards Movement, teacher education programs focused their curriculum and instruction on the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes of pre-service teachers (Freeman, 2007). There was a general consensus in the field at the time that all teachers should have knowledge of the content and pedagogy that they are teaching, the necessary skills to teach, and a positive attitude toward teaching and learning (Adediwura & Tayo, 2007).

Teaching knowledge and skills had been a stable part of the teacher education programs for decades. These concepts were teachable and easily measurable by teacher educators in the field. It was the requirement to teach and assess the attitudes of teachers that was more complicated. According to Freeman (2007), the gap that existed between one's intentions and their actual behavior made attitudes an unsuitable domain for teacher education. Additionally, many studies show that attitudes were not reliable predictors of behavior (Bersoff, 2001). Similar to its vernacular cousin, dispositions, the term 'attitudes' was seen as an ill-defined concept in the field, and measuring teacher attitudes was very difficult for many teacher education programs (Freeman, 2007).

In 1985, educators Lilian Katz and James Raths, proposed that teacher education programs add dispositions, in addition to knowledge, skills, and attitudes, to their program goals (Katz & Raths, 1985). Katz postulated that the way that skills were taught in schools at the time actually weakened teachers' dispositions to use them (Freeman, 2007). For example, a reading program that narrowly focused on a particular reading skill may leave out important components of learning how to read, actually weakening one's disposition to read and leaving the student without a comprehensive knowledge of reading (Katz, 1993). In addition to the danger of possibly diminishing skill development, Katz and Raths (1985) also believed that some pre-service teachers going through teacher education programs may have the necessary skills and knowledge to teach, but lack the proper patterns of behavior or dispositions.

Katz and Raths (1985) defined dispositions as frequently exhibited patterns of behavior that are intentional and habitual. These acts may be conscious and deliberate, or they may be so habitual and automatic that they may seem intuitive or spontaneous (Buss & Craik, 1983; Katz & Raths, 1985). Similar to their predecessors, Ryle (1949), Combs et al. (1969), and Arnstine (1967), Katz and Raths (1985) describe dispositions as observable, contextual, and habitual in nature. Drawing from the work of Dewey (1916/1944), the educators describe dispositions as "habits of mind."

[Dispositions] are "habits of mind"—not mindless habits. They are classes of intentional action in categories of situations and they can be thought of as "habits of mind" that give rise to the employment of skills and are manifested (ideally) by skillful behavior. (Katz & Raths, p. 303)

Though dispositions are grounded in one's behavior, a single act in isolation does not constitute one's disposition. Dispositions are a summary of all actions observed (Katz & Raths,

1985). According to Katz and Rath (1985), a teacher's dispositions could be defined by observing her actions taken over time throughout her daily practice.

Much like Arnstine (1967), Katz and Rath (1985) also asserted that dispositions can serve as a basis for predicting future trends in behavior. Presumably, in the context of teacher education, understanding pre-service teachers' dispositions could be a good predictor of how they would perform in the classroom.

Though Katz and Rath (1985) did not explicitly argue for substituting dispositions for attitudes, they did discuss the difference between the two terms, observing that attitudes are explanatory in nature and focus on one's pre-disposition or tendency to act, while dispositions are more descriptive and are a summary of one's observed actions. Attitudes are consistent inclinations to act in a particular manner (Adediwura & Tayo, 2007), not the actions themselves. Contrarily, dispositions are conscious and deliberate patterns of acts that are intentional on the part of the teacher (Katz & Rath, 1985). Katz and Rath (1985) believed that adding dispositions, in conjunction with or in lieu of attitudes, would force teacher educators to think more profoundly about how to educate pre-service teachers which would, in turn improve teacher quality. They proposed that teacher education programs adopt goals that promote not only a teacher's content knowledge and pedagogical skills, but also the professional teaching dispositions necessary to use that knowledge and skills (Katz & Rath, 1985).

The concept of teacher dispositions gained more headway in 1986. In response to the growing student population and the need for state's need for strong, qualified teachers, The Task Force on Teacher Education for Minnesota's Future released *Minnesota's Vision for Teacher Education: Stronger Standards, New Partnership* (1986). Borrowing from the work of Katz and Rath (1985), the report recommended that in addition to knowledge and skills, teacher

education programs should foster certain dispositions for new teachers (The Task Force on Teacher Education for Minnesota's Future, 1986). The report highlighted twenty-one ideal dispositions for teachers under the headings of "Disposition of Self," "Disposition Toward the Learner," "Disposition toward Teaching," and "Disposition Toward the Profession" (The Task Force on Teacher Education for Minnesota's Future, 1986). Considering the concept of teacher dispositions was still both new and vague, Minnesota's Vision for Teacher Education (1986) helped construct the professional understanding of dispositions and was considered to be very influential in the field at the time (Freeman, 2007).

Teaching as a Moral Practice: The Nineties

The drive to improve the state of education was a major focus for the nation and effort to improve education standards continued into the 1990s. The Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), which was passed in 1994, required that states develop rigorous content standards and assessments to measure student achievement (NAE, 2009). States held schools accountable for meeting the standards, and public school systems held teachers accountable for improving student achievement. States reinforced new standards by setting up performance accountability systems that included public reporting requirements of assessments for schools and performance tests for students (NAE, 2009; Ginsberg, 1995).

While schools in some states made academic gains from policy changes, students who attended urban public schools continued to underperform academically. In fact, the enactment of accountability policies at the time led to increased inequities between schools (Massey et al. 2014), and the concept of urban schools became synonymous with negative images, deficit thinking, and "underachievement" (Milner, 2008).

During this time, the need for qualified public school teachers was crucial. Classroom teachers were accountable for raising the rigor of classroom instruction and making sure students mastered standards and passed high-stakes state assessments. Accountability was even higher for urban classroom teachers who had the additional pressure of closing the achievement gap that existed between Blacks and Latinos and their White peers, while working in schools with limited access to funding or resources (Talbert-Johnson, 2006).

In addition to increased accountability created by standards-based education reform, questions arose about what *kind* of teachers were teaching in U.S. classrooms. During this time, an increased societal concern regarding the perceived decline of moral and ethical values promoted a renewed interest in moral education (Campbell, 1997; Sockett, 2009). Reminiscent of the work of Aristotle (trans. 1999) and Dewey (1916/1944), with this new decade came an increased interest in teaching as a moral activity (Clark, 2005; Sockett, 2009). Though the Standards Movement was about performance and accountability, there was now an increasing dialogue about connecting the ethics of teaching with moral education (Campbell, 1997).

In the early 1990s, a series of essays entitled *The Moral Dimensions of Teaching* (1993) examined teachers' professionalism and ethical practices. In one essay, Soder (1990) discusses the moral responsibility that teachers have to ensure that all children are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomics. Another essay suggests that teacher conduct (i.e. treating students justly, demonstrating compassion and care, personifying morality) is just as critical to the work of a teacher as the subject matter that is being taught (Fenstermacher, 1990). There were hopes by some that teacher preparation programs would move away from the narrow conception of teaching methods and skills and move toward teaching moral professionalism (Osguthorpe, 2008).

Though teaching dispositions had not yet become mainstream in teacher education, due to the work of Katz and Rath (1985), growing concerns about the moral development of teachers kept the concept of dispositions current. With little discussion in the literature, the traditional domains of teacher education began to shift from knowledge, skills, and attitudes to knowledge, skills, and disposition (Freeman, 2007).

During this time, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), a group of state agencies and national educational organizations, became monumental in bringing dispositions to the forefront of teacher education. Created by the Council of Chief State and School Officers, INTASC was responsible for the preparation, licensing, and on-going professional development of new teachers. Concurrent with the views of Katz and Rath (1985), the consortium recognized that teachers could have the knowledge and skills required to teach, but not apply them in the classroom (Diez, 2007). With a focus on the importance of performance based assessment for evaluating teacher quality, INTASC's Standards Development Group, chaired by renowned educator, Linda Darling-Hammond, published *Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Development: A Resource for State Dialogue* (1992). Using the Minnesota report as their guide, Darling-Hammond and her committee members advocated principles that explained the best practices of teaching and lobbied to have these principles adopted by the state standards boards (Rath, 2001). The report also separated INTASC standards into three categories, "knowledge, skills, and dispositions," officially replacing the previous categories, "knowledge, skills and attitudes" (Diez, 2007).

Though the report did not provide a clear definition of dispositions, a definition could be inferred from the "root words" associated with each set of dispositions outlined in the INTASC basic principles (Rath, 2007). The root words included in INTASC standards described a

teacher who: realizes, appreciates, has enthusiasm for, believes, respects, is sensitive to, values, and recognizes (INTASC, 1992). Unlike other definitions of dispositions that primarily focused on the actions, behaviors, and habits of the teachers (Arnstine, 1967; Katz & Raths, 1985), INTASC's word choice had moral undertones and represented a summary of one's beliefs, values and personal characteristics (Raths, 2001).

In 1996, at the request of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and the National Board for Professional Standards of Teaching (NBPTS), the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future published *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future* (1996). The commission made recommendations on the preparation, recruitment, licensure, certification, induction, professional development and continuing support of both teachers and principals (Darling-Hammond & Ball, 1998). The report also concluded that teachers have the strongest effect on student learning and that improving the nation's schools is dependent upon improving the quality of teachers in the classroom (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996).

In response to the report, NCATE, CCSSO, and NBPTS, all of which participated in the commission, developed three sets of standards to guide their individual programs. NCATE, the organization responsible for the accreditation of schools, colleges, and department of education at the time, created standards that required institutions to provide coherent programs that prepared effective teachers for the classroom (NCATE, 2002). INTASC developed standards that outline what effective teachers need to know and what they believed these teachers should be able to do. NBPTS, an organization that provides national certification for teachers, also developed a set of separate standards for accomplished teaching to guide their advanced

certification program. Each group created standards to improve the quality of teaching and “shift views about teaching away from ideas about ‘generic or context free teaching behaviors,’ and bring new attention to teachers’ capacities for performance in particularly contexts of teaching” (Carroll, 2006, p. 2).

By the late 1990’s, largely due to the INTASC (1992) report, the terminology of disposition was officially a part of the accreditation framework and teacher education policy (Diez, 2007; Sockett, 2009). Once adopted into the framework, teacher education programs who had the task of ensuring that pre-service teachers had the knowledge and skills to teach a challenging curriculum, now had to define, identify and measure the dispositions of their pre-service teachers. As the new millennium approached, teacher education programs throughout the nation scrambled to understand this new domain of teacher education.

Dispositions in the New Millennium and Today

In 2000, following the lead of INTASC, NCATE also decided that dispositions should be included in what teachers should know and what they should know how to do in the classroom (Raths, 2001). During this time, NCATE standards committees made explicit their expectations that teacher education programs should address not only the knowledge and skills of teacher candidates, but should also attend to their dispositions (Diez, 2007). More specifically, NCATE standards stated that “Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other professional school personnel know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn” (NCATE, 2008, para. 2). *Standards 2000* stipulated that every teacher education institution must develop a theoretical framework that outlines desired dispositions for teachers, defines and operationalizes additional professional

dispositions, and assesses the dispositions of pre-service teachers based on their observable behaviors in an educational setting (NCATE, 2002).

By 2013, InTASC (formerly INTASC), dropping the “new” from its name and now established performance standards for assessment of all teachers, revised the professional standards first created for beginning teachers in 1992. No longer a guideline for exclusively for new teachers, the new standards reemphasized the importance of knowledge, dispositions and performances to the teaching practice for all teachers. While teaching dispositions remained a key component of the standards, InTASC now classified professional dispositions to teach as “critical dispositions.” According to InTASC (2013), critical dispositions refer to the “habits of professional action and moral commitments that underlie the performances play a key role in how teachers do, in fact, act in practice.” While maintaining its stance that teaching is a moral practice, the revised definition acknowledges that dispositions are also motivated by habits that are enacted during classroom practice.

During this time, NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), a rivaling accreditation agency, combined to form The Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), becoming the official accrediting body for educator preparation providers. CAEP also offered a definition of teacher dispositions defining them as “the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors towards students, families, colleagues, and communities that affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth” (CAEP, 2014, p. 8). Though the definitions state that teacher dispositions are influenced by teachers’ behaviors, the organizations provide no examples of how these positive behaviors are demonstrated or how they should be assessed.

While positions on best ways to assess teacher dispositions vary and are somewhat contentious, determining best practices for assessment is an important consideration for teacher educators.

Assessing Teacher Dispositions

Based on the idea that dispositions are predictors of effective and ineffective behavior in the classroom, the concept of teacher dispositions was adopted into the accreditation framework and consequently teacher education programs. With no clear definition in the field and no accord on how dispositions develop, teacher educators struggled to find consensus on how to effectively assess teacher dispositions. Among the many difficulties in assessing teaching dispositions is the controversy over the terms connection with the concept of morality. Many education critics do not like the idea of teacher educators judging or assessing the moral character of pre-service teachers (Damon, 2005). Without a clear definition or universal list of target dispositions, teacher educators can make unverified inferences that are not linked to specific evidence (Diez & Murrell, 2010; Notar, Riley, & Taylor, 2009). Teacher selection based on dispositions has led to legal concerns in the field that has in turn influenced the development of disposition assessment (Wasicsko, 2007).

Assessing for Dispositional Alignment: Contextual Considerations. An example of the importance of teacher dispositions and schooling is in the work in urban teacher education. Teachers often find themselves in educational settings characterized by low student achievement, inadequate school readiness, low parental involvement, poor access to learning resources, lack of discipline, language barriers, and poor student health (Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005). Though highly qualified urban teachers are in high demand, urban schools have high teacher turnover and fewer highly qualified teachers than their suburban counterparts (Massey et al., 2014). In order to overcome the structural challenges that come with working in a high-needs

urban school, classroom teachers need to have a “professional dispositions toward differences, including continuous and conscious examination and reconstruction of their own existing assumptions about differences and high expectations for all learners, along with skills to work with diverse learners, such as practicing equitable pedagogy” (Lee & Herner-Patnode, 2010, para. 3).

Though students who attend urban schools have more success with teachers who have the optimal dispositions to teach diverse learners (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994), there is often a cultural disconnect between the teachers who work in urban schools and the students in their classrooms. Many teachers working in urban schools are monolingual and White, and often lack the knowledge, skills or most importantly, the dispositions to teach diverse learners (Major & Brock, 2003). Cultural mismatches between students and teachers can result in deficit-model thinking toward students (Ladson-Billings, 1995), warrant negative outcomes, such as low student expectations, inappropriate remediation, harsh disciplines, and a readiness to attribute academic and behavioral problems to students’ home environment (Kidd, Sanchez, and Thorpe, 2008).

In an effort to improve the quality of teachers working in urban classrooms, states, educational organizations and school districts looked to teacher education programs to correct any misalignments that may exist and better prepare teachers to work in urban classrooms. According to Kidd et al. (2008), pre-service teachers often come to teacher education program with assumptions and biases about culture and limited understanding of multicultural education. It was up to institutions who prepared teachers to develop programs that would train teachers to work with culturally, linguistically, socioeconomically and ability diverse children (Kidd et al., 2008). When teacher dispositions became a part of accreditation requirements, institutions

charged with preparing a growing number of teachers to work in urban classrooms began to closely examine which dispositions were necessary to teach in urban schools. Programs aimed to develop and nurture the teaching dispositions required for pre-service teachers to work in the urban school context (Gay, 2010; Talbert-Johnson, 2006).

While there is no consensus on which teaching dispositions are necessary for urban teaching, many studies made connections between specific dispositions and urban teachers' effectiveness. While some focused on caring dispositions (e.g., Nieto, 2006; Valenzuela, 1999), others focused on importance of teachers having a dispositions toward social justice (e.g., Noddings, 2005; Villegas, 2007). Ladson-Billings (2004) work on culturally relevant pedagogy offered a framework for desired dispositions for urban teachers, suggesting that teachers have, (a) an anti-bias or anti-racist philosophy of education, (b) a commitment to values of equity and cultural diversity, (c) critical consciousness about the world around them, and (d) a transformative attitude toward educational inequities. Building on the work of Ladson-Billings (2004), Villegas and Lucas (2002) suggested that it is important that teachers have dispositions related to sociocultural consciousness, constructivist learning, and social change.

Haberman's (1995) studies of successful teachers of children living in poverty, identified more specific dispositions associated with urban student success, including (a) persistence, (b) promoting learners and learning, (c) translating generalizations into practice, (d) having an appropriate approach to at-risk students, (e) professional and personal orientations with students, (f) acknowledging burnout, and (g) fallibility. Haberman is among other educators who viewed dispositions as fixed traits. Based on a Likert scoring system, Haberman's STAR teacher interview attempts to determine whether a teacher would be a successful match for a high-needs, urban classrooms setting (Haberman, 1995). Many programs currently use summative

assessments, like the Haberman, prior to admission to their program to screen candidates' dispositions and to fulfill accreditation requirements. This method of gatekeeping, which is usually in the form of interviews, disposition checklist, or reflective essays, disallows candidates who lack the appropriate dispositions to teach to enter the teacher education program (Diez & Murrell, 2010). Additionally, summative assessment of dispositions does not view disposition assessment as a vehicle for reflective professional growth, and instead maintains that teachers' dispositions are static or fixed traits that are formed over a lifetime and are unlikely to change (Combs, 1969; Haberman, 1995; Osguthorpe, 2008; Wasicsko, 2007). According to this view, if a teacher does not have the disposition to teach, prior to training, it is unlikely that they will develop said dispositions during the course of a teacher education program. Haberman and others that prescribe to this view believe that denying admission of pre-service teachers who do not have the appropriate dispositions to teach at the onset of the program saves teacher education programs time and money, prevents inadequate teachers from entering the classroom, and allows teachers who are more appropriately suited for the profession an opportunity to enter the program (Haberman, 1995).

Much of the research on dispositions associated with urban schools closely connects teacher beliefs and attitudes with an individual's moral character. According to Diez (2006), the process of developing assessment of teacher dispositions should be guided by the moral compass of teacher educators in relation to the context of instruction. Doing so will help teacher educators construct desirable dispositions for teaching, clear explanations of what is expected of the teacher, and clear descriptions of good teaching in context (Sockett, 2009). The Diversity Disposition Index, or DDI, is one of the few validated assessment instruments that measures the desirable dispositions of teachers who work with students from diverse backgrounds (Schulte,

Edwards, & Edick, 2008). Using Ladson-Billings (1994) propositions for culturally relevant teaching, the DDI was developed to measure teacher dispositions as they relate to the teachers' conception of self and others, social relations, and conceptions of knowledge (Schulte et al., 2008). Assessment that has been developed with moral meaning, like the DDI, can help teachers become more aware of their teaching dispositions, provide evidence of teachers' moral commitment to their practice, and can assist them in developing the dispositions necessary to be effective educators of students from all backgrounds (Feiman-Nesmer & Schussler, 2010; Schulte et al., 2008).

Concern for the accuracy of any summative assessments warrant caution. There is no way to know if responses to numerous dispositions measures currently available are truly based on the beliefs, values and/or dispositions of the teacher candidate (Diez & Murrell, 2010).

Candidates can provide answers or write essays that reflect what they believe a teacher should say or do, and not be based on what they accept as true. Additionally, there could be incongruence between what candidates say they will and what they actually will do in their daily practice (Argyris & Schön, 1974). In addition, with this type of assessment, candidates are not informed on their dispositional strengths and weaknesses, nor are they allowed opportunities for dispositional growth, an important aspect of teacher education programs that are charged with cultivating teacher dispositions.

Assessment for Dispositional Growth. Defining the purpose of disposition assessment as it relates to the professional development of pre-service teachers is an important aspect of developing effective assessment for dispositions. Disposition assessment should assist in the growth and development of pre-service teachers, promote awareness of desirable dispositions, and provide feedback that will help them mature as moral educators (Diez, 2006; Notar, Riley &

Taylor, 2009). Additionally, assessing teacher dispositions should allow pre-service teachers to become more conscious of their strengths and weaknesses, developing habits of inquiry regarding their teaching and reflecting on the reasons and motivations behind their actions and words, and (Stooksberry, 2007; Diez, 2006; Diez, 2007). Since dispositions are a summary of actions observed (Katz & Raths, 1985), disposition assessment should not be a one-time evaluation at the onset of a teacher education program nor should it be a one-time summative evaluation at its finish. Comprehensive assessment of teacher dispositions should be on-going throughout the teacher education program and should be measured consistently in conjunction with knowledge and skills. Valuable teacher disposition evaluations should be valid and reliable, and should nurture the dispositions of pre-service teachers and contribute to their professional growth (Notar, Riley & Taylor, 2009).

Implications and Considerations for Urban Teacher Education

As each decade passed, the educational reforms, laws, organizations, and opinions have changed, but their main goal remains the same, quality education. Implementing teacher dispositions into teacher education programs across the nation was a goal introduced to improve the quality of classroom teachers, and in turn, enhance the quality of education for all students. After almost thirty years of vernacular debates, moral discussions and institution mandates, the implementation remains a slow and laborious process. The adoption of teacher dispositions into the field resulted in little to no consensus on some of the major elements surrounding the term and has left teacher educators questioning its meaning, its developmental nature, and how it should be most efficiently used in teacher education.

Despite the lack of a clear definition in the field, teacher dispositions remained a major part of the accreditation requirements for teacher education programs. The response to

INTASC's and NCATE's incorporation of teacher dispositions into their national standards was resounding. Many states have used accreditation agency's definition of teaching dispositions to create their own state standard settings, with at least thirty states issuing mandates requiring teacher education programs to include dispositions, along with knowledge and skills, into their program design (Diez, 2007). In less than a twenty year span and with little fanfare, the term teacher dispositions solidified itself into the vernacular of teacher education. Annual education conferences, like American Educational Research Association (AERA) and American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), had a growing number of sessions with sessions dedicated to teacher dispositions (Raths, 2007). Similarly, educational literature and empirical studies on the topic increased as well. In 2016, the term teacher dispositions received 1,847 hits in ERIC database. Though the term has become more commonplace in education, many of the arguments from the previous thirty years about teacher dispositions continue to resurface today. Confusion over the definition, varying opinions about if and how dispositions are developed, and contention over the best methods of assessment continue to hinder effective implementation of teacher dispositions into teacher education programs today.

Defining Teacher Dispositions

Over past forty years, educators, professional educational organizations, and teacher education educators have worked towards incorporating the term teacher dispositions into program designs and the general language of the field. Though the term is now prevalent in teacher education, the evolving concept remains hard to define and unclear. Varying definitions from different perspectives and approaches have caused confusion about the topic and impeded its implementation. The numerous definitions of teacher dispositions that exist in the teacher education literature can be attributed to the concepts overlap with content knowledge and

pedagogical skills, and the lack of sufficient research-based assessment tools (Wasicsko, 2007). According to Lee Smith et al. (2005), the lack of cohesiveness and consistent definition has clouded the discourse and confounded the application of research findings. As a growing number of universities and teacher education programs attempt to incorporate teacher dispositions into their program goals, conceptualizing teacher dispositions remains a high priority. Constructing a clear and concise definition of teacher dispositions for the field of teacher education would reduce uncertainty about the concept, assist teacher education programs with effective implementation into their program design, and contribute to dispositional growth and professional development of teachers in the field.

Though many definitions of dispositions exist, many are general in nature, and are not specific to teacher education. Within the literature, the term has been used interchangeably with words such as, traits, characteristics, attitudes, beliefs, judgments, values and attributes (Lee Smith et al., 2005). Of the many definitions that exist, the themes that can be found in the literature are the concepts of dispositions as moral traits or virtues, dispositions as actions, and dispositions as habits of mind. Though in some definitions, these elements seem independent of each other, when reviewed collectively, these reoccurring themes are key elements of the definition of teacher dispositions.

Dispositions as Moral Traits. The term teacher dispositions association with words like *morals* and *character* has inhibited the development of an operational definition. According to Sockett (2009), political and social unrest about the moral undertones of the word, as well as the legal implications that could potentially arise from using character and/or moral assessment in teacher education program design, has caused controversy surrounding the topic and made the concept difficult to define. Though the connection between teaching dispositions and morals has

caused much debate, after examining the origin of dispositions and reviewing the literature from an historical perspective, it is difficult to deny the interconnectedness of dispositions and morals.

Consistent with the beliefs of early philosophers, Aristotle (trans. 1999) and Dewey (1916/1944), many of current definitions of teacher dispositions emphasize the relationship between a teacher's disposition and his/her moral character. According to Sockett (2009), teaching is a moral activity that involves developing young people, academically and morally. Since teachers model a way of being and interacting in the world to their students, teacher dispositions reflect how teachers function as moral educators (Carroll, 2006). In essence, teacher dispositions demonstrate a teacher's "moral stance in action" (Diez & Murrell, 2010, p. 12) and any definition of the term should make connections between a teacher's disposition and his/her moral character.

In accordance with the conceptualization of dispositions as moral traits, Sockett (2009) defines teacher dispositions as virtues relevant to teaching. The concept of virtues as dispositions has "a cognitive core that is internal in the sense that the agent knows what he/she believes in and acts accordingly out of these virtues" (Sockett, 2009, p. 299). Similar to the beliefs of Sockett (2009), Wasicsko (2007), who continued the work of Combs et al. (1969), defines dispositions as the core attitudes, values, and a belief system that underlies teacher behavior and characteristic. According to Wasicsko (2007), this value system or set of virtues guides what teachers say and do in the classroom. For example, a teacher who has the disposition that all students can learn demonstrates this moral belief in her actions in the classroom. According to Sockett (2009), dispositions as virtues are qualities that are intrinsically motivated, achieved in the face of obstacles, and are a result of an individual's initiatives.

Dispositions as Actions. Just as morals play a significant part in the definition of teacher dispositions, teachers' actions play an equally significant role. Without the action element of teacher disposition, dispositions would be no more than thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. In the case of the teacher with the disposition that all students can learn, her disposition is made up of her belief and knowledge that her students can learn and the observable actions in the classroom that demonstrate and support her belief that all students can learn. Subsequently, since teacher dispositions are interconnected with what teachers do in the classroom, some form of the word behavior or action needs to be included into the definition of the term. Phrases such as "summary of observed actions," "summaries of act frequencies," "tendencies to behave," "patterns of behavior," and "symptoms of behaviors" have all been used when defining dispositions (Arnstine, 1967; Buss & Craik, 1983; Combs et al., 1969; Katz & Raths, 1985; Ryle, 1949).

Though the majority of the definitions of dispositions have an element of action, it is unclear whether dispositions are the tangible actions or whether they are cognitive thoughts or beliefs that cause the action. Katz and Raths' (1985) definition is based around the assertion that dispositions are manifested in action. The educators describe dispositions as a "summary of actions" observed, purporting that more than one action is necessary to constitute one's disposition (Katz & Raths, 1985). Ritchchart (2002) definition also describes dispositions as a collection of behaviors, rather than a single action. Both definitions highlight the interconnectedness of actions and teachers' dispositions. Similarly, Sockett (2009) definition of disposition also indicates the importance of actions when defining dispositions. Sockett (2009) defines dispositions as intentional acts that are conducted with awareness and intentionality.

Katz and Raths (1985), Ritchhart (2002), and Sockett (2009) definitions emphasize the actions that are caused by thoughts and/or beliefs when defining teacher dispositions.

Contrarily, Ryle differentiates the actual dispositions from the action, explaining that dispositions are the motives behind the action, not a part of the disposition themselves. According to Ryle (1949), the action is secondary to the actual disposition. In his definition of disposition, he describes dispositions as propensities that precede the action. Similarly, Arnstine (1967), who describes these propensities as “tendencies,” asserts that dispositions are the impetus behind the action. Both educators believe that the action is the result of the disposition.

Based on definitions that currently exist, it is clear that action plays a key part in defining teacher dispositions, which is why it is believed that dispositions influences effective teaching. Though it is unclear whether dispositions are actions that precede thoughts and beliefs or thoughts and beliefs that precede action, behavior or action is a function of one’s dispositions (Sockett, 2009). As teacher educators attempt to define teacher dispositions, the concept of dispositions as actions should be integrated into the definition.

Dispositions as Habits of Mind. When defining teacher dispositions, it is necessary to not only understand the role of teacher actions and morals, but it is also necessary to examine the cognition that underlies the actions and morals. According to Ritchhart (2001), teaching dispositions are a collection of cognitive tendencies that reflect a pattern of thinking (Ritchhart, 2001). Dewey, who described dispositions as “habits of mind,” believed that dispositions were habits that made one’s actions intelligent, providing an explanation for why one would act in a given manner. In the realm of teaching and teacher dispositions, Ritchhart (2001) states that teacher dispositions reflect the habits or tendencies that a teacher is disposed to perform in the classroom.

The inclusion of words like habit, tendencies, and patterns when describing teacher dispositions speaks to the predictive nature of the concept. Arnstine (1967) and Katz and Rath (1985) asserted that assigning a disposition to someone is to say that the person had a tendency to act in a certain way given the situation. One could predict that a teacher with the disposition that all students can learn would habitually demonstrate this disposition in the appropriate context. Katz and Rath (1985) also addressed the consistent nature of teacher dispositions, defining dispositions as conscious and deliberate acts that are habitual and automatic.

Examining a pre-service teacher's tendencies and "ethics-in-action" may give teacher educators insight into what a teacher believes, how they think, and how they may act in given situations, but it does not provide a comprehensive overview of his teaching dispositions. Though these elements are important to defining teacher dispositions, they only represent a part of this complex concept. Understanding how habits of mind and moral traits are manifested in the teacher's actions is the last important component of defining teacher dispositions.

A Working Definition. Moral traits, habits of mind, and action are interdependent of each other when identifying teacher dispositions. These reoccurring themes can be found in a majority of the collective definitions examined throughout this review. From these definitions, it can be inferred that teacher dispositions (a) reflect the morals of the teacher, (b) are guided by habits of mind of the teacher, and (c) are manifested through actions or behaviors in the classroom. It can also be determined that these dispositions are predictive acts that are intentional and contextual (Arnstine, 1967; Katz & Rath, 1985; Sockett, 2009). Additionally, dispositions are determined through the observation of, not one, but many acts, which, in turn constitute a trend or pattern of behavior.

Though their work was not specifically address dispositions, Argyris and Schön's (1974) *theories of action* offers a unique explanation of the synthesis between each of these components that make up teaching dispositions. According to Argyris and Schön (1974), each of us has a mental map that directs our behavior, our *theories of action*. The theory states that individuals hold two different types of theories of action, an *espoused theory* and *theories-in-use*. An *espoused theory* is made up of one's beliefs, attitudes, and values and *theories-in-use* are what govern our actions. In the classroom setting, an espoused theory describes how a teacher would report her actions in the classroom during a given situation and/or how she would rationalize her behaviors to others, and theories-in-use are manifested through actions or behaviors in the classroom. To fully understand a teacher's practice, it is necessary to understand her teaching dispositions (theories of action), which are inclusive of both perceptions about teaching (espoused theories) and actions in the classroom (theories-in-use).

Using Argyris and Schön (1974) as a framework, one can assume that in order for teacher educators to properly examine pre-service teacher's teaching dispositions, they must understand the morals and habits of mind of the teacher, and then observe how they are demonstrated in her classroom practice. Teacher educators should use the reoccurring themes of morals, habits of mind and action to develop a working definition for the field and identify appropriate teaching dispositions for effective classroom teachers. Given that teacher dispositions are now a part of the performance-based evaluations directed by professional education accrediting bodies, defining which teacher dispositions should be supported and developed through teacher preparation programs is an important part of developing a definition. Once exemplary teaching dispositions have been identified and a working definition of the concept has been established,

determining how to effectively assess teacher dispositions is the final piece of the developing puzzle of teacher dispositions.

Conclusion

The complex concept of dispositions can be traced back to 300 B.C. when Aristotle connected the term to ethical virtues (trans. 1999). John Dewey (1916/1944) expounded upon this idea adding that dispositions were not only moral in nature, but were habits of mind that made one's actions intelligent. In addition to the cognitive and moral components, dispositions were also found to be contextual and predictive (Arnstine, 1967; Katz & Rath, 1985; Ryle, 1949). Though disposition and teachers were studied briefly in the 1960's (Combs et al., 1969), the concept was not introduced to the field of teacher education until the 1980's, when Katz and Rath (1985) contended that pre-service teachers needed to have the appropriate dispositions, in addition to the necessary knowledge and skills, to become effective teachers. This assertion combined with pressure from the Standards Movement allowed for the quick adoption of teacher dispositions into teacher education policy, programs, and vernacular. Though the intent of adding teacher dispositions to program designs was to provide classrooms with quality teachers with the necessary dispositions to teach, the lack of clarity combined with surplus of incongruent literature on the topic, generated a myriad of definitions, opposing theories of development and varying methods of assessment inevitably impaired its implementation into teacher education programs. Though the concept has continued to evolve over time, a lack of conceptualization of the term along with its ambiguity has stifled effective implementation in teacher education.

This historical analysis resulted in the identification of three key themes, moral traits, actions, and habits of mind, that helped comprise a working definition of teacher dispositions for teacher educator use: moral traits, actions, and habits. Though each theme provides insight into

the conceptualization of teacher dispositions, their relationship with teacher actions has great implications for teacher educators. Since dispositions are enacted in practice, authentic assessment has the potential to not only measure dispositions, but to also promote dispositional growth and help develop teachers' professional competence (Ladson-Billings, 2004). Developing the right dispositions to teach is particularly imperative for high-needs urban teachers who are often challenged by contextual variables.

Reaching a consensus on the dimensions of teacher disposition (definition, development, and assessment) would improve the quality of teacher education programs and pre-service teachers and could benefit education at all levels. Conceptualizing teaching dispositions would help structure expectations for teacher educators, assist in determining target dispositions for teachers, unify the vision of teacher education programs, and synthesize best practices as they relate to assessing teacher dispositions (Stooksberry, 2007). Consensus would also help teacher educators lawfully comply with CAEP, state policymakers, and other educational organizations mandates regarding teacher dispositions. Though conceptualizing teacher dispositions may not answer all of the questions surrounding topic, it will advance the dialogue about the term and help educators inch closer to establishing its most beneficial use in the field of teacher education.

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PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICE: AN INVESTIGATION OF URBAN TEACHERS' PERCEIVED AND OBSERVED TEACHING DISPOSITIONS

Over the past thirty years, in an effort to improve the quality of classroom instruction, teacher educators, professional educational organizations, and school districts have incorporated the term teacher dispositions into state policy, national accreditation, teacher education program design, and the general language of the field of education. Unlike well-established domains of teacher education, such as the acquisition of content knowledge and skills, insufficient research exists regarding the definition and conceptualization of teacher dispositions (Johnson & Reiman, 2007).

As the pressure to improve the academic achievement of students continues, the need to identify, develop and retain quality classroom teachers remains paramount. This is especially true for teachers of students who attend high-needs urban schools where an achievement gap exists between students of color and their white counterparts. High-needs urban schools, which are generally populated by Black and Latino students from low socio-economic backgrounds, are often characterized as being overcrowded, under resourced, and underperforming (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Foote, 2005). Often, these schools face structural challenges that inhibit effective teaching and learning (Gehrke, 2005). Exposure to quality teachers with positive teaching dispositions is key to enhancing the academic achievement of students in these schools (Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Taylor & Wascisko, 2000; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005). In order for teaching dispositions to positively affect student achievement, educational organizations need a concrete understanding of how to identify, develop, and assess the teaching dispositions of classroom teachers. Since high-needs urban teachers face unique circumstances that differ from teachers working in urban, suburban, and

rural schools (Truscott & Truscott, 2005), specific attention needs to be given to the teaching dispositions of teachers working in these schools. While much of the literature on dispositions focuses on the constructs relationship to morals (Diez & Murrell, 2010; Sockett, 2009), several studies (Combs, Soper, Gooding, Benton, Dickman & Usher, 1969; Thornton, 2006; Wasicsko, 2007) emphasize the connection between dispositions and behaviors. According to Combs et al. (1969), though perceptions or dispositions represent our beliefs, they also impact our behaviors and determine our future actions. Therefore, in order to capture an accurate illustration of one's teaching dispositions, it is necessary to not only consider what one says, but it is equally as important to observe what a teacher does in her practice.

The purpose of this study is to expand the conversation on teaching dispositions and provide clarity to the concept by examining congruencies and incongruences that exist between perceived teaching dispositions and dispositions-in-action. This study contributes to the numerous studies on dispositions (Combs et al., 1969; Thornton, 2006; Wasicsko, 2007) by comparing how classroom teachers working in high-needs urban elementary schools perceive their teaching dispositions with the teaching dispositions evidenced through their classroom practice, or simply stated by comparing whether teachers working in high-needs urban classrooms “practice what they preach.”

The goal of this study is to provide additional evidence-based understanding about the teaching dispositions of high-needs urban classroom teachers, so that school districts and teacher education programs can create curricula and educational professional developments that will foster the dispositional growth of classroom teachers, improve the quality of teachers, and support the academic achievement of children in high-needs urban classrooms.

Definition of Terms

Teacher Dispositions. Currently, there is no universal definition for teacher dispositions used in the field of education. National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the former accreditation system for education preparation, defines teachers' professional dispositions as "professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities;" (NCATE, 2006). According to NCATE (2006), teaching dispositions are positive behaviors that support learning and can be observed in an educational setting. The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the current accreditor for education preparation providers, defines teacher dispositions as "the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors towards students, families, colleagues, and communities that affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth." (CAEP, 2014, p. 8).

Though both definitions recognize that teacher dispositions are manifested through actions or behaviors and reflect the values of the teacher (Arnstine, 1967; Katz & Raths, 1985; Sockett, 2009), neither definition explicitly states which dispositions are ideal for classroom teachers. It is noted that CAEP's definition is more comprehensive in describing who teacher dispositions impact, stating that in addition to benefiting students, dispositions also influence the professional growth of the teacher.

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the current accreditor for education preparation providers, defines teacher dispositions as "the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors towards students, families, colleagues, and communities that affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's

own professional growth.” (CAEP, 2014, p. 8). For the purpose of this study, I will adapt CAEP’s definition of teacher dispositions, adding that the acts that make up teachers dispositions are also intentional, contextual and predictive in nature and can be determined through the observation of, not one, but many acts, constituting a trend or pattern of behavior (Arnstine, 1967; Katz & Raths, 1985; Sockett, 2009). Presumably, in order to properly examine teaching dispositions, researchers must understand the teacher’s core attitudes, values, and beliefs and observe how these relate to the teacher’s actions in the classroom.

High-Needs Urban Schools. High-needs urban schools are schools that are characterized as having students who (a) come from a low socioeconomic backgrounds, (b) speak English as their second language, (c) are students of color, and/or (d) exhibit low-academic performance (Jacob, 2007). These schools are also characterized as having high concentration of students who receive free or reduced lunch meal prices (Jacobs, 2007). In these schools, the educational disparity that exists is often perpetuated by teachers who find themselves ill-equipped with the necessary resources, skills, knowledge, and dispositions to effectively teach the students of color that they serve (Terrill & Mark, 2000). The lack of qualified teachers coupled with the disconnection that exists between students and teachers at high-needs urban schools has ultimately resulted in low assessment scores and low academic achievement.

In order to overcome the structural challenges that come with working in a high-needs urban school, classroom teachers need to have “a professional dispositions toward differences, including continuous and conscious examination and reconstruction of their own existing assumptions about differences and high expectations for all learners, along with skills to work with diverse learners, such as practicing equitable pedagogy” (Lee & Herner-Patnode, 2010, para. 3).

For the purpose of this study, high-needs urban schools will be defined as schools that are located within a greater urban metropolitan area in which the students are characterized as having low academic achievement and where 50% or more of the student population receives free or reduced lunch meal prices (Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Jacobs, 2007). I recognize that all urban schools are not high-needs schools, and all high-needs schools are not located within or near urban metropolitan areas.

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework represents the perspective that one brings to a study and signifies the lens from which one views the world (Merriam, 1998). Over the past thirty years, behaviorists, constructivists, and developmentalists have all made contributions to the discussion on teacher dispositions; offering a wide range of perspectives on the subject. Though cognitive theorists, Chris Argyris and Donald Schön (1974) did not specifically address teacher dispositions in their research, their work on individual and organizational learning shares many theoretical similarities with the concept and provides implications for teachers and teacher education.

Argyris and Schön (1974) use the term *theories* to describe vehicles for explanation, prediction and control that are generalizable, relevant, consistent, and testable. According to the theorists, each individual has thousands of these theories that explain their experiences, predict their future events, and control the outcomes of situations in which they are involved (Argyris & Schön, 1974). Much like dispositions, these theories, which are referred to as *theories of action*, are situational, contextual, and are based on the values, beliefs, and assumptions that frame the individual's perception of the world (Argyris & Schön, 1974). Theories of action involve how

individuals plan, implement, and review their actions, and are key to understanding human action (Argyris, 1995; Argyris & Schön, 1974).

According to Argyris (1995), individuals hold two different types of theories of action. The first, *espoused theory*, is the theory that one gives allegiance to and upon request communicates to others (Argyris & Schön, 1974). This theory is made up of one's beliefs, attitudes, and values (Argyris, 1995) and refers to the worldviews and values that guide one's behavior (Savaya & Gardner, 2012). In the classroom setting, an espoused theory describes how a teacher would report her actions in the classroom during a given situation and/or how she would rationalize her behaviors to others. In this study, participants self-reported their perceived teaching dispositions through participant interviews and a disposition self-assessment. In accord with Argyris and Schön's (1974) definition, participants used these data sources to provide their espoused theory, what they believed that they do in their classroom practice.

The second theory that falls under the umbrella of theory of action is *theories-in-use*. Theories-in-use are the theories that govern our actions (Argyris & Schön, 1974). One cannot determine one's theory-in-use through self-report or simply by asking them. Theories-in-use are operational, subconscious to the individual, and determined through observation of behavior (Argyris & Schön, 1974). In the working definition of teacher dispositions, I have stated that, like theories-in-use, teaching dispositions are guided by the habits of mind of the teacher and are manifested through actions or behaviors in the classroom. Through observation of the participants' instruction in the classroom, I observed behavioral indicators of participants' teaching dispositions (theories-in-use).

To fully understand a teacher's practice, it is necessary to understand her teaching dispositions (theories of action), which are inclusive of both perceptions about teaching

(espoused theories) and actions in the classroom (theories-in-use). Using Argyris and Schön's theory of action (1974) as my theoretical framework, I attempted to identify the teaching dispositions of the high-needs urban teachers in the study and then made comparisons between how the teachers perceived their teaching dispositions with the teaching dispositions that were evidenced through their classroom practice.

Methodology

Qualitative research helps researchers explain the meaning of social phenomena and/or contemporary events that occur without disruption to the natural setting (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). This methodology allowed me to give explanation and clarification to the topic of teacher dispositions by exploring dispositions from the vantage point of those involved, classroom teachers, in an environment in which the phenomenon took place, high-needs urban elementary classrooms.

A case study is a type of qualitative research that is defined as “an exploration of a ‘bounded system’ or a case over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich text” (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). Case studies involve investigating a phenomenon in its real-life context through intensive analysis in order to create a holistic description of the phenomenon (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003).

A multiple case study was chosen as the applicable design for this study. According to Creswell (1998), multiple case study design first provides a detailed description of each case and analyzes the themes within the case (within case analysis), then follows with a thematic analysis across the cases in the study (cross-case analysis). Multiple case studies are often considered more robust than single case studies, allowing the researcher to compare cases in their totality and providing the readers with evidence that is considered more compelling (Yin, 2003).

This design provided the appropriate framework to illustrate the process of identifying teacher dispositions, understand the varied perspectives of the teachers, and expand the knowledge base of the topic. Through the use of multiple methods of data collection and data sources to assess, observe, and analyze my data, I examined teacher dispositions self-reported by elementary classroom teachers working in high-needs urban schools with the teaching dispositions evidenced in their classroom practice. The learning context of each classroom informed the following questions used to guide my research:

1. How do elementary classroom teachers self-report their dispositions for teaching in high-needs urban classrooms?
2. What teaching dispositions are evidenced through classroom observations of high-needs urban classrooms?
3. To what extent is there a relationship between self-reported teaching dispositions and dispositions evidenced through observations of classroom instruction?

Sampling

Potential participants for the study were recruited from a purposeful sample of a population of graduates from an urban teacher education program (or UTE) at a state university located in the southeastern region of the United States. Program graduates were contacted via email and asked if they were willing to participate in a follow-up study on UTE student for research purposes. Though three graduates from this sample responded to the recruitment email, they were unable to participate in the study due to scheduling conflicts. At that time, I contacted four additional teachers via email who were a part of the UTE program cohort that I graduated from in 2005. Though I had not had contact with the participants for over ten years, I had

knowledge that we worked for the same school district and I had access to their work email addresses.

Of the four teachers contacted, two participants were willing to participate in the study and met the following criteria: (a) they currently taught in a high-needs elementary public school and had their own classrooms, (b) they did not work in the same high-needs urban school, and (c) they received their certification from a teacher education program that specialized in preparing teachers to work in high-needs urban schools.

The two schools in this study are Title I, with at least 40% of the student population coming from a low income families. Both schools are predominantly African American and fit the definition of high-needs urban schools stated earlier in this paper. The teachers in the study, Angie and Marsha (both pseudonyms) are also African American. Though it was not a part of the sampling criteria, Marsha and Angie were both employed by the same school district which is located in a large metropolitan city in the southeastern region of the United States. Characteristics of the study participants can be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Characteristics of Study Participants

	Angie	Marsha
Race	Black	Black, Latina
Year completed UTE program	2006	2006
Years of teaching in high-needs, urban schools	13	13
Current role	2 nd grade teacher	1 st grade teacher
Number of students in class	12	18
Qualified students for free & reduced price lunch (2015)	98.8%	99.2%

Role of Researcher

In qualitative research, researchers are advised to be constantly aware of their personal biases and preconceived notions, and how their prejudices may influence their investigations (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). Though I was the primary researcher of this study, like the participants, I am also a teacher in an urban classroom. Since I graduated in the same UTE cohort as the study participants and worked in the same school district, we also shared similar academic training and years of work experience. Due to these professional similarities, I had sensitivities to the participants' experiences and context that allowed me to be more intuitive throughout the research process. My role as a teacher in the same school system also allowed me access to the participants and their classrooms. Though our commonalities were an asset to the study, because of my previous relationship with the participants, I took extra measures to prevent any bias. I reviewed my findings with the participants to allow them to tell their story from their perspective. I also provided them the opportunity to interpret my observation findings.

Additionally, I worked closely with my doctoral committee chair throughout the research process, constantly collaborating to review the data to help me maintain my credibility.

Throughout this study, I was also the primary researcher of this study. In qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument for gathering and analyzing data (Merriam, 1998). In this role, I conducted participant interviews and classroom observations, analyzed interview transcriptions, and observed classroom actions and behaviors inductively in order to provide a complex, holistic picture of the phenomenon from the perspective of the participants (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1998).

Data Sources and Collection

The evidence used for case studies came from many different sources and (a) helped me address the broader issues that surround the topic, (b) assisted me in the development of converging lines of inquiry, (c) helped me establish construct validity, and (d) substantiated the findings for my study (Merriam, 1998, Yin, 2003). Data sources are detailed in the next section. Each teacher's case included, (1) a disposition self-assessment (Diversity Disposition Index-DDI); (2) three participant interviews and (2a) field notes from each interview; (3) five classroom observations and (3a) field notes, and (4) 5 observation debriefings and field notes. Table 1 illustrates the relationship between the study's research questions and the data sources in the study.

Table 2

Crosswalk of Research Questions and Data Sources

Research Questions	1	2	3	4	5
How do elementary classroom teachers self-report their dispositions for teaching in high-needs urban schools?	X	X		X	X
What teaching dispositions are evidenced through classroom observations in elementary classrooms in high-needs urban schools?			X	X	X
To what extent is there a relationship between self-reported teaching dispositions and dispositions evidenced during observations of classroom instruction?	X	X	X	X	X

Note. Data Source 1 = analysis of DDI scores, D2 = audio-taped transcriptions teacher interview 1 and 2, D3 = field notes from observations, D4 = field notes from observation debriefings, D5 = audio-taped transcriptions teacher interview 3

Teacher Interviews. Using a three-interview series model, adapted from Siedman (1998), I conducted three interviews with each participant in order to develop a better understanding of the perceived and observed dispositions. All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed (see Appendix A for sample questions from interviews 1-3). Each interview lasted approximately one hour. The first and second interviews took place in the teacher's classroom after school. These interviews took place over a two month time span. Interview three, which took place at locations close to the participant's home, took place after my initial data analysis.

The primary purpose of the first interview was to understand the participant's background and life history and provide a general look into each teacher's values, beliefs, and attitudes connected to teaching and learning in a high-needs urban classroom. I completed Angie's interview in late April 2015, while I conducted Marsha first interview in early May 2015. During this interview, I found out the participant's previous educational experiences, how and why each participant became an urban teacher, philosophies on teaching and learning, and

personal rewards and challenges that come from teaching in an high-needs urban context. Data from this interview were used to help initially identify the participant's self-reported teaching dispositions.

The second interview for both participants took place in July 2015 after classroom observations were completed. The goal of this interview was to allow each participant an opportunity to respond to observations made by the researcher and provide additional descriptions on what was observed and how specific observations reflected her teaching dispositions. Questions for this interview, which were semi-structured in nature, were developed based on the dispositional actions and/or behaviors observed during the classroom observations. Data gathered during this interview were also used to further identify how each participant self-reported her teaching dispositions.

Since it was important to have a clear understanding of the self-reported and observed teaching dispositions prior to my final interviews with the participants, the third interview was scheduled only after interview data, observation data and the DDI were properly coded, analyzed and compared. During the third and final interview, I reviewed the themes that emerged with the participants, allowed them to further clarify what was observed in their practice during classroom observations, and discussed and interpreted consistencies and/or incongruences from the findings. I completed my final interview with Angie in January 2016, while I conducted my final interview with Marsha in April 2016. This interview provided me with a better understanding of each teacher's self-reported teaching dispositions and how specific behaviors observed reflected those teaching dispositions. This interview also served as member check to assess the accuracy and credibility of my interpretations and to provide insight and/or recommendations for clarity in my findings (Creswell, 1998).

Classroom Observations. Five classroom observations lasting approximately 45 minutes to one hour were conducted over five consecutive days following the interview one. All classroom observations took place in the teachers' classrooms at the same time every day. Marsha had to reschedule her final interview due to a scheduling conflict with her school. All observations took place in May 2015. Both teachers requested that I observe a math unit for their classroom observations. Since the observations took place at the end of the school year, all of the content taught during the observations had previously been introduced and was review for the students.

Field notes were taken during each observation. During each observation, I focused on teacher behaviors and demeanor (including tone, gesture, and language used), teacher relationships and interactions (with students and other classroom visitors), classroom instruction (including lesson openings, closings and transitions, instructional strategies and materials used), and the classroom environment. Data gathered from observations were used to capture the participant's observed dispositions.

Observation Debriefings. Following each observation, I reviewed field notes and recorded questions and comments about observations to prepare for daily observation debriefing. Observation debriefings took place with the teacher during her first available break following each classroom observation. I met with Angie while her students were at lunch, and I met with Marsha after school. Debriefing sessions lasted approximately 15 minutes during which time I discussed what I saw during my observations, and invited each teacher to discuss, clarify and elaborate the observational data presented. These meetings also served as a member check, allowing the participant to verify what I saw in the classroom. This was important as I wanted the classroom observations data to represent the participant's interpretation of her practice and

not that of the researcher. Field notes taken during daily debriefings were used to give the participants' a voice regarding their dispositions-in-action. Data gathered observation debriefings were used to capture the participant's observed dispositions.

Self-Assessment Instrument: The Diversity Disposition Index. A validated self-assessment tool designed to measure the dispositions of teachers who work with diverse learners was used to initially identify self-reported dispositions. The Diversity Disposition Index, or DDI, was the only instrument found that measured the teaching dispositions needed to work with students from diverse backgrounds (Schulte, Edwards, & Edick, 2008). Using Ladson-Billings (1994) propositions for culturally relevant teaching as a framework, the DDI was developed to measure teacher dispositions as they relate to the teachers' conception of self and others, social relations, and conceptions of knowledge (Schulte et al., 2008). The assessment was analyzed for reliability and construct validity using Chronbach's alpha and the instrument was found to be psychometrically sound (Schulte, et al., 2008). The creators of the DDI concluded that the survey could be used as an effective self-assessment instrument that could help teachers become more aware of their teaching dispositions, and assist them in developing the dispositions necessary to be effective educators of students from diverse backgrounds (Schulte et al., 2008). The DDI is composed of forty-three items. Each item is a dispositional statement that participants rated based on her level of agreement with the statement. Participant responses ranged from "1," indicating that she strongly agreed with the statement, to "5," indicating that she strongly disagreed (see Appendix B for a sample items from the Diversity Disposition Index).

Following interview two, participants were emailed an electronic copy of the DDI in late July 2015. The DDI was given to participants following interviews and observations so

participants would not know which dispositions were being observed in advance. The teachers were given a two week time period to complete the self-assessment. Upon completion, participants scanned and emailed the DDI back to me for analysis. Though the data captured by the assessments was not used to statistically measure teachers' dispositions, the assessment was used in conjunction with interviews one and two to summarize the participants' perceived teaching dispositions.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a complex and highly intuitive process that involves reducing the data, interpreting the participants' words or actions, and making meaning of the data using inductive and deductive reasoning (Merriam, 1998). In order to understand each participant's teaching disposition, I conducted a within case and a cross-case analysis of the data. Using constant comparative methods (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), I made comparisons at each phase of data analysis, developing concepts and ideas about each participant's teaching dispositions and identifying similarities, differences, and patterns within and across cases.

Within Case Analysis. Each case was first analyzed individually. Cases were each analyzed in five phases. For the first phase, I examined the participant's DDI, noting the dispositional items for which the participant strongly agreed (score of 5), to identify the initial self-reported dispositions of each participant. Items on the DDI for which the teacher scored as a 4 or below (agreed to strongly disagreed) were not used during this part of the study. Though I considered including items for which the participant agreed (score of 4), since the majority of the dispositions self-reported by both teachers were positive (scores of 4 and 5), I decided to only include data that the participant strongly agreed with. Examining the dispositions that the participant felt strongly about allowed me to narrow my data so that I was able to focus on the

teaching dispositions that evoked the strongest feelings in each participant. These items (score of 5) were then used to create an a priori list of potential codes for the analysis of the interview transcriptions and the observation field notes (see Appendix C for a list of a priori codes). A separate coding manual containing initial codes from the DDI, category names, developing codes and additional notes was kept for each case.

During phase two of analysis, I examined interview data in an effort to further determine the perceived teaching dispositions of each teacher. I read and re-read the transcriptions, coding sentences and phrases from the interviews using the initial list of codes and creating new codes when appropriate. Throughout the analysis, codes were constantly compared, merged, separated, and renamed. After reading through and coding this data set, I generated a list of codes that had reoccurring patterns within the data, trying to examine how these codes and groups of codes could be combined to form themes. Categories and codes were confirmed during peer debriefing sessions with my committee advisor and helped me keep an intuitive view of the participants in each case. From this phase of analysis, overarching themes about each teacher's perceived dispositions emerged.

The goal of the third phase of data analysis was to identify the participants' observed teaching dispositions. Before coding observations, I reviewed self-reported teaching dispositions and determined how each disposition would be enacted in the classroom. Using the identical process of analysis in phase two, I used a priori list of codes and self-reported dispositions to read through observation field notes and observation debriefing field notes. Data were constantly compared throughout the process. Once both data sources were carefully coded and analyzed, relationships and connections between codes were examined, and themes related to the

teachers' observed dispositions emerged (see Appendix D for a table illustrating the coding process).

Once I determined the teachers' perceived and observed dispositions, the fourth phase, I required that I created concept table based on each theme that emerged. I used the map to compare whether self-reported dispositions were supported by observed dispositions and to determine if dissonance was present (see Appendix E for an example of a concept table).

Throughout the data analysis process, I attempted to make sense of the data in order to create an accurate narrative regarding both teachers perceived and observed teaching dispositions. Each participant's data were analyzed as a single case, and a narrative containing self-reported teaching dispositions, observed teaching dispositions and a discussion of congruence and incongruities between dispositions, was written.

The fifth stage of analysis took place after the third and final interview. This interview was used as a participant member check. The participants were presented with the categories and themes that emerged from the data, as well as my findings related to their self-reported and observed teaching dispositions. Participants were provided the opportunity to verify or elaborate on the findings regarding self-reported and observed dispositions. During this time, participants were able to discuss and explain congruence and incongruity found by the researcher. Since this interview was an extension of the teacher's perceptions and provided clarity on behaviors observed, the results were coded and presented as part of the participant's self-reported and observed dispositions.

Cross-Case Analysis. Once individual cases were analyzed, I conducted a cross-case analysis to find similarities, differences, and patterns between cases. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), cross-case analysis of a study enhances generalizability and deepens the

understanding and explanation of the study. By creating a table of both participants perceived and observed dispositions, I compared codes, categories, and themes found within each case and looked for similarities and differences between the dispositions identified in each teacher's case. The cross-case analysis provided a conceptual overview of how elementary classroom teachers working in high-needs urban classroom self-report their teaching dispositions, how teaching dispositions are evidenced in classroom practice, and themes that emerged when comparing cases.

Trustworthiness. Establishing trustworthiness is an essential part of the data analysis process and is essential to evaluating the worth of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Study findings are trustworthy only to the extent that there has been some accounting for their validity and reliability (Merriam, 1998). Guba (1981) proposes four criteria that he believes should be pursued by qualitative researchers to establish trustworthiness in their qualitative research design: (a) credibility, (b) dependability, (c) transferability, and (d) confirmability. Below, I will discuss each of these elements and how they relate to the current study.

Credibility. Establishing credibility or internal validity involves making sure that your research findings are congruent with reality (Merriam, 1998). I maintained credibility in this study by collecting multiple data sources and using multiple methods of data collection. Additionally, study participants were given opportunities to give feedback through member checking throughout the research process. Findings of the study were reviewed by the participants and my doctoral committee chair. Though time constraints did not allow me to increase the length of the study, I increased credibility by conducting multiple field visits.

Dependability. According to Yin (2003), maintaining dependability minimizes the errors and biases of the study. As I conducted my research, I maintained dependability by ensuring that

my findings were consistent and dependable. Following suggestions from Yin (2003), I made the steps of the research process operational by, (a) implementing a strong data management system, (b) keeping a researcher's notebook and (c) establishing a case study protocol. Additionally, I maintained a chain of evidence throughout the process to create a transparent path for readers to effortlessly follow each step of the research process (Yin, 2003).

Transferability. Within my study, I provide a rich, thick narrative to describe each participant, their perceived dispositions and their dispositions-in-action, and the context of the study in an effort to make the study's findings more transferable (Creswell, 1998). I used language and descriptive detail in my narratives to illustrate the typicality of each participant, allowing readers to make comparisons and generalize to similar situations (Merriam, 1998). Lastly, examining multiple cases within one study increased the external generalizability of my findings and make the study as a whole more compelling and robust (Yin, 2003).

Confirmability. The researcher is a human instrument for data collection in qualitative case studies, and is therefore susceptible to holding personal biases that may or may not interfere with the research process (Merriam, 1998). I took multiple steps to increase confirmability throughout my study. First, I used multiple subjects, data sources and data collection methods. Next, upon completion of the study, I presented findings to the participants to make sure that what I reported represented their experiences and ideas (Shenton, 2004).

Findings

This research employed the case study methodology with a multiple-case case study design (Yin, 2003) in order to investigate the perceived and demonstrated teaching dispositions of teachers working in urban school settings. This study compared the findings to determine congruencies and incongruences that exist between teachers' self-reported and observed teaching

dispositions. The study also examined the role that context plays on teacher dispositions in order to test the propositions that working in a challenging school environments influences perceived and demonstrated teaching dispositions.

The findings are presented in two parts. Part one presents the two individual case study narratives, which include each participants' self-reported and observed teaching dispositions (research questions 1 and 2), and the relationships between their self-reported and demonstrated teaching dispositions (research question 3), and part two provides a detailed cross-case analysis of the two cases.

Part One

Case One: Angie. Angie, a single, African American woman in her early forties, is reserved in demeanor and conservative in appearance. Throughout her early schooling, she was one of the only African American students in the predominantly White, suburban schools that she attended. After ten years of working and going to college, she obtained her undergraduate degree in International Business. After working as an administrative assistant for two years, she became an elementary school teacher through an alternative teacher preparation program that focused on preparing mid-career professionals to work in high-needs urban classrooms. After she obtained her certification, she obtained her masters in urban education. Throughout her thirteen year teaching career, Angie has taught third, fourth, and fifth grades at three different urban elementary schools within the same school system. At the time of data collection, Angie was in her fifth year of teaching at her current school and she was in her second year of teaching second grade.

After analyzing interview data, the DDI assessment, and classroom observation data, three overarching themes representing Angie's teaching dispositions emerged: 1) enthusiasm for technology, 2) setting attainable goals for students, and 3) maintaining an orderly classroom.

Enthusiasm for Technology.

Self-reported. Angie perceives herself as a teacher who demonstrates enthusiasm for teaching using technology. Though during interview one, Angie admitted that she was indifferent about teaching 2nd grade content, throughout both interviews, she shared her passion for using technology in the classroom. "If it's technology related, I'm on board with it." The educator explained that technology is her favorite part of teaching, and she sees herself as a "cutting-edge teacher" when it comes to technology in the classroom. On the DDI, Angie indicated that she was enthusiastic about sharing knowledge with her students, and according to the teacher, this is particularly true in the area of technology. "I'm always searching for the next big thing." When her school first acquired a laptop cart, she stated that she was the only teacher who would check out the cart for classroom use. Angie explained that she uses technology with her students daily and integrates it throughout her curriculum.

I use it every day with all my subjects, especially during math. We use the iPads and we use the Promethean Board. We use the computers. There are programs like TenMarks and FrontRow Ed; those are the two that they use on the computer, and then I use the iPad to do Reflex Math, which they also use on the iPads. Those are part of my centers. Angie believes that her students learn best when using technology. "I try to come in with the technology to keep them engaged. They love trying different things." Though urban schools often have limited resources (Foote, 2005), Angie's schools had four student computers in their

classrooms and an iPad carts that could be checked out for classroom use. Angie hoped that her expertise in technology will help her get a position as a school media specialist.

My love for [technology] is one of the reasons that I got my media specialist add-on. The media specialist that we currently have doesn't do anything with technology. I just sit and think about all the things that I would do in that position.

Angie believed herself to be “more technical than a lot of teachers” at her school and boasted that she already helped many of her colleagues when they had issues or questions about technology. “I'm the go-to person” for anything technical in the school. Angie told the researcher that teachers often interrupted her class so that she could provide them technical assistance. “I like helping out, so I will pop out of my class, while [the teachers] watch my kids, I'll go fix [their] problem and then come on back.”

Observed. Angie's interactive board was located in the front of her classroom, and she used it during classroom observations every day. When on, the board emitted a yellow glow and was difficult to see without all of the lights in the room off. During interview three, Angie explained that “I use that board every single day. If it ever broke, I do not know what I would do.” Angie used her interactive board for whole group instruction, and when the board was not on, she used the board primarily as a whiteboard.

During observations, the students were not observed interacting with the board or other technology during whole group instruction or independent work. All instruction was whole group and teacher-led. When asked about the lack of technology use during the fourth observation debriefing, Angie assured the researcher that the class did use technology regularly and were unable to use it during observations due to their altered end of the year schedule. She

explained, “It’s late in the year and teaching has definitely slowed. We’re just trying to make it to the end.”

During classroom observations, Angie was observed assisting teachers on her team on several occasions with technology issues. Just as she reported, Angie’s two teammates entered or sent students to her classroom for technical support on four different occasions. During observation two, while Angie’s class was working on independent work, a colleague asked Angie to come to her classroom to assist her with logging on to a district website, so that the teacher’s students could take an online assessment. Angie left the classroom to assist the teacher whose classroom was located next door. Angie was gone for approximately five or six minutes. During her absence, the students talked quietly and continued their independent work. During observation three, her other colleague came to ask Angie for assistance during whole group instruction. Angie stopped teaching and assisted the teacher on her own computer for approximately three minutes. During classroom debriefing on day three, Angie explained that the teacher needed assistance with an online teacher evaluation website. The other two interruptions were on day five of observations. On two separate occasions, students from other classrooms requested that Angie come to their classrooms to assist their teachers’ with issues the teacher was having with their interactive boards.

Relationship(s) between self-reported and observed dispositions Angie used technology daily in her classroom. Although she reported her students also used technology regularly, students were not observed interacting with the whiteboards or seen using iPads or classroom computers. Angie blamed her unpredictable end of the year schedule as the reason that her students were not able to use technology during classroom observations. Angie self-reported that she used was the “go-to” person for technology issues at her school. Her expertise with

technology was demonstrated in her practice during classroom visits, and on several occasions, she was observed collaborating with her grade-level team to help them troubleshoot technology issues.

Setting attainable goals for students.

Self-reported. Angie self-reported that she is a teacher who determines students' learning needs in order to set attainable academic goals for her students. Components of this teaching disposition were reflected in Angie's responses on DDI items 20, 23, 28 and 39. Angie expressed that she had hopes that her students would improve academically and be prepared for the next grade level. She believed that she set attainable goals for her student based their academic abilities. Though Angie's expectations were not typically high, as indicated on the DDI, she did believe that they were realistic for her class.

During interviews one and two, Angie discussed the wide variance of abilities levels of the students in her class. In interview one, she explained that her class consisted of students with "deficiencies in that low bracket," as well as, students with "strengths in that high bracket." In reading, her students ranged from non-readers to independent readers, while in math, she had some students who were still working on Kindergarten and first grade skills and others could multiply and divide. In this same interview, Angie stated that, though mathematics was her favorite subject to teach, her student struggled most with understanding math concepts.

Math is not my kids' strong suit. I have students who have huge holes in their math learning, some that are on grade level, some that are above grade level. I even have some kids who are still working on counting, believe it or not.

When asked about working with students who had such a wide range of ability levels, Angie admitted, "At times, I feel like I have an EIP [Early Intervention Plan] class. I really do.

When do you have time to progress monitor all the ones who need it? Then you have the ones that can work on their own. I don't know; it's like juggling." By the end of their second grade year, Angie indicated that she still had two students who were "very low, nonreaders," three students who were "math illiterates," and 50 percent of her class of 12 who qualified for some type of special academic services.

During interview two, Angie explained that she differentiated her instruction in order to ensure that her students showed academic growth at the end of the school year. She said that she had to do "intensive training with this group." According to the teacher, she delivered most of her instructions in small groups to students based on their academic needs because she "loses them in whole group." Angie reported that her class worked in small group math centers daily. The students rotated through three math centers and she worked with one group each day. She admitted that she enjoyed meeting with her high group, but was not as enthusiastic about working with her "lower group." "I like meeting with my high group, but then I have to do one plus one with my little group, and I have to say, 'that's a subtraction sign.'" Though teaching "Kindergarten and first grade math" frustrated Angie, she thought that differentiating her instruction was beneficial to her students and allowed her to "meet one-on-one with [the students] on their deficiency level."

Though Angie was aware of her students' academic struggles, she reported in interview one that she still hoped that they would show academic growth by the end of the school year. She stated that she hoped "that they at least learn something." During this interview, it was apparent that Angie wanted them to show academic improvement. She expressed that regardless of their academic level at the beginning of the year, she wanted them to be ready for the next grade level and hoped that they would be able to "step up to the plate and handle the rigors of

third grade and [the high-stakes state test].” She explained that during their time in her class, she wanted her students to grow and “get the basics,” stating “I want them to leave my class with something that they learned that they can add to their [academic] toolbox.”

Angie’s aspirations for her students went beyond the conclusion of the school year, and during interview one she also discussed her prospects for future possibilities for her students. Angie explained that she wanted the students in her class to understand that “[living in poverty] doesn’t have to be your life,” and that college and careers are an options for them. Referring to the crime and violence in her school community, Angie stated that she knew that her students “go home to things,” and admitted that there were days that she simply “[wanted] them to come back the next day of ‘sound body and sound mind.’”

Observed. During the week of classroom observations, Angie reviewed a unit on two and three dimensional shapes to her second grade class. Each lesson that was observed followed a similar format, a math warm-up, whole group instruction, independent work, and an exit ticket. Angie delivered instruction in lecture form to the whole group each day. Though Angie used the interactive board to teach the majority of the lessons, students did not interact with the technology. During each lesson, approximately five or six of the 12 students present were engaged and actively participating in the whole group lesson, and student engagement consisted of the students calling out guesses and answers to questions presented by the teacher.

Each day, following whole group instruction, Angie gave students independent work to complete following her whole group lesson. During the first two days of the unit, students were given worksheet tasks that required the use of manipulatives (string, rulers, paperclips, etc.). During the following three lessons, students worked on a review packet on two and three dimensional shapes. Angie explained during interview three that she gives her students a review

packet at the end of each math unit to see what they have learned. “[Review packets] are a quick and easy way to see what they’ve learned.” Angie timed independent work using her phone, which seemed to motivate some of the students in the class. During observation debriefing four, she explained that her students liked the timer, explaining that “they really get into it.” Most days, while the students completed their independent work, Angie walked around the classroom monitoring and assisting students with their work and preparing instructional activities. During observations, all students received the same activities or assignments.

The researcher did not observe any group work, student collaboration, or differentiation in assignments during classroom observations. When asked about the absence of group work during interview three, Angie, similar to her response about the lack of technology, she blamed her unpredictable end of the year schedule. She explained that there were several school-wide programs and activities planned which affected their daily schedule during the week of observations. She offered her apologies and explained, “We had something planned almost every day, so I had to plan accordingly.” Angie ensured the researcher that throughout the year, prior to the May observations, she implemented differentiated math centers “almost daily.”

During observations of whole group instruction, Angie often showed visible frustration over her students’ lack of understanding of the concepts that she was teaching. Angie’s students consistently vocalized that they did not understand concepts taught during whole group instruction. Angie explained during observation debriefing five, that she has a group of “I can’ts” describing her students lack of desire to try do things that are asked of them. Throughout the week, students expressed their lack of understanding with the following statements:

I don’t know.

We don’t know.

It's too hard.

That's hard.

I don't know how to do it.

I can't.

I don't understand what you're saying.

Students also expressed their lack of understanding by continuously guessing incorrect answers throughout Angie's instruction. Angie often responded to these comments by telling her students to read or listen to the directions, "watch her," "listen better," or "think." During observation one, Angie responded by sighing loudly or stating "let's start over." During observation two, she became frustrated when students continued guessing incorrect answers while she reviewed how to find the missing length of a triangle with the class.

Ya'll have to think about where I'm taking you. The problem wasn't that hard. You have to think. Ya'll don't like to think. You want me to give you the answer. This is a review.

It's a review problem.

Relationship(s) between self-reported and observed dispositions. Angie self-reported that she determines students' learning needs in order to set attainable academic goals for her students. Though a teacher's goals for her students cannot possibly be observed after a week of observations, it was noted that all of the classwork that was assigned during classroom visits was standards-based and appropriate for the second grade. Though it was evident through observation that Angie's students had varying levels of abilities and needs, no differentiated instruction or activities was observed and there was no evidence that Angie adapted her classroom practice to meet the needs of all of the different learning needs. Additionally, in her interviews, when asked about her academic goals for students, Angie said that she hoped that her students showed

academic growth over the school year. Though the unit that was observed was grade level appropriate and was review for the class, the majority of Angie's class did not show that they had understanding of the concepts being taught. Instead of using different instructional strategies or modifying her lessons, Angie responded to her students' lack of understanding of understanding with frustration.

Maintaining an orderly classroom.

Self-reported. Angie believed in maintaining order in her classroom environment. During her interview, Angie stated that she knew that having good classroom management skills and predictable classroom procedures and routines helped maintain a positive learning environment for students.

Angie believed that successful classrooms management required discipline. She explained that her students needed a regimented classroom structure because they came from homes that were unstructured. In interview one, Angie explained, "I try to be regimented enough—they don't have that at home—so I try to be rigid." Angie said that she spent the first months of the school year trying to establish classroom routines, and believed that by May her students had a clear understanding of her classroom procedures. "I think that for the most part, they understand the rituals and routines of our class." Angie explained that her students knew where to "find stuff," understood her class rules, and followed her daily class schedule.

The desks in Angie's classroom were set up in the shape of a 'U,' which she had strategically arranged in order to "keep the peace in the class." During interview one, she explained,

I tried other arrangements, but the ‘U’ was the only way that I could keep some of them separated. This class doesn’t get along. I think the u-shape has helped a little. I can keep this [student] separated from that [student].

Though Angie believed that her rules, routines, and classroom seating arrangement helped with classroom management, she admitted that she had difficulty with consistency. “I’m constantly changing my room and changing routines, and I know that’s bad for the kids. I’ve tried to stick with it, but I can’t help it.”

Angie admitted to also being inconsistent when it came to her classroom management system. When asked about behavior management systems during interview one, Angie explained that at the beginning of the year, she used ClassDojo, an online behavior management system that gave students points/dojos for good behavior. By November, Angie had switched to a stamp reward system, in which the students got coin stamps stamped into their paper wallet for their good behavior. When students received a certain number of coin stamps, Angie would allow them to go to the class store to “buy” trinkets and toys. Though Angie said that her students enjoyed the coin stamps more than ClassDojo, she explained that she found it difficult to maintain the system regularly. Angie admitted that she often forgot to give out stamps and sometimes assumed that she had given students more stamps than she actually had.

I’m not consistent with giving them out. I’ll be like, “She should have enough coins to buy something, but she wouldn’t, cause I hadn’t given her any...Like I said, I have to do a better job of being consistent with that. I have to tell [the students], “Y’all have to remind me [to give stamps].”

Angie said that there were also times that she would forget to open the school store, stating “the kids would go shopping on every other Friday or so, when I remember or I feel like it.” Other

times, she would close the store due to student misbehavior, explaining "...they will get in trouble, so the store has to be closed that week and I'm like, "No, I'm not going to be bothered with y'all."

Angie believed that her struggle with consistency was due to boredom, and admitted that she eventually got tired of the coin management system. During interview two, she expressed that she indeed "felt bad" about her inconsistency because she knew that her students enjoyed the coin stamp management system.

Angie reported a lack of consistency in other areas of her classroom management. She stated that she was unable to maintain the "go-around" cup, a instructional strategy used to call on all members of the class to respond to questions or make comments. Much like the coin system, Angie stated that she often forgot to pull names from the cup. She admitted that she needed to do a better job at including all of her students in class discussions, but confessed that, "Me and the go round cup did not get along."

Organization was another area of classroom management that Angie believed was important to student success. She explained,

...I try to teach my kids organization. They get rewarded for a clean desk. [Student] has a perfect desk, I think. They know that I desire this...I want them to be organized, so that they know where their stuff is. Having a desk that is a mess is just unacceptable to me. I can't.

During our first interview, Angie confessed that over the holiday breaks she would often go through the students desks to "clean it out and declutter it." She explained, "I used to dump my [students'] desks over. They would come in, and their desk would be dumped over. I don't have

the patience.” Even though Angie had expectations that her students be organized, she admitted that she struggled with keeping herself organized.

I’m messy by nature. A tornado looks like it went off in my [class]room every single day. I don’t know where the paper comes from, but it just explodes in my room every day. It’s a constant.

Angie described her classroom as chaotic. “It’s the best adjective that I can go with.” She explained that in the past she had bought trays, buckets and crates to help her get organized, but claimed that nothing helped. She acknowledged that being disorganized, yet expecting the students to be organized was probably hard for her students to understand, stating “I’m a pack rat, but I don’t want you to be.”

Though the DDI does not specifically address maintaining an organized classroom environment, Angie did indicate on the self-assessment that she believed herself to be reflective about how her actions affect student achievement. Although, Angie was reflective about her struggle with consistency with classroom procedures, routines, and organization, since she was not responsive in taking actions to correct the behavior, it was unclear as to whether she would be able to make adjustments that would positively effect the academic achievement of her students.

Observed. Angie’s medium-sized classroom was located on the lower level of the school. The walls of the room were covered (from floor to ceiling) with teacher-made anchor charts, vocabulary words and store-bought posters. The room was dimly lit and had two windows, one which was covered by white bulletin board paper and the other was covered by an anchor chart. Two floor lamps sat on opposite sides of the room. As Angie explained in interview one, her student desks were arranged in a u-shape with a small rug placed in the middle

of the U. Three student desks were strategically placed in three different locations around the classroom. Angie explained during observation debriefing one that the students who sat in these desks “had a hard time getting along with the rest of the class.” The class had four computers on a table along the right wall and with a large anchor chart hung over the computers titled “Websites We Use.” An interactive whiteboard, that projected yellow light due to a cord malfunction, was located at the front of the room and a bulletin board displaying standards and lesson objectives was to its right. The closet structure and shelves on the back wall, where the students hung their backpacks, had an off-white bed sheet that partially covered the backpacks and a set of encyclopedias that were displayed on top of the structure. Most of the shelves as well as the teacher’s desks were covered by numerous stacks of papers. Though the classroom is literacy-rich, as Angie stated in her interviews, it was also cluttered and seemingly disorganized.

Students ate breakfast in the room every morning, and each observation began with students cleaning up their breakfast before their math lesson. During this time, Angie also cleans and straightens the classroom. On more than one morning, Angie swept the entire classroom, something that she explained that the night crew often neglected to do thoroughly. When asked about cleaning in observation debriefing number three, Angie said, “It’s a neurotic thing. I don’t do dirt and it just has to be clean.”

Once breakfast was over, students would complete a quick math warm up, before Angie began her whole group instruction. During whole group instruction, approximately 50 percent of the class seemed to be participating in the lesson. Half of the students were energetically calling out answers and participating, while the others sat quietly disengaged. During instruction, most of the students sat at their desks, while some sat or laid on the rug in the middle of the floor in front of the interactive board. During observation three, field notes state,

Students do not raise hands during classroom discussion. Some students standing at desks. 5 students at desk with heads down.

It was common to see a lot of movement during Angie's classroom instruction. Students regularly moved back and forth from their desks to the rug or to their backpacks in the back of the room while Angie was teaching. Every time Angie turned on the interactive board, students quickly got up and turned off the lights in the classroom. More often than not, Angie does not comment on the students' lack of engagement or movement during the lessons. When asked about the movement in the classroom during instruction, Angie explained in observation debriefing three that her class was very "free-flowing," and laughed as she recalled that her assistant principal called her class the "free-spirit room," because of all the movement.

Though Angie described her class as laid back, there were circumstances during the observation when rules were enforced. During observation two, a student was reprimanded by Angie for writing on his paper after the timer went off. Angie told the student that she would give him a 0 on his paper, reminding him "I told you when my timer goes off to put pencils down." On that same day, Angie scolded a student for not sitting in "learning position," straight up in his desk with his feet on the floor, a rule that was not consistently enforced as there were numerous occasions in which students slouched in their chairs, rested their heads on their elbows, and put their heads down on their desks. Angie also had an established rule for sharpening pencils, and reminded a student that she would not be able to sharpen her pencil because it was after 8:00 am.

Though it was clear that Angie had established rules in her classroom, no set rules or routines for getting the students' attention, lining up, handing out papers, or calling on or responding to students were observed. Additionally, Angie's enforcement of rules was

inconsistent. Some student misconduct was immediately addressed by Angie, while other misbehaviors were not observed to be acknowledged by the teacher. The following are instances when where Angie did not address student misbehavior.

Field note, Observation 1:

STUDENT 1: Teacher, he's looking through your grade book.

STUDENT 2: [puts down grade book; singing loudly] Like a diamond in the sky.

Teacher ignores student, continues collecting papers.

Field note, Observation 2:

Students talking quietly. Teacher tells student to "Be quiet." Student responds by stomping foot loudly in teacher's direction. Teacher ignores students.

Field note, Observation 4:

Student bangs on the classroom door. Student walks in classroom while teacher is teaching. Yells out "Let me in!" Disrupt class and teaching. Student is swinging large, full trash bag as he enters room. Teacher looks at student, but does not say anything. Continues teaching.

Field note, Observation 4:

Student arguing with another student. First student yells "shut up" [loudly]. Teacher ignores and continues cutting triangles.

The behavior management systems mentioned in Angie's interviews were not evident. Angie explained during interview three that she decided to change her system because her students' behavior had "gotten out of control," so she created a check system to keep track of behavior. During observations, Angie gave students "checks" for misbehavior. A graph displaying a list of student names and end of the year activities helped Angie keep track of the

students' checks. If a student received three X's next to their name for a particular activity, the student would not be allowed to participate in that activity. During the five observations, students received "checks" for laughing, arguing with other students, not remaining quiet upon request, not paying attention and using inappropriate language. Though Angie allowed students to move freely during instruction, students received checks during instruction for keeping their heads down on their desks and for going to their backpacks without permission, but checks given for these behaviors were inconsistent.

When enforcing rules, Angie's tone was at times stern, and sometimes short with the students. It was common to hear her tell students to "be quiet," "sit down," or "pay attention." On occasions, Angie loudly stated that she "was not in the mood" or "I'm not entertaining you right now" responding to students questions, comments, or behavior. During observation two, Angie responded to a student who was repeatedly asking for a ruler by telling her "you getting on my nerves!" Angie admitted during observations debriefing three that she had a "tough class" this year, and sometimes her students "tested her patience." While during observation five, she responded to a student who made a noise to get her attention by saying, "I am not a dog." On occasions throughout the week, Angie would have positive interactions with her students. She was observed winking and/or smiling at students in response to their amusing statements or actions.

Relationship(s) between self-reported and observed dispositions. Angie self-reported that she believed that classroom routines and organization were essential for student success. Though she self-reported that she desired an orderly, disciplined classroom, Angie's students were "free-flowing" during classroom instruction. Though Angie regularly cleaned her classroom, the room was still observed to be disorganized and cluttered. Lastly, Angie had

established rules and procedures in her classroom practice, but similar to her self-report, enforcement of the rules was not consistent for all behaviors and for all students.

Case Two: Marsha. Marsha self-identified as an Afro-Latino woman. She was single, in her late thirties, and grew up in a large metropolitan city in the North. She attended a private, parochial school for most of her early educational career. After obtaining a degree in Finance from a prestigious university in her home state, she worked as a licensed insurance broker on Wall Street for a year before deciding to become an elementary school teacher through an alternative teacher certification program in the south. Marsha's teaching program prepared mid-career professionals to teach in high-needs urban schools. Once completing her certification, Marsha immediately obtained her masters in urban education. Throughout her thirteenth year teaching career, Marsha has taught Kindergarten, first, second grades as well as, English as a Second Language (ESOL) Kindergarten. She has worked at four different high-needs urban elementary schools in two different school systems. At the time of data collection, Marsha was in her first year of teaching first grade at her current school.

After analyzing interview data, the DDI assessment, and classroom observation data, three overarching themes representing Marsha's teaching dispositions emerged: 1) enthusiasm for teaching and learning, 2) expectations for academic growth, and 3) maintaining positive learning environment.

Enthusiasm for Teaching and Learning.

Self-reported. In her interviews, Marsha self-reported that she possesses a positive and enthusiastic attitude about teaching and learning. She indicated that she was passionate about learning on the DDI as well. Her enthusiasm for education began when she was a child in elementary school. During interview one, Marsha explained that she remembered "loving

education” and revealed that each year she would get very excited when it was time to go back to school in the fall.

I remember loving school as far back as kindergarten. I’d be so excited about learning every year. We started school in September in New York. I mean, when back to school [shopping] came around at the end of August, I couldn’t wait. I couldn’t wait to go to the Dollar Store or the Five and Dime just to look at the loose-leaf paper, compositions notebooks, and Trapper Keepers. All of that stuff excited me. Of course, my mom was not buying all that stuff, but just looking at it gave me a little high.

Adding to this enthusiasm, each year, Marsha also became very excited about the notion of a new classroom and a new teacher. “Every year, just thinking about what my classroom was going to be like, what my teacher was going to be like, what I was going to learn—I was just excited.”

Marsha was strongly influenced by her own education and discussed several positive schooling experiences. During her time at the private school, Marsha’s enthusiasm for education continued. During interview one, Marsha spoke fondly of her high school teachers, explaining that “they influenced [her] tremendously” and helped her develop a “passion for mathematics.” She discussed how her high school math teacher was inspirational to her and raised her understanding of mathematics.

In 9th grade, I finally met the teacher that made me love math. I didn’t hate it before, I just didn’t really think about it much, but this teacher made me love it. He was so hard, but he made it so interesting, and after that it was like I was on my way with math.

Marsha’s love for learning combined with the positive influence of her former teacher led her to become a teacher. “I teach because I do love learning. I teach because the teachers that I

just mentioned a few minutes ago, really made an impact on my life. I still remember them.” Marsha admitted that now that she is a teacher, the beginning of the school year still gets her excited.

I just love it. I really do. There’s just something about it that—even now, although I love to rest over the summer, once July starts coming around, I’m already thinking about the school year...and I’m just excited about the possibilities and everything else. I’m just, once again, excited for the start of the year to see the types of kids I’m going to have. I just love it.

When Marsha was first hired as a teacher, she remembered being “so happy and excited about teaching, and so thrilled to impart knowledge on [her] students.” She explained that she finds fulfillment from teaching that she did not have when she worked in her previous career as an insurance broker. “I have [fulfillment] as a teacher. When I go home, I feel like I’ve done something to better someone’s life.”

Marsha’s enthusiasm for teaching and learning carries over into her classroom practice. When planning her instruction, her goal is to make learning fun for her students. During interview two, she explained she is not a rigid person, and that she thinks that instruction should be “interesting and entertaining.” “I’m not the type of person who likes to go around frowning all day long or having to raise my voice or be stern or firm. I think learning should be fun.”

Marsha indicated on the DDI that she believes her students enter the class with excitement about what the day will bring. In interview one, she explained that her class enjoyed instruction that is interactive, such as games and “hands-on” and tactile activities. “They love anything where they can move.” When deciding on activities, she often makes her decisions

based on whether the activity is something that she would also like to do, admitting that she “get[s] bored easily.”

...if it's not entertaining for me, they probably won't want to do it. I like things that are vibrant and fun, which is something I told [the class] in the beginning. If I think it's actually pretty fun, they usually think it's fun. I've had one or two times that it didn't work, but that doesn't happen too often. I just try to find something fun.

In addition to planning “fun” lesson, Marsha discussed the importance of teaching with enthusiasm.

I don't want to approach [teaching] with anything less than being enthusiastic about it, because they are not going to be excited about it. So, even if it's the most boring subject ever, I'm going to sell it, because then that will make them excited about it.

During her second interview, Marsha explained that when she is teaching, she enjoys watching the students learn and “get excited about what they are learning.” She acknowledged that the feeling of excitement was often reciprocal.

I love seeing the light bulb go on. I love seeing them turn on, get engaged...their feedback makes me more pumped. So, if I see they're smiling and getting ready for something I'm telling them is about to happen, it makes me more excited. I feed off of them too.

Observed. During classroom observations, Marsha's enthusiasm was demonstrated through her positive demeanor and teaching style, as well as through her instructional planning and activity choices. Her classroom instruction was fast-paced and energetic, and her tone was commanding, yet friendly. Marsha was very animated as she taught, often changing facial expressions and constantly moving throughout the classroom as she spoke. Her interactions with

her students were positive, and she praised the students often. At times, Marsha expressed humor with her students during instruction, participating in a funny dance or making a silly face to the class. During interview two, she reflected on how much she enjoyed her class, explaining, “We had a lot of fun this year.”

Marsha’s enthusiasm for teaching was evident in her instruction. During classroom observations, she gave the impression that she was enjoying herself as she taught, and the majority of her students were almost always engaged in what she was teaching. During observation one, Marsha taught a whole group lesson on non-standard measurement. Student estimated the number of Unifix cubes that they would need to measure the height of the wall from the ceiling to the floor. Using two classroom helpers to hold the column of cubes, Marsha hopped on a bookshelf to measure the wall and reach the ceiling. The class responded to Marsha getting on the desk with laughter and excitement. All 18 students were engaged in this lesson. When asked about students being engaged during interview three, Marsh explained that if she showed excitement while she was teaching, her students would also get excited. Another demonstration of her enthusiasm was more spontaneous in nature. During observation four, as Marsha taught a different lesson on non-standard measurement, each student in the class measured their own height using pre-cut paper feet and recorded their answers on the interactive whiteboard. After everyone recorded their height, the students spontaneously decided to measure Marsha’s height. Laughing, Marsha laid on the class rug as the students gathered around her. Two students carefully placed the paper feet on the floor to determine Marsha’s height using the pre-cut feet. The class was very lively and laughed, as the students measured their teacher. The students seemed notably excited about the activity, as did Marsha.

During interviews one and two, Marsha expressed that she believed learning should be fun for students, and admitted that she determined whether lessons would be interesting for the students based on whether *she* thought that the activity would be fun. Incorporating “fun” lessons into her days helped keep teaching interesting for Marsha and allowed her students to also get excited about the content that they were learning.

During classroom observations, Marsha planned math lessons that were collaborative and tactile for her class. Most of the activities that were observed, centered around the interactive whiteboard. Marsha used the board to display teacher-created measurement flipcharts, graphs, and measurement vocabulary. Marsha gave students the opportunity to interact with the whiteboard, allowing them to identify and record answers on the board. During one observation, Marsha also used the whiteboard to project a measurement game. Each student had an iPad at their desks. To play the game, a measurement question was displayed on the whiteboard, and students answered the question using their iPad. The percentage of students who gave correct and incorrect answers was then displayed on the board. The students would cheer and groan when the correct answer was given.

During observation five, the students participated in math learning centers. There were five different centers, which the class called B.U.I.L.D. Each center had a different measurement activity. During the observation debriefing that day, Marsha explained that she liked math centers, and explained that centers allowed her to differentiate her instruction. Centers included a measurement game, a cut and paste measurement activity, measuring objects around the room, a workbook, and measurement games on the computer. Students worked in small, homogenous groups based on their academic level to complete the tasks at the center. The students in the room were loud during center time, and the majority of the students were engaged. Only one

student did not participate in math centers, because he got upset during a game. Marsha allowed the student to sit out, and explained during the observation debriefing that followed that he “has some anger issues and sometimes he just needs some time to cool down.”

Relationship(s) between self-reported and observed dispositions. Marsha’s energetic classroom instruction and incorporation of interactive activities in her class demonstrated her enthusiasm for teaching and learning. Throughout the week, lessons observed appeared to follow same objectives with focus on reinforcing students’ previous learning. As Marsha explained during interviews two and three, students and the teacher were engaged and were seemingly having fun during instruction.

Expectations for academic growth

Self-reported. In her interviews and the DDI, Marsha self-reported that she believes that all students can achieve academic growth and reach their potential. In order to help them reach their full potential, Marsha explained that she made effective instructional decisions specific to her students’ learning needs and consistently retaught the content in order for her students to gain academic understanding. Though her students began the year behind academically, Marsha believed that they could achieve academic growth and reach their potential.

By the time Marsha met her class at the beginning of the school year, she had already heard many stories about their behavior from other teachers in the school. Twelve of her eighteen students had come from the same Kindergarten class the previous year, and the group of students had already developed a poor reputation regarding their behavior within the school.

“Throughout the school, people would look at my class and they would be like ‘You have one of the worst classes in the school.’ Worse than some of the 4th or 5th or 3rd grade classes.” In addition to struggling with behavior, her class struggled academically. “They were so far behind.

Most of them did not know their alphabet. They only knew like 20 sight words. They literally bombed the first [computer adaptive test] at the beginning of the year.”

Marsha indicated on the DDI that she believed that all students can learn and succeed. When she received her students’ baseline test scores, she was not deterred and was determined to help her students grow academically. When asked about her academic goals for her class, Marsha responded,

I know this is cliché, but each child can learn—and my thing is you may not have as much growth as the child or the classmate sitting next to you, but you are going to grow and it’s my duty to make sure you grow, some way, somehow.

Marsha understood what her students needed to pass to the next grade level, and she quickly realized that she “didn’t have a minute to spare.” At the beginning of the year, Marsha spent hours each day after school planning instruction, looking at assessments, and trying to determine her students’ academic needs. “I was busting my behind spending so much time at the school. It was my second home. My goal was to make sure that they learned as much as possible when they were with me.”

In order to help her students grow and reach their academic potential, Marsha implemented a variety of research-based instructional strategies like, giving formal assessments to track student gains, differentiating instruction to meet the needs of her learners, and incorporated lessons that were interactive and fun for her students. In addition to the traditional classroom strategies, Marsha said that she also “took some risks” and made academic decisions that were not always in line with her school or the school district policies. “I had to make choices, about what was best for my kids. I knew them best, so I felt like I should be the one deciding what’s was best for them.” Sometimes Marsha’s decisions involved, ignoring school

district mandates in order to have individualized instructional time with her students. “We’re supposed to do Power Up [a district-wide group exercise program] each morning in our class between 7:30 and 8:00, but that’s the only time that I can work one-on-one with some of my kids. I had to make a choice.” Other times, academic decision making involved Marsha including things into her curriculum that were not required by the school district. Though handwriting was not mandated in the first grade curriculum, Marsha felt that it was something that was important to teach.

I still teach [handwriting]. Some teachers have gotten away from it, because they don’t feel like they have enough time. I don’t think it’s even mandated anymore. My thing is, when you see a child’s handwriting and you are like “I can’t read what you are writing.”

They need it. It needs to be taught in Kindergarten and First.

Marsha believed that she best understood the diverse needs of her class and made decisions for her class based on these needs. Though Marsha knew that her principal wanted the teachers at her school to incorporate literacy and math centers into their daily schedule, at the time, she did not believe that her class was capable of participating in independent centers.

At the beginning of the year, all we kept hearing about was centers, centers, centers. My class wasn’t ready for centers. All they would do was fight. So, even though they like them, I got rid of centers for a while. Until they knew how to act in centers.

Marsha also made changes to her school mandated class schedule. Though all of the first grade teachers were supposed to teach phonics first thing in the morning, Marsha moved her phonics block until after specials, “because so many of my students would come in late and miss my phonics instruction.” During phonics, Marsha used the mandated phonics time to review skills from the previous week.

By the middle of the school year, Marsha explained that she began to see her students making academic progress. Marsha indicated on the DDI that she continues to reteach until her students develop an understanding of the academic content. She believed that constantly re-teaching content to her students for understanding was key to their academic growth. Marsha explained that she first had to review student work and assessment in order to determine her students' academic needs. Once she determined "where everybody was, [she] would reteach them what they hadn't mastered." Marsha explained that her class did a lot of reviewing throughout the school year.

I've always scaffolded my instruction. I've done that for years—constantly reviewing what I've taught. I notice that their able to retain it better. It helps it stick, because they see it every day. It's always fresh in their heads.

Marsha reported that even her students' homework assignment were review. "I want them to feel successful, so I don't send home anything that they would need my assistance with." Marsha explained that sending home work that the students can do independently also increased the number of students who turned in their homework.

According to Marsha, her efforts to help her students grow academically were fruitful. She boasted that her student's spring scores on the computer adaptive test were "through the roof," explaining that by the end of the year, she had 10 students that received a score of 2000 and above, a far improvement from the beginning of the year. Marsha remarked that she was proud of her student's academic achievement this year. "When I see their results at the end of the year, and I see how much they know versus how much they didn't know at the beginning, it really makes me sit back and smile."

Marsha was particularly proud of a student in her class who entered only knowing seven letters of the alphabet and who began the year in the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. “As of today, she knows 137 sight words, and she can read four paragraphs. Just amazing.” Marsha noted that her principal also recognized the student’s growth, “My principal even noticed how much she had grown. She was like ‘I can tell that you’ve worked hard with [the student]. Her confidence level has gone through the roof.’” Her principal credited Marsha for the positive impact that she had on her entire class that year, telling Marsha, “That was all you. It’s almost a miracle.” While Marsha explained that she was proud of her student’s academic achievement, she was equally as proud of their increase in confidence when it came to academics. “Some have had more growth as far as confidence than others, but you can see all of them feeling like I can do this. And at the end of the day, to me, I’ve done my job.”

Observed. Marsha self-reported that she believes that all students can achieve academic growth and reach their potential. During classroom observations, Marsha demonstrated this belief in her classroom practice by implementing a wide variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of all of her learners and by establishing positive teacher-student relationships with each of the member of her class.

Although observations took place during the last weeks of the school year, Marsha implemented well-planned math lessons on standard and non-standard forms of measurement during the five days of classroom observations. After her students completed their daily math warm-up, each day, Marsha conducted a whole group lesson followed by partner work or independent work. During direct instruction, Marsha used the interactive white board to display measurement vocabulary, share teacher-created flipcharts on the concept being taught, and show videos on measurement. Student-centered activities that took place during the unit included,

partners measuring their height with yarn and/or Unifix cubes, students measuring the perimeter of their bodies using plastic chain links, and a measurement scavenger hunt. At the end of the week, the students participated in small group differentiated math centers.

Though each lesson had the same basic structure, daily classroom instruction and student-centered activities varied. During classroom instruction, Marsha's taught the class in whole group and used varied instructional practices and interactive activities. Following whole group instruction, students participated individual or collaborative activities. In interview three, Marsha discussed that she structured her lessons in this way so that her students knew what to expect. "They knew that we would start on the carpet, and then we would move on to doing something in a group or with a partner, or maybe they would do some independent work." On the last day of observations, the students participated in differentiated math centers in which they participated in games and activities based on their academic level.

Marsha was also observed to emphasize positive relationships with her students in order to help them achieve higher levels of achievement. During classroom observations, Marsha's demeanor was always positive, and her interactions with the students were caring and respectful. When interacting with the students, Marsha used a respectful tone and respectful words with her class. Even when reprimanding or correcting misbehavior, she consistently prefixed her statements with "please" and "thank you." While the students completed independent work, it was not uncommon for Marsha to start a conversation with a student as she monitored the classroom. During observation three, she asked a student if her mother had brought her new sister home from the hospital. The conversation lasted for approximately 2 to 3 minutes and when it was over, the student returned to her work with a smile on her face. The next day, Marsha discussed a basketball game with a student as the class lined up to leave the room. Each

conversation was short and discreet, and it demonstrated Marsha relationship with her students and showed that she cared about the students and the things that were going on in their lives.

Relationship(s) between self-reported and observed dispositions. Marsha demonstrated her belief that all students can have academic growth and reach their learning potential by implementing a wide variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of all of her learners and by establishing positive teacher-student relationships with each of the member of her class. In her participant interviews, Marsha also claimed that she believed that re-teaching content helped her students' better understand concept and retain knowledge. This belief was evidenced during the observation of the unit on non-standard and standard forms of measurement. The standards that were taught during this unit were taught earlier in the year, and the majority of Marsha's students demonstrated understanding of concepts being reviewed. Although, Marsha believed that making instructional decisions based on her students' needs was also an integral in her students' academic growth, academic decision making was not something that was observable during classroom observations.

Maintaining a Positive Learning Environment.

Self-reported. Marsha self-reported that she teachers are responsible for creating a positive and structured classroom atmosphere where all students practiced good citizenship. By setting high standards for student behavior, Marsha believed that she provided her students with routines and procedures that helped maintain a positive learning environment. Additionally, through modeling and teaching components of good citizenship, like respect and gratitude, to her students, she was able to create a caring classroom community for all of her learners.

Marsha believed that establishing classroom rules, implementing structure and discipline, and "teach[ing] the students how to follow the rules" is essential for a successful classroom.

I believe in structure and discipline. You have to give [students] structure and discipline, so that they know what's expected of them. You set up rules. You teach them appropriate behaviors, so that they know how you want them to behave...and then you have to teach them the consequences of their behavior. Nothing's left up to question. Without [rules, structure, and discipline], you really can't teach.

She explained that at the beginning of the school year, her students had difficulty following classroom and school rules. They constantly tattled, got into disagreements with each other, and called out answers during lessons. She said that they were often disruptive and that they "tended to make a lot of announcements," yelling out statements or declarations, to the class. "I kept having to reiterate, 'You don't have to make announcements. You don't need to tattle, and we have to get along.' It was a lot of attention-seeking behavior."

Marsha also indicated on the DDI that she believed in setting high standards for all students. In order to create positive atmosphere that promoted good citizenship, Marsha believed that it was necessary to maintaining high standards and expectations for her students' behavior. She spent the first two months of school setting up her rules and expectations. "If someone did something, anything...I would stop everything and discuss the rule again." She explained that she spent a lot of time redirecting student behavior, and that "it took awhile to get [her students'] behavior under control," and though she reported that her class continued to have minor behavior issues periodically, but she stated that student behavior had "dramatically improved" from the beginning of the year.

When Marsha first met her class in August, she stated that many of her students' behavior issues stemmed from the students' inability to "act like children." "They were so way beyond their years in their mind set. They thought they were grown – hand on the hips, rolling their eyes,

just everything...they acted like miniature adults.” Marsha said one of her goals this year was to make the students “act their age.” “I wanted them to enjoy being a child; have fun.” She explained that the class had several talks about “acting their age” and stated that she gave constant reminders of “you’re a child, act like you’re six or seven.”

Many of Marsha’s rules and expectations for her students focused on good citizenship in the classroom. According to Marsha, being a good citizens included understanding out to interact with other, so Marsha promoted positive student interactions within her classroom practice. “To me, [teaching] is not just about learning academically; it’s learning how to interact with people.” Marsha explained that one of her “pet-peeves” was people with poor etiquette. She explained that it was important to her that her students demonstrate good manners and show respect to others.

To me, I’ve seen adults with poor manners and my thing is, if it were “nipped in the bud” when they were children, at school or home, we wouldn’t have so many adults with poor manners. A lot of adults will push you instead of saying excuse me or walk on by or whatever, and I think it’s intentional. I hate when people feel disrespected, so I’m trying to get them to be good citizens.

According to Marsha, good citizenship also included having “a grateful attitude.” Marsha explained that at the beginning of the school year, many of her students were dismissive when they received things from others and acted as though they were entitled to whatever they may have received. She said that throughout the school year, the class had several discussions about gratitude.

I kept telling them, when you show gratitude you show that you are grateful for what this person has done for you. Because, once again, if somebody shared their cookie with you, show that you appreciate it. Say, “thank you,” and don’t act like you deserve it.

Marsha gave several other examples of occasions in which she used teachable moments throughout the school year to enhance her students’ understanding of good citizenship. During these learning opportunities, she would often introduce different colloquialisms to her students, in order to reinforce their understanding of what it means to be a good citizen.

I end up having a lot of sayings with them. For example, “you catch more bees with honey” and stuff like that. And they are like, “What does that mean?” And I explain it to them, and they are like, “Oh, that means you need to be nice to people.” I tell them, ‘If you’re nice to them, they can’t really help but to be nicer in turn because of the way you approach them.’

When asked if she saw behavior changes from the beginning to the end of the year, Marsha explained that “the yelling toned down” and the environment seemed more positive and less “hostile.” She believed that her students displayed qualities of good classroom citizens and were more thoughtful in their interactions. “I think all of the ‘tidbits’ along the way helped.”

Marsha believed that creating a positive and structured classroom atmosphere where all students practiced good citizenship helped positively influence her students’ behavior. She credited the change in class conduct to her emphasis on setting high standards for behavior, establishing a structured classroom environment, and promoting respectful interactions and grateful attitudes. Marsha also believed that using teachable moments to discuss how to interact with others gave her students a better understanding of good citizenship in the classroom.

Observed. In her interview, Marsha expressed that she believed that structure, along with discipline was an important part of creating a positive learning environment. Marsha's appreciation for a structured classroom environment and classroom procedures was demonstrated in her physical classroom environment. Hanging on the whiteboard in the front of her classroom, you could find a daily class schedule, class rules, a morning warm-up, and a pocket chart detailing math and literacy center groups and rotations. On the other side of the board, Marsha's weekly learning objectives, essential questions, and the weekly spelling words were hand written on the board. Her classroom is clean and organized. Hand-written labels can be found all over the room indicating where to find classroom materials. Student desks were arranged in clusters of four. A small rug was placed on the side of the room in front of the interactive board. Five 12 x12 carpet squares were placed behind the larger rug for students who could not fit on the carpet.

In addition to the orderly classroom environment, Marsha's students' behaviors demonstrated the presence of established and reinforced structure and classroom procedures. During classroom observations, it was noted that students knew where to find classroom materials, such as pencils, papers, manipulatives, understood classroom routines, and smoothly transitioned from one activity to the next. Since observations took place at the same time during the five days of classroom visits, the researcher was able to observe the students come in from lunch, complete their math warm up, and engage in a whole group math lesson and independent work. Each day, the students followed the same procedure with little guidance from their teacher. During instruction, students raised their hands to answer and ask questions and responded appropriately when Marsha called for the class's attention.

Marsha used classroom managers to help make classroom procedures more efficient. During interview three, Marsha explained that she started using classroom managers her first year of teaching. “Managers help my classroom work, and the kids love it.” During observations, classroom managers passed out and collected papers, took messages to the office and other classrooms, turned out the classroom lights when necessary, and inspected student behavior when the class lined up.

Marsha used ClassDojo for behavior management in her class, and she believed the system contributed to her positive learning environment. The students were very receptive to ClassDojo. Students earned Dojo points for good behavior and lost Dojo points for misconduct. ClassDojo can be operated from a computer or from an app on Marsha’s phone, and positive and negative Dojos are indicated by a high pitch and low pitch sound respectively. The majority of the Dojos that Marsha gave throughout the week were positive. Students received positive Dojos for completing their work, participating in class discussions, and giving good answers.

There were four occasions during the week in which students received negative Dojos. During one of these incidents, a student told another student to “shut up” because the other student was “annoying” him. For this offense, Marsha gave the student a stern look and a Poor Choice (negative) Dojo, but did not directly address the comment. During another incident, a student lost a Dojo for stating “I don’t want to play this stupid game again.” Again, Marsha took away a Dojo without speaking to the student.

Marsha explained during the observation debriefing that followed that she usually did not directly address students’ negative behavior when giving out negative Dojos, because the students already knew her expectations. “They know what I expect and they know what that [negative Dojo] sound means. Most of the time, they’ll straighten up immediately.” On

occasion, Marsha would simply mention ClassDojo and students would correct their behavior. Every day after lunch, Marsha would project her students' Dojo points on the interactive white board before doing their math warm-up. Each day, Marsha's class got very excited to see their Dojo points. Marsha explained that if every student in the class earned 10 Dojos by the end of the week that the classroom observations took place, her students would earn a dance party.

Classroom relationship and connections were another indicator of Marsha's positive learning environment. During classroom observations, several positive teacher-student interactions were observed. Marsha consistently modeling respectful behavior and good manners, acknowledging positive student behaviors, and giving students praise for their efforts. Some positive affirmations that were heard during classroom observations include,

Great job with place value, people!

Awesome! Absolutely awesome! You just made my day!

Good try, Student.

I love how Student is focusing and trying to find the right answer.

Thank you for saying "Thank you," Student!

Thank you for raising your hand, Student!

Thank you so much for having such a great day, guys!

Alright, my friends, I do want to tell you that I think you all did a good job!

Marsha's demeanor with her student was consistently friendly, and her tone during lessons and all student interactions was authoritative, yet positive, warm, and respectful. She smiled often and gave students friendly gestures of endearment such as, winks, pats on the shoulder, and the thumbs up gesture.

Throughout the week, Marsha acknowledged positive student behaviors, and it was common to hear Marsha give complements to students for following directions. When Marsha did acknowledge student misbehavior, she disciplined students discreetly, using a low voice or by taking the student into the hall. During interview three, Marsha explained, “I don’t believe in embarrassing students. I don’t think it helps the situation.”

Marsha self-reported in her interviews and on the DDI that she encouraged good citizenship in her classroom by using teachable moments to promote respectful interactions and a gracious attitude amongst her students. Though there were no teachable moments in the form of class discussions during observations, Marsha gave students reminders about her maintaining respectful behavior in the classroom. During observation four, during a whole group lesson, a student responded to a question incorrectly and some of the students responded by laughing. Marsha told the students that “We don’t laugh at each other. He needs time to think, so we are going to respect that.” On another occasion, students were working with partners to measure classroom objects using yarn. Two partners were having difficulty measuring the class bookshelf. The students seemed to become frustrated because the yarn was not long enough to cover the length of the bookshelf, and one of the students called the other student “dumb” for not choosing to measure a different object. Marsha, who was assisting other students at the time, responded quickly to the incident reminding the students that “we use kind words in this class.” Throughout the week, Marsha reminded students to respect the person that is talking, make wise choices, use good manners and proper grammar, and to refrain from making “announcements” to the class.

Relationship(s) between self-reported and observed dispositions. Marsha self-reported that she created a positive and structured classroom atmosphere where all students practiced

good citizenship. Her students were seemingly aware of routines and procedures and responded positively to her classroom management system. Minimal student conflicts were observed and Marsha maintained encouraging demeanor during instruction and positive interactions with her students. Marsha's disposition was demonstrated through the positive classroom climate that was evident during each classroom visit.

Part Two

Cross-Case Analysis: Angie and Marsha. Angie and Marsha both came to the field of education after having careers in other fields. Upon deciding to become a teacher, both women applied for and were accepted to an alternative certification program that trained mid-career professional to become classroom teachers in high-needs urban schools. The women received their certification and went on to complete their master's degree in urban education. At the time of data collection, Angie and Marsha were both completing their thirteenth year of teaching in urban elementary schools.

Enthusiasm. During their individual participant interviews, Angie and Marsha both self-reported that they demonstrated enthusiasm for different aspects of teaching. While, Marsha expressed a love for teaching and learning in general, Angie specifically was enthusiastic about teaching students through the use of technology.

Angie admitted that she did not enjoy teaching primary grade curriculum. For Angie, teaching through the use of technology was "the best part of teaching." Angie's love for teaching technology had developed since she had become a teacher, and she recently completed her media specialist add-on certification, with hopes that she would soon be able to leave the classroom and work as the school's media specialist. Unlike Angie, who had developed her passion in recent years, Marsha was enthusiastic about teaching and learning since she was a

child and she expressed a lifelong love of learning. Her love for learning developed into a love for teaching. Marsha asserted that the best thing about teaching for her was the feeling of fulfillment that she received from imparting knowledge on her students.

Although their interests were different, both teachers self-reported that their passion motivated their classroom instruction. Angie stated on the DDI and through interviews that she searched for new knowledge and activities to share with her students in the area of technology, stating that she was “always searching for the next big thing.” Marsha’s love for teaching and learning motivated her to make learning fun for her class.

Though both teachers were passionate about teaching in different ways, Marsha’s enthusiasm was demonstrated in her classroom practice, while Angie’s was not. Upon observing both teachers in the classroom, Marsha was able to translate her passion for teaching and learning into classroom instruction. Her instruction was enthusiastic and lessons involved the students. Angie dislike for teaching the 2nd grade curriculum superseded her enthusiasm for technology. As a result, her students were not engaged classroom instruction.

Academic goals. The students in both Angie and Marsha’s classes started the school year struggling academically, and according to their perspective teachers, each class had a number of students who were not working on grade level. Though both teachers indicated that they had high expectations for their students on the self-assessment, participant interviews revealed that each teachers’ outlook surrounding their students’ potential was very different.

Despite indicating that she set high standards for her students on the DDI, Angie acknowledged her students low academic performance at the beginning of the year and set “realistic” goals for academic growth. Her main goal for her year was that her students be prepared for 3rd grade. In contrast, Marsha communicated that she had high hopes for her

students and expressed her expectation that all of her students would show growth. Though both teachers reviewed math concepts previously taught during the year, each class's responses to instruction was markedly different. Angie's class called out incorrect answers and voiced their lack of understanding, visibly frustrating Angie. Marsha's students answered questions asked by the teacher correctly and the majority of the class seemed to have mastery of the concepts that Marsha has provided instruction in. While Marsha had high expectations for her class and was determined that they make academic progress, Angie's expectations for her students were more modest and she was unsure whether they would be able to overcome their academic deficits.

Angie and Marsha used different instructional approaches to help their students reach their academic goals. Though they followed a similar instructional format for their daily math instruction, their teaching styles differed. Angie used direct instruction to present math content to her students. During whole group instruction, she presented content, primarily asking the students closed-ended questions. Half of Angie's class was engaged, while the other half participated by calling out and guessing answers which were often incorrect. Marsha also began her lesson with whole group instruction. During her lesson, her students came up the interactive board to solve problems and answer questions. Marsha asked students closed and open-ended questions and checked for student understanding during instruction. Marsha's students responded to and asked questions throughout the lessons.

In each classroom, students practiced the skills that were taught following whole group instruction. Angie's students worked independently on worksheets and review packets, while students worked cooperatively or participated in independent hands-on activities. Though Angie stated that she used small groups and integrated technology into her lessons, Marsha was the only one observed using either.

When asked about their students' progress for the academic year, the teachers responded with opposing emotions. Angie self-reported in her interviews and demonstrated in her observations that she was frustrated with her students, and was apprehensive about their ability to succeed in third grade, while Marsha expressed pride in her students' academic achievements and believed that she was a major factor in their academic growth that school year.

Classroom management. Even though Angie and Marsha both self-reported that they believed that effective classroom management was necessary for student success, their classroom management styles fell on two different ends of this spectrum. Angie was the sole authority in her class, and her management style was primarily teacher-centered. Angie admitted that "release of control [was] hard" and she did not "trust [her] kids enough" to give them classroom responsibilities. Marsha's classroom management was more student-centered than Angie's. Though she was also appeared to be the sole leader in her classroom, her students were more involved in the daily classroom operations. While Angie's attitude toward her students was one of general mistrust, Marsha appeared to have confidence in her students' abilities to handle classroom responsibilities.

Marsha believed that establishing classroom routines and procedures was important, and described herself as someone who is "structured." Each day, Marsha's students followed classroom procedures and had a clear understanding of her daily classroom routines. Angie's students also understood their daily schedule, though procedures observed were less orderly and required more redirection from the teacher.

Marsha and Angie both reported that managing discipline was a school-wide problem at their prospective schools. At the beginning of the school year, both teachers reported that they had several students in their class who displayed negative classroom behaviors. Angie claimed

that she had “never had a group like this” and she reported that she constantly had to settle arguments between them, often feeling like “a referee, not a teacher.” Though her students were not customarily violent or aggressive toward one another, she asserted that they were disruptive and displayed a lot of attention-seeking behaviors. At the beginning of the school year, Marsha also stated that her students exhibited attention-seeking behaviors. Marsha and Angie both created classroom rules and implemented similar behavior management systems to help correct student behavior.

Both teachers wanted to promote positive student behaviors in their classrooms. Angie’s had a general expectation that her students got along, while Marsha’s goal was more specific and she wanted her students to develop identities as good classroom citizens. To achieve this goal, Marsha spent a lot of time throughout the year establishing classroom rules, informing students of their expectations and teaching them about the positive behaviors that she expected. Angie admitted that she struggled with consistently maintaining behavior management systems and saw no behavioral improvements. In addition, both teachers responded to classroom misconduct differently. Marsha consistently addressed behavior issues, modeled and acknowledged positive behaviors, and addressed student misbehavior discreetly. She used visual and verbal cues and proximity to correct student behavior. Conversely, Angie was inconsistent with her discipline, often focused on negative behaviors, and disciplined students very publicly.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceived dispositions and dispositions-in-action of high-needs urban classroom teachers and examine relationships that exist between them. I determined self-reported teaching dispositions of two classroom teachers through examination of responses from participant interviews and the Diversity Disposition Index. Once

perceived teaching dispositions were determined, I observed teacher participants at the end of their school year in order to determine how their dispositions were enacted in each teachers' classroom practice and then compared perceived and observed dispositions to determine congruence and incongruities. Findings were presented based on themes that emerged surrounding each teacher's dispositions, and a cross case analysis was conducted to compare and contrast each case. This study is important as it sheds light on how dispositions are enacted in classroom practice and brings attention to the teaching dispositions of in-service teachers working in high-needs urban classrooms, both areas of the teaching disposition discussion that are often overlooked. In the next section, I discuss the results of the study, as well as study implications and suggestions for future research. This section is structured around the three research questions, combining questions one and two as they are closely related.

How do elementary classroom teachers self-report their dispositions for teaching in high-needs urban classrooms? What teaching dispositions are evidenced through classroom observations of high-needs, urban classrooms?

Overall, the majority of the teaching dispositions self-reported by teachers in this study were positive. Findings showed that both Angie and Marsha 1) self-identified as good teachers, 2) believed that they had a strong instructional practice, and 3) used a wide variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of their students. The teachers felt strongest about dispositions related to their content knowledge and classroom instruction. Both teachers self-reported positively on the DDI assessment, with Angie agreeing or strongly agreeing to 84 percent of the teaching dispositions listed and Marsha positively, agreeing or strongly agreeing with 79 percent of the dispositions. Though the sample was small and not generalizable, the

study suggests that the participants' perceived themselves as having optimal dispositions to teach diverse learners.

Through analysis of self-reported and observed dispositions of the teachers in the study, three themes emerged related to the teaching dispositions of high-needs urban teachers: 1) enthusiasm, 2) Academic goals, and 3) the classroom environment.

Enthusiasm

Angie and Marsha both self-reported that they demonstrated enthusiasm about aspects of teaching. Teachers who are highly enthusiastic about what they teach demonstrate a higher quality of classroom instruction (Kunter, Tsai, Klusmann, Brunner, Krauss & Baumert, 2008). Marsha self-reported her enthusiasm for teaching and learning, and this teaching disposition was enacted in her classroom instruction. Marsha used enthusiasm as a teaching tool to deliver effective, high-energy, and interactive lessons to her class. When teachers are perceived as enthusiastic, students are more involved and engaged in classroom instruction. According to Zhang (2014), student with enthusiastic teachers are more interested in lessons, curious about the content, intrinsically motivated to learn, and engaged behaviorally and cognitively.

Zhang's (2014) study showed that teacher enthusiasm causes emotional contagion in students, "wherein teachers transfer their enthusiasm and energy to their students" (p. 53). This was observed in Marsha's classroom and was also true in the case of Angie and her passion for technology. Angie was passionate about teaching with technology and she also believed that her students were enthusiastic about technology as well.

Though enthusiasm can positively influences instructional behavior, lack of enthusiasm can have the opposite effect. Angie's lack of enthusiasm for teaching 2nd grade curriculum was evident in her instruction. Her indifference to teaching the content had an adverse effect on

classroom teaching and learning. Lack of enthusiasm can be demonstrated by low levels of energy delivery of instruction, exclusive use of direct instruction, and the use of low level questioning. According to Barsade and Gibson (2007), lack of teacher enthusiasm can also result in antisocial, disruptive, and deviant behaviors from students during classroom instruction, an unfortunate outcome that Angie reported in her classroom environment.

Academic goals

Countless studies have connected teacher expectations to student achievement (Brophy, 1983; McKown, & Weinstein, 2008, Rubie-Davies, 2006). Though Angie expressed that she had hopes that her students would be academically prepared for the next grade level, her expectations regarding their abilities said otherwise. Inappropriate expectations for students are often formed by preconceived notions about students' race or ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic background, readiness, messiness or disorganization, or labeling or academic diagnosis (Cotton, 1989). Angie's beliefs about her students' socioeconomic status coupled with her frustration over their lack of understanding of concepts and low achievement levels may have prohibited her from having high expectations for her current class. Though Angie indicated that she had high expectations for her students on the DDI, her low expectations were demonstrated through the assignment of simple tasks that did not require higher order thinking (i.e. worksheets and review packets), limited use of classroom manipulatives, and low-level questioning during classroom instruction. Contrarily, Marsha, whose students' demographics mirrored Angie's, perceived her students low achievement levels at the beginning of the year as a challenge, yet still put instructional effort forth to make sure that they showed academic growth. Marsha also expressed her belief that all of her students could grow academically and be successful. Teacher expectations can have significant effects on students' success in the classroom (Brophy, 1983;

Cotton, 1989). Marsha had high expectations for student growth and reported that they showed academic improvements by the end of the year.

Classroom Management

In order to maintain an efficient learning environment, teachers must have a strong classroom management. Classroom management is a complex construct that includes many practices integral to teaching and learning, such as ensuring and maintaining order, arranging the physical setting, maximizing student engagement (Adeyemo, 2012; Sariçoban & Sakizli, 2006). Both teachers in the study valued classroom management as an important part of their teaching practice. Angie's ultimate goal was to maintain order in her classroom. This approach to classroom management is more traditional, where the teacher has control over the students and the class subject matter (Sariçoban & Sakizli, 2006). In Angie's classroom was primarily teacher-centered, Angie taught by direct instruction, the students worked independently, and the teacher was responsible for most, if not all of the classroom tasks. Teachers who follow a traditional classroom management style require strong intrusion and management techniques in order to lead and be responsible for all classroom issues (Garrett, 2005). Angie believed that effective classroom management included having an organized classroom environment, maintaining order and structure, and having well-behaved students. Though Angie made several attempts to maintain an orderly classroom environment, lack of consistency inhibited her from maintaining a structured atmosphere, and there were no notable improvements in her students' behavior or classroom environment.

Marsha's approach to classroom management focused on the students rather than classroom order. Marsha wanted her students to be good classroom citizenship and used character development as a classroom management strategy. According to Jalili and Mall-Amiri

(2015), classroom teachers who use a student-centered approach to classroom management affirm each student's individual value and help students develop the positive social-emotional aspects of their behavior. Similar to Marsha's classroom, student-centered classrooms are characterized as having more hands-on learning, learning through problem solving and student collaboration.

Another component of classroom management involves the ability to improve harmonious and mutually respectful relationships with students. Angie did not trust her students, therefore it was hard for her to build positive relationships with her students, and this impacted classroom behavior in her class. According to Rimm-Kaufman and Sandilo (2015), students that have positive relationships with their teachers, 1) are more engaged in class, 2) behave better, and 3) have a greater desire to learn. Marsha's student-centered approach helped her develop positive relationships with her students. She modeled respect, good manners and had positive interactions with her students. Marsha's students responded well to her classroom management approach, they were respectful, self-corrected their behavior, and engaged in learning.

To what extent is there a relationship between self-reported teaching dispositions and observed dispositions evidenced during observations of classroom instruction?

The study found that there was some congruence between perceived and observed teaching dispositions, but also found some incongruity between participants' dispositions and their dispositions-in-action. While the teaching dispositions that Marsha self-reported were enacted in her classroom practice, Angie's case results were less consistent. When asked about the dissonance between her perceptions and her practice, Angie cited schedule changes due to the time of year in which the observations took place as a reason for the incongruity, suggesting that dispositions-in-action are temporal in nature.

Argyris and Schön's (1974) theory of action provides further explanation to explain incongruence between Angie's perceived dispositions and enacted dispositions. The theory of action (1974) states that there is a fundamental and systematic difference between individual's espoused theory and their theory-in-use. Comparatively, this study suggests that there is a difference between perceived teaching dispositions, represented by teachers' attitude, beliefs and values, and evidenced teaching dispositions, the behaviors enacted in classroom practice. Based on study findings, perceived dispositions are more stable because they are a core part of a teachers' beliefs, while observed dispositions are changeable and may be influenced by time and context. The incongruence that was determined in the case of Angie, shows that it is possible that perceived or self-reported dispositions can be independent of a teacher's dispositions-in-action.

Argyris and Schön (1974) also indicate that individuals are often unaware that discrepancies exist between what they say and their actions, which ultimately does not allow them to effectively manage their behavior and can result in undesired and unintended outcomes.

People become skillfully blind about the inconsistency between their espoused theories and their theory-in-use. They may become aware of it afterwards, but while they're producing behavior they are rarely aware, and the end result is that our behavior is often less effective than it could be. (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 2)

Teachers working in high-needs urban schools face structural challenges that are unique to urban schools (Foote, 2005). Often urban teachers experience high rates of discipline problems, inadequate pay, inadequate support from the administration, and limited input on decision making (Freedman & Appleman, 2009). Based on Argyris and Schon's theory, working in a challenging work environment increases the likelihood that there could be incongruences

between what a teacher believes she is doing in the classroom and what she is actually doing in her daily practice. As a result, these teachers may not be operating at their optimal level of effectiveness.

According to Argyris and Schön (1974), effectiveness and learning can result from developing congruence between theories-in-use and espoused theory. Given that the goals of teacher education are to facilitate learning and increase teacher effectiveness, one can assume that it would be essential that teachers' perceptions of their teaching dispositions be aligned with what they are doing in the classroom. Argyris and Schön (1974) propose that in order to close the gap between espoused theory and theories-in-use, learning is required. Learning can only take place when there is a match between intentions (espoused theory) and consequences (theories-in-use) (Argyris, 1995). In relation to teaching dispositions, both facets of a teacher's disposition, their perceived attitudes, beliefs, and values about teaching and their observable actions in the classroom, need to be reconciled in order for reflection and learning to occur.

Data obtained from the classroom observations were used to compare whether participant's perceived teaching dispositions (their espoused theory) were congruent with their actions or behavior in the classroom (their theories-in-use). Based on Argyris and Schön theory of action (1974), incongruity between teachers' perceived dispositions and their observed dispositions happen when individuals are confronted with difficult situations. If this were true, even with this small sample, there should have been incongruity between perceived and observed dispositions of both cases, given that both teachers taught in comparable high-needs urban schools. Though not included in sampling criteria, the teachers in the study worked in the same school district, both taught primary grade levels, and had been teaching for the same number of

years. Though Angie's class was uncharacteristically small, both teachers reported students who displayed challenging behavior and were not on grade level academically.

This study found that teachers working in high-needs urban classrooms perceive themselves positively, especially in the area of classroom instruction. When comparing perceived and observed dispositions across cases, similar thematic themes emerged suggesting areas of the teaching practice that are highly valued by urban teachers. When teaching dispositions were examined for congruence or incongruity within each case, there were inconsistent results between cases, with one case showing congruence and the other case finding incongruity.

Limitations

Though qualitative research provides readers with an understanding and descriptions of individuals' personal experience of phenomenon, the methodology also comes with limitations. In this study, data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data were completed by a single researcher, and therefore, was only examined from one perspective. I addressed this limitation by collecting multiple data sources, conducting ongoing observation debriefings and member checks throughout the data collection process, and regular peer audits by my committee chairperson.

As a teacher in an urban classroom and colleague of the participants, I was empathetic to the experiences of the participants, which I believe was helpful in my analysis of their teaching dispositions. At the same time, this role may also have been a limited my ability to be objective. After observing Angie and Marsha's practice, I found that my own teaching style and perceived disposition was closely aligned to Marsha's, which may have influenced the emphasis that I placed on findings in the study. To address this limitation, I deliberately examined Angie's data

first, so as not to use Marsha's profile as a means to judge and compare her to Angie. Again, peer audits, conducted by my committee chairperson, also helped limit any bias that may have existed.

Another possible limitation to this study was the time of year that data collection occurred. In addition to unexpected changes in the daily schedule, attitudes of the teachers and the students often shift as the year comes to a close, making it more difficult to get an accurate account of the teachers' dispositions. I addressed this limitation by conducting observation debriefings following interviews. Participants were given the opportunity to explain, discuss and clarify data observed in observations. Additionally, during interview three, I allowed participants to discuss and clarify data observed and gave each teacher the opportunity to discuss how classroom instructional and learning practices evolved throughout the year. If the study was replicated, it is recommended that data collection occur in the middle of the school year. By the middle of the school year, teachers have established classroom rules and procedures, developed relationships with their students, and are generally able to follow a consistent daily schedule. Though time was a limitation, because it may have influenced teachers' dispositions, the temporal nature of dispositions should be considered.

Conclusion and Implications

The study found evidence of congruence and incongruity between both teachers' perceived and observed teaching dispositions. Both teachers shared similar self-reported teaching dispositions (enthusiasm, academic goals, classroom management), but their enactment of those teaching dispositions varied in their classrooms despite similarities in context. While school context did not seem to play a major role in perceived and enacted dispositions, findings

suggested that the temporal nature of dispositions may have influenced enactment which has implications for teacher educators and high-needs urban schools.

It also brings into question the importance of determining which teaching dispositions are ideal for teachers working in high-needs urban classrooms. Since students who attend urban schools are more successful with teachers who have the right dispositions to work with students of color (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994), it is necessary that we know and understand which dispositions are optimal. This is especially important for teacher educators preparing pre-service teachers to work in high-needs urban schools. Though initial teaching dispositions used in this study were determined from the DDI, an instrument developed to measure the dispositions of teachers who work with diverse learners, many of the dispositional items were not specific to structural challenges of urban schools and were synonymous with effective teaching for all students. If there are specific teaching disposition that support the academic success of students who attend high-needs urban schools, we need to have additional information these dispositions, as well as how they are perceived and enacted in classroom practice.

Additional implications of this research surrounds how teaching dispositions of teachers working in high-needs, urban schools are currently assessed in teacher education programs and within urban school districts. Once optimal dispositions are determined, teacher educators and school districts need to develop authentic disposition assessment that has the potential to measure dispositions and promote dispositional growth. Based on these finding, using stand-alone measures, such as self-report assessment instruments, interviews, or observations to determine the dispositions of teachers and teaching candidates does not provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexity of teacher's disposition. Findings suggested that teachers self-reported their dispositions positively, yet there was some incongruence in how disposition were

enacted in practice. According to Diez (2006), self-reported assessments or interviews exclusively, teachers often give “expected” or acceptable responses that do not match with their actual beliefs or with how they are likely to behave. When using classroom observations as a stand-alone measure, dispositions are often left to the subjectivity of the evaluator and are determined through a snapshot of the teachers’ practice. Teacher dispositions are dynamic and therefore need an assessment measure that can capture all aspects of the construct. Study findings suggest that identifying teacher dispositions requires self-assessment, interviews and classroom observations. Since dispositions are enacted in practice, authentic assessment has the potential to not only measure dispositions, but to also promote dispositional growth and help develop teachers’ professional competence (Ladson-Billings, 2004).

Additionally, the voice of the teacher needs to be a part of the assessment process. Allowing teachers’ opportunities to reflect and provide feedback on their practice, will help evaluators understand dispositions and build professional competence. Ongoing opportunities for reflection and dialogue will help teachers understand and if necessary, change and grow their teaching dispositions and increase their effectiveness in the classroom. If evaluators determine that there is incongruity between perceived and observed dispositions, teachers can be made

I hope that this study illuminates the complexity that surrounds determining teaching dispositions of teachers working in high-needs urban schools. I also hope that it brings attention to the need for continued dispositional professional development not only for pre-service teachers, but for teachers who are currently working in urban classrooms. Teaching dispositions are a synthesis of teachers’ attitudes, beliefs, and values and the actions enacted in their classroom practice.

Recommendations for Future Research

Though numerous studies exist on the teaching dispositions of pre-service teachers, few focus on the perceptions of teaching dispositions of in-service teachers, and even fewer have been conducted on the perceptions of teachers who work in high-needs urban classrooms. Results from this study support the need for a longitudinal study comparing perceived and observed teaching dispositions of teacher working in high-needs urban classrooms in order to capture intersect between espoused theories and theories-in-action across a period of time. In addition, because of importance of expectations and actions, the relationship between students' perceptions and the (urban) teachers' perceptions of teaching dispositions may offer further explanation of how dispositions influence practice.

Additionally, though not examined in the study, it is possible that in the case of Angie, incongruence may have been influenced by teacher burnout. Competing dispositions, such as burnout and self-efficacy, can interfere with the implementation of something a teacher may believe is important but is unable to put into action (Haberman, 2005, Savas, Bozgeyik, & Eser, 2014). With the increasing demands of today's classroom teachers, professional burnout is a growing problem for teachers, and can influence and interfere with enactment of what is considered important for teaching learning in significant ways. The relationship between teacher burnout and the teaching dispositions of teachers working in high-needs urban schools should be further explored.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview 1-3 Sample Questions

Interview one

- How do your students learn best?
- Which kind of interactions do you feel might have the greatest impact?

Interview two

- While I was there, it seemed that you used technology every day. How often do you use technology (iPads, promethean board, etc.)? How do your students respond to the use of technology in the classroom?

Interview three

- We've talked about when I came it was the end of the school year. In terms of your teaching, what would I have seen in August or September versus what I saw at the end of school year?

Appendix B

Diversity Disposition Index (sample)

Please mark your level of agreement with each of the statements listed below using the following response scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree
 2 = Disagree
 3 = Neutral
 4 = Agree
 5 = Strongly Agree

1. I continually search for new knowledge within my content area.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can express myself creatively as a teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I learn from my students.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I see myself as a part of the community in my role as a teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I continue to look for new information to share with my students.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am involved in the community where I teach.	1	2	3	4	5
7. It is important that I attend activities in my students' neighborhoods.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I collaborate with others in order to learn and grow.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I collaborate on providing community service opportunities for my students.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I work to establish positive school-community relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I welcome community members into my classes to share their skills.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I make an effort to build positive relationships with my students' parents/guardians.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Many of my lessons require my students to think critically.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I contact my students' parents/guardians about positive growth.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I encourage my students to give back to their community.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Students enter my class with excitement about what the day will bring.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C

A priori code list from DDI

gaining knowledge	students can succeed	community service
developing critical thinking	student can learn	interaction w/ peers
meaningful relationships	enthusiasm	interaction w/community
excitement	collaboration with others	interaction w/family members
teachable moment	reflective	giving back to community
understanding of the world	creative expression	involved in community
working cooperatively	looks for new information	attends community activities
teaching strategy	learning from students	part of the community
encouraging students	searching for new knowledge	interactive
differentiating expectations	classroom atmosphere	challenging thinking
taking responsibility	open atmosphere	reteaching
high standards	appreciation for diversity	parent communication
passionate about learning	positive school community relationship	welcomes community members

Appendix D

Illustration of Coding Process

Marsha's Observed Teaching Dispositions

Codes	Categories	Themes
interactive	enthusiasm during instruction	Enthusiasm
games		
active engagement	enthusiastic demeanor	
movement-students		
tone		
provides encouragement	Instructional strategies-teacher	Academic growth
energetic, physically active		
repeating directions for understanding		
acknowledging correct answers		
modeling		
providing constructive/encouraging feedback		
uses wait time effectively		
assessing prior knowledge		
checking for understanding		
finding clues within the text		
provides choice	instructional strategies-students	
gives explicit directions		
self-assessment		
peer learning	Values structure and discipline	Classroom management.
independent work		
disciplines discreet and respectful		
established calls to attention		
uses school wide behavior management		
class behavior management/reward system		
acknowledges positive behaviors		
gestures of endearment		
meaningful relationships		
praise		
gives reminders (regarding respectful behavior)	promotes good citizenship	
models respectful behaviors		
teachable moments		

Appendix E

Example of Concept Table Marsha's Teaching Dispositions

Category	Disposition
Enthusiasm	Possesses a positive and enthusiastic attitude about teaching and learning
Self-reported Dispositions	Observed Dispositions
enthusiasm for learning (self) <i>-always loved school/learning/education</i> <i>-private school; attended good schools</i> <i>-enjoyed being challenged</i> <i>-loved math</i>	teaching style during instruction excited, energetic and animated Constantly asked questions during whole group instruction <i>-majority of the class involved and answering questions</i>
enthusiasm for teaching <i>-teachers made an impact on her life; identify with former teachers</i> <i>-don't want to be less than enthusiastic</i> love for classroom teaching <i>-enjoys summers, but loves coming back; possibilities</i> <i>-excited about setting up classroom</i> making a difference; excited about the impact of teaching <i>-thrilled to impart knowledge</i> <i>-feel fulfilled—better someone's life</i>	Positive attitude and demeanor <i>-lots of praise</i> <i>-positive feedback</i> <i>-humor during lesson</i> incorporated a wide variety of instructional strategies to keep students engaged -wait time -checking for understanding -higher order thinking -demonstrated knowledge of content
believes in making learning fun /interactive <i>-hands on/interactive activities</i> <i>-if I think its fun...</i> <i>-like being busy; they like to move</i> <i>-come up to the board or use an ipad</i> <i>-like to take responsibility</i> <i>-working in small groups or independently...as long as its fun</i> <i>-want them to gain the concept...but like to see them get excited</i> <i>-I get bored easily...</i> <i>-at the end of the day...had fun</i>	hands on instruction <i>-discussed the importance of each part of the lesson</i> <i>-related to real-world examples</i> <i>-included herself in the lesson (had student measure her)</i> interactive lessons/active engagement tools <i>-use of the interactive white board</i> <i>-kahoot game; game-based learning platform</i> <i>-measurement activity; partner games and activities</i> learning centers <i>-BUILD centers</i> games <i>-math relay; cooperative learning teams</i> student actively engaged <i>-student actively doing and actively thinking</i> <i>-upset when game(s) were over</i> <i>-almost everyone on task</i>